KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING

Book One

By J. Preston Eby

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Chapter 1

The Coming of the Lord

It was the last night of the revival in the sleepy little south Alabama town. The congregation was softly singing, "Just as I am," and the preacher was standing in front of the pulpit with both arms raised in invitation. He knew there were people present who needed to receive Christ as Saviour. "Jesus Christ could come tonight," he urged. "Will you be ready for Him? The trumpet may sound before this meeting is over, or before you awake in the morning. When that happens the cemeteries will burst open and the dead rise, and those living who are ready will go soaring off into space to meet the Lord. Everywhere people will suddenly be missing without any clue as to where they may be. Husbands will miss their wives, and wives, their husbands; parents will miss some of their children, and children will miss father or mother or both. They will be searching for them in all possible hiding places, but will not be able to locate them. Loud wailing will ensue, and hearts will be filled with the dread of unknown and hostile powers. Finally, after days of fruitless searching, they sit down in dumb resignation and despair. The Antichrist will then appear and the Great Tribulation will begin. Those of you who are left will have to go through seven years of hell on earth. The scenes of earth will be indescribably bewildering and terrifying. Oh, why not make things right with God tonight so you will be spared from such a time of trouble and punishment!"

I was just a boy at the time, but it made a profound impression on me. In fact, when I saw my first aurora borealis, it nearly scared me to death. I was sure Jesus was coming at last, and I knew for a certainty that I was not ready for it. On another occasion I arrived home from school one late afternoon. I stepped off the school bus in our rural district and made my way up the embankment to the house. The house was open, the windows up, the doors unlocked; but no one was to be found. Mother wasn't there. My brothers weren't there. The house was empty! I called but no one answered. I checked across the road at the neighbors and they were gone, too. Suddenly a terrible fear seized me and my blood ran cold. "Oh, my God!" I thought, "the rapture has taken place and I have been left." There is no doubt that I was the happiest little boy in the whole world that afternoon when my mother came walking across the hollow. Of course, Jesus hadn't come that day nor has He come (in that manner) any other day in the past forty years. Looking back, I wonder why it took me so long to question what the preacher said.

Of course, among those who believe in the return of the Lord, most simply take it for granted that His return could take place at any moment. But is that true? Is it possible that you might step out the front door of your home tonight, see a bright light flashing across the sky, and suddenly realize that Jesus IS RETURNING, and He is returning NOW? After all, Jesus did promise to return. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go... I WILL COME AGAIN, and receive you unto myself" (Jn. 14:2-3). "For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mat. 24:27). Make no mistake about it! Jesus did promise to go away and to return to planet earth.
In World War II when General Douglas MacArthur withdrew from the Philippines - after Pearl Harbor and before the surrender of Corregidor - he waded waist deep out into the Pacific and dramatically exclaimed to the on-looking Filipinos, "I will return!" For long months and years these words of General MacArthur echoed in the ears of the people of the Philippine Islands while they waited under cruel enemy occupation. Millions of people hung on these three words as the only ray of light in the darkness of tyranny and oppression. They were words of hope, they were words of promised deliverance for people around the world. MacArthur did return, he returned with a vengeance. Not stopping at Manila, he went on to Tokyo to receive the surrender of the proud nation of Japan on the deck of the Battleship Missouri. Although he was, after all, a frail human being, he kept his promise. He did return.

Before the Lord Jesus Christ left this earth to ascend to heaven, He said, "I will come again." He, as the glorified Christ, repeated these words to the apostle John on the lonely island of Patmos, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me" (Rev. 22:12). Twenty-one times, at least, Jesus speaks of His coming again, and most of these references are made on the eve of His departure. It was in the shadow of the cross that He foretold His advent in glory. He declared, "The Son of man shall come." "They shall see the Son of man coming." "Your Lord does come." "When the Son of man shall come." "When He comes in the glory of His Father." "You shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord," etc., etc. Our Lord did clearly not once or twice, but repeatedly, and at definitely marked crises in His ministry - declare that He would come again.

Plain as Jesus had made the promise of His coming again to His disciples, at the time of His ascension, they still did not seem to grasp its significance. A faithful group of His followers stood looking upward on that historic occasion. As the Lord ascended, He perceived their consternation and sent messengers of assurance: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).

THE PROBLEM

No subject in the entire Bible has gendered more interest, study, speculation, and theological debate than the return of Christ. It has been interwoven into practically every theory, creed, or doctrine expounded by man. Through the ages it has been the object of scorn and mockery by enemies of truth, and not a few times has it, through ignorance and carnal reasoning, suffered abuse and distortion by well meaning friends. No subject has been more misunderstood or misconstrued than this great truth; and yet it is the hope of the ages. The focus of the entire scriptures is upon this great event. It is interesting to note that when men drew near to God they would receive glimpses of this truth. Certainly the scriptures have much to say about it but only the blessed Spirit of Truth can make it substance in our lives.

Most of the differences in scriptural interpretation among Christians is the result of an incomplete knowledge of the plan and purpose of God. Much of what is taught and believed in Christian circles today is derived from the wrong source - Bible study! That statement may astound you, and you may demand to know why I say that the great mass of confusion in Bible teaching stems from the wrong source - Bible study. What's wrong
with Bible study? Isn't this very article an effort in Bible study? Ah, there is nothing whatever wrong with Bible study IF WE HAVE THE RIGHT TEACHER TEACHING US. Christians gather together in Bible schools, Bible study groups, Sunday schools, etc., to study the Word of God, but the problem with the vast majority of such groups is that they have the wrong teacher - the human, natural, carnal mind! They try to decipher the deep and wondrous and spiritual mysteries of the Word of God with the human intellect, instead of allowing the One whom God sent to be our teacher, the Holy Spirit of Truth, to unveil to pure minds and transformed hearts the hidden mysteries of the Kingdom of God, and His great plan and purpose. If we all have the right teacher we will all be taught the same thing, and what we learn of Him will be the truth. What He teaches is truth; He cannot give us anything else but truth.

When we think we know it all, we shut ourselves off from further revelation, and make it impossible for the Spirit of Truth to guide us into all truth. We need to pay heed to the Biblical injunction, "If any man think that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know" (I Cor. 8:2). Yes, we still have a lot to learn, there is yet much of the total picture to be revealed to us, and as the beams of divine revelation stream from the glory above, let us ever walk in that light, and as we do, it will be fulfilled in us what the scriptures say, "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). There are many precious christians who believe, and have received the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, who try to fit into this one, initial experience with the Lord, all the parts of the Word of God that pertain to further experiences. The infilling of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, the in Christ experience, sonship, overcoming and reigning with Christ, and many others, they think these have all been incorporated in this first experience of regeneration. Yet, those of us who have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit as another experience, know what blessing and reality they are depriving themselves of when they assume that they have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit when they first believed. The infilling of the Spirit is not the end either, as many Charismatics seem to believe, it is merely the beginning of more and more wonderful experiences with the Lord, and we continue to walk in the Spirit and grow up into the image and glory of God.

In entering upon this grand and wondrous portion of the Word of God we desire to do so with profound reverence and humility of spirit, dreading to rush in where angels may fear to tread; and anxiously desirous to bring out of the inspired words what is really in them, and to put nothing into them that is not really there. As I have said, there is no subject where there seems to be more of the confusion that attends carnal minds conjuring up inaccurate and half-stated and fancifully conceived theories than this subject of our Lord's return. It will take intense spiritual effort, and much prayer and holy brokenness before God, to lay aside all one has heard and hears, to lay down all preconceived notions and ideas, to find out just what the Holy Spirit teaches. The one question ultimately must be, What does the Word of God actually teach? and not, What have men taught? We are determined in this study to be committed to the Spirit of Truth and the Word of God only, in receiving an understanding of Christ's coming, irrespective of any or all traditional views that might tend to influence a forced or unnatural conception. We must be willing to let inspiration lead and interpretation follow. Some will be constantly tempted to stop and ask, "Why! how can that be!" regarding some point brought out in the study. And perhaps nowhere more than at the point of truth I shall now set forth!

NO "SECOND COMING"!
It may surprise many of my readers to learn that the Bible nowhere speaks of the "second coming" of Christ. Interesting, isn't it - how some of the major and most commonly accepted doctrines of professing Christianity cannot be found in the Bible? There is no mention whatever of such things as Christmas, Easter, the "immaculate conception" of Mary, mass, popes, church buildings, the Trinity, or - the "second coming"! The Spirit of God has dealt with me severely and consistently through many years that the Lord's people should purge their conversation, purify their terminology, and remove from their consciousness the multitude of non-scriptural and extra-biblical expressions carried over from Mystery Babylon. We have both parroted and coined a great many unscriptural terms that have been so misleading and have led us astray in our understanding of the scriptures and the wonderful plan of God.

How often we, like the babes in the harlot's house, refer to a minister of the gospel as "the pastor" of our church or some other congregation of saints. To hear all the Christians today constantly talking about "our pastor," "their pastor," "your pastor," "my pastor," and "the pastor," one would certainly be led to believe that this position of "the pastor" must indeed be one of the cardinal doctrines and most highly acclaimed offices in the New Testament! The fact is, precious friend of mine, the phrase "the pastor" is entirely foreign to the Word of God. It is an un-scriptural and extra-biblical term.

There was no man in the New Testament church who ever occupied a position called "the pastor." Not one church raised up by the twelve apostles or by Paul had any such ministry as "the pastor." Oh, yes, there were "pastors" plural (Eph. 4:11), but no single minister of God in the New Testament was ever elevated to the position of "the pastor" of an assembly. The truth is that in every case in the Greek New Testament where the word for pastor (POIMEN) appears in the singular accompanied by the definite article, it is used in reference solely to our Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is T-H-E  P-A-S-T-O-R of the flock, T-H-E  S-H-E-P-H-E-R-D of the sheep! The sweet singer of Israel stated it so aptly in his lovely Psalm when he sang out under the spirit of inspiration, "The L-O-R-D is my SHEPHERD (pastor)!" Can we not see by this that any man who takes to himself this title "THE PASTOR," thereby usurps the place and headship of our precious Lord. I instructed the brethren among whom I labored in years past that they should never call me "the pastor" or "their pastor" because the Lord alone I-S THE PASTOR. I may be "a pastor," but never "the pastor." The saints were taught that if any one came inquiring after "the pastor" they should be told that the pastor is the Lord. If they were asked, "Who is the pastor here?" they should reply, "The Lord is the pastor here." They could then explain that Bro. Eby is one of the servants, an under-shepherd, along with elders and ministries; but THE LORD IS T-H-E P-A-S-T-O-R.

We have been so completely saturated, so thoroughly brain-washed in the errors of the religious systems that we do by rote and speak by habit the ridiculous absurdities imbibed in the pews of Babylon. How astounded we are when once we learn the truth and discover that the cherished teaching or hallowed practice we have unwittingly ASSUMED to be godly and spiritual is not only unfounded in the Word of God, but actually is an abomination in the sight of God! And this term - "the second coming of Christ" - is not scriptural, either, and cannot be found anywhere in the Bible; yet it has influenced the thinking and teaching of most Christians to accept and believe concepts that simply are not true. We have been so confused in our thinking that everything in the scriptures pertaining to the coming of the Lord, His appearing, His manifestation have to fit into His coming as a man two millenniums ago, or to His so-called "second coming" when every eye shall see Him. This is wrong. Very wrong.
May the Mighty God come speedily with His coal of fire from off the holy altar of Eternal Truth and forever sanctify our speech! The second coming of Christ is not a biblical phrase. It has no scriptural warrant. It is my deep conviction that it should be discarded altogether, for it is the cause of much confusion of thought and not a little positive error. Many texts speak of the coming of Christ, the coming of the Son of man, the coming of the Lord or similar phrases. The word "second" never occurs with a word that can be translated "coming." Let us consider a few passages. "For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mat. 24:27). "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep" (I Thes. 4:15). "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (II Thes. 2:8). "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain" (James 5:7). "Be also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh" (James 5:8). The texts, and many others, all include the English word "coming." But the preachers, when preaching from these texts, always ADD the word "second" to each one, and proceed to preach on "the second coming of Christ"! They invariably add the word "second" to every "coming" in the New Testament, and then add the "second coming of Christ" to nearly every chapter in the Bible - even in the Old Testament. Adding "second" to the word "coming" does violence to the meaning every time. Jesus did not say, "the second coming of the Son of man." James did not say, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the second coming of the Lord." Peter did not ask, "Where is the promise of His second coming?" Paul did not say, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall ... destroy with the brightness of His second coming." There is no justification whatever for adding "second" to any of these inspired passages. I have all the confidence in the world that the Holy Spirit inspired them to be written exactly as they should be written - without the word second! You will have to rewrite the entire New Testament to support the doctrine of the "second coming" of the Lord. The "second coming" is not a biblical expression and first occurred among Christians as late as the middle of the second century after Christ. I can not emphasize too strongly that the word "second" is NEVER used in Holy Writ with the word "coming." That is the simple and plain and incontrovertible truth, and this fact is elementary and basic to a correct understanding of the coming of the Lord!

APPEARING A SECOND TIME

Someone will surely raise the question: Can not the expression "second coming" be justified by the closing verse of the ninth chapter of Hebrews? The passage reads, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear THE SECOND TIME without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). This verse can be rightly divided only when taken within the context of the verses preceding it. The writer says, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9:24-26).
Some have tried to find three "appearings" in these verses, but there are only two. And the words are taken by unthinking people as though "appear the second time," or "second appearing" were somehow the equivalent of, or a synonym for, the "second coming." But this is merely playing on the language of our English version. The two "appearings" in this passage do not even refer to the so-called "first coming" of the Christ in Bethlehem's manger, or to His "second coming" from heaven at the end of this age. As we shall see later, the Lord has had MANY APPEARINGS on this earth. And here TWO of those many appearings are contrasted, the one with the other, so that one is "first," and the other "second." Here we have His "first" appearing: IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands ... but into heaven itself, now to APPEAR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US."

In the types of the Old Testament the atonement for sin was not accomplished with the killing of the animal, and the sprinkling of the blood on the altar, the people and the tabernacle; not until the High Priest presented himself in the Most Holy Place, in the presence of God with the blood of the sacrifice. This was a type of the sacrifice of Christ for our sins. It was not accomplished nor completed with the shedding of His blood and His death on the cross. Before there could be any efficacy to His sacrifice He had to PRESENT HIMSELF IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD by His own blood to make atonement for our sins. This is what this verse is speaking about; Christ entered the Holiest, not of the earthly tabernacle, but into heaven itself, presenting Himself, appearing before the presence of God, in the eternal realm of spirit, as the bearer of our redemption. This verse says that He APPEARED in the presence of God for us. This is the first of the two appearings here contrasted, but certainly NOT His first appearing unto men! As we follow on in this scripture we are told that the Christ needed not to offer Himself often as did the High Priest of the Old Covenant, once a year with the blood of others. Only once did He need to offer Himself, as we read, "But now ONCE in the end of the age has He APPEARED (in heaven - vs. 24) to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Once He has appeared, the first time, IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US!

Verse twenty-eight speaks of another APPEARING, even a second appearing in connection with our salvation. It begins with these words, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many (referring to verses 24 and 26 where it says He entered the Most Holy Place in heaven and appeared in the presence of God for us)". Now He appears again the second time: "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Most Christians believe this verse in referring to what is called the "second coming" of the Lord, a visible appearing at the end of this age. This is not alluding to such a coming at all. The word actually employed is wholly different. It is a general word, and it is the very word used with reference to His manifestation to His disciples after His resurrection. It occurs four times in I Cor. 15:5-8 where it is translated "was seen". The Lord appeared to many following His resurrection. The Lord Jesus appeared to the apostle Paul entirely apart from His two appearings set forth in Hebrews chapter nine. The Lord appeared unto Paul in the form of a bright light above the brightness of the noon-day sun. Jesus manifested Himself to Paul in the form of light to commission him to the work of the gospel. And the Lord said, "Rise, and stand upon your feet: for I have APPEARED unto you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of these things which you have seen, and of those things in the which I WILL APPEAR unto you" (Acts 26:16).

And further, the definite article must be omitted: "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, SHALL APPEAR A SECOND TIME, apart from sin, to
them that wait for Him, unto salvation." That is how the Greek text reads. The statement is not prophetic, but doctrinal; and the doctrine in question is not the so-called "second coming," but the PRIESTHOOD! It is not the prediction of an event to be realized by those who shall be alive on earth at the time of the end, but the declaration of a truth and a fact to be realized by every elect member of the body of Christ, no matter in what dispensation his sojourn upon earth may fall.

Our Lord Jesus Christ appears a second time to those who LOOK FOR HIM, who diligently seek for Him and follow after Him; not any more as a sin offering appearing in heaven for us, but in the mighty manifestation of His power usward, UNTO SALVATION. And this salvation is the work of our great and wonderful High Priest. This same wonderful truth is set forth in Heb. 7:25 in these words, "Wherefore He is able also to SAVE THEM TO THE UTTERMOST that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them." This phrase is given by Phillips as "He can save fully and completely." Young's Literal, "He is able to save to the very end." Amplified, "He is able to save to the uttermost - completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity."

The Greek points out that He is able to save COMPLETELY. He is able to save ALL THE WAY, even unto the valley of the shadow of death. He is able to save altogether, NOTHING LACKING - complete salvation with no flaw, complete as only a holy and omniscient and omnipotent God knows completeness and perfection. This salvation "to the uttermost" is a complete salvation of spirit, soul and body reserved for those who "come unto God by Him" - those who follow all the way, into the Holiest, within the veil, to know HIM in all His glorious and eternal reality. And it is not a salvation effected by Jesus flashing across the sky, but by our great High Priest ministering from His throne of intercession! "The uttermost" is the strongest and extremist word in all the world. There cannot be anything beyond the uttermost. The uttermost is situated on the very extremist rim, on the very outmost edge, and on the very highest pinnacle of all existing things. It is the limit, the boundary, the completeness, the perfection, the fullness, the summit, the apex and the ultimate of all realities. Oh, the wonder of it! Salvation to the UTTERMOST! What a limit! What a boundary! What a summit!

The "uttermost" salvation cannot be understood apart from our High Priest who has secured it and who now ministers it to us from that higher realm of incorruptibility. Jesus pointed to this day when, on the night of His judgment, before crucifixion, He announced to the startled High Priest, Caiaphas, this amazing proclamation, "You have said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mat. 26:64). To paraphrase, Jesus says, "Though now you see me in this low and abject state, nevertheless the day is coming when I shall appear otherwise. Though you watch me die upon a Roman cross as a sin-offering, you will shortly see me sitting upon the throne of my Father and coming in the clouds of heaven."

How prone we are to view these as two events, separated by a vast span of time. Our conception is of Jesus sitting upon the right hand of God for a couple thousand years, at the end of which time He leaves His throne to "come in the clouds of heaven." NOT SO! "HEREAFTER you will see..." So runs the King James version, translating a Greek phrase which signifies unequivocally "from now on" - or literally, HENCEFORTH. But it is safe to say that the average reader, reading from the Authorized version, generally understands it to mean something very different - not "HENCEFORTH shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven," but
"in the hereafter," at some point in the indefinite future, you will see the Son of man "sitting" and then "coming." The correct thought is, "HENCEFORTH - FROM N-O-W O-N you will see the Son of man sitting... and coming." These two events, the sitting and the coming, are simultaneous. They are co-extensive. They transpire at the same time. And they both happen "from now on." He sits AND He comes. He sits upon the throne of heavenly power and He comes in the clouds of heaven! He sits as our great High Priest and He comes as our transforming Saviour. He doesn't sit and then come, He comes while He sits. It is not two separate, independent actions, but a two-fold, interdependent action.

Has He not come to you, precious brother, sister, in mighty saving power even as He sits upon the throne on High? Is it not true that He has power to save completely just BECAUSE He is seated upon the throne? Ah - it is not Jesus crashing down through the skies who is able to save to the uttermost - it is, rather, Christ our High Priest on the throne of the Majesty on High who is able to save us to the uttermost, seeing HE EVER LIVES TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US. Oh, we read so much into the Word of God that is not there! With our limited and faulty carnal reasoning we distort it all out of shape, making it say what it does not say, and not say what it does say. Why cannot men cease their ignorant prattlings and learn once and for all that our Lord Jesus Christ is fully able to sit and to come at the same time! It is high time for all of God's elect saints to learn that Jesus is both High Priest and Saviour at the same instant. He sits and He comes. He has appeared once and for all before the Father in heaven as our sin-offering, and now He sits there continually as the High Priest of that mighty life. And unto all who LOOK FOR HIM He will APPEAR A SECOND TIME UNTO SALVATION. He has appeared in the presence of God FOR US, and now He will appear a second time UNTO US. The subject is not His "second coming," but His glorious saving PRIESTHOOD! It is time for all men to believe the Word of God and cease from following their own shameful delusions.

THE COMINGS OF THE LORD

We have been led to think in terms of the first coming and the second coming, whereas the Bible speaks in terms of the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ. Our God does not talk about the "first coming" and the "second coming" - He talks about the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. For example, let us take a look at that thought in Micah 5:2, "But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto Me who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting."

Notice, His "goings forth." The plural is used. The goings forth of the Lord speak about the Lord Jesus Christ! Now, the idea of "goings" has to do with the onward marching of God - the unfolding of the purpose of God, step by step. This is what is indicated here. This is what history is all about, the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the marching forward of God, the ever-increasing unveiling of Himself to man. The unfolding of end-time events and God's order for the ages to come, which are the main contents of the last book of the Bible, are called "the Revelation of Jesus Christ."

The term "second coming" is as unfortunate as it is unscriptural. It implies there has been only one coming of Christ thus far. This is not true. It may surprise you to learn that the scripture does not treat His coming at Bethlehem as an isolated event. Although it is important, it is not considered out of proportion to other and comparable events. His coming as a man was a step in the development of God's plan for redemption of the
world. Actually, Bethlehem is one in a series of appearances of Christ into the world. By the same token, it is not His last coming to the earth. In order to get the importance of His birth, let's withdraw from Bethlehem and consider His coming there as just one event in the panorama of the ages. Let us consider this theme under the following divisions: (1) Before Bethlehem (2) Beginning at Bethlehem (3) Because of Bethlehem.

An abundance of scripture supports the fact that Christ was before Bethlehem. He is just as real in the Old Testament as He is in the New Testament. The great difference, of course, is that HE BECAME FLESH. He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Also He said is, "My Father works hitherto and I work." He and the Father were working long before Bethlehem. John opened his matchless Gospel with this majestic statement: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (Jn. 1:1-2). The prophet Isaiah had made a very careful distinction about His birth at Bethlehem: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." Micah, the contemporary of Isaiah, had said, as I have pointed out, that He would come forth from Bethlehem but that "His goings forth have been FROM OF OLD, FROM EVERLASTING." His footprints were manifested in this world before the prints were made in His hands.

The pages of the Old Testament are literally sprinkled with the accounts of the Lord's comings, beginning in Eden's blest Garden and continuing through all generations of old. On the very day that man sinned he "heard the voice of the Lord God WALKING IN THE GARDEN in the cool of the day" (Gen. 3:8). The casual way in which this is stated indicates that this was a normal event, perhaps a daily appointed time at which the Lord manifested His presence to communicate with the man He had placed on this planet. The Lord still walked among men even after Adam was banished from the Garden, for Cain, after he slew Abel, "went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod" (Gen. 4:16).

In Gen. 17:1 we find that "The Lord appeared unto Abraham." In Gen. 17:22 it says, "God left off talking to Abraham, and WENT UP FROM HIM." Interesting, isn't it, that the Mount of Olives was not the first time or place where the Lord ASCENDED! In Gen. 18:1 we read, "And the Lord appeared unto him." In Gen. 18:33, "The Lord went His way, as soon as He left communing with Abraham." In Gen. 26:24 we see that "the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac) the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father: fear not, for I am with you." In Gen. 35:7 it says, "And he (Jacob) built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him." The Lord appeared unto Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:15-16). After Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt Christ walked among them in mighty manifestation of power and glory and provision, "for they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:4). Later, the Lord again came to Israel in another form as we read in Ex. 19:9, 18 and 20: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I COME UNTO YOU in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak unto you ... and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it ... and the Lord CAME DOWN UPON MOUNT SINAI, on the top of the Mount." When the Tabernacle in the wilderness was erected "the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud (His coming in a cloud is nothing new, either!)(Deut. 31:15). In the days of Samuel the prophet "the Lord appeared ... in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh" (I Sam. 3:21). In II Chron. 3:1 the "Lord appeared unto David... in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." In I Kings 3:5 the Lord appeared to Solomon. And this star-studded record of the Lord's comings in the Old Testament times takes on special
significance when Israel exclaims, "The Lord HAS APPEARED OF OLD UNTO ME, saying, Yea I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you" ( Jer. 31:3).

We dare not lose sight of the fact that our Lord has already had many comings, many appearances. We have limited the comings of Jesus strictly to two because of our unscriptural terms "first coming" and "second coming," but the truth is that He came; He continued to come; He comes; He continues to come; He will come; and He will continue to come! There are numerous "comings" and "appearings" of the Lord in the New Testament. BUT THEY DO NOT ALL REFER TO THE SAME EVENT. The word "coming" is very often used in the scriptures of a visitation or manifestation of the Lord to judge or bless or accomplish some aspect of His plan and purpose among His people and in the earth. One would think, listening to the preachers rant and rave about "THE second coming of Christ," that every time the Lord says, "I will come," He is speaking of one, specific, particular, singular event sometime out in the dim and misty future. I do not hesitate to tell you that this is a great error.

Rev. 2:5 tells of a COMING of our Lord. "Remember therefore from where you are fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I WILL COME unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except you repent." Since Jesus had gone a COMING of Jesus would be a RETURN. So what does the Lord say? He warns the church at Ephesus that if it does not repent, "I WILL COME ... QUICKLY!" "I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place." "Candlestick" means lamp stand. A lamp stand is for holding up a light. Now what is the use of an assembly of believers? That is the purpose of an assembly - "YOU are the light of the world." Christ tells these people that if they do not repent HE WILL COME TO THEM IN JUDGMENT, swift and effective judgment, and remove them from being an assembly of light-bearing children of God. It was a COMING which might not take place! Jesus said, "I will COME if you don't repent." What would prevent this COMING? Ephesian saints repenting! The Ephesian church was an active and patient, and doctrinally sound church. But it lost its first love for Christ, the pure, virginal love for Him and for Him alone and sadly, never repented. So God allowed the light to go out. Later on the darkness of Mohammedism swept over the land where this church had been located. There is no lamp stand in Ephesus today, for there is nothing but the ruins of a once great city. In Ephesus there is no church at all. The site of the ancient temple is now a marsh, inhabited only by frogs. Ephesus, of course, in keeping with the pattern of the book of Revelation, was merely a TYPICAL CHURCH, and the Lord's solemn warning signal flashes out to this day to be heeded by every man and movement that is of the Ephesian spirit and character: "Repent, or I WILL COME unto you quickly!" Is this, then, THE so-called "second coming" of Christ? Assuredly not! But I greatly fear that almost all of God's children hold the childish notion that whenever Jesus says, "I will come," He always refers to one singular event called "the second coming."

The book of Revelation furnishes us with a sequential overview of the comings of the Lord. Its inspired title is found in the first verse - "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." The Greek word for "revelation" is APOKALUPSIS meaning "unveiling, uncovering," and hence, revealing." This is expressed in Rev. 1:7, "EVERY EYE shall SEE Him..." The error of the unspiritual and unenlightened mind is that it immediately assumes that every eye must see Him at the same time and in the same manner. But the multitudinous ways in which the Lord comes and comes and comes throughout the illuminating pages of this glorious book indicates to me the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the many-
faceted and many-splendored appearing of the Lord from one degree of glory to another until, when all is finished, every creature in heaven, earth and hell shall have had a revelation of the Son of God (Rev. 5:13).

With what divine genius does the Holy Spirit on the pages of God's Word portray the living Son of God coming and standing in the midst of the seven churches! This is an earthly scene. The risen and glorified Christ was present in and among the churches. Jesus had promised to come back, and according to chapters two and three of Revelation He HAD come back! Then follows swiftly the tragic scene of Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour, standing at the end of this age COMPLETELY OUTSIDE the Laodicean church! No longer is He dealing with the apostate CHURCH SYSTEM, but knocking, knocking, knocking at heart's door of INDIVIDUAL MEN AND WOMEN, saying to them, "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). This passage can only refer to a spiritual presence coming to any INDIVIDUAL, to A-N-Y M-A-N who will open his heart's door to intimacy of fellowship and vital union with the Christ of God.

As one has written concerning this significant passage, "The message is to "any man," a message that abandons the multitude to their religious play, to their church creeds and their church Christs; a message that 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 sup with HIM and he with ME.' The church of the last days is the church of the INDIVIDUAL. It is the individual believer with a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP to Christ. For the man who will forsake ALL ELSE and sup with Christ this is an age of glory, an hour of preparation such as we have never known. This is a time when the Spirit of God is speaking TO YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL. He seeks to sup and dine and feast with you apart from all the religious confusion about us. It is a glorious day when we see the promise that is ours in this hour" -end quote. And what is the promise? The promise, wonderful promise! is of HIS COMING. "I WILL COME in to HIM, and will sup with him and he with me." Ah, is this the so-called "second coming" of Christ? It is not the one men preach about or that Christians expect and wait for, but, beloved saints of God, it IS THE COMING OF CHRIST, nonetheless. He does not come once and in just one way. He comes and comes and comes in the progressive revelation of HIMSELF!

There is neither time nor space to discuss all of these comings and appearings fully in one brief article, so we shall pursue these great truths in the months to come. We shall touch just enough at this time to let you see clearly that there are more than two comings of Christ mentioned in the Bible, and that trying to apply all the scriptures on the Lord's coming to just two comings, has caused a lot of confusion and erroneous teaching and has caused the Lord's people to miss completely some of the most marvelous aspects of God's great and wonderful purposes.

On the day of Pentecost Christ came again as the Comforter. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He DWELLS WITH YOU, and shall be IN YOU. I will not leave you comfortless (orphans): I WILL COME UNTO YOU. Yet A little while, and the world sees me no more; but YOU SEE ME: because I live, you shall live also. At that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I IN YOU" (Jn. 14:16-20).
In Mk. 13:26 He comes with CLOUDS. In Mat. 24:27 He comes as LIGHTNING. In Rev. 16:15 He comes as a THIEF. In Mat. 25:6 He comes as the BRIDEGROOM. In Rev. 22:16 and 2:28 He comes as the MORNING STAR. In Mal. 4:2 He comes as the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ARISING. In Phil. 3:20-21 He comes in RESURRECTION POWER. In II Thes. 1:7-8 He comes in FLAMING FIRE. In Mal. 3:1-3 He comes to His priesthood company as REFINER’S FIRE and FULLER’S SOAP. In I Thes. 4:16-17 He comes IN THE AIR. In Hos. 6:3 and James 5:7-8 He comes as the RAIN. In Rev. 19:11 & 14 He comes on a WHITE HORSE. In Mat. 25:31-34 He comes as KING. In I Pet. 5:4 He comes as the CHIEF SHEPHERD. In Mat. 16:27 He comes WITH HIS ANGELS. In Jude 14 He comes WITH HIS SAINTS. In Jn. 14:18 He comes TO HIS SAINTS. In II Thes. 1:10 He comes IN HIS SAINTS. In Jude 14 & 15 He comes in JUDGMENT. In Rev. 22:12 He comes WITH REWARDS. And time and space fail me to tell of how He comes with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God; He comes to the Mount of Olives; He comes to His temple; He comes in glory; He comes as Lord; He comes in His Kingdom; He comes as seasons of refreshing, etc., etc., etc.

Like a choir of many voices and as the sound of many waters, the testimony of the Word of God resounds with abundant and stunning and inescapable evidence that the coming of Christ is not a single event, but includes many different manifestations. His coming to us is a many-sided experience. To multitudes He appears as Saviour. They find Him at the crossroads of their lives. He becomes their salvation but they never venture any deeper to know Him intimately. They have only a superficial knowledge of Him. To others He appears as Chief Shepherd and Bridegroom. These hear His voice and are moved by His love, and follow on to know Him in deeper measures of intimacy and union. To others He appears as a Thief. He comes into their world uninvited and unannounced, He overtakes them unexpectedly and breaks up their life style and smashes their religious games. And unto others He appears as Fire, consuming their hay, wood, and stubble, eliminating by the spirit of burning all that is of self and not of God. The coming of the Lord is as many-faceted as the most dazzling crystal of earth or the most beautiful diamond known to man. In the Old Testament, the rabbis were often confused by the seeming contradictions in the descriptions of the coming of the Messiah. In some of the passages the Messiah was described as coming as a Suffering Servant to be wounded for transgressions and bruised for iniquities. In other passages He was coming as a Conqueror to rule and to defeat the enemies of the people of God. The people asked their scholars for an answer to this seeming contradiction. The rabbis would often go so far as to say that two Messiahs were coming. They were wrong; the same Messiah was coming twice. But more than that! Yea, a thousand times more! The same Messiah comes five, ten, thirty, ten thousand times, in as many and varied ways and manners as there are dealings and operations of God to be wrought in the lives of men and in the destiny of nations upon this earth. My earnest prayer to God is that the spirit of wisdom and revelation may somehow make forever plain to all who read these halting lines that we have seen too limited a vision of the truth, but bringing all the facets together, there is the fuller view where it readily appears that there are many-splendored dimensions to HIS COMING.

If the coming of the Lord is not a progressive revelation in many manifestations, then, pray tell me, WHICH of the many comings enumerated earlier IS THE SECOND COMING? When He says, "I will not leave you orphans: I WILL COME TO YOU," is THAT "the second coming"? or is it when He declares, "Behold, I COME as a thief?" Or when He says, "I WILL COME unto you as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth," is that manifestation His "second coming"? Or is it when He comes as lightning, or
as the sun of righteousness, or as the Bridegroom, or as King, or with His saints, or to His saints, or in His saints? Paul said that Jesus would come with a "shout," also with the "voice of the archangel," and with the "trump of God." Jesus said, "Behold, I come as a thief." Certainly thieves do not blow trumpets and shout! Nor did Jesus blow trumpets when He ascended from the Mount of Olives, yet the messengers said that He would come "in like manner." And it would seem that if He came as rain and as fire at the same time, the rain would put out the fire!

But these are not contradictions. They are word pictures to help our finite minds comprehend more clearly some of the great factors involved in the coming of Christ and what His coming means to the whole creation. When we put all these together and add to them all the other illustrations of the Bible pertaining to Christ's coming, we begin to understand that what we are to look for is not a human being coming down through the literal clouds, setting fire to the earth and toppling over the mountains, but mighty manifestations of the risen and glorified and ascended Lord of heaven and earth, leading to the transformation of mankind from selfishness and hate to compassion and love; from war and destruction to peace and reconstruction; from dead in trespasses and sins to alive in Christ; from the carnal mind to the precious mind that was in Christ Jesus; from sickness and death to health and life; from funeral processions to the quickening power of His resurrection!

And hence it is that so very few Christians have really scriptural thoughts about the coming of their Lord. They are looking into prophecy for the church's hope - they confound "the Sun of Righteousness" with "the Morning Star" - they mix up the coming of Christ "IN His saints," and His coming "WITH the saints" - they have not the foggiest notion what is the difference in time or manifestation between His coming as Rain or His coming as Fire; His coming as Saviour and His coming as Lord; His coming as Lightning or His coming with Clouds; His coming as Bridegroom or His coming as King. All this is a most serious mistake, against which I am compelled by the Spirit of God to warn my readers. Not very many know when or how the Lord comes in any of His manifestations therefore, they cannot know how to MEET HIM!

Almost all of Christendom teaches that the return of the Lord is one single, future event. They are generally agreed that He will come in a body of flesh, with wounds in His hands, feet, and side, and that He will be suspended in the sky in such a manner that every eye of all human beings living on this earth at that time will see Him and thus know of His coming. How much more reasonable and understandable is the glorious truth! Former misconceptions and crude theories concerning this great event should not be permitted to hinder us now from ascertaining the simplicity of the truth concerning it, as set forth in God's blessed Book and revealed unto His elect saints now by the Spirit. Whenever I long for the Lord to move by His Spirit and make Himself real by His presence, or manifest the greatness of His power in some place or circumstance, my heart cries out, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

There is a principle in the scriptures concerning the coming of the Lord. That is, we must spiritually discern and respond to His comings in our midst and in our individual lives. Jesus said, "Occupy till I come." In the midst of all our activity we are to ever look for His comings. We must be spiritually perceptive and awake at all times. Then, recognizing His presence and turning aside from all that would distract, we can move with Him in His visitation. As we respond to His comings, be it in blessing, refreshing, quickening, enlightenment, transformation, Lordship, fellowship and communion, judgment,
correction, stripping, purging or cleansing - we shall come to KNOW HIM in all His wonderful reality and be made like Him as His own in the earth. Oh, listen for the sound of His comings!
Chapter 2

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Both secular and sacred history agree that about two millenniums ago there was born in Bethlehem a babe, who was named Jesus; that He grew to manhood's estate; that He was a great teacher; that He was crucified on a Roman cross, and died; and that the church systems of Christendom profess to be based upon the teachings of this great Teacher, Jesus of Nazareth.

The Bible record reveals that Jesus of Nazareth, at the age of thirty years, was baptized in the river Jordan, at which time a voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of God; that He selected twelve disciples, who were His special pupils during the three and one-half years of ministry that followed; that He preached the Kingdom of God and performed mighty signs and wonders and miracles among the people; that His crucifixion had been foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament; that on the third day after His death He was resurrected from the dead; that forty days thereafter He ascended into heaven and ten days later the Holy Spirit was given to His faithful disciples, who were waiting at Jerusalem as directed by Him; and that these disciples confidently expected the return of Jesus Christ, and that later, in their epistles to the church, they spoke of His coming again. These facts are conceded by all who believe the Bible. Therefore, if the scriptures conclusively establish the fact of His coming again, then we should expect to find therein evidence as to the manner of His coming, the time of His coming, and the purpose of His coming.

Throughout the past several years the Holy Spirit has progressively been teaching me some wonderful and revolutionary things regarding the return of our Lord. It is not new to us to have the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, tear away many of our former cherished beliefs; this He has been doing since the move of His Spirit many years ago whereby he began to draw us out of the religious systems of man in order to reveal Himself and unfold this glorious One that we call the Lord Jesus Christ. As we were separated from the static systems of Mystery Babylon we began to be taught by the Spirit of Truth, the One sent by God to teach us all things, and to guide us into all truth. The realization soon broke in awesome solemnity upon our quickened minds that most of what we believed, had been taught, and cherished, was not the truth at all, but just the thoughts and reasonings of the natural mind, the interpretation of the scriptures through the instrumentality of the intellect of man, and not by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God.

The first prerequisite to being taught by the Spirit of Truth is a readiness to lay down any, and all, preconceived ideas of what the scriptures teach, with a holy disposition to accept what the Spirit teaches. It is an obvious fact that all Christians believe many doctrines simply because they have been handed down from generation to generation. Our forefathers, our church, and our brethren believed them for generations, and we believe them because they did. Much of what we believe, we believe because people for many
years and long centuries have believed thus, but not one precious child of God in a thousand ever takes the time or expends the energy or spiritual initiative to discover the origin of his beliefs, and whether they are truly scriptural. We just blindly follow on in the traditional path because father and mother and friends believe that way. But because our fathers, or the majority of Christians, have believed a thing is no guarantee that it pertains to the realm of truth! We made this startling discovery when the streams of light began to flow from the realms above and the blessed Spirit of Truth began to dig down deep beneath the surface of the scriptures, the letter of the Word, opening to our astonished understanding the deeper things of God. We soon found out, however, that when the Spirit begins to bring to light, and uncover the hidden mysteries of the Kingdom of God, that many immediately commence to fight against it. When one tears away time-honored tradition he must be prepared to be branded as a heretic; and he may be sure that his statements will be misrepresented, his teachings misstated, and he himself regarded as unspiritual and dangerous.

The things the Spirit reveals are always different from what men have previously believed, and how often they are staggered! The Truth is light, and the light reveals the great darkness in the carnal and childish concepts conceived by the natural mind by interpreting through the intellect the dead letter of the Word; and because the truth is so contrary to the ideas treasured and nourished for so long, many are incited to fight against it. Because they are not seeking truth, and not contending for truth, they set themselves to defend to the death their old established doctrines, never taking the time to search out whether they are right or wrong. Oh, how subtle, how deceitful and foolish the heart of man! "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). Only the Lord knows what is in the heart of man, and He says, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins." We can be fully convinced in our heart that we are standing for the truth, when the opposite is true. How we need to have our hearts circumcised and broken before God, and our eyes opened, and our ears unstopped, so we can see and hear what the Spirit has to say to the churches!

Most of what is taught in the earth contains some element of truth. Most Christian church doctrine has some truth in it, enough to make it acceptable to some people, but I do not hesitate to tell you that there is so much mixed with it that is not truth at all, and this is what has created all the divisions between the children of God. It isn't the truth that divides, it is all that is false that is mixed in with the truth that separates. Truth mixed with falsehood ceases to be truth. Since the coming of Christ is a major theme of the New Testament, and linked to man's complete redemption, why is it so variously taught and conceived? Who is responsible for distorting the truth, and what gain is made by doing so? Perhaps Paul furnishes an answer in this scripture: "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).

Let me reiterate here one of the salient points from our previous study on this subject. I am sure it surprises many of my readers to learn that the Bible nowhere speaks of the "second coming" of Christ. Interesting, isn't it - how many of the major and most commonly accepted doctrines of professing Christianity cannot be found in the Bible? Even without the vast and conclusive testimony of scripture, even without the illuminating effect of the Holy Spirit of Truth, we would be inclined to suspect the "orthodox" teachings of the churches on the so-called "second coming of Christ" simply because all of the preachers and teachers and professors of Mystery Babylon are so united in dogmatically proclaiming it! Some will shudder at the very thought of questioning so sacred and
orthodox a doctrine. Let them transfer their reverence from such empty shells of human supposition to the living, imperishable Word of God, and their feelings will revolt at that which they now revere. We have long enough covered up the truth with Babylonian babblings. Let us clear them aside so that we may look upon the face of God's holy Word.

The term - "the second coming of Christ" - is not scriptural and cannot be found anywhere in the Bible; yet it has influenced the thinking and teaching of most Christians to accept and believe concepts that simply are not true. We have been so confused in our thinking that everything in the scriptures pertaining to the coming of the Lord, His appearing, His manifestation have to fit into His coming as a man two thousand years ago, or to His so-called "second coming" when every eye shall see Him. This is wrong. Many texts speak of the coming of Christ, the coming of the Son of man, the coming of the Lord or similar phrases. The word "second" never occurs with a word that can be translated "coming". The "second coming" is not a biblical expression and first occurred among Christians as late as the middle of the second century after Christ. I cannot emphasize too strongly that the word "second" is NEVER used in Holy Writ with the word "coming". That is the simple and plain and incontrovertible truth, and this fact is elementary and basic to a correct understanding of the coming of the Lord.

A great deal of faulty reasoning is apparent among Christians when the subject of the coming of the Lord is under discussion. We have been led to think in terms of the first coming and the second coming, whereas the Bible speaks in terms of the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ. Our God does not talk about the "first coming" and the "second coming" - He talks about the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We dare not lose sight of the fact that our Lord has already had many comings, many appearances and shall continue to have many more. We have limited the comings of Jesus strictly to two because of our unscriptural terms "first coming" and "second coming," but the truth is that He came; He continued to come; He comes; He continues to come; He will come; and He will continue to come! There are numerous "comings" and "appearings" of the Lord in the New Testament. BUT THEY DO NOT ALL REFER TO THE SAME EVENT. The word "coming" is very often used in the scriptures of a visitation or manifestation of the Lord to judge or bless or accomplish some aspect of His plan and purpose among His people or in the earth. One would think, listening to the preachers rant and rave about "THE second coming of Christ," that every time the Lord says, "I will come," He is speaking of one, specific, particular, singular event sometime out in the dim and misty future. I would be remiss if I failed to tell you that this is a great error.

We have seen that on the day of Pentecost Christ came again as the Comforter. In the scriptures Christ is presented coming with clouds; coming as lightning; coming as a thief; coming with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God; coming as Bridegroom; coming as King; coming as the morning star; coming as the sun of righteousness; coming in resurrection power; coming as Judge; coming in flaming fire of judgment; coming as Saviour; coming as Christ; coming as Lord; coming as refiner's fire and fuller's soap; coming to His temple; coming on the Mount of Olives; coming in the air; coming on a white horse; coming as the Chief Shepherd; coming in His Kingdom; coming as seasons of refreshing; coming in glory; coming on His throne; coming with His angels; coming with His saints; coming to His saints; coming in His saints; etc.; etc.

It should be evident to every spiritual mind that Truth is greatly suffering when all the above "comings" of the Lord are crammed into just ONE "second coming" of Christ. Like
the sound of many waters the testimony of the Word of God resounds with abundant and stunning and inescapable evidence that the coming of the Christ is not a single event, but includes many different manifestations, past, present and future. His coming to us is a many-sided experience. The confusion on this subject reminds me of one of the six blind men of Hindustan, that many who read these lines had in their readers when they went to school. It went something like this:

There were six blind men of Hindustan, to learning much inclined,
Who went to see an elephant, though all of them were blind,
That each by observation might satisfy his mind.
The first approached the elephant, and happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side, at once began to bawl,
This mystery of an elephant is very like a wall.
The second, feeling of the tusk, cried, "Ho, what have we here,
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear,
This wonder of an elephant is very like a spear."
The third approached the elephant, and happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands, thus boldly up and, spake,
"I see," quoth he, "the elephant is very like a snake."
The fourth reached out an eager hand, and felt above the knee,
"What most this wondrous beast is like! is very plain" said he, "
'Tis clear enough the elephant is very like a tree."
The fifth who chanced to touch the ear, said, "Even the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most; deny the fact who can;
This marvel of an elephant is very like a fan."
The sixth no sooner had begun about the beast to grope,
Than seizing on the swinging tail that fell within his scope;
"I see," said he, "the elephant is very like a rope."
So these blind men of Hindustan disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion exceeding stiff and strong;
Though each was partly in the right, they all were in the wrong!

How like the doctrines of Christendom today! Each one seeing only part of the picture; having little or no understanding of the overall plan and purpose of God. Just seeing a fraction and not the total picture; and yet like these blind men of Hindustan, disputing loud and long, each in his own opinion exceeding stiff and strong. Each one thinking he is right, and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. You see, each man was closed-minded. And what made him closed-minded? Not that he held an untruth, but that he held a TRUTH! It was true that an elephant is like a rope. However, where the blind man thought that it was the whole truth it was really only a PARTIAL truth. It never occurred to him, nor to his fellows, that ALL of them might be telling the truth and that if they put their pieces of truth together they would come up with "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Only as they put each man's description with all the others could they possibly hope to know what the WHOLE ELEPHANT really looked like. And until they could learn to do that, they would ever be quarreling among themselves about what an elephant is really like, no one ever knowing what an elephant is really like, because each one was blinded by the IN-PART truth that he held.

As we come up through the various stages of spiritual growth, we get hold of a truth. And, like each of those blind men, we jump to the conclusion that what we hold to is THE
WHOLE TRUTH when, in reality, it is only a part. It never occurs to us that there might be another side that is equally valid, equally important, and equally essential to our understanding. We cling stubbornly to the elephant's tail, thinking it is the whole elephant, and then wonder why circumstances contradict our great and wonderful truth. Certainly, part of the elephant was like a spear, part of him like a rope, part of him like a tree trunk, but the total animal was something far more than any of these, and though each of these blind men was right about the little part that he understood, they were all entirely wrong about the whole!

The coming of the Lord is not the simplistic event that many have made it. This explains why so very few Christians have really scriptural thoughts about the coming of the Lord. They are looking into prophecy for the church's hope - they confound "the Sun of Righteousness" with "the Morning Star" - they mix up the coming of Christ "IN His saints," and His coming "WITH the saints" - they have not the faintest idea what is the difference in time or manifestation between His coming as Rain or His coming as Fire; His coming as Christ and His coming as Lord; His coming as Lightning or His coming with Clouds; His coming as Bridegroom or His coming as King. Not very many know when or how the Lord comes in any of His manifestations, therefore, they cannot know how to MEET HIM! Almost all of Christendom teaches that the return of the Lord is one single, future event. How much more reasonable and understandable is the glorious truth! Christ came, He comes, He continues to come, He will come and will continue to come. Nothing - absolutely nothing in the scriptures limits Christ's coming to one singular future event. The doctrine of the second coming of Christ as an event that has never occurred (in recent times) is as fictitious as Henry Kissinger being the antichrist, the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary, the infallibility of the Pope, or the pre-tribulation rapture! Former misconceptions and crude theories concerning this great event should not be permitted to hinder us from ascertaining the simplicity of the truth concerning it, as set forth in God's blessed Book and revealed unto His elect saints now by the Spirit. Whenever I long for the Lord to move by His Spirit and make Himself real by His presence, or manifest the greatness of His power in some place or circumstance, my heart cries out, "Come, Lord Jesus!" It is a marvel of church history that practically every great move of the Spirit of God has been accompanied by the proclamation of the soon coming of the Lord. In times of spiritual revival there is always a childlike readiness to look and long for Christ. It has been a remarkable feature of the vast majority of spiritual visitations that either by preaching, prophetic utterance, tongues and interpretation, visions, dreams, or other spiritual phenomena the Lord has declared in the midst of His people, "I am coming soon!" It was noted by many, in the early centuries of the church, and during the revivals of the past few centuries, that it seemed to be a necessary companion to the quickening which God was then effecting, that they looked for the coming of the Lord, that they were filled with the expectation of His presence, that it was not merely a mighty blessing that had reached their souls - as indeed it was; but along with this, and above this, there was the fixing of the heart on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. They yearned to behold Him and know Him in deeper measures.

During a mighty move of the Spirit in Scotland in the early 1800's the following testimony was recorded: "On Saturday Mr. C came over, and my mouth was again opened (to speak in tongues). He said, 'It is written, Pray that ye may interpret;' he accordingly prayed. I was then made to speak in short sentences which George interpreted one by one. The first word of interpretation was, 'Behold He cometh - Jesus cometh.'" In a letter dated April 19, 1830, R. B. Lusk of Greenock writes: "I afterwards saw Miss M. and Mrs. J. They both appeared to be in a state of strong excitement. I have never seen anything
at all like Mrs. J's appearance - I cannot describe it. But were it not that her words were words of truth, and that I had previously heard what I have now mentioned, I would have supposed her mad. The words she spoke were words of great power, and she seemed in an agony for utterance. I have omitted to mention that the burden of all they say is - that the Lord is near, near at hand." A portion of a letter written on May 18, 1830, is as follows: "Last Saturday night after James had spoken in tongues for a while, he prayed for interpretation, and ... it is very striking that almost all that has been interpreted has been on the coming of Christ."

A great many who read these lines can bear living witness to the fact that in the great Pentecostal outpouring at the turn of this century, the overriding message spoken by divine utterance was just this: "Jesus is coming soon!" The question follows, In all these moves of the Spirit of God through the centuries, where the soon-coming of Jesus Christ was proclaimed, DID HE COME? Did those who prophesied lie, or did "soon" mean two thousand years later, eighteen hundred years later, two hundred years afterwards, or a century thence? The Holy Spirit does not lie, neither does He create illusions, nor does He tantalize us with something which we have no hope of seeing within our lifetime. Most assuredly HE CAME! Ah - He came not in the way people expected; He came not in the manner that the saints were looking for Him; but His word was certain, and I can assure you that every time He said He was coming SOON -- HE C-A-M-E!

All through the 1800's, in revival after revival, throughout various parts of the earth, the Spirit of God thundered out the message, "Jesus is coming soon!" Then Jesus came. In Pentecostal power, at the turn of the century, He came! But the sad fact is that the complacent and lukewarm Christians and ministers in the historic churches of that day missed His coming altogether. They were unprepared for such a coming. They were no more aware that the Christ was present among His people in a new and fresh manifestation of His person, than the Jews were aware two millenniums ago that their prophesied and long awaited Messiah walked among them. It happened as the scripture declares of His coming of old: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (Jn. 1:10,11). In the days of the Pentecostal move some eighty-five years ago Christ came in mighty power, but the nominal Christians remained untouched and unmoved by His presence. In fact, like the Jews, they rejected Him. He came in manifest glory, but the church world never beheld His glory. He came with a mighty voice, but none of the religionists had ears to hear. He came and they knew Him not.

Again the Spirit sounded forth the message: "Get ready - Jesus is coming soon!" And all the Pentecostals thought they knew what that meant. Midway through the twentieth century, again there was to be a mighty cry unto God for a fresh and deeper manifestation of His glory. Bands of saints across the land and around the world prayed and interceded for more of God. When God responded this time the glory erupted in a Bible School in Canada and within a matter of months swept across America and around the world. God did a new thing that for a time was destined to shake the church all over America. Christ came as The Prophet in the mouths of His holy prophets, and the prophetic word of the Lord flowed like great Niagara's of Living Water. Christ came as the Song of the Lord in the mouths of vast multitudes as the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and the music of celestial choirs on earth went sweeping up the sky steeps. He came in healing, delivering, and miracle working power and great beyond the telling were the signs and wonders wrought by His name. But the leaders in the old established Pentecostal denominational churches had not prepared their hearts for this
coming of the Lord. They perceived not that it was HE. They were too busy building their own petty kingdoms and gazing heavenward, expecting to be snatched away from the earth by rapture. They knew not the hour of their visitation, and all who joyfully drank at the ever flowing fountain of life were rejected and promptly excommunicated from their ranks, pronounced fanatics and branded as heretics. He came to His own, and His own received Him not!

A man was traveling, and issued from a range of hills on to an extensive plain. He crossed a stream that ran off to his right over a long stretch of sand; after an hour or so a thread of water gushed toward him from the right, falling over a cascade of white marble to his left; soon another stream was approaching him from behind, flowing over gravel through pure red soil, and going off into the woods nearby. With the appearance of water again after an hour's riding, the question arose: How many rivers had he crossed one or several? The contours of the region were not decisive against several; the traveler was a stranger in the neighborhood; to find out from an inhabitant of the country was difficult; but he had adopted a method that gave him a definite and accurate conclusion: he had observed that the water at every crossing, in every direction, and over every succeeding bed of sand, of rock, of gravel, of marble, carried always, not only a particular substance of solution, but also a peculiar kind of grass floating on the surface; he drew the conclusion, with such certainty as the Method of Agreement in Inductive Logic could afford him, that the several streams were one: one stream in extremely varied surroundings. He had crossed the same stream several times!

Now in the history of God's dealings there is a stream of the manifestation, appearing, revelation, and unveiling of Himself to men that meets us everywhere - from the heaven blest Garden of God in Eden to the closing verses of the book of Revelation wherein John the beloved cries out with the anguish of love, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" "They have seen Thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary" (Ps. 68:24). Now, the idea of "goings" has to do with the onward marching of God as King - it touches the coming of the King, and His kingly rule among the children of men. It passes through the most varied country as the King appears to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Moses, to the children of Israel, to Samuel, to David, to Solomon, to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, to the Jews, to the Church, to Paul, to vast numbers of saints, the apprehended ones in every age. This is what history is all about, the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ from age to age, from dealing to dealing, from one stage of His purpose to another, the marching forward of God and the unveiling of His glory in our individual lives, in the corporate body, and in the affairs of men and nations. Christ has come and come and come; He came in the Old Testament, He came in Bethlehem, He came in the resurrection, He came on the day of Pentecost, He came on the Damascus road, He has come to His people again and again in seasons of refreshing, in quickening, in judgment, and all these comings will be finally consummated when at last the Christ has conquered every enemy, filled all things with Himself, and God becomes All-in-all. The many comings will then be seen to be but the ONE COMING of the Lord in extremely varied circumstances, stages, and unfoldments.

MARANATHA

It has been asserted that other than the epistle to the Galatians, Paul used a secretary or scribe to write all his letters. Paul dictated a long letter to the saints in Corinth and at last comes to the end. He takes the manuscript away from Sosthenes or Achaicus (whoever it was that was writing) and with his own hand writes the salutation. Then he adds this
startling statement: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor. 16:22). These are strange words, indeed, but without doubt Paul knew by the Spirit that all of the problems that existed in the Corinthian church, which were manifold, would not be solved by anything other than a sincere and intimate and intense love of Jesus Christ in the hearts of the believers.

The word ANATHEMA means devoted to the wrath of God; it means to be lifted up to the wrath of God; it means to be accursed. It is the word found so often in the Old Testament of the accursed thing - that which had been devoted to the curse of God. If anyone love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be devoted to the wrath of God; offered up unto the withering curse of the Almighty, to be duly processed by His judgments. The result of a lack of love for Christ is the ANATHEMA, the curse of God. It begins right here in this life with the withering of the soul, with the withering of its capacity to love those things which are good and true and beautiful and noble.

Paul concludes with a second strange word: MARANATHA! In the King James version that is part of the same sentence. It makes little sense that way, however. Linguistic scholars have concluded that it is properly a separate sentence; that Paul stopped after the word ANATHEMA (accursed), and lifted his pen only to place it down again to write a new sentence composed of two words in the Aramaic language, that form of Hebrew which was the lingua franca of Palestine at that time: Maran-atha. The words mean "the Lord is at hand." The Jews of that time frequently had upon their lips the word "mara" which means "Lord." It was a plea, a prayer, "Lord, come." They looked for the Messiah. But those who rejected the Messiah that came continued to cry out, "Maran! Maran!" looking for the Lord to come, having rejected Him who had already come. And so the Christians took upon their lips the words "maranatha." It can have several shades of meaning. It can mean "the Lord hath come."

We cannot love one who is simply a myth or a legend and so we are called to love One that lived a life of flesh and blood, One who suffered on our behalf, One who endured the agony of the cross for us, One who rose from the dead, One who ascended into heaven, One who came again on the day of Pentecost in mighty Spirit power, One who now dwells in our hearts by faith, the One who has already come. We are not called to love merely a promise, but a present Christ who has lived and died and rose again for us. Furthermore, it means that the Lord is at hand; even now He is with us, always accessible to us. He is present. We cannot love simply a memory, but a living Christ. He is here to work mightily within us in the present. "THE LORD IS AT HAND. MARANATHA." Finally, it calls us to a remembrance that Christ will come again, and even that is at hand. The Lord is on His way. His coming is imminent. He has come and continues to come. He comes and He shall come and shall continue to come. He will come in as many and varied ways and manners as there are needs in your life and mine, dear one, and in the whole world of men and movements and nations. MARANATHA! JESUS IS COMING! THE LORD IS AT HAND!

BEHOLD! HE COMES

I would draw your attention to the book of Revelation, the unveiling of Jesus Christ. This marvelous book contains deep and rich teaching for the elect saints concerning the coming of Christ; symbolic, mysterious, wonderful, but always to be approached reverently, humbly, with head bowed low and shoes removed from off our feet, as people standing on holy ground. Nineteen hundred years ago the beloved disciple on the lonely
isle of Patmos saw unfolding before him the enthralling drama of the coming of his Lord. As the awesome sight began to unfold he cried out in astonished wonder and surprised joy, "Behold! He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). The coming of the Lord as revealed in the book of Revelation is complex and progressive, extending through a variety of diverse scenes, stages, events, and manifestations, until He has come in such measure of fullness that we know Him finally in that dimension where HE IS the glorious fulfillment of all that our heart has yearned for, and desired so earnestly. All the lacks swallowed up into completeness, all the voids filled with His fullness, and we know the bliss of HIMSELF as our All-in-all.

BEHOLD! This is the word with which John begins his description of what he saw. Someone has said that the word "behold" in the scriptures is the "Stop, Look, and Listen" sign of the Bible. It always calls for special attention and directs our focus to a truth of unusual importance. The word comes from the Greek IDOU, a demonstrative participle. There are four things we should understand about this word. First, it bids the reader or hearer to give attention to what is being said, as if we were to say, "Now listen!" Second, it is used when an event is specified which seems impossible, yet occurs. Third, it is an exclamation of one pointing out something and calling attention to it. Fourth, it means to observe what is about to be said and consider it thoroughly.

Now let us look at the two words that follow: HE COMETH. "Behold! He cometh." This phrase is from the Greek word ERCHOMAI. It is the third person singular, present indicative. Any reader who knows the conjugation of verbs knows what that means. First, it means HE COMES as a present tense reality. The verb is present indicative. He comes. He is in the act of coming. Behold! He is (now) coming! In other words, He has been coming, He is still in the act of coming, and He continues to come. This is extremely important. More than once the coming of the Lord is spoken of in this tense throughout the book of Revelation. It's not a future thing, not something that shall happen somewhere down the course of history, but it is something that IS. Oh! that God with flames of His holy fire would burn this truth indelibly upon the hearts of all who read these lines.

The church world is either looking back to an historical Christ, or forward to a futuristic coming of Christ, and they miss this word ERCHOMAI which means "Behold, H-E C-O-M-E-S, He is coming, He continues to come, He will continue to come." It is something that can happen right now. It means that He comes from one place to another. He comes out of the realm of spirit to be manifested in flesh, expressed and revealed in a visible, tangible way to the material creation. ERCHOMAI means to come, to make one's appearance come before the public. It means that He comes and appears before the view of the people round about. And this coming, has already happened, it is now happening, and it shall continue to happen. This is the revelation that so captivated the apostle John that he could only stand and in amazement exclaim, "Behold! He comes!"

The coming of the Son of God did not begin with the lowly birth at Bethlehem; it began when time began; it is still going on. The Christ was in the world ages before Jesus was laid in the manger beneath the lowly cattle-shed; He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. And the Christ never went away to stay; He always leaves in one form in order to come in another. He is in the world today, known and loved and trusted by multitudes of those who through Him have received the spirit of adoption as sons. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Christ is born anew every morning, and as many as receive Him to
them gives He power to become the sons of God. "The dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk. 1:78-79).

YAHWEH - THE COMING ONE

That glorious Name by which God is known in the Old Testament, "Yahweh," is a name which indicates a Coming God. This is neither the time nor place to enter into a lengthy technical and linguistic study, but the word Yahweh, the greatest rabbis will tell you, means the Coming One. For many years I have read various interpretations of the name Yahweh. Some say it signifies, "I am." Others say, "The Coming One." Other scholarship seems to consider "The Eternal" as the most satisfactory. Another definition has been given as "The Self-existent One." Actually there is merit in all of these interpretations. God is eternal just BECAUSE He is Self-existent and therefore not dependent on any outside help or support. He is the One who in Himself embodies essential life, permanent existence, derived from no source outside Himself, and absolutely dependent upon no other person, thing, or circumstance for its continuance. And because He is Self-existent and eternal He is the One who always has been, who now is, and who always will be. Therefore, He is the One who is always coming, always at hand.

How graphically this grand truth is expressed in the introduction to the book of Revelation with these words, "Him Who is, and Who was, and Who is coming" (Rev. 1:4). And again, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who WAS, and Who NOW BEING, and Who is the COMING ONE" (Rev. 4:8). The trilogy of holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, refers to the threefold time, past, present and future. The holy One Who was from eternity, the holy One NOW BEING, and the ever COMING ONE. The Lord God Almighty is not someone to come sometime in the distant future. He is the One Who WAS coming, Who IS coming, and Who shall CONTINUE to come, manifesting Himself to His people in blessing and judgment and redemption until every eye has beheld Him and every heart has acknowledged Him, Lord of all.

In the Hebrew scriptures salvation is of Yahweh. No other name is given which His own people could invoke for help. Even when the Messiah came in flesh in order to be the Saviour there was no real change, because in Hebrew HE IS YAHWEH-SAVIOUR, which is the meaning of the name Jesus. Peter could assure the Jews that "there is salvation in no other: for there is NONE OTHER NAME under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Does this deny that there is salvation in YAHWEH? Quite the opposite! It insists that Jesus IS the Yahweh in Whom salvation is. So that, as a matter of fact, the name Yahweh occurs every time that we find the personal name of our Lord. Salvation is united with the Name in a compound. It is no longer Yahweh, but Yahweh-Saviour Jesus.

How few realize the fullness which is in our Lord's redemptive name! Suppose we spread it out before us and unfold its meaning. Then "Jesus" is the SAVIOUR WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS COMING. How wonderfully this fits into His history! Most of those who saw Him in the flesh saw only the One who is. Of His past glory with the Father they knew nothing. Of His future exaltation they did not dream. They saw little more than His present humiliation. Anyone who really knew His Name realized what He had been, and what He would be, as well as what He was. He is a Saviour who plans and performs and perfects, in the past, in the present, and in the future. Ah, sons of God, the one who has come to you and has begun a good work in you is the same One who will come and
come in your today and in all of your tomorrows to perfect that good work, bringing it to
completion, and present you faultless in the image of God. It is an on-going process, an
ever-unfolding salvation.

Yahweh is the ever-coming One. The Coming One is my Lord and my God. Various
Yahweh combinations or compound names are used in the scriptures, each indicating
how He comes to us:

- YAHWEH-TSIDKENU, the Coming One, thy Righteousness.
- YAHWEH-JIREH, the Coming One, thy Provider.
- YAHWEH-ROPHI, the Coming One, thy Healer.
- YAHWEH-NISSI, the Coming One, thy Banner.
- YAHWEH-MEKADDISHKEN, the Coming One, thy Sanctifier.
- YAHWEH-SHALOM, the Coming One, thy Peace.
- YAHWEH-SABAOTH, the Coming One, thy Warrior.
- YAHWEH-SHAMMAH, the Coming One, Present with thee.
- YAHWEH-ELYON, the Coming One, Most High.
- YAHWEH-RA-AH, the Coming One, thy Shepherd.

Vast multitudes of Christians leave heard of these wonderful covenant names of God and
thrill to the things they hear, but their hearts cannot comprehend nor understand the vital
truth and reality of the message. They "listen to the music, but never hear the song." How
often through the years I have encountered this lack of comprehension among the Lord's
people! They have eyes but they do not see. They examine the outer shell, but never
taste the kernel within. They say they understand, but their spirit has not grasped the
truth. They will talk long and loud about "Christ IN YOU the hope of glory," "the Kingdom
of God is WITHIN you," "Ye are the BODY of Christ," and then turn around and with the
next breath say that the "coming" of the Lord is still a distant, singular, future event. When
men profess that they have seen this truth of the ever-coming Christ and confess that the
Christ is their Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Baptizer, Provider, etc., and then wistfully add,
"and my soon-coming King," I know they have not seen it.

They have seen nothing. Do they not make Him their COMING King because they are
not sure whether they want this Man to rule over them? Most folk do not mind Him ruling
over Castro and the devil and the millennium, but they feel they are free moral agents
and have little desire to own Him as King of their present domain. That is why so many
have kept Him COMING. The Lord wants to be King NOW. He wants to come to you
today and invade the foundations of your heart and life and reign gloriously within the
temple of your being. Ah, my brother, my sister, Christ is coming to me constantly. I feel
Him near. I sense His presence and behold His glory from realm to realm. He manifests
Himself to my consciousness in close and glad communion. He transforms my mind and
heart and life and flows from my innermost being so that deep calls unto deep. I am not
saying that He is not yet to come, even to me. Certainly He has not come to me, or to
you, in all the fullness of Himself! But His coming in God's great tomorrow is not a single,
once for all, event - it will be but the consummation of that glory in which He is appearing
to us, in us, and through us in our today.

So many people wonder, Will Jesus come in my lifetime? Will I live to see the return of
the Lord? Well, start living and allow Jesus to come again in your lifetime! How many
lifetimes do you have? You have only this one lifetime - let Jesus come in your lifetime!
As someone has said, Let Jesus come in your lifetime and begin to have the TIME OF
YOUR LIFE! Then you can cease gazing up into the skies wondering when Jesus is going to come, and you can step into the NOW of God and begin your progression back into God where He is all-in-all in your life. NOW is always the best time to live. TODAY is always the best time to walk with God. THE PRESENT is always the best time to see and know the Lord. I have this peculiar trait of enjoying life NOW. You can dream of tomorrow and you can look back into the past, but all you have or will ever have is RIGHT NOW. It is always NOW. God is NOW. Get into TODAY, into God's NOW and begin living - JESUS HAS COME!

My heart earnestly cries that the day may speedily come when all of God's elect will know assuredly and understand thoroughly that Christ is always coming again, and each new quickening of the eternal Word, and each fresh inworking of His grace brings Christ throbbing upon earth. Christ always comes to hearts that are opened to receive Him. A soldier of World War I told how on the battlefield and in the trenches some saw a white Christ coming to them in their hour of need and they were strengthened by that vision. In our hour of need, if we trust in Him, the Presence is always near. Lift up your heads to the hills, the high places of God in the Spirit. Can you see the Christ there? Isn't it your weakness and carnal-mindedness if you cannot see the Blessed One?

Christ also comes in judgment against our carnal and traitor lives. What a mess we make of the testimony of our Holy Lord, even if we finally never succeed with our carelessness! Christ comes as the Convicting Spirit that calls the soul on the block of judgment and asks why the failure! Christ does come every day to judge, to bless, to transform. Have you not felt that Presence? Been aware of it? Experienced it? "No!" Then, God pity your soul. Some day, you, too, in your far country will come to yourself. Then you will see the Christ and find He was dogging your footstep as you went down and tried to escape Him. Christ is the "Hound of Heaven," and, though we flee Him down the nights and down the arches of the years and through the procession of the ages, He never gives up. Our fears cannot keep us moving fast enough to escape Him and our speed can never outdistance His movement of love. He will pursue us to the lowest hell and there demand our heart's surrender.

God has purposed to reveal every aspect of His purpose through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. So we are living this very day in a progression. God is marching on! He wants to reveal Himself and unfold this glorious One that we call the Lord Jesus Christ. He is standing at the door knocking. Open the door and invite Him and He will come in to you and will sup with you on a plane where you have never before known Him. God is preparing a people at this very time who are waiting for a further revelation of God. These apprehended ones are not saying, "Oh, if I could just tell you about those good old days when God moved in mighty power ... if only we could have continued to move in those days of glory." This people God is preparing today is not lamenting or trying to recapture or perpetuate the glory of the past. It is a true and wonderful fact that for every day there is fresh manna, there is that fresh unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not a time for God's sons to try to recapture the past, or try to warm over the glories of yesterday. There is something brand new for you and me today in the economy of God! The elect of God are now in a time of patient waiting as they are being prepared for the hour when the younger sons of God shall come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the firstborn Son. This is not a time for those who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to get excited about doing exploits for God in the waning anointing of yesterday or by the threadbare methods of the past. The glory that fills our expectant souls today is born of
the knowledge that the hour of His manifestation is at hand - the hour when the Christ shall come in fullness to be revealed IN HIS SAINTS, and they shall reign over the earth.

I am prophesying a new and fresh revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The night is falling on the present order. Already we are seeing evidence of the dawning of a new day breaking forth upon us and many thousands of the Lord's elect are even now arising to behold the first rays of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn. There is a mighty cry in our hearts for the Lord to move in a fresh and altogether new way in our lives and in the earth. Many things are happening in the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms today, but I do not hesitate to tell you that all of these things are but stale "leftovers" from previous visitations. We are due for a fresh move and a new work of God in the earth today! So the night is coming, bringing an end to particular forms of the movings and operations of the Spirit of God. Though all the manifestations of the past have been precious and needful, yet our God in this hour is moving on. A new manifestation and revelation of the Christ is coming in the midst of us, and I hear and see the signs that He is beginning to come. We are living in the early dawn of another APPEARING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. This appearing will be through the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God. This truth is burning within my bones, pulsating within my bosom. I am being quickened by these things. My one desire is to be available to be a part of this appearing of the Lord that is preparing the sons of God for the wind-up of this age and the inauguration of a far greater age of glory.

Every time there is a change in the working of God we are thrown into a crisis situation. There is something about us that is never quite prepared for change. There is always that shock of seeing a cherished order vanish away, while wondering what the next order will be. But this is how it is. The Lord God reveals His glory and it accomplishes a purpose. Then the end of that day comes. The night steals in upon that era. God is ready for a new order, a new day, another phase of His workings. Again, even as I pen these lines, there is a fresh working of God in the earth. Again there is a "going forth" of Jesus Christ, released in another form through a many-membered body of sons of God. God moves on and a new glory is ready to be revealed. It will not be revealed upon those unspiritual souls who sit by saying, "My God delayeth His coming; He has not come and is not now coming; He will come bye and bye and take us up to heaven." Ah, those who for two thousand years have kept Him coming in a singular event away out there in the future some where fulfill exactly the words of Jesus; these are the "evil servant" who says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming!"

I must speak very plainly, my friends. This next move of God, the manifestation of the sons of God, will not come through those who are waiting for a rapture to whisk them away to the skies. It will come through a people who are crying out from the depths of their spirits, "Oh God, visit us afresh. Do a new thing! We need YOU! Creation groans for deliverance! Come! Lord Jesus, and meet us on a higher order, in a higher dimension. Come to your temple in fullness. Come! with the power necessary to purge and cleanse us and transform us into your image. Come! that we might behold your glory and be changed from glory to glory. Come! that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, that we may see Thee today in present revelation. The whole earth is waiting with bated breath for the glory of the Lord to be manifested. Come! and cause righteousness and praise and deliverance to spring forth before all the nations. Even so, Come! Lord Jesus!"
It is the beautiful time of waiting and watching for His appearing. It is the time to listen for the glad heralds of the morning.

"It may be morn, it may be night or noon; We know HE'S COMING SOON!"
Chapter 3

The Coming of Christ to Men

When the end of the second World War, first in Europe and then also in Asia, was announced, wives and brides, and also fathers and mothers rejoiced because it opened up for them the prospect of a rather speedy return of loved ones from whom they had been separated for a considerable period of time. They carefully scanned the newspapers for whatever indications these might contain of the order in which the land, sea, and air forces would be demobilized. And when they heard of the point system, they began to figure out how long they would yet have to wait for the return of their husbands, sweethearts, or sons. Naturally, they were greatly interested in the time of their release and of their home-coming. Every indication of the fact that the time would not be long caused their spirits to rise and filled their hearts with gladness. Sometimes they grew rather impatient with whatever delayed the glad return and the joyous reunion. In that respect they resembled those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who rejoice in the thought of His return and eagerly look forward to the time of His glorious appearing. They are certain that the day of His return will fill the cup of joy to overflowing.

It need hardly be said that in the teachings of Jesus and the early apostles the thought of some future coming of His looms rather large. On a careful consideration of their words, however, it soon becomes apparent that they do not always speak of His coming in the same sense. The study of the teachings of the New Testament on this point calls for careful and prayerful and reverent discrimination. The supposition by the teachers and believers in the church systems that every time the scriptures speak of Christ's "coming" they have one particular and singular future event in mind can only lead to confusion and error. It should be self-evident that Christ's coming as Bridegroom (Mat. 25:1-10) cannot be to the same people, at the same time, in the same manner, nor for the same purpose as His coming as a Refiner's Fire (Mal. 3:1-3). He comes as Bridegroom to His prepared, adorned, and expectant bride in a deeply spiritual relationship of intimate love and vital union, whereas He comes to those apprehended to be His Royal Priesthood in a manifestation of severity - purging and purifying. Both are said to be His COMING. Christ's coming again as the Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:16-23) and His coming in Flaming Fire of Vengeance (II Thes. 1:7-8) are obviously not the same coming; not to the same people, not at the same time, not in the same manner, nor for the same purpose. He came as the blessed Spirit of Truth on the day of Pentecost and has continued to come in that precious way to illuminate mind and heart of every man and woman who seeks Him in sincerity and truth; but He has come and shall yet come in Flaming Fire to deal out retribution - chastisement and vengeance - upon those who do not know or perceive or become acquainted with God and upon those who ignore and refuse to obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Both of these manifestations are described in scripture as the COMING of the Lord. It is useless to try to fit them both into one singular event destined to transpire within a few moments of time at the conclusion of this age. The Word of God is clear in its teaching that the coming of the Lord is a many-faceted experience, including many manifestations. Truly He came; He continued to come; He comes; He continues to come; He shall come; and He shall continue to come!
As in the rebuilding of the wall, in Nehemiah's time, it was first necessary to remove "heaps" of "rubbish," just so in these days, in order to rightly understand the truth concerning our Lord's return, it is necessary to remove "heaps" of "rubbish" - rubbish of tradition, prejudice, misinformation and misinterpretation. The church world has become so thoroughly indoctrinated with the simplistic, childish and crude imaginations of the natural mind that it is practically impossible to get people to consider the Lord's coming as it really is in the scriptures. They are warned to regard with suspicion and reject all teaching on the subject any different from that which they have been taught. In fact, to think of the venerable doctrine of the church on this subject as being FALSE, strikes them as being blasphemous. There is only one sure path in this important hour, there is only one way to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Even now, as in the long ago, our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, standeth, saying, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth" (Jn. 16:12-13).

We often miss the truth because too many of us have been relying on our intellect to interpret to us the scriptures, instead of looking to the Teacher sent from God, to do His work, and perform His ministry. Even Spirit-filled Christians depend mostly on commentaries and books by the hundreds, written by men, and often men void of the Holy Spirit, as their source of information and understanding of the scriptures, and the Holy Spirit is relegated to a back room in our minds, and rarely consulted about anything the scriptures have to say. We need to reinstate Him to His proper position and allow Him to fulfill the ministry He came to do. Now don't think I am against books, I am not. I use books. If I were opposed to writings I would not be sending out this article. Many people have been helped by what is written, but far too many saints think that through Bible study, and by searching the scriptures alone, they can come to an understanding of the things of God, and acquire a knowledge of the truth. But if we are really studying the Bible, in the light of revelation, this is what we will find, for this is what the Bible teaches: that apart from the revelation of the Holy Spirit, there is no way that we can search out, nor understand, the things of God, and His ways. Hear what the scripture itself says: "O the depths of riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how UNSEARCHABLE are His judgments and His ways PAST FINDING OUT" (Rom. 11:33). How can we ever search out the unsearchable, or find that which is past finding out? Impossible by any human means or methods, but not impossible with God, for with Him nothing is impossible. There is a way, His way, and that is by the working of the Spirit of Truth.

Down through the pages of the Bible and the ages of time God revealed Himself to various men and women in their times. The principles were always the same, but the manifestation of His appearing was different in each case. He appeared to Moses as a burning bush; to Israel as a cloud and pillar of fire; to Gideon as the Angel of the Lord; to Isaiah as the glorious One high and exalted upon a throne; to Ezekiel as a wheel in the middle of a wheel; to His disciples as a mortal Man, the Lamb of God; to Mary as the gardener; to Saul of Tarsus as a blinding Light brighter than the noonday sun; to John the Revelator as One standing in the midst of the candlesticks with hair white like wool, feet like brass burning in a furnace, and a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth.

As God revealed Himself in different ways in the Old Testament times, so in the New Testament times He is still revealing Himself in higher heights and deeper depths through the glorified Christ Jesus. As Luke points out in Acts, chapter one, Jesus BEGAN to minister when He walked in a body of flesh on the earth, until He ascended back to the
Father. Then as you read on in the book of Acts, you find that He BEGAN to minister through now, not just a single body of flesh, but through a corporate body of believers as the Body of Christ came to birth on the earth. As you read this message, my earnest prayer to God is that He might BEGIN to move and work and manifest and appear in YOUR LIFE in a new and fresh unveiling of HIMSELF! A new manifestation and revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ is coming in the midst of His apprehended ones, and I see signs all about that He is beginning to come - again! Truly we are living in the dawn of another and greater and more glorious appearing of our Lord. Praise HIS wonderful name!

MISSING HIS COMING

While there is a widespread belief in the nearness of the coming of Christ, it is a fact that so many false teachings have been connected with this great truth that it is to be feared, when the event itself takes place, precious few who profess to believe in His coming will be prepared to receive Him because of the false views they hold regarding the manner and purpose of His coming. I do not pretend to understand the exact sequence of all things which are soon to come upon the earth, neither do I believe that any man or woman on earth is fully informed of the events that shall mark the end of this present age and the glory of the age to come. But of this we may be sure: the minds of Christians have become so blinded by grimy old tradition they hold as doctrines that they are almost completely immune to truth. They are like the Jews of old who were so set and sure that the Messiah would come and restore the kingdom to Israel that they missed Him when He came and knew Him not. In like manner today millions of Christians are blind to the truth because of their traditions, for while they sit idly by waiting for a rapture which will deliver them from the tribulation and usher them into the glory of God, they will one day awaken to discover to their everlasting consternation that Jesus HAS COME and they missed Him and knew Him not.

At the time Jesus was born on earth, the Jews had fallen into such slumber and inertia, although outwardly they were religious and self-satisfied, that they did not know the Word of God when He was made flesh and came and dwelt among them. When their Messiah came, for whom they had been looking for centuries, they neither knew Him nor received Him. Because He was born in a stable, and His body, the tent in which He tabernacled when upon earth, was poor and without comeliness; because He did not come in pomp and worldly power and glory, the Jews knew Him not.

At that time the Jewish people were expecting the Messiah. They were students of the prophecies, and were acquainted with those predictions which indicated the time of the Messiah's coming. They knew that the 483 years of the Messianic prophecy of Daniel (Dan. 9:20-27) which were to elapse between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the Messianic Prince, were expired. The time was fulfilled, and hence they were looking for the Messiah to appear, and eagerly expecting His appearance. But while they were right regarding the time, they misunderstood the character and work of the Messiah. They were looking for a deliverer, not from sin and self, but from political bondage. They wanted a military genius who would save them from the tyranny of the Roman yoke, and had no interest in a Saviour who would save them from sin and from themselves.

In the words of the notable English mystic, William Law, writing about the year 1750, "Consider how it is that the carnal Jew, the deep-read scribe, the learned rabbi, the religious Pharisee not only did not receive but crucified their Saviour. It was because they
willed and desired no such Saviour as He was, no such inward salvation as He offered them. They desired no change in their nature, no inward destruction of their own natural tempers, no deliverance from the love of themselves and the enjoyments of their passions. They liked their state, the gratifications of their old man, their long robes, their broad phylacteries and greetings in the markets. They wanted not to have their pride and self-love dethroned, their covetousness and sensuality to be subdued by a new nature from heaven derived into them. Their only desire was the success of Judaism, to have an outward Saviour, a temporal Prince that should establish their law and outward ceremonies over all the earth. And therefore they crucified their dear Redeemer and would have none of His salvation because it all consisted in a change of their nature, in a new birth from above, and a Kingdom of Heaven to be opened within them by the Spirit of God."

They rejected the humble Nazarene though they saw His mighty works and heard His wonderful words of life. They were looking for the glorious Messiah to come, put down the Romans, and deliver them from the Gentiles. They expected a king who, taking the throne of David would establish a temporal government more powerful than any on earth, and that all the kings of the Gentiles should nourish and bow down to Israel.

They all were looking for a King
To slay their foes and lift them high
Thou canst, a little baby thing
That made a woman cry.

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn. 1:4,9,10). A great light shined in the darkness, the greatest light that has ever been upon the face of the earth and yet, to this day, they are dwelling and walking in darkness. There was light all around - the light of God's Christ. The very glory of the Father was revealed to them as the scripture said it would be. All God ever could be or ever shall be was manifested in Jesus Christ. No greater light could have shown unto them than that light, because the Light of lights was there to see. Most of them did not recognize Him, neither did they know that the Lord of glory was in the midst of them, their very God.

Because Christ was not in person, purpose and work what the Jews thought He should be; because He was not the conquering Lion of Judah, but instead He came as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world; therefore they are still waiting for One to come who will fulfill their earthly-minded desires and carnal concepts and worldly ambitions. How strange it is that one generation will not learn from the mistakes of their predecessors! Oh, Christian, look not only at the old Jew, but see thyself in this glass, for practically the whole body of evangelical churches today is looking forward with that same intense watching for a rapture or a kingdom that will deliver them from the world's bondage and establish them on temporal thrones of political power and authority in the earth. True, there shall come a day when the sons of God shall be manifested, when God's King-Priest company shall arise in power and authority, when the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, when ALL nations and kindreds shall serve Him, when ALL THINGS in heaven and in earth shall be subdued unto Him; but, precious friend of mine, this marvelous work shall be wrought, not by worldly political or military might - but by dynamic SPIRITUAL POWER!
If you entertain the crude notion that reigning with Christ means sitting behind a desk over in Jerusalem with telephone at hand and television cameras running, you know nothing as you ought to know of that blessed Kingdom of God which is "not of this world" and which "comes not by outward show," but is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And I do not hesitate to tell you that when Christ comes in mighty power to bring the triumph of His Kingdom into new and greater dimensions on this earth through the ministry of that body of sons so painstakingly and meticulously formed under His hand of dealing through this age of grace, vast multitudes of Christians will MISS HIS COMING because it will not conform to the manner, purpose or result that they imagine it should be. Like the Jews, these Christians will continue on with their religious games, singing, clapping, preaching, prophesying and waiting for a second coming that will meet their demands and fulfill their misguided expectations. Ah, we blame the Jews for their blindness and unbelief, and of making the Word of God of none effect through their tradition, but are there not vast multitudes of the Lord's people in our own day who are doing this very thing? The Jewish nation was not ignorant of the teaching of scripture concerning His coming - in fact, they were good Fundamentalists, anxiously expecting His arrival but they had drifted so far from the Holy Spirit of God, that when the day arrived they did not know it because it took the Holy Spirit to reveal it. And as the Jews of old and their descendants failed to recognize the coming of the Lord in their day, together with the many related events, even so a similar sleeping church today fails to recognize the signs and events which herald a new manifestation of that same blessed Person!

When Jesus walked in flesh upon this earth there were very few among the multitudes who recognized Him. It was Peter among the disciples that was blessed to know the revealing of the Son. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 16:16-17). There was a division among the multitudes as to the identity of Jesus. Some said He was a prophet, others said He was a good man or a great teacher, and then there were those who said He was the prince of devils and a glutton and a winebibber. In the religious circle it was noised about that Jesus was a blasphemer and a trouble-maker that stirred up the people. So there were different views as to who the Teacher was. The few who did recognize Him at His birth, during His ministry, and after His resurrection were those who walked with God and whose spirits were open to the light of heaven.

According to the very first statement in the Gospel of John, that kindly Nazarene, that gracious Galilean, that friendly Teacher who walked the paths of Galilee and sat beside its shores, was none other than the living God, the Creator of all things. John goes on to say that by Him were all things made and without Him was not anything made that was made. He is the Creator of all! He is the architect of the cosmos. He is the fashioner of the galaxies. He is the designer of suns, the artificer of planets. He is the framer of the vast eons of time. The eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient God was born a wee baby thing; He visited this blue-green orb which He had delicately fashioned and spun off into its orbit.

He who came to His own, was the One who had led them through the wilderness, and who had revealed God to them; He had gone before them in the cloud by day and in the pillar of fire by night. It was He who had dwelt in the unutterable and unapproachable glory in their Holiest of all; it was He who had defeated their enemies for them, and had spread His pavilion over them, so that all nations were afraid before them. He it was, who
came to His own and THEY KNEW HIM NOT. That, indeed, is such an incredible thing, such a fantastic and sublime truth, you would think that there would have been an unending celebration that would have gone on for centuries, as the welcome was prepared and the red carpet rolled out for Him. But, rather, to our utter astonishment, we read those incredible words: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world KNEW HIM NOT." I think that enwrapped in those simple words we have the entire tragedy of the carnal mind. "The world knew Him not." "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Is not this the essence of the natural mind? The world knew Him not! The Roman world looked upon Him with that unconscious, stupid, bovine stare; it knew not what it saw. The religious world looked upon Him and perceived Him only as a threat to their wicked schemes and hunger for power. Still today the Christ is in the world and the world knows Him not!

Dear child of God, how many times has He come to you in a different way than you were expecting, and you knew Him not? How many times, in answer to your prayers, He came to you in some humble or mean thing, and you knew Him not. How many times you asked great things of Him, and He commenced to answer your prayers through low, mean channels. He hid behind the wall, He came to you, and you knew Him not. When we become spiritually lazy or stubborn or willful, when we become indifferent or fall asleep, when we walk along the path of our own will and flesh, we will hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Rise up, My love, and come away with Me!" Have you ever come before the Lord, thinking that you were pressing forward into Him, and He convicted you that you were motivated by self? Has He made you know that you have not been going as fast as He would have you, or as you thought you were going? When we hear His voice let us drop everything and everybody; and let us hasten to the place where the Lord can meet us!

"SECOND COMING" ERRORS

The false teaching that the "second coming" of Christ is one singular event limited to a specific date in the future when Jesus Christ will come in a single body of flesh, with wounds in His hands, feet, and side, and that He will flash through the skies, snatching away His faithful followers, carrying them with Him to some far-off heaven somewhere, has given rise to innumerable speculations, predictions, calculations, prophecies and projected dates concerning when this stupendous event is supposed to transpire. Various dates have been set for the "rapture" or for the "end of the-world." History and the Bible have been so interpreted that this or that ruler or dictator or pope or statesman has been called "The Antichrist" who would hasten the return of Christ and the commencement of the "Great Tribulation." The inspiring promises about our Lord's coming have too often been an issue of sensationalism. Men have quarreled and quibbled and fought over a most precious assurance, and have missed altogether the wonderful blessing and the glorious reality. Because of the distorted understanding of this blessed truth many ridiculous theories have been spawned about the "time" and "manner" of the coming of Christ.

In the past few decades, several small groups, devoutly following the leadership of a would-be prophet, abandoned their jobs and professions; sold all their worldly goods, and confidently awaited a precise moment when either the "rapture" would occur, or Jesus Christ would return. All such predictions failed, of course. Usually the news media only inform us of the sheepish admissions of such would-be prophets that they will have to restudy the prophecies," but we never hear about the victims of their hare-brained
schemes who divested themselves of their accumulated goods only to find that the
dogmatically trumpeted prophecies were only so much "pie in the sky." On a larger scale,
major church movements have been equally disappointed, their embarrassed leaders
frantically attempting to discover some alternative explanation as to WHY their confident
prophecies did not come to pass as they had proclaimed! Over the years I have seen
some of the most carefully constructed theories collapse like proverbial houses of cards!
A peculiar and easily recognizable, identifying stamp of all these would-be prophets (or
prophetesses) is some strange "key"; some obscure "clue"; some magic "formula"; some
alleged "cycle"; or some private "revelation" which THEY, and THEY ONLY, know!

Emphasis on the nearness of Christ's "second coming," so strong in many Christian
circles today, is nothing new. In the early church dates were set for the Lord's return
again and again through the first two or three centuries. Augustine set the date for the
end of the world at A.D. 1000. History tells us that a general belief prevailed in Europe
towards the close of the tenth century that the year 1000 would witness the coming of
Christ, the day of judgment, and the end of the world. On the basis of the interpretation
which some of the early Church Fathers (Augustine, etc.) gave of Rev. 20:4, the
conviction gradually gained popularity in the church that at the end of the first thousand
years of the church's existence the second coming of the Lord would take place. It was
supposed to be the time when the church would be perfected and the natural life of men
would come to an end. As the time drew near, a general panic seized the minds of men.
Many pious people reasoned that since the present order was ending it would be folly to
further attempt to satisfy their temporal ambitions or fulfill their earthly goals. They simply
ceased working, sold or abandoned their homes, farms and businesses, and bought a
little plot of ground near some church building or monastery, and not a few moved to the
Holy Land, there to await on holy ground the glorious appearance of their blessed
Saviour and Lord. So vast and intense was this movement that the whole course of
ordinary life was violently disturbed and deranged for an entire generation!

In the Middle Ages Joachim of Floris, an Italian monk strongly inclined to mysticism and
ecstasy, pondered deeply on the hidden plan of God. He spoke of three dispensations:
the first that of the law or the Father, the second that of the gospel or the Son, and the
third that of the Holy Spirit. According to his reckoning, the first dispensation belonged to
the past, the second was approaching the end since the church had become very
worldly, and the age of the Spirit was destined to begin in the year 1260 A.D. Then the
church would be purified; Jews and Gentiles would be converted in great masses; a final
conflict would be waged against the evil forces of the world; and then the new order
would begin under the blessed reign of Jesus Christ. But these hopes were also dashed
to the ground.

At the time of the Reformation some of the Anabaptists raised the cry of the speedy
return of Jesus Christ. They established their headquarters at Muenster, set up their own
government under the alleged direction of the Holy Spirit, and thus founded the New Zion
in anticipation of the momentary return of Jesus Christ as their King. The city became the
scene of unrestrained fanaticism that knew no bounds, and which was finally forcibly
suppressed by the government.

Martin Luther at one time taught that Christ would come in the year A.D. 1530. The
Puritans looked for Jesus to set up His Fifth World Empire in the seventeenth century.
Daniel DeFoe tells us in his JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR that, in the midst of the
Great Plague in London, England in 1665, a woman on a square gained a hearing for her
prognostications that the Coming of the Lord was right near; a few gathered, then many, then a crowd, as she pointed excitedly toward the heavens to "A Horseman in the Sky." The Son of Man was coming; could they not see Him? Some thought that they could. And during the Napoleonic wars, when the Man of Destiny was bestriding Europe and the Near East like a colossus, what a hey-day the prophecy-mongers in England had, with the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation in one hand, and the latest mail from Egypt in the other! They were all cocksure that the Antichrist had come, and some of them actually prophesied what Napoleon would do next, just as the same excitable souls are eyeing Henry Kissinger, the World Bankers, or Pope John Paul II today! (1986)

In our own country similar prophets arose. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century William Miller, who became the founder of the Millerite sect, traveled through New England, New York, New Jersey, and Canada, with the announcement that Christ would return in 1843. He thought he saw, plainly, the time indicated, in the scriptures, when our Lord would return. Being a signally gifted and scholarly man, he led thousands to adopt his views. The burden of his preaching was: Christ will soon be here; are you ready to meet Him? There were many conversions born of fear in view of the imminent appearance of the coming Judge. The meetings of the people were often scenes of wild confusion; emotion was aroused, people fell down crying, men shouted and women fainted. Despite all the opposition of the churches to this unbounded sensationalism, Miller continued his crusade with great persistence and assurance.

As the predicted day drew near many took their horses and fodder for two or three days, and went out into the woods, expecting to be all the more likely to see all that was to be seen when once away from the crowded city. All over the States there were people who had made ascension-gowns in which to soar into the air in proper costume. They waited, and they waited, and I am sure that no text could have been more appropriate for them than this, "Ye men of America, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven?" Nothing came of it; and yet there are tens of thousands in America and elsewhere who need a fanatical leader and they would run into the like folly. The desire to know the date of Christ's return is a craze with many poor folk whose insanity runs in that particular groove. Every occurrence is a "sign of the times": a sign, I may add, which they do not understand. But when the year 1843 passed by without any unusual occurrence, Miller had to resort to the subterfuge that Christ had indeed come but remained in hiding temporarily because the people had not yet repented sufficiently; and when the year 1844 also passed by in the ordinary way, he finally had to admit that his calculations, based on Daniel chapter eight, had been mistaken.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century there was another group, an entire American Colony in the city of Jerusalem, who gathered there to await the imminent return of the Lord. These sincere, and in many cases brilliant, believers would go out to the Mount of Olives by night to wait for the Lord's return. They justified their action by the words, "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech. 14:4). One saintly lady would take a cup of cold water ready to present it to the Lord "in the name of a disciple" upon His arrival.

In the present century the notorious Pastor Russell, the spiritual father of Jehovah's Witnesses, boldly proclaimed that the Lord would return in the year A.D. 1914. When that year passed by without the expected appearance of the Lord and marked instead the beginning of the first World War, to save face, followed the example of Miller. He maintained that the Lord had indeed come, but was now in hiding because of the
wickedness of the people. In due time He was bound to show Himself. Russell's successor, the eloquent Judge Rutherford, kept alive the expectation of the speedy transformation of the living saints. The burden of his message, which was spread over billboards, shouted over the radio, and blazoned to the world in paid advertisements was "Millions now living will never die." It was a rather daring assertion, seeing that it could be so easily proved, or disproved. A leading laundry, which had more humor than reverence, adopted the slogan as its own, making it read in this fashion: "We do the dyeing for the millions now living."

Then there was the Great Pyramid delusion. Back about the turn of the century a man by the name of Morton Edgar published a book titled PYRAMID PASSAGES. The thrust of this book was that the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in Egypt was built by divine wisdom and under God's direction, to be one of God's witnesses to men, the object of its construction being to establish in stone a record and a prophecy of God's great redemptive plan of the ages. The scriptural basis for this was Isa. 19:19-20, "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt." This "altar" and "pillar" was assumed to be the Great Pyramid - often referred to as THE BIBLE IN STONE.

It was conjectured that every passage and chamber therein silently but eloquently symbolized in size, length, structure, etc. the whole wonderful plan of God from the heaven blest garden in Eden down to the times of the restitution of all things when every enemy should be destroyed and God would be All-in-all. Those who studied the Pyramid from that standpoint were able to locate all the major events of history there - Creation was there, Calvary was there, the Reformation was there, the return of Christ was there, and the Millennial Age. It was all laid out neatly and precisely in the measurements, passages, chambers, and symbolism of the Great Pyramid! And, since the measurements from certain well established points to another, for instance, from Calvary to the Reformation, were all quite precise, it followed that the measurements from the Reformation to the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (and hence, the second coming of Christ) were conclusive. The testimony of the Great Pyramid showed irrefutably that Christ would return in 1914!

When Christ didn't make the anticipated appearance in 1914, the theory was later revised by Dr. Adam Rutherford of England. According to Rutherford's careful calculations the entrance into the King's Chamber, typifying the beginning of the Millennial Age, would be reached on August 20, 1953. With 95 per cent of the chronology of the passage system of the Great Pyramid supposedly already verified by history, the attention of thousands was focused upon August 20, 1953. Their expectancy was that the events of that day would demonstrate beyond question that their understanding of the purport of the Great Pyramid revelation was correct. In the summer of 1953 thousands of followers began to anticipate the development of spectacular events to climax, perhaps with the visible appearance of Jesus, on the Great Pyramid dating of August 20, 1953. They hoped that what would occur then would firmly establish their belief in the reliability of the prophecy. But the day came and with it the failure of the hoped-for developments. Jesus didn't show up. The Millennium didn't begin. Armageddon didn't break out. Nothing happened.

Again, the system was revised! According to Rutherford the "mistake" that had been made in his reckonings was "discovered" and duly "corrected". A new date was set: 1978. In July of 1978 I published an article in which I admonished the Lord's precious
people, " Others are proclaiming that the Millennium will begin in 1978-79 according to the revelations of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. I must speak a word against that! I have no fear in offering to buy all your Pyramidology books for .01 each in 1980. I'll even pay the postage on them! Beloved, brethren, I have no desire to be cynical about these things, but the Spirit of the Lord would have His chosen ones to get their eyes off dates, and pyramids, and computers, and newspaper headlines, and world leaders, and world events, and supposed Antichrists, and Beast Governments, and so-called "Mark of the Beast" banking and economic systems, and all the rest of the dime-store side shows which capture the minds of those apprehended to be sons of the Most High. How much more profitably will time and meditations be spent in LOOKING UNTO HIM - in intimacy of fellowship and blessed communion with the Lamb on Zion's holy hill. A correct understanding of all the above mentioned things (and most saint's understanding of them is NOT CORRECT!) can never add one-inch to our spiritual stature nor bring us to perfection in Christ. The finishing touches on God's great building, His house of sons, are not yet complete. 'Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves LIKE UNTO MEN THAT WAIT FOR THEIR LORD' (Lk. 12:35-36). Look unto HIM! That is the only act you can perform in this dark hour that will in any way hasten the day of manifestation" -end quote.

The error of these delusions is manifest in their repeated failure. I am sure that all of my readers remember the great 1982 Planetary Alignment hype. According to certain Fundamentalist preachers the "rapture" was going to take place on Sept. 6, 1975. The "logic" for this was that in 1982 all of the nine planets of our solar system would be perfectly aligned on the same side of the sun. Two scientists, writing in Newsweek magazine, Sept. 16, 1974 theorized about 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 million 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 was expected that the earthquakes around 1982 could destroy large populations of the earth. Some even theorized that the sun would "nova" in which case the earth would be completely burned to a cinder.

Therefore, reasoned certain preachers and teachers, since the earth would be purged by fire in 1982, the Great Tribulation must precede that event by seven years, necessitating a beginning in 1975. Furthermore, since Jesus must come, according to their imaginings, BEFORE the Tribulation; and considering that He would come with the sound of a trumpet, and at the "last trump"; it was concluded that He would split the eastern sky on the date of the FEAST OF TRUMPETS in the year 1975 - precisely on Sept. 6! I arrived in Big Spring, Texas on the afternoon of Sept. 5, 1975 and found a large number of the Charismatic brethren weeping, wailing, and repenting in preparation for the rapture the following day. It fell my lot to declare to the brethren assembled in the meeting where I was speaking that night that nothing-absolutely nothing - would happen the next day. Of course, Jesus didn't come on Sept. 6, 1975 and seven years afterward the long awaited planetary alignment turned out to be a non-event! The mischief done by these well-meaning men is all the greater when they coolly fix a fresh date when the march of time has utterly falsified their previous dogmatic chronological predictions. It is still a very adulterous generation which seeks after a sign.
Some months ago I received in the mail a booklet sent from a country in South America, in which certain brethren share that it has been revealed to them in a strikingly supernatural manner, and confirmed through many humble saints and varied spiritual manifestations, that Pope John Paul II is the Antichrist; the "rapture" will take place in 1987; and the consummation of all things will follow in 1991. I do not hesitate to tell you that none of these things will happen, either! Another letter came across my desk bearing this news: "We've met some interesting saints who have been walking in the Spirit since 1948 & 1950. One said (in 1948) a sister had a Christmas cactus and a spider came on it and spun the word: MILLENNIUM 198-. The date was complete to the year, but no one could believe that the Lord's coming would be so long delayed as the eighties. After all, the Lord was moving mightily and the Jews had just come back to their homeland! The words and date remained for three days and three nights and then both spider and web disappeared. But no one could remember the date, though many had seen it."

Though Jesus and the apostles told us there would be a rash of false prophets in the closing days of this age, I never cease to be amazed at the number of people who are claiming that they have some kind of direct revelation from God about any number of events to transpire in this hour, and the dates on which they are to occur. In 1981 Bill Maupin, leader of the Lighthouse Gospel Tract Foundation in Tucson, Arizona, proclaimed that Christ would return on June 28 of that year, and rapture his followers to heaven. He also stated that prior to the June 28th date, Damascus, the Syrian capital, and Lebanon would both fall to Israeli conquest, and Egypt would regain the Sinai Peninsula. Maupin said he would wait in the nude on June 28 for Christ to return and take him and his followers to heaven.

You may smile to yourself at such obvious error, but I will incur the wrath of many well-meaning people when I declare that not a few of these false prophets are in the so called "end-time" or "sonship" message, and in the midst of those sincere saints pressing on into the fullness of God. Over the past several years I have heard countless visions and prophesies proclaiming that the Great Tribulation would begin in 1970, or 1975, or 1978, or on some other date; that the sons of God would be manifested in 1968, or 1974, or 1976, or 1978, or 1982, or 1986, or 1988; many other events I have heard prophesied, none of which ever came to pass! Some of these deceivers required their people to go out into the wilderness places to establish wilderness hideouts, hoping to escape the coming judgment. Some, to this day, are stockpiling guns and ammunition and food and plan to shoot their way through the tribulation.

Every attempt that has been made to fix a date, even approximately, has brought the truth into discredite, and has dishonored our Lord, especially in view of the fact that many predictions have been made, and then changed with startling craftiness, in order that the date might still further be postponed, in view of the previous mistakes. These failures point out not merely that these men are mistaken about the TIME of Christ's return; they prove further that their WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED - they know not WHEN He comes; they perceive not the PURPOSE of His coming; and they understand not HOW He comes! The "orthodox" teaching on the "second coming" of Christ gets people into many unexplainable predicaments, out of which they cannot extricate themselves honorably and logically. The system will not work. It will not work because it is a lie. There is not one scripture in the whole Bible to uphold the popular theory. But there are many to prove it false, and much precious and extremely vital truth which the preachers and churches have totally missed.
THANK GOD that He delivers us from all this fantastic nonsense! And in its place he directs our attention to what HE is doing, yes, that which HE IS BECOMING and FULFILLING in His elect. We look, indeed, for HIS GLORIOUS APPEARING, and rejoice with joy unspeakable in that wherein He has appeared unto us, and in the glory in which He shall yet appear in surpassing splendor, praise HIS wonderful name!

THE COMING OF CHRIST IN THE FEASTS

It is infinitely necessary that every Christian understand that the coming of the Lord is carefully established and explicitly revealed through the Old Testament Feasts of the Lord. There is a simple order which God has established relative to the unfolding of truth and the progression of His purposes, and it is this: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual" (I Cor. 15:46). This principle is evident everywhere in the scriptures. First the old creation, then the New. First Adam, the man of earth, then the Last Adam, the Man from heaven. First the Passover, with its lamb slain in Israel, then the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. First the law, and then Grace. First the temple in Jerusalem built of stone, then the temple of God which you are, composed of living stones built up an habitation of God through the Spirit. And the wonder of it all is this, that the end of the Old is the beginning of the New: and out of that which is destined to pass away there cometh forth that which is destined to remain.

While men speak of the "first coming" and the "second coming" of Christ, God's program is in THREES. God has promised to meet with man in THREE DIMENSIONS. "THREE TIMES in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which HE shall choose; in the feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD (Passover), and in the feast of WEEKS (Pentecost), and in the feast of TABERNACLES: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty" (Deut. 16:16). God says that He will meet with man THREE times - in the three great Feasts of the Lord! "THREE TIMES in a year shall all your males appear before the Lord." To "appear before the Lord" designates not only an action on your part, but a reciprocal action on God's part. Not only must you appear, but HE MUST APPEAR! It is a joint-meeting in which YOU APPEAR B-E-F-O-R-E H-I-M, or as the apostle has so eloquently explained, "When Christ, who is our life, SHALL APPEAR, then shall YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM in glory" (Col. 3:4).

The Feasts of Yahweh were but types and shadows of those things which were yet to come. These Feasts portrayed in their typology God's plan for man even to the very end of the ages. They bring to us the unfolding purpose of God for us from the foundation of the world. An Old Testament type is literally a word picture or living example that prefigures that which is to come. In another sense, it is an exact shadow of that which does not yet exist. The apostle Paul in speaking of those things which happened to Israel in their wilderness journey stated, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (examples, object lessons), and they are written for OUR ADMONITION, UPON WHOM THE ENDS OF THE WORLD (AGE) ARE COME" (I Cor. 10:11). The apostle Paul again explains to us, "For the law HAVING A SHADOW OF GOOD THINGS TO COME, and not the very image of the things..." (Heb. 10:1). The shadows of the law were but school-masters to bring us to Christ. The greater work of a SPIRITUAL NATURE was still to be accomplished to fulfill these Old Testament types and shadows of which the three Feasts of Yahweh are a major part.
The three primary Feasts given to Israel were the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Two of these Feasts have now been fulfilled and are still being fulfilled in the body of Christ today. The last Feast still waits a future fulfillment that will begin at the completion and maturity of the Christ-body at the end of this age. Because of their typical nature, the Feasts have many times been overlooked as to their great significance in the proper interpretation of Bible prophecy. The Bible is full of such great truths that have been given for our enrichment and instruction, it is up to those who "follow ON to know the Lord" to diligently dig out those truths that will lead us into greater depths in the Lord. Let us consider these Feasts in the light of our forward walk in God.

When God meets man in the first dimension, He meets us in the Feast of Passover. Jesus appears to us, He comes to us as SAVIOUR in that realm. "When I see the blood, I will pass-over you!" (Ex. 12:13). I dare say every reader of these lines has passed through that Feast, has met and seen and experienced the Lord in that realm. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7). Jesus is the Lamb of God. The Old Paschal Feast is gone forever. We no longer need a Paschal Feast of the old type, we no longer need to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem in the Old Feast, for HE HAS APPEARED unto us as the Lamb of God and has cleansed us with His precious blood. Has God met with you for the first time? Has Christ come to you in the first dimension? Has He appeared to you as the Lamb of God? Have you eaten the Lamb? If so, the Lamb is WITHIN you!

The Feast of Pentecost was a separate Feast and the Pentecostal experience is a separate experience. Has God met with you a second time? Has Christ come to you in a second dimension of His presence and life and glory? Has He come from heaven as a rushing mighty wind and filled your house with power and glory? Has He appeared to you as Baptist with the Holy Ghost and fire? Have you appeared before Him in the spiritual Feast of Pentecost? Then you are blessed indeed! But God does not stop at Pentecost and the second Feast is but the "earnest" and the "firstfruits" of the final Feast! In Israel the Feast of Pentecost was "the feast of harvest, the FIRSTFRUITS of thy labors" (Deut. 16:9-12). Under New Testament economy this is the FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT. "And not only they, but ourselves also which have the FIRSTFRUITS of the Spirit..." (Rom. 8:23).

The last great Feast of the Israelite year was Tabernacles ... and startling as it might seem, this is the Feast that remains to be fulfilled! Tabernacles is called "the Feast of Ingathering, which is in the END OF THE YEAR." Pentecost is only the firstfruits of the Spirit, but Tabernacles is the full harvest - FULLNESS! And this fullness comes in the END of the year, at the completion of our walk with God, and I believe that we have not witnessed such fullness in any save in our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and neither shall we until the very close of this present age, The Feast of Tabernacles could not be celebrated until Israel had left the wilderness behind, and was dwelling in Canaan. Even so, Christ is bringing a great company of apprehended ones, in the END of this age, out of their wilderness wanderings of immaturity, carnality and struggle on into their promised land - the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST. Oh, yes, God shall surely give unto the elect sons of God the FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD of which we, up until this time, have only received the "earnest" or "firstfruits."

I do not hesitate to say that we are still partaking of the Feast of Pentecost. But I have good news for you. JESUS IS COMING AGAIN! He is coming in the Feast of Tabernacles, and BLESSED are they who are called to this great Feast, that which
supersedes Pentecost, that which is the balance of the meal of which Passover and Pentecost were merely the first courses. As we leave this Feast in great strength, those who shall represent the Kingdom of God on this planet from that time forth will be abiding in the fullness of HIS RESURRECTION LIFE. It shall mean a new day of hope and deliverance and glory for the whole earth as the Lord COMES AGAIN to meet man in this great and glorious Feast of HIS FULLNESS. This is the coming of the Lord that the churches and television and radio evangelists know nothing about. The "rapture" crowd doesn't actually believe in the "COMING of the Lord" anyway - they believe in the "GOING of the saints"! While we teach the "APPEARING of Jesus" they teach the "DISAPPEARING of the Church." How much more wonderful and beautiful is the truth! Jesus is COMING! Glory to God!
No revelation, doctrine or system of teaching in the Old Testament can be fully comprehended until it has been correlated and integrated with the revelation of the New Testament. Together, the two books form the interlocking halves of one perfect whole. It may be said that the seed of all New Testament truth is found in the Old Testament text. But if that is true, it is equally accurate to say that all truth revealed in the New Testament is concealed in the Old Testament. In a word, the flower of revelation which blossomed from Moses to Malachi has come to its fruit in the records from Matthew to Revelation. Therefore there can be no contradiction between the teachings of these two sections of God's Word, as one must merely complement the other.

The theme of the Old Testament is "Someone is coming!" Every prophet of the ancient times looked forward through the ages to the Coming One. Moses began the theme when he wrote, "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and Malachi closed the continued reiteration joined in by all the prophets, when he told of the Sun of Righteousness which should arise, with healing in His rays. But the New Testament has two themes, both of them centering in one Person. The first theme is "Someone has come!" This, indeed, is borne out by Philip, who sought out Nathanael with the startling greeting, "Come and see! We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write!" He did indeed come, but the shame of His rejection remains as the vilest blot upon the page of human activities. Rejected, cast out, and crucified, He ascended back into heaven, from whence He had come. Then follows the second theme of the New Testament, which may be stated as "Someone is coming again!" Thus the entire scripture centers in the Person of One who was to come, who did come, and who is coming again. He is the coming One of Old Testament promise, and is the object of our present study.

The Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of Christ exhibit the same peculiarity as those of the New Testament, in that they foretell many distinct events, but do not usually state the order of their occurrence, or the length of the interval between them, or the manner of their fulfillment. The students of Old Testament prophecy who sought to fix the time of the coming of the expected King would have pondered such passages for example, as Zech. 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold THY KING COMETH UNTO THEE. He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." And in the attempt to fix the order of His coming in relation to other predicted events they would, of course, have noted particularly Isa. 40:3: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord"; and Mal. 3:3: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord Whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple"; and Mal. 4:5: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."
From these prophecies the expositor might have insisted, and with a show of reason, that the Lord could not "come" to His "temple" until the messenger should first appear to prepare the way "before" Him; and that they who looked for Him to appear before the predicted messenger were indulging a vain expectation. Yet the fact is that the Lord came, on the natural plane, to His Old Testament Temple, thirty years BEFORE the predicted messenger appeared to announce Him; and He was seen by Simeon (the "hearer") who was led by the Holy Spirit, by Anna, who waited upon the Lord in the temple, by the shepherds who were keeping their flocks by night, and by the wise men from the East, who saw His star, and hence must have been watching in the night; and, moreover, His coming was made known "to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Lk. 2:38).

It seems to me that for centuries our eyes have been kept holden to many of the great truths of the scripture. We have read and studied the Bible, taking for granted that our minds comprehended fully what was written, and frequently just reading over the passages and understanding little or nothing of the precious gems of divine truth which lay hidden just beneath the surface. We should not berate ourselves for this lack of understanding, always keeping in mind that God never reveals anything to anybody until HE IS READY to reveal it, and He is never ready to reveal anything until the "fullness of time" has arrived in which He is about to accomplish that which He discloses.

For centuries Israel had looked for the coming of the Messiah until their eyes were dim with watching, but who among them had even the faintest idea of how that coming would be accomplished? They did not expect a virgin birth; they did not expect a lowly birth; they did not expect a teacher at variance with their organized religion and their established creeds; they did not expect the supernatural ministry of healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead; they did not expect an ignominious death by crucifixion followed by a startling resurrection; they did not expect an ascension into heaven. All these things were contrary to their expectations and their established interpretations of the predictions of the prophets. Most Jews missed the glory of the coming of Christ because it was so different from their cherished beliefs and because it all seemed too fantastic to be true. They failed to accept the prophesied events when they transpired before their very eyes.

I do not hesitate to tell you that modern Christians are viewing the Bible completely "out of focus" in the same way as did the Jews of old! We will never discover anything that God chooses to hide from us, but our highest concern should be that when God does draw back the curtain and send us light that we receive the hidden treasure, for if we reject it, the light we have becomes darkness and we can understand nothing. When the Spirit of wisdom and revelation illuminates a truth to our heart, it is time to grasp it and pursue it with all spiritual vigor and determination, for if we tarry it will be covered again, and we will miss it. Do you remember that Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even, so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight"? The moment the blessed Spirit of Truth begins to unveil a truth, it is time to earnestly seek Him and beseech Him to instruct us in it. Do not submit God's revelation to the criticism of some dead church member or indoctrinated preacher, for they like the crows that gather to the farmer's field will steal away the seed of the truth before it has a chance to sprout or take root within you.
'There can be no doubt that we are living in an hour when the Lord is revealing many things that concern the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am certain, however, that even now we see them only darkly. We catch only faint and fleeting glimpses of the glory of His many-splendored coming. We are looking for the REVELATION of Jesus Christ. We are looking for the UNVEILING of the sons of God. The revelation will reveal what is hidden. The unveiling will reveal what has been kept concealed. As the lightning flashes forth from the ominous darkness of swirling stormy clouds, so the manifestation will disclose what has been hidden in the darkness.

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

I would draw your attention to an enlightening passage of scripture in Prov. 22:19-21. "That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee EXCELLENT THINGS in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" The word "EXCELLENT", as used here, is the Hebrew word SHALISH meaning three-fold, or weighty. It is most interesting to note that Young's Literal translation renders it, "Have I not written to thee THREE TIMES with counsels and knowledge?" A free translation would run, "Have I not written unto you THREE-FOLD things?" Three-fold things. These are the excellent things of God. These are weighty things, things which have depth upon depth upon depth in their meaning. This three-fold principle is brought forth again and again as the Spirit unfolds the truth appointed for His overcoming company in this important hour.

While men speak of the "first coming" and the "second coming" of Christ, God's program is in THREES. God has promised to meet with man in THREE DIMENSIONS. He has met man historically and experientially in the first and second realms. I declare to you that He will meet with us dispensationally and experientially yet a THIRD time! The pattern is clear: "THREE TIMES in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD (Passover), and in the feast of WEEKS (Pentecost), and in the feast of TABERNACLES: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty" (Deut. 16:16). God says that He will meet with man THREE times - in the three great Feasts of the Lord! "THREE TIMES in a year shall all your males appear before the Lord." To "appear before the Lord" designates not only an action on our part, but a reciprocal action on God's part. Not only must we appear, but HE MUST APPEAR! It is a joint-meeting in which WE APPEAR B-E-F-O-R-E_H-I-M, or as the apostle has so eloquently explained, "When Christ, who is our life, SHALL APPEAR, then shall YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM in glory" (Col. 3:4). When this three-fold aspect of His appearing is clearly understood, then the fact that the scriptures nowhere speak of just a "first coming" and a "second coming" takes on new meaning!

The Feasts of Yahweh were but types and shadows of those things that were yet to come. These Feasts portrayed in their typology God's plan for this world even to the very end of the ages. They bring to us the unfolding plan of redemption that was ordained before the foundation of the world. An Old Testament type is literally a word picture or an object lesson that pre-figures that which is to come. In another sense, it is an exact shadow of that which does not yet exist. The apostle Paul in speaking of those things which happened to Israel in their wilderness journey stated, "Now all these things happened unto them for ENSAMPLES (EXAMPLES), and they are written for OUR ADMONITION (INSTRUCTION), upon whom the ends of the world (age) are come" (I Cor. 10:11).
It is made very plain by this scripture that Israel's history contains numbers of events that were a figure, a type, a shadow, of those events that were yet to come. The apostle Paul again explains this to us: "For the law having a SHADOW OF GOOD THINGS TO COME, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1). The shadows of the law were but school-masters to bring us to Christ. The greater work of a spiritual nature was still to be accomplished to fulfill these Old Testament types and shadows of which the three Feasts of the Lord are a major part. The Word of God never ceases to amaze as the intricate patterns of the plan of God weave in and out of scripture to produce a perfect plan in the consummation of it all. At first glance, as one reads the Old Testament record, the Feasts seem so insignificant and without further need of reference. They appear to be something to keep Israel busy and happy and their times of observation could fall in any order. The unsearchable riches of God found here are hidden from the eyes of a sin-blinded world and a carnal-minded church, but to those who walk in the Spirit of the Lord they speak of the wonders wrought in redeemed lives by the Spirit of the living God, and of supernal glories yet to come.

The three primary Feasts given to Israel were the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Two of these Feasts have now been fulfilled and are still being fulfilled in the body of Christ today. The last Feast still waits a future fulfillment that will begin at the completion and maturity of the Christ-body at the end of this age. Because of their typical nature, the Feasts have many times been overlooked as to their great significance in the proper interpretation of Bible prophecy. The Bible is full of such great truths that have been given for our enrichment and instruction, but it is up to those who "follow ON to KNOW the Lord" to diligently dig out those truths under the illuminating power of the Spirit, that will lead us into greater depths and heights in the Lord. Let us consider these Feasts in the light of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In order to understand the coming of the Lord in the Feasts, it will be helpful to trace the origin of the word itself. When we speak of a feast, we are prone to picture a banquet of rich foods and an evening of entertainment. But such is not the original concept of the word. Festival comes a little nearer to expressing the thought. It suggests gala attire, parades, singing, dancing - a holiday spent in celebrating some new event or in commemorating one in the past. The Hebrew word translated feast is CHAG. It refers to a SACRED feast - not an ordinary meal given for entertainment. Its original meaning is a procession, a dance, or a public dramatization of some event. The eating and drinking which accompanied it were of secondary importance. From the earliest times it was the custom of heathen peoples to observe certain festal days. Primarily these seasons were for the purpose of worshiping or appeasing their idol gods. The occasion gave them an opportunity to openly display their beliefs, by various forms of art and ceremony, and thus to instruct all who witnessed the celebration in the tenets of their religion. This custom continues to this very day among primitive peoples. Our own American Indians, though now educated according to our way of life, still preserve their cultural and religious heritage by means of such ceremonies and festivals.

In Old Testament times they had no books or other means of teaching one another. Most of the religions confined their ordinances to a small body of priests, and the common man had little or no religious instruction. However, the feast was the exception to this rule. When the festal season dawned, all work and business were laid aside, and old and young alike donned their finest garments and jewels and joined the great crowds in an open display of "worship" and religious education.
There is no indication that the children of Israel ever celebrated ceremonial feasts until the time of their deliverance from Egypt. It is a matter of profound significance that their feasting began with their deliverance, and that the idea of it did not originate in their own hearts. It was formed in the heart of the Lord Himself! HE desired to take His people into the wilderness, that they might worship Him and keep a Feast with Him. He revealed His will through His servant Moses: "And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a FEAST unto the LORD" (Ex. 10:9).

How precious the knowledge that we have a God who hungers, thirsts, deeply desires, to feast with His people - a God who from the beginning has tried to show us that His greatest delight is not in showing His authority, but in enjoying intimate and close fellowship with His children. It is true that He disciplines, that He leads us in paths of sacrifice, fasting, travail and tears - in their proper place. But He causes the sacrifice to be turned into increase, He exchanges the ashes for beauty, and the tears He turns to laughter! He set a Feast of fruits before Adam and Eve, the like of which man has never been able to reproduce, and He communed with them face to face. He ate with Abraham in his tent at noonday. He spread a table in the wilderness for the entire nation of His chosen, and gave them the very bread of heaven. Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding feast. He fed five thousand on a hillside. He did not hesitate to attend feasts, nor to eat with publicans and sinners. He also attended the Feast of dedication and the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:37; 10:22) during the years of His public ministry. He heartily desired to keep the Feast of Passover with His chosen disciples, and He has established the New Covenant with a Feast, a great spiritual Feast, wherein He has given the redeemed His own body for their meat and His own blood for their drink. He has promised through the prophet Isaiah that in the latter days He will make a Feast, a great Feast of spiritual blessings and benefits for all nations, upon His holy Mount (Isa. 25:6). And the greatest Feast of all - the marriage supper of the Lamb - will usher a people into the most intimate relationship with their Lord!

The Feast means, that God and man are brought together, the Lord appears unto man to associate Himself with him in an intimate manner, in an extremely close and joyful relationship. Christ comes in three Feasts, three unique and wonderful relationships between Himself and His people, and these relationships become real to us and become His coming and His appearing unto us, praise His glorious name!

The Feasts have at least three aspects to them. They have the memorial aspect, they were done in memory of something, they pointed back to something, back to something God had done. The Feast of Passover was kept in memory of Israel's deliverance from slavery and bondage in Egypt. Every year when the Feast of Passover was observed the children would ask, "What are we doing this for?" Then the father would sit down and tell his children the story of what God did back in Egypt. Thus it was in memory and as a memorial of God's protection in Egypt and their deliverance from Egypt. The Feast of Pentecost was given in memory of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai as the children of Israel passed through the desert on their way to the land of promise. The Feast of Tabernacles was kept in memory of their entering into the land of promise and into their full inheritance and possession. So each of the Feasts were instituted as a memorial to something grand and glorious that God had done for His people.

Every one of these Feasts had also a prophetic aspect. That is, they pointed not just to the past, but they pointed forth to the future. They pre-figured something that God was
going to do. They were prophetic in their implication. They pointed toward something that God declared He purposed to yet perform for His people. The prophetic aspect of the Passover was that the slaying of the Paschal lamb pre-figured Christ's death on Calvary as the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. The Feast of Pentecost was prophetic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by which the Law of God, written at Sinai upon tablets of stone, would be finally written by the Spirit of God upon the fleshy tables of our hearts.

Every one of the Feasts of the Lord have not only a historical aspect, pointing back to something God did, and a prophetic aspect, pointing forward to something God would do; but every one of them has a personal and individual aspect in our lives experientially. Each Feast finds its fulfillment in our forward walk in God. In Passover we see a picture of our justification. In the Feast of Pentecost we have a picture of our baptism with the Holy Spirit, the "firstfruits" of our inheritance. In the Feast of Tabernacles we find a picture of our glorification, our entrance into the fullness of our inheritance and possession in God, even all the wisdom, knowledge, life, victory, nature and power of the Almighty.

A feast involves an appointed day, a public assembly at a fixed time or season. The feast days were occasions when Israel kept divine appointments; times when they assembled BEFORE THE LORD; times when they MET WITH GOD in great joy and festivity. All their worship centered around these three major religious festivals. Our Redeemer has also set some appointments for us, and He expects us to keep them. Only by keeping these divine appointments can we meet with Him or know and experience Him in His comings and appearings. The sublime truth is not merely that we are called to appear before Him in the Feast, but that HE COMES to the Feast! HE APPEARS in the Feast! In Passover we meet the Son; in Pentecost we meet the Spirit; and in Tabernacles we meet the Father. God in Christ comes to us in three dimensions in the Feasts. Furthermore, there is a complete salvation that God has ordained for man, in spirit, soul and body, and these three Feasts provide for it all. All three are necessary for a full salvation.

Another important truth in relation to these Feasts is that they are all HIS FEASTS! There are so many Christians today who are possessed of the childish notion that God is the manager of a great heavenly super market, or that He is a glorified celestial Santa Claus. All we have to do is just quote our favorite "faith scripture," snap our finger, turn our faith loose, and God comes running with a load of goodies with which to satisfy our every whim and fancy. NOT SO! He is LORD. He is SOVEREIGN. He is KING. And these are not our Feasts, they are HIS FEASTS. This is a grand and sublime truth we must understand from the beginning if we would progress into the depths of God. These are HIS FEASTS, the Feasts of THE LORD! He's the Host, and we are the guests. Sometimes people like to appear religious, and they hang on the wall a little plaque that says, "Christ is the unseen guest at every meal." I trust, my brother, my sister, that Christ is NOT the guest in your home! He should be the HOST! He must be LORD!

GOD appointed who would meet with Him in the Feasts. All the males of Israel were to keep the Feasts and appear before Him in the place where He put His name; so the Feasts are especially for sons. Not only did God designate WHO would meet with Him, but He specified WHEN they would meet and WHERE they would meet. God ordained the whole thing and established the order thereof. He commanded that they meet with Him in the place where the name of the Lord was recorded. In Old Testament economy that was first in the tabernacle in the wilderness and later in the temple at Jerusalem. In New Testament fulfillment it is first of all in Jesus Christ and then in His many-membered
body. The name of the Lord, which means the nature of the Lord, was recorded in the life of Jesus Christ and now is being sealed in the foreheads of His firstfruits company who are putting on the precious mind of the Christ. Furthermore, God gave commandment concerning what the males of Israel were to bring to His Feasts. He left no detail lacking. HE was the Lord of WHO, WHEN WHERE, WHAT and HOW in relation to His Feasts. You will come HIS way, precious friend of mine, and see Him and know Him and experience Him in HIS APPOINTED FEASTS, or you will never see Him at all!

The children of Israel were delivered from Egypt in the first month and the Feast of Passover was celebrated in the first month. The Law was given at Mount Sinai in the third month and the Feast of Pentecost was kept in the third month. The people gathered in the abundance of their crops for the first time in the land of promise in the seventh month and the Feast of Tabernacles was observed in the seventh month. When God meets man in the first dimension, He meets us in the Feast of Passover. Jesus appears to us. He comes to us as SAVIOUR in that realm. "When I see the blood, I will pass-over you!" (Ex. 12:13). I am confident that every reader of these lines has passed through that Feast, has met and seen and experienced the Lord in that realm. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7). Jesus is the Lamb of God. The old Paschal Feast is gone forever. We no longer need a Paschal Feast of the old type, we no longer need to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem in the Old Feast, for HE HAS APPEARED unto us as the Lamb of God and has cleansed us with His precious blood. Has God met with you for the first time? Has Christ come to you in the first dimension? Has He appeared to you as the Lamb of God? Have you eaten the Lamb? If so, the Lamb is WITHIN you!

The Feast of Pentecost was a separate Feast and the Pentecostal experience is a separate experience. Has God met with you a second time? Has Christ come to you in a second dimension of His presence and life and glory? Has He come from heaven as a rushing mighty wind and filled your house with power and glory? Has He appeared to you as the Baptist with the Holy Ghost and Fire? Have you appeared before Him in the joy and glory of the spiritual Feast of Pentecost? Then you are blessed indeed! But the idea entertained by many Christians is that now since we have had Passover and Pentecost, there is nothing left to do but die and go to heaven, or catch the rapture, whichever comes first. That's what most folk tell me. There's nothing more. The only things that remain to be experienced in God beyond salvation and speaking in tongues and blessings are golden streets and harps and palm branches for eternity. But I have news for you, my friend. God does not stop at Pentecost and the second Feast is but the "earnest" and the "firstfruits" of the final Feast! In Israel the Feast of Pentecost was "the feast of harvest, the FIRSTFRUITS of thy labors" (Deut. 16:9-12). Under New Testament economy this is the FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT. "And not only they, but ourselves also which have the FIRSTFRUITS of the Spirit..." (Rom. 8:23). We have had the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost and both of these Feasts have been fulfilled IN THIS AGE IN THE CHURCH which is His body, and right here on the earth. For some strange reason men seek to postpone the last Feast to some future age, or give it to the Jews, or relegate it to some beautiful "Isle of Somewhere," and consequently the real spiritual meaning and import of the Feast of Tabernacles is completely obscured and lost. The grand truth is that like the others, the Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled in the body of Christ. It will be fulfilled dispensationally, it will be fulfilled in us individually, and it will be fulfilled in us as the Corporate Man.

No Bible scholar in the world will dispute the truth that on Calvary's hill and in the lives of multiplied millions of believers the Feast of Passover was and is fulfilled. No Bible scholar
on the face of the earth will dispute the truth that in Acts chapter two the Feast of Pentecost came to pass in reality. The Old Pentecostal Feast has gone forever. The Pentecostal Feast can never be reestablished as in olden times, because the promise of the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghost has come. We need not implore any more for the Holy Ghost to come, for the Holy Ghost has come and has never gone away, and remains a gentle, gracious, loving Spirit, desiring to enter every heart and impress the Law of God there, and just as surely as these came to pass in the lives of New Testament saints, the body of Jesus Christ is going to experience the Feast of Tabernacles and all that it speaks of. The Feast of Tabernacles is a further realm and a higher dimension of our walk in God. We have no record in the New Testament nor in church history of the Feast of Tabernacles finding fulfillment. If it wasn't fulfilled, then it remains to be fulfilled. Its just that simple. Not one jot or tittle shall in any wise pass from the Law of God till ALL BE FULFILLED.

The last great Feast of the Israelite year was Tabernacles ... and this is the Feast that remains to be fulfilled! Tabernacles is called "the feast of the INGATHERING, which is in the END OF THE YEAR." Pentecost is only the firstfruits of the Spirit, but Tabernacles is the full harvest - FULLNESS! And this fullness comes in the END of the year, at the completion of our progressive walk with God, and I believe that we have not witnessed such fullness in any save in our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and neither shall we until the very close of this present age. The Feast of Tabernacles could not be celebrated until Israel had left the wilderness behind, and was dwelling in Canaan. Even so, Christ is bringing a great company of apprehended ones, in the END of this age, at the consummation of our progression into God, out of their wilderness wanderings of immaturity, carnality, limitation and struggle on in to their promised land - the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST. Oh, yes, God shall surely give unto the elect sons of God the FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD of which we, up until this time, have only received the "earnest" or "firstfruits."

I do not hesitate to say that for the most part we are still partaking of the Feast of Pentecost. How bountifully the table has been spread with His presence and divers gifts of the Holy Spirit! But the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast at the END of the year, is the Feast of Fullness. I have more good news for you. JESUS IS COMING AGAIN! He is coming in the Feast of Tabernacles, and BLESSED are they who are called to this great Feast, that which supersedes Pentecost, that which is the BALANCE OF THE MEAL of which Passover and Pentecost were merely the first courses. And the balance must therefore come, the remainder of the meal which will give strength to the laborers to go forth and accomplish great things for the Master. And this Tabernacles Feast, being the last, shall bring perfection! It will bring the consummation of our SALVATION, spirit, soul and body. As we leave this Feast in great strength, those who will be in control of this planet from that time forth will be abiding in the fullness of RESURRECTION LIFE and will be forever free from the curse, spirit, soul and body. It shall mean a new day of hope and deliverance and glory for the whole earth as the Lord COMES AGAIN to meet man in this great and glorious Feast of HIS FULLNESS. In the Feast of Passover He comes as JESUS, the Saviour. In the Feast of Pentecost He tomes as CHRIST, the Anointed One, and thus the Anointer, for the anointing which we have received, we received OF HIM. But in the Feast of Tabernacles He comes as LORD, the Lord of the harvest, the Lord of Fullness! There is a depth of inworking taking place these days in those whom He has apprehended for the realms beyond. They are slowly, but surely, coming to know Him as LORD of all their life. There are depths of truth which cannot be uttered by voice or inscribed by pen, so may HE grant illumination far beyond what is here written.
THE COMING OF CHRIST IN THE FEAST OF PASSOVER

The people of Israel were under bondage in Egypt. They suffered a physical, economic, and spiritual slavery such as no nation up to that time had ever endured. Then God called Moses to lead them out of that bondage. The Bible records the history of the plagues that came upon Egypt because Pharaoh refused to let Israel go. The tenth plague resulted in the death of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, but Israel was protected from that plague. It would be well to read the whole account, for it has much to do with the subject we are discussing. The record will be found in Exodus, chapter twelve, where the Lord said: "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Ex. 12:2).

God here gave Israel a new calendar. The sacred year, as far as Israel was concerned, was to begin with the time of the Exodus from Egypt. This caused the first month of this New Year to correspond generally with our present month of April. It was a time of birthing, when as a nation they were thrust forth from the Egyptian womb of bondage and captivity. After 430 years of servitude, they were released at last unto a pathway of freedom and fulfillment. From this date forward Israel was to have a new calendar. This occasion would mark the first month of their New Year because God was going to deliver them from Egyptian bondage, and bring them into a new experience and a new land. Israel's old associations were to be gone forever! They would now depart out of the world system to which they had for 430 years been slaves.

No longer would they serve the Egyptian taskmaster under cruel bondage, but they were to serve the Lord their God. No longer were they to eat the leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt, but they would feast upon the manna from heaven, and drink water out of the flinty rock. No longer would they abide in the houses of their mean world in Egypt, but they would henceforth follow the cloud of glory from one place to another, from one experience to another, even from "glory to glory." Had not the Lord God plainly declared, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and I have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them" (Ex. 3:7-8). And so, to deliver Israel from the judgment of the firstborn, and to prepare them for a new life as a separated and holy nation, God instituted the Passover. And the faithful observance of the rites and ceremonies connected to this event would mean the preservation of Israel in the hour of God's judgments upon the land of Egypt, and the beginning of a new era for the people of God. On the tenth day of that month they were to select a lamb from the flock, one without blemish, and they were to keep it until the evening of the fourteenth day. Then it was to be killed and its flesh was to be eaten. Its blood was to be applied upon the lintel and upon the two side posts of each doorway in all their houses. This was to be the means of their salvation in view of the coming judgment that night. The Lord's promise to them was, "...when I see the blood, I will pass over you..." (Ex. 12:13).

Every redeemed spirit will shout a thousand hallelujahs at the rich truths portrayed by this prophetic symbolism. Enlightened eyes can readily see Jesus, the Son of God, being selected by the Father to become our Paschal Lamb. We can see Him, laying down His life without murmur or complaint, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Ah, how blessed to have His precious blood applied, to be among the redeemed (Eph. 1:7), to be justified (Rom. 5:9), to be at peace with God (Col. 1:20), and to experience restored fellowship with our heavenly Father (Eph. 2:13)! How very real to every true believer has been this deliverance from the world and a life of sin. Indeed, the
Passover experience is a brand new beginning, a new day, a new year, a new calendar, a new life, a new era for the child of God. Old things begin to pass away, and all things begin to become new. The bondage of the world and sin, the old life-style of serving the lusts of the flesh and of the mind is left behind, giving way to a new walk in the Spirit of God, a life of servitude to the God of our salvation. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). From the time we receive Christ as our personal Saviour, and really partake of the power of His blood, from that very hour we begin a new life in God. Historically and experientially the death of Jesus Christ was the first step in the process of producing a spiritual kingdom of people who would eventually rule and reign with the Lord over the earth and all things. Jesus spoke of the fruit of His death in this manner: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:23-24). Jesus died that through His death He might become the firstfruits of a vast family of sons of God who would follow Him.

The coming of Christ in the Feast of Passover brought a new beginning for us and for the whole world. Did it really make any difference? Was the world any different for His coming? The coming of Jesus Christ into the world was the greatest boon in the history of mankind. In fact, the coming of Christ so clearly divides the history of the world into B.C. and A.D., that no one can write a letter or sign a check without bearing mute testimony to the incomparable excellencies and accomplishments of the Carpenter of Galilee. Indeed, Jesus makes a great difference! All the world is different because He came. Can you even imagine what the world would be like today had He NOT COME? The entire history of mankind before His coming can be seen as nothing other than a preparation for His advent into the world. All history since His coming has simply been the unfolding of the progress of His Spirit in the hearts of men and the effect of His Kingdom in the world.

I would like to have you consider with me the wonders of the coming of Christ in the Feast of Passover. His coming was an event that caused men and women and even mighty angels in heaven to wonder. How the angels must have wondered in astonishment when they saw, to their utter unbelief, that the glorious Word of God had left His eternal glory in heaven, where unnumbered cherubim and seraphim worshipped Him with unceasing adoring adulation, and now was born in the filth and stench of a stable. It was not a plaster of Paris stable with little white donkeys, but a filthy stinking stable, where the Son of God was born. How the angels must have wondered at that! A time of wonder! Not only the angels, but Mary herself was filled with wonderment. "How shall this be," she said, "seeing that I know not a man?" Her heart was filled with amazement and Joseph must have been overwhelmed with astonishment at the news that his wife had conceived by the Almighty. "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Mary's heart was filled with wonder and she kept these things in her heart and pondered upon them - that God Almighty had come and had been born in human form. What amazement, what wonder must have filled her soul when she looked down into the face of that little baby to which she had given birth and knew that this was not just a human baby but was the incarnate God. This was the Creator of the galaxies who had come to dwell in human flesh. Her heart must surely have been overwhelmed with the wonder of that! Consider the Magi who came all the way from the Far East at the sight of that star, knowing that the ancient prophecy had been fulfilled and that the Messiah of the world
had come. What awe must have filled their souls as they crept in and bowed down before that little child and offered themselves and their gifts.

How many people down through the ages have been filled with wonder. And all that I have said pales into insignificance beside the surpassing wonder of this blessed One hanging and dying like a common criminal upon a Roman cross. Behold, the Lamb of God! Behold the Paschal Lamb! Behold the blood of Jesus! Beloved, it is the most incredible story in the history of the world! It is tragic that the repeated telling of it robs it of its wonder and astonishment in our hearts. Perhaps one of the most wonderful things about the reality of Christ our Passover is the motive that brought it to pass - a motive of love, infinite love, undying love, unconquerable love, the unconditioned love of God who sent the Son of God into this world.

But there is an even greater wonder than this. John the beloved in his Gospel said, "And the Word was MADE FLESH and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14). The question follows: Of what substance was the Word before He became flesh? The answer is clear: He was SPIRIT, of course! Didn't Jesus say that God is a Spirit? And did He not also say that HE CAME FROM GOD AND WOULD RETURN BACK TO GOD? As physical men of earth it is difficult to understand the world we cannot see. We have been guided by our five physical senses so long that if we cannot see, taste, touch, hear or smell a thing we cannot comprehend it. To speak of the flesh body of Jesus brings reference to that which was made to be given in sacrifice. A body was prepared for the Word of God to be manifested in. In the Greek New Testament we read, "Hence when He comes into the world He says ... A body Thou hast fitted Me" (Heb. 10:5). We must understand that the Word was not flesh substance until He entered into the world. It was a means of conveyance and also for a SACRIFICE. That body could function in this world but its main goal or purpose was to be the sacrificial offering for all mankind. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: SO CHRIST WAS ONCE OFFERED TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANY: AND UNTO THEM THAT LOOK FOR HIM SHALL HE APPEAR THE SECOND TIME WITHOUT SIN UNTO SALVATION" (Heb. 9:27-28).

In order to understand the coming of Christ to us today, we must first understand His coming in that Passover Feast of long ago. When was it, beloved, that you BEHELD HIM for the first time? Was it not by the eye of the spirit? Did you not see Him by the eye of the spirit hanging on a tree, becoming the sacrificial Lamb on your behalf? But what you saw so clearly by the revelation of the Spirit in your heart actually happened on a hill outside Jerusalem two thousand years ago! The Christ is not here today in that body of flesh hanging on a tree. He has returned to the Father, back into the realm of the Spirit. And it was there in that eternal realm that the Lamb of God was truly given. May the blessed Spirit of Truth somehow help us to understand that He was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world! He had already been slain before Adam was banished from Eden's garden, before Abraham trod the dusty trails of Palestine, before David prophesied of One who would be wounded for our transgressions. What happened on that Judean hill twenty centuries ago was but the dark shadow of an event which had transpired in the realm of spirit before the ages were framed or ever God said, "Let there be!"

Oh, yes, Jesus died on that hill by Jerusalem on that day long ago, but He appeared to you as YOUR SIN OFFERING in the here and now, and you beheld Him in spirit hanging upon a tree for you. Historically He came as the Passover Lamb two millenniums ago, but
by the quickening of the Spirit He APPEARED TO YOU as that same Jesus, the very Lamb of God, and He was brought bleeding and dying into your present, in a manner more real and wonderful than it was to those wondering souls who stood gazing in shocked anguish at the foot of the cross that day at Jerusalem. You see, when He appeared to you as YOUR PASSOVER LAMB, you beheld Him in spirit. It was not the shadow of the Man of Galilee that you saw, but the One who was slain in the realm of spirit from the foundation of the world! He became manifested in power in your life in the true Feast of Passover, not in the shadow, but in the substance. He CAME TO YOU as the Lamb, in the eternal and infinite power of His blood, in the authority of His life, and a new and glorious day dawned for you, a NEW BEGINNING. Oh, the wonder of it! The mystery of it!

THE PASSOVER GOD OUR DEFENSE

God said, "When I see the blood I will PASS OVER you." For years I thought that meant that God would "skip over" them, that when He passed through the land meting out death to the firstborns, He would see the blood and "pass on by." "I will skip over you." But that isn't what He said. Notice Ex. 12:23: "The Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and over the two side posts, the Lord will PASS OVER THE DOOR, and will NOT ALLOW THE DESTROYER TO COME IN UNTO YOUR HOUSES TO SMOKE YOU." Now who was doing the smiting? The Destroyer! "I will pass over the door, and will not allow the Destroyer to come in." God was saying, not that He would skip over them, or pass them by, but He was assuring them, "I will become a tent, I will impose my presence over you and you can stand under the tent of My presence and be safe! The Destroyer will be out there but he can't get in - because I will be there! I will pass over you, and will not allow the Destroyer to come in unto you."

Who is the Destroyer that was in the land of Egypt that dark night? The Destroyer was the ANGEL OF DEATH. According to Heb. 2:14, throughout the Old Testament period the devil HAD the power of death. At Calvary Jesus took it away from him and now the Christ of God holds the keys of both hell and death in His mighty hands. None enter or leave those dread realms except at His word. All power and authority over all things in heaven above, and in earth below, and in the nether world has been given into the hands of the triumphant Christ. "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" (Heb. 2:14).

Jesus rendered Satan powerless. He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. The Greek word here rendered "destroyed" means that He rendered him powerless. The Weymouth translation reads, "...in order that through death He might render powerless him who had authority over death, that is, the Devil, and might set at liberty all those who through fear of death had been subject to lifelong slavery." The Amplified Bible renders, "...that by going through death He might bring to naught and make of no effect him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and also that He might deliver and completely set free all those who through the haunting fear of death were held in bondage throughout the whole course of their lives."

In Old Testament times Satan was the angel of death, appointed by God to that purpose. "Behold," says the Lord, "I have created the waster to destroy" (Isa. 54:16). The Lord unleashed the mad dog, the devil, that night in Egypt. You see, the devil is just a mad dog on the end of God's leash, and God turned him loose that night with command to smite the firstborn. God unleashed that dark angel of death in the land of Egypt, but what
did God do? God said, "I'm going to come down in the midst of you, and when I see the blood I will interpose My presence over you. I will pass over you and not permit the Destroyer to come in unto your house." Notice Ex. 12:26-27: "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and DELIVERED OUR HOUSES. And the people bowed the head and worshipped."

God passed over their houses to protect them. He became a defense for them. He became a refuge. His power became a strong and impregnable fortress round about them. Ps. 91 is, I believe, an allusion to the Passover. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, HE is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

If you have met God in the Feast of Passover, if the Christ has come to you in the reality of this wonderful Feast, where are you today? Under His feathers, under His wings! The Passover God has come and has passed over us, when we embraced Him as our Saviour. When you took the blood of Jesus and applied it to your life, that blood brought the covering presence of the Almighty God. You have perfect protection against the Destroyer! I have no time for the crowd of fear-mongers that roams our land today. I have nothing in common with those who constantly peddle fear - fear of tribulation, fear of the terrible conditions at the close of this age, fear of the Antichrist, fear of economic collapse, fear of communism, fear of the Illuminati, fear of computer systems, fear of conspiracies, fear of demons, fear of death.

There is a lot of false teaching going around today on demonology, and men casting all kinds of devils out of the saints, and bringing a totally erroneous concept which is neither scriptural nor right, leaving people in confusion and in fear of demons and the devil. When you come in under the covering of the Passover God, the God who passes and hovers over you as a fortress and a defense, you have perfect protection against the Destroyer and all his forces. I do not hesitate to tell you today that I am not afraid of the devil - the devil is afraid of me! And he's afraid of you, if you have truly experienced the Lord in the Feast of Passover. Nowhere does the Bible state that the Christians fear the devil - it says in James 2:19 that the devils believe and What? - tremble! It is the devils that are trembling today! God has a people who are marching through the land triumphant above all the fear of demons, the devil, the world, death, and all that business. There is a tremendous need for the Lord's elect to know their place under the blood and in the indwelling and overshadowing presence of the Lord. HAS HE COME TO YOU IN THE FEAST OF PASSOVER? Are you eating and drinking and rejoicing with Him in that wonderful Festival? Ah, GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN YOU THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD!
Chapter 5

The Coming Of Christ In The Feasts

(continued)

I believe every word that the Bible says about the coming of our Lord; I don't believe what the apostate churches say about it, nor what the television evangelists say about it, nor what the tradition-bound preachers say about; but I certainly believe what the Bible says about it!

Briefly, I would again draw your attention to a passage of scripture in Prov. 22:19-21. "That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee EXCELLENT THINGS in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" The word "EXCELLENT", as used here, is the Hebrew word SHALISH meaning three-fold, or weighty. It is most interesting to note that Young's Literal Translation renders it, "Have I not written to thee THREE TIMES with counsels and knowledge?" A free translation would run, "Have I not written unto you THREE-FOLD things?" Three-fold things. These are the excellent things of God. These are weighty things, things which have depth upon depth upon depth in their meaning. This three-fold principle is brought forth again and again as the Spirit unfolds the truth appointed for His overcoming company in this important hour.

While men speak of the "first coming" and the "second coming" of Christ, God's program is in THREES. God has promised to meet with man in THREE DIMENSIONS. He has met man historically and experientially in the first and second realms. I declare to you that He will meet with us dispensationally and experientially yet a THIRD time! The pattern is clear: "THREE TIMES in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD (Passover), and in the feast of WEEKS (Pentecost), and in the feast of TABERNACLES: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty" (Deut. 16:16). God says that He will meet with man THREE times - in the three great Feasts of the Lord! "THREE TIMES in a year shall all your males appear before the Lord." To "appear before the Lord" designates not only an action on our part, but a reciprocal action on God's part. Not only must we appear, but HE MUST APPEAR! It is a joint-meeting in which WE APPEAR B-E-F-O-R-E H-I-M, even as He appears in His glory as He did in Jerusalem of old. Or, as the apostle has so eloquently explained, "When Christ, who is our life, SHALL APPEAR, then shall YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM in glory" (Col. 3:4). When this three-fold aspect of His appearing is properly understood, then the fact that the scriptures nowhere speak of just a "first coming" and a "second coming" takes on new meaning!

The three primary Feasts given to Israel were the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Two of these Feasts have now been fulfilled and are still being fulfilled in the body of Christ today. The last Feast still waits a future fulfillment that will begin at the
completion and maturity of the Christ-body at the end of this age. Every one of the Feasts of the Lord have not only a historical aspect, pointing back to something God did, and a prophetic aspect, pointing forward to something God would do; but every one of them has a personal and individual aspect in our lives experientially. Each Feast finds its fulfillment in our forward walk in God. In Passover we see a picture of our justification, with sins forgiven. In the Feast of Pentecost we have a picture of our baptism with the Holy Spirit, the "firstfruits" of our inheritance. In the Feast of Tabernacles we find a picture of our glorification, our entrance into the fullness of our inheritance and possession in God, even all the wisdom, knowledge, life, victory, nature and power of the Almighty.

**THE COMING OF CHRIST IN THE FEAST OF PENTECOST**

The Feast of Pentecost was the second of Israel's three annual Feasts, celebrated in the third month. As the scriptures reveal, the Feast had many names. It was called the Feast of Harvest, the Feast of Weeks, the Day of Firstfruits, the Feast of Firstfruits of Israel's Labor, and the Feast of Pentecost, which means "fiftieth." An examination of Lev. 23:15-16 will reveal why the Feast is called Fiftieth. It was because the Feast began on the fiftieth day after the Passover sabbath, or "the morrow after the seventh sabbath." This, of course, parallels exactly with the fulfillment of the type in the New Testament. When Christ arose from the dead, He continued with the disciples for the space of forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). Then He departed into heaven, and after ten days (at the time of Israel's Feast of Pentecost), He sent forth the Holy Ghost upon the waiting disciples.

Many are under the misapprehension that the day the waiting disciples received the Holy Spirit, is called the Day of Pentecost because the Lord poured out His Spirit on that day. But the Bible says that the Spirit came "when the Day of Pentecost was fully come." The fact is, the Day of Pentecost had been celebrated annually for 1500 years BEFORE the outpouring of the Spirit recorded in the book of Acts. The Feast Day of Pentecost was a Feast kept in remembrance of an historical event in Israel which is recorded for us in Exodus chapters 19 to 23. Fifty days after the children of Israel had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb, they came to Mount Sinai. It was at this moment that the presence of God came down in a way that God's people had never known before. It was a new manifestation of God's power and glory. The Bible says that Mount Sinai was shaking and on fire. The voice of God was heard out of the midst of the fire in an awesome way. The words God spoke on Mount Sinai are the Ten Commandments, and various other commandments given to Moses for the people. It is very important to notice the commandments to build the Tabernacle of Moses were given on Mount Sinai. God commanded the people of Israel to keep the Feast of Pentecost to REMIND THEM OF THEIR EXPERIENCE AT SINAI.

The two loaves, the ten sacrificial animals offered with the bread, the new meat offering, and all the details of the Feast of Pentecost pointed back to the power and glory of God when He met with His people at Mount Sinai, and to the LAW OF THE LORD given to them at that time and place. But it also pointed FORWARD in time. It was a shadow of something to come - a New Testament manifestation of God's power and nature.

For fifteen long centuries Israel had kept the Feast of Pentecost. On one Pentecostal celebration, when Jews from many places were gathered together in the city of Jerusalem to keep the Old Testament Feast, suddenly they heard a strange commotion coming from an upper room. While Jews in the temple continued to keep the old Feast,
the one hundred and twenty followers of the despised Nazarene were experiencing the New Testament fulfillment of Pentecost. While the Jews were keeping the Feast of Pentecost fifty days after the Feast of Passover, the disciples were experiencing its fulfillment fifty days after the Passover Lamb had been slain on Calvary. God spoke with His people in an altogether new way from Mount Sinai. He did so again as the hundred and twenty received the spiritual experience of which Sinai was but a type. For, it is written, the one hundred and twenty "began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance as God's presence came down in fire just as it did upon Mount Sinai. In like manner, as the hundred and twenty received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." God wrote His Holy Law on tablets of stone on Mount Sinai. But at the spiritual Pentecost He inscribed His Law upon the fleshy tables of men's hearts by the transforming power of His indwelling Spirit.

Pentecost! What a vast treasure house of spiritual reality and experience looms before us as we contemplate the tremendous implications of the word! We could not begin to adequately explain the meaning of the Feast without saying that it is the celebration of the receiving of the Law. The baptism in the Holy Spirit certainly begins with the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, speaking in tongues, prophecy, miracles, healing, discerning of spirits, etc. It has been said that receiving the Holy Spirit is like buying a pair of shoes - the "tongues" come with it! I believe that. But - speaking in tongues may be the evidence that you have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is in no way the evidence that you are walking in the Spirit. Tongues are not the evidence of either a Spirit-filled or a Spirit-led life. But I will tell you what is! In Ex. 19, when the children of Israel came to Mount Sinai, it was there in the third month that God gave them the Law. So the proof of the real Pentecostal experience is THE LAW OF GOD WRITTEN UPON THE TABLES OF YOUR HEART. "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 them out of the land of Egypt. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; 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. 8:8-10).

There is the power of a REAL PENTECOST! It is sad that that has not been the experience of most Pentecostals. Someone has said that if you have all "Word" (Fundamentalism) you will dry up, and if you have all "Spirit" (Pentecostalism) you will blow up; but if you have both the Spirit and the Word you will GROW UP! The real Pentecost, precious friend of mine, is not signs and wonders and miracles, but the Law of God written upon the heart. Jesus walked out this glorious Feast upon earth, He fulfilled all the Law as the anointed One of the Father, and revealed the nature, mind, will and power of God before men. Now HE is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit! For us as members of His body, we keep the Feast of Pentecost when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, endued with power, transformed in mind and heart, receiving the earnest of our inheritance, the gifts and fruit of the Spirit ministered by love.

It is important that the Feast of Pentecost occurred at a separate point in time from the Passover and was different and distinct from the previous Feast. For the second time, all males were to appear before the Lord in the place of His choosing (Deut. 16:16). This Feast, like the first, was also associated with the harvest. Whereas Passover was held at the time of barley harvest, Pentecost was held at the time of wheat harvest (Ex. 34:22). Therefore, we see that the Feasts were associated with a PROGRESSION IN
HARVEST, and speak of the ongoing process of the development and maturing of HIS LIFE in the life of the believer. There is a continuous process of sowing and reaping throughout the believer’s walk with the Lord. We do not receive the life of our Lord in full measure, or full blossom, or full fruitage at the time of our conversion at the Feast of Passover, but we continually "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 13:14; Eph. 4:24). We are to be progressively changed into His image from glory to glory until finally we arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ (II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 3:19; 4:13).

How sad that good men of God who have experienced the glory and wonder of the Passover experience, should now close the door to further reality in God and deny that the Feast of Pentecost is a second and further appropriation of the presence and working of God in His people. In fact, most of Christendom has never even come into this Pentecostal experience. They have refused to come to the Feast! They have not appeared before the Lord as commanded. We find that their leaders have barred the door, telling the people that both the old Feast of Pentecost in the Old Testament and the glorious manifestations of power in the New Testament fulfillment, are events of ancient history, that the early church enjoyed them for a season, to help get the church off to a good start, but it is not for them today - so they are denied the blessings of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and that satisfying praise and worship which comes by His quickening within. Speaking in tongues is a "no-no", or any supernatural moving of the Spirit as He would anoint those who go on from Feast to Feast. Yes, for many the Lord has come to them only once - in the Feast of Passover - and they experience and know Him only as Jesus the SAVIOUR. So we praise God for the ones who are receiving of His Spirit around the world today, being called to appear before the Lord in the second great Feast of Pentecost, to receive of its ministry to them. The Lord came down and appeared to Moses on the Mount. And the Lord has come down and is appearing to, in, and through His people in the spiritual Feast of Pentecost. We marvel at how religious leaders will acknowledge the COMING OF JESUS as SAVIOUR in the Feast of Passover, and yet refuse to acknowledge the COMING OF C-H-R-I-S-T, i.e. the ANOINTING SPIRIT, which is to abide within us and guide us into all truth, and reality and maturity of His life, in the Feast of Pentecost.

When Moses ascended Mount Sinai and God appeared to him, he received the various commandments as to how the Israelites were to conduct themselves as a family and a nation, how the different Feasts were to be held, and the sacrifices pertaining to the Feasts. He received the Ten Commandments of God's Law on tables of stone. But not only that. He was at the same time given by God the pattern of the Tabernacle which they were to build, in which God would dwell among them as they journeyed on. And when the Spiritual Israel came to Spiritual Sinai on the Day of Pentecost, in Acts chapter two, God began to reveal His Laws and Commandments, now not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of our heart (II Cor. 3:3). It was at Pentecost that the True Tabernacle of God began to be built, not of acacia wood, brass, silver and gold, but of living stones of men and women who were soft and pliable in the Spirit of God. He began to fashion a dwelling place, the many mansions of Father's house, and He is still working on it today, praise His name. It is at Pentecost where, when filled with the Spirit of God, we can offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to Him; we can minister one to another, building each other up in the faith.

As it was necessary for Israel to come to Sinai and receive from God in the way they did, so it is vital that God’s people know the Sinai or Pentecost experience today and have His Spirit moving in their hearts. For in Deut. 1:2, Moses, when counting how many days
journey it would be to the promised land, reckons it not from Egypt, nor from Passover, but said it was eleven days journey from Horeb or Sinai; meaning that Israel had to go via Sinai to get their inheritance since it was reckoned from Sinai. And today, for you and me to come into God's inheritance, we have to go via Sinai or Pentecost! When I say God's inheritance, I am not talking about some far-off heaven somewhere, and that if we are not filled with the Holy Ghost we won't make heaven. There are many precious saints who have gone before and weren't filled with the Holy Ghost, but the Lord had come to them in the Feast of Passover as Saviour. But I am speaking of an inheritance which God has reserved in heaven READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME. It is the inheritance of ALL HE IS AND ALL HE HAS. For a people to come into this, they must be filled with the Holy Spirit, not ten or twenty years ago, but a day by day experience of flowing in the Spirit of God and allowing the Spirit to flow through them and be formed in them. Once a preacher was asked by a man if he could get to heaven without the Holy Ghost. The preacher looked at him and said, "Son, I wouldn't want to go to the drug store without Him!" Hallelujah!

We must see clearly from the light of scripture that in the Old Testament period the Spirit of God did not indwell men. In that time the Spirit of God descended upon man to move man to do God's work; the emphasis was upon the Spirit of God being the power to man. In the Old Testament the anointings of God's Spirit came and went, fell and lifted. The Spirit was never completely "given" to any man - prophet, priest or king. This is why we read such statements as these: "And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God CAME UPON HIM (Saul), and he prophesied among them" (I Sam. 10:10). But later: "...the Spirit of the Lord DEPARTED FROM SAUL" (I Sam. 16:14). When God initiated His great plan to GIVE, to dispense His Spirit into man, Jesus was the first to so receive, but during His earthly ministry the dispensation of God's Spirit was limited to Him alone. Although people in the Old Testament received the Spirit of God upon them as a Word and as Power, yet in reality they did not receive the Spirit of God into them to BE THEIR LIFE. In the Old Testament times, the Spirit of God merely descended upon man as a Word and as Power, but did not enter into man AS LIFE; He only bestowed a divine power upon man, but did not impart to man a divine nature and being. Therefore, in the Old Testament we see a number who possessed the power of God, yet had nothing whatever of God's life, nature or mind. Samson is the best example (Judges 14-16). He had the supernatural power of God upon him, but at the same time he did not have the nature of God in him at all. Here we have a strong man whose power was beyond measure, yet whose nature was totally incompatible with God. Therefore, with respect to power, Samson had the Holy Spirit upon him, but with respect to life, he did not have the Holy Spirit within him. The Holy Spirit of God descended upon Samson that he might have God's power, but did not enter into him that he might have God's nature. It was not until the New Testament times, not until the coming of the Lord in the spiritual Feast of Pentecost, that the Spirit of God actually enters into man and becomes man's life that he might possess not only God's power, but also God's life, nature and mind.

The prophet Ezekiel saw this day of the New Testament, of the remarkable regeneration by which men would actually be born of God to become sons of God, and he prophesied, saying, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean... 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 an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit WITHIN YOU, AND CAUSE YOU to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them" (Eze. 36:25-27). In Christ, we not only have our sins forgiven in
the Feast of Passover, but as we follow on to the next Feast there is an impartation of a NEW SPIRIT, a NEW LIFE, even the divine life of God. We are impregnated by the Spirit of God, and a baby spirit, a divine nature, is conceived within us. This new embryo is the offspring of God in Christ, so that God becomes, not figuratively, nor creatively, but very literally in a Fatherly way OUR FATHER, the Father of our spirit. Therefore, "If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE" (II Cor. 5:17). There is within ourselves, beyond the realm of our conscious knowledge, a divine life, the child of God's Spirit, under His loving care, working in stillness, ever unwearied, never exhausted, ever growing and maturing, to gain control of our being, and transform us into the image of God. This is the Law of God written upon the tables of the heart - the glory and power of Pentecost!

CHRIST IS THE SPIRIT

Immediately I hear some reader saying, "But why do you say the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the coming of CHRIST - is it not the coming of the Holy Spirit, and is not the Holy Spirit a different member of the Godhead?" But, dear reader, do not be too hasty in your judgment.

In II Cor. 3: 17 we read these arresting and outstanding words: "Now the Lord IS THAT SPIRIT." For comparison and further clarification let us go to additional translations and get their insight into this portion of scripture. From the Jerusalem Bible we read II Cor. 3:15-18: "Yes, even today, whenever Moses is read, the veil is over their minds. It will not be removed until they turn to the Lord. NOW THE LORD IS THE SPIRIT, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, with our unveiled faces, reflecting like mirrors the brightness of the Lord, all grow brighter and brighter as we are turned into the image that we reflect; this is the work of the Lord who IS THE SPIRIT." We are told that we reflect the brightness of the Lord like mirrors, and that we shall continue to do so until we are transformed into that bright image that we now reflect. But, in turning to Rom. 8:29, we learn that we are predestinated to be "conformed to the image of His Son." Therefore, since the "Lord is that Spirit," and we are to become as that Spirit someday, and since we are also told that we are predestinated to conform to the image of the Son, we have no alternative but to conclude that the Lord Jesus Christ is "that Spirit." The Amplified Bible says, "Now THE LORD IS the Spirit." Moffatt's translation reads, "'The Lord' means the Spirit." The Weymouth Translation renders, "Now by 'the Lord' is meant the Spirit." Young's Literal Translation says, "And the Lord IS THE SPIRIT; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

I prayerfully invite all who read these lines to carefully consider the following words spoken by our Lord. "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him were to receive: for the Spirit WAS NOT YET; BECAUSE Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn. 7:38-39). Our Lord promises here that those who come unto Him and drink will not only never thirst, but will themselves become fountains, whence streams of living water, of life and blessing, will flow forth. In recording the words, John explains that the promise was then a future one, that would have to wait for its fulfillment till the Spirit should have been poured out. He also gave the double reason for this delay: The Holy Spirit WAS NOT YET; BECAUSE Jesus WAS NOT YET glorified. You will note that in the King James Version it reads, "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." You will also note, however, that in the King James Version the word "given" is in italics, showing that the word is not in the original, but is supplied by the translators in an effort to clarify what they perceive as the meaning. Omitting the added
word the passage reads: "The Spirit WAS NOT YET; BECAUSE Jesus was not yet glorified." The expression: the Spirit was not yet, has appeared strange, and so the word "given" was inserted. But the expression, if accepted as it stands in the Greek New Testament, may guide us into the true understanding of the real significance of the Spirit's not coming UNTIL JESUS WAS GLORIFIED!

Jesus promised that if He went away He would send "another Comforter." The basic fact underlying the truth of the Comforter is just this: "For the Spirit WAS NOT YET; BECAUSE Jesus had not yet been glorified" (Weymouth Translation). In other words, this peculiar manifestation of God AS THE COMFORTER did not and could not exist until Jesus had ascended on high. This is intimated in Ps. 68:18 wherein the Psalmist says, "Thou hast ascended on high... Thou hast RECEIVED GIFTS for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God MIGHT DWELL AMONG THEM."

Do not misunderstand me. I do not say that the Holy Spirit did not exist previous to the glorification of the Son of man, for the very term "Holy Spirit" signifies "the Spirit Who is holy", even the everlasting God (Jn. 4:24). But I do say that the manifestation of God AS THE ABIDING COMFORTER was utterly impossible until Jesus was glorified; and this because of the very nature of the Comforter, for the scriptures teach that He proceeds from the Father and the Son (compare Jn. 15:26 and Acts 2:33), thereby combining almighty POWER with mediatorial and intercessory GRACE. How clearly this is expressed as follows: "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, THAT HE MIGHT BE A MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to SUCCOUR them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:16-18). And again, "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the FEELING of OUR INFIRMITIES; but was in ALL POINTS tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

These things were spoken of Jesus in the days of His flesh; what have they to do with the Comforter? Listen! "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, HE hath shed forth this..." (Acts 2:33). And now of the Spirit which we have received of Him it is attested, "Likewise the Spirit also HELPETH OUR INFIRMITIES", making "intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26-27). Who intercedes for us, Christ or the Spirit? The intercession of the Spirit IS the intercession of the Christ, for "the Lord IS THE SPIRIT." Here, then, is that blessed intercessory aspect of the Spirit which is peculiarly related to the priestly ministry of Jesus developed in Him in the days of His flesh, and without which there would be no consolation in Christ, no comfort of love, no fellowship of the Spirit, no tender mercies and compassions (Phil. 2:1).

May the blessed Spirit of Truth help every reader of these lines to understand the precious truth that when the Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, He came not only as the Spirit of the eternal God, but just as surely the Spirit of the GLORIFIED JESUS, the Spirit of the crucified, resurrected, ascended and exalted Christ, the bearer and communicator to us, not merely of the life of God as such, but of that life as IT HAD BEEN INTERWOVEN INTO THE HUMAN NATURE IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST JESUS. The Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Son of man become the Son of God - HE could not BE until Jesus was glorified! God IS a Spirit, and there is only "one Spirit." The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are the one Spirit. Now the Lord IS THAT SPIRIT. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the SPIRIT OF GOD dwell in
you. Now if any man have not the SPIRIT OF CHRIST, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). "And because ye are sons, GOD hath sent forth the SPIRIT OF HIS SON into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). "There is one body, and ONE SPIRIT" (Eph. 4:4).

This thought opens up to us further the reason why it is not the Spirit of God as such, but the Spirit of Jesus, that could be sent to dwell in us. Christ came not only to deliver man from sin and the law and its curse, but to bring human nature itself into the fellowship of the celestial life, to make us partakers of the divine nature. In His own person, having become flesh, He had to sanctify the flesh, and make it a worthy and willing receptacle for the indwelling Spirit of the Father - God. Having done this, He had, in accordance with the law that a lower form of life can rise to a higher, only as it is seized upon and transformed by the higher life, prepared Himself by death to give Himself as the seedcorn to bring forth fruit in us. From His nature, as He brought His humanity into subjection to the Spirit, as it was then glorified in the resurrection and ascension, His Spirit came forth as the Spirit of His human life, glorified into the union with the Divine, to make us partakers of all that He had personally wrought out and acquired, of Himself and His glorified life. And in virtue of His having perfected in Himself a NEW HOLY MANHOOD on our behalf, the SECOND MAN, the LAST ADAM, He could now communicate what previously had no existence - a life at once human and divine! And now, blessed be God! Jesus has been glorified; there is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of God.

We seldom stop to consider that this precious Comforter, "another Comforter", is the Spirit of God in a dimension that did not and could not exist until Jesus had been glorified. We do not realize that He is indeed the eternal Spirit, the ever living Almighty God, but tempered, so to speak, by the FEELING of our infirmities wrought out in the days of His flesh; that the very flesh and blood of Jesus, with all His life of suffering and submission, have been combined with resurrection life and sent to dwell in us, and that this is what Jesus meant when He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you ... He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me. and I IN HIM...it is the SPIRIT that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (Jn. 6:52-63). Oh! the tremendous import and the awful reality of the fact that the ever living God became flesh, was touched with the feeling of my infirmities, made the sacrifice for sins once for all, and now lives after the power of an endless life, a priest for ever, coming to dwell in my heart as a quickening Spirit!

If further proof is needed that the Comforter is NOT a Being separate from the Father and the Son, it is surely found in Jn. 14:21-23: "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and WILL MANIFEST MYSELF to him. Judas (brother of James) saith unto Him, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt MANIFEST THYSELF unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered, 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." Here He promises that the Father and the Son will come to those who truly love our Lord Jesus, yet He distinctly states that this coming will be a MANIFESTING OF HIMSELF - a revelation and a personal relationship distinct from any they had received or could receive during His earthly ministry, and therefore "another Comforter" but still the very SAME JESUS! "WE will COME UNTO HIM, and make our abode with Him," promises Jesus. And yet the preachers think that every time Jesus speaks of His "COMING AGAIN" He is referring to some future coming when He will split the eastern sky in His body of flesh. Would to God that the Lord's people could see that the scriptures have many, many things to say about HIS COMING that the preachers and churches know absolutely nothing about!
THE COMING OF CHRIST AS THE SPIRIT

As we continue our meditation upon this wonderful theme of the coming of Christ in the Feast of Pentecost, we will fasten our attention upon the ascension of our Lord; and if I had sufficient imagination I should like to picture our Lord and the eleven walking up the side of the Mount of Olives, communing as they went, - a happy company, with a solemn awe upon them, but with an intense joy in having fellowship with each other. Each disciple was glad to think that his dear Lord and Master who had been crucified was now among them, not only alive but surrounded with a mysterious safety and glory which none could disturb. The enemy was as still as a stone: not a dog moved his tongue: His bitterest foes made no sign during the days of our Lord's after-life below. The company moved onward peacefully towards Bethany - Bethany which they all knew and loved. The Saviour seemed drawn there at the time of His ascension, even as men's minds return to old and well-loved scenes when they are about to depart out of this world. His happiest moments on earth had been spent beneath the roof where lived Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. There they had seen Lazarus raised from the dead by Him who was now to be taken from them: the memory of the triumphant past would help the tried faith of the present. There they had heard the voice saying, "Loose him, and let him go," and there they might fitly see their Lord loosed from all bonds of earthly gravitation that He might go to His Father and their Father.

But they have come to a standstill, having reached the brow of the hill. The Lord stands conspicuously in the center of the group, and, following a brief discourse, He pronounces a blessing upon them. He lifts His hands, and while He is lifting them and is pronouncing words of love, He begins to rise from the earth. He has risen above them all to their astonishment! In a moment He has passed beyond the olives, which seem with their silvery sheen to be lit up by His radiance. While the disciples are looking, the Lord has ascended into mid-air, and speedily He has risen to the regions of the clouds. They stand spell-bound with amazement, and suddenly a bright cloud, like a chariot of God, bears Him swiftly away. That cloud conceals Him from mortal gaze. Though we have known Christ after the flesh, now after the flesh know we Him no more!

They are riveted to the spot, very naturally so. They linger long in the place, they stand with streaming eyes, wonder-struck, still looking upward. It is not the Lord's will that they should long remain in shock; their reverie is interrupted. They might have stood there till wonder saddened into fear. As it was, they remained long enough; for the messenger's words pierced their souls: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Do you not see them going down the side of Olivet, taking that sabbath-day's journey into the cruel and wicked city? They held fellowship of the most delightful kind with one another, and without delay entered into the upper room, where in protracted prayer and communion they waited for the promise of the Father. You see I have no imagination, I have barely mentioned the incidents in the simplest language. Yet try and realize the scene, for it will be helpful to do so, since our Lord Jesus was to come in like manner as the disciples saw Him go into heaven.

Ten days after that little group of ardent disciples stood gazing up into the heavens in bewilderment, wondering at the phenomenon of their beloved Master rising bodily from their midst and disappearing into the cloud, they were startled by another manifestation of the miraculous. It was the Day of Pentecost, and as they were waiting and praying in the upper room in Jerusalem, the power of God manifested itself in their midst. Had not the
messengers declared, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner AS YE HAVE SEEN HIM GO INTO HEAVEN?" And now, when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, suddenly "there C-A-M-E FROM HEAVEN a sound as of a rushing mighty wind...and there APPEARED UNTO THEM cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost..." Ah, it was the fulfillment of the messenger's promise to them, this SAME JESUS had returned in mighty Spirit power, they heard Him come, and they SAW Him come from heaven, even as they had seen Him go into heaven. Their minds were now enlightened with a better understanding of those things yet to come in the outworking of the Father's plan and purpose. They had been assured that their Lord would return. The angel had said that "this same" Jesus shall so come "in like manner" as they had seen Him taken into heaven. But not until the Spirit of the ascended Lord came upon them at Pentecost did they begin to understand the meaning of His "return." Their faith had been strained by the fact that His ministry had come to such an abrupt and fatal end, and before many of the promises of God concerning the work of the Messiah had been fulfilled. But now He was here again - and this time IN A MANY-MEMBERED BODY! Please don't write to me explaining that the disciples were still expecting the Lord to come years after the Day of Pentecost had come and gone, certainly they were expecting the Lord, for He comes in many-faceted ways, about which we shall write through many months to come; but this particular coming of the Lord in the Feast of Pentecost was clearly and repeatedly prophesied by the Lord Himself, and He came just as He promised, praise His wonderful name!

Many years ago B. F. Headley penned these true and graphic words: "At this point, let us scan carefully Jn. 14:28-29. 'Ye have heard how I said unto you, I GO AWAY, and COME AGAIN UNTO YOU. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father;....And now I have told you BEFORE IT COME TO PASS, that WHEN it IS come to pass, YE might BELIEVE.' Note, dear reader, that Jesus said, 'I go away and come again.' Note that He said also that 'WHEN it IS come to pass, YE might BELIEVE.' These verses of scripture upset some of our old theology and started it crumbling, and set us to digging to see if these things be so. If you, dear reader, are candid and honest, it is possible that they may also change some of your pet opinions concerning the so-called 'second coming' of Jesus.

"Now please be honest with plain English, with yourself and with God, and answer these questions. Was Jesus talking to His disciples about something which was to take place during their lifetime, or was it something which was to be two thousand years, or more or less, after their death? That He spoke of events which were to transpire before their deaths is very evident, else He would not have said, 'that when it is come to pass, YE might believe.' They could not believe in something which was to happen after they were dead and gone, but it was very possible that they could believe in something which happened while they were yet alive and He was desirous that they should believe it when it came to pass, therefore, He fore-warned them by saying, 'I have told you BEFORE it come to pass, that WHEN it IS come to pass, YE (not those who come after you) might believe.'

"Now let us ask another question. What was Jesus talking to His disciples about? Immediately I hear someone answering, 'His going away.' But that is not right. He was talking about, not only His going away, which is only half of the subject, but He was talking about His COMING BACK. Knowingly or unwittingly, we have observed the first half of that statement of Jesus and forgotten about the second half of it. He was talking just as much about His coming again as He was talking about His going away. So the
whole subject to which He was calling their especial attention was 'I go away AND come again.' It was ALL of this in both phases of the subject, both the going and the coming, to which Jesus was calling their attention and fore-warned them about it ALL when He said, 'I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.' What was to come to pass? He was to 'go away AND come again.' When was it to take place? During the lifetime of those disciples to whom Jesus spake! Was Jesus to 'go away' during the lifetime of those disciples? Yes, that is just what He said. But, was He to 'come again' during the lifetime of those disciples? Yes, Jesus said that He would do that very thing also. Did those disciples die? Evidently they did die for we have no record of any of them being alive today in the flesh, and there is record of the deaths of many of His disciples. If then, Jesus was to come again before the death of those disciples in accord with what is written in the scripture quoted above, can we logically conclude that He did anything other than just what He said He would do, that is, 'go away AND come again?' And both the going away and the coming again must have taken place centuries ago during the lifetime of those disciples, if we are to believe that Jesus did what He said He would do" - end quote.

Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but YE SEE ME: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day YE SHALL KNOW THAT I AM IN MY FATHER, AND YE IN ME, AND I IN YOU" (Jn. 14: 18-20). Simple as these words may seem they have occasioned great perplexity to those whose spiritual minds are veiled to the vast storehouse of scripture passages that speak of the coming again of the Christ as the Spirit. Many Christians, and I might say most, believe in the "first" and "second" coming of the Lord. The first coming was when He was born in the stable of Bethlehem, the second coming will be when He will appear in the glory of His Father, and every eye will see Him. The first coming is past, and they are fervently looking for the time when He will come again in the clouds of heaven in His glory with all the heavenly angels accompanying Him; and they try to make all the scriptures pertaining to THE COMING OF THE LORD fit into just these two comings. How surprising it is to many to learn that the Bible doesn't speak of two comings at all, it speaks of many comings, and in trying to apply all the scriptures that pertain to the various comings and appearings of the Lord, to these two comings, is what has caused most of the confusion and the great and dreadful ignorance on the part of most Christians regarding the Lord's return.

Let us look at some other interesting and enlightening statements about the coming of the Lord. Meditate deeply upon these words, my beloved. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you ANOTHER COMFORTER, that He may abide with you for ever; I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU" (Jn. 14:16,18). "Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt MANIFEST THYSELF unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me ... My Father will love Him, and WE WILL COME unto Him, And make our abode with him" (Jn. 14:22-23). "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, BECAUSE I GO TO THE FATHER. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. AND IN THAT DAY ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you" (Jn. 16:16, 22-23).

How clear it is that Jesus was talking about His coming again, but not in the way that is generally perceived as His second coming, but yet a true and personal coming to the one who loves Him and keeps His commandments. It was not to be a manifestation to the
world, for the world would know nothing whatever of it; but it would be in very fact the COMING of "this same Jesus" to indwell their hearts by His Spirit.

The disciples were greatly perplexed when Jesus died. But then He arose the Conquering Christ! The fact of the Christ's resurrection is historic. The man who disputes it disputes the best established fact in history. He was seen by those who had despared of His existence. He ate with them. He drank with them. He walked with them in a bloodless body. He talked to the despondent and brokenhearted apostles the eleven, for nearly forty days. It was impossible to be deceived. He spoke, and was seen and heard on one occasion by five hundred, the most of whom were living at the time that Paul made the declaration that they knew Christ and had seen Him after His resurrection. He proved His resurrection by telling them that if they would go to Jerusalem and enter into an upper room, and wait for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit's power would come. The promised outpouring took place. Christ went up and the Holy Ghost came down. They saw Him go and they saw Him come. It shook the place where they were sitting. The divine earthquake shook Jerusalem. It shook Israel. It shook the Roman Empire until it fell to rise no more. It shook the world. The Spirit's power came. The Christ returned in mighty Spirit-power. He who IS the Truth came again as the Spirit of Truth. He came as an indwelling Life. Men who were weak became strong. Men who were wicked murderers and devils were transformed into men of virtue and power with God. Men who were illogical became great and mighty reasoners. Men who were feeble stood up, and in their spiritual majesty tower today over all the men of their time. All history substantiates the claim. Every philosopher and potentate of their time had to recognize them so that Peter, Paul, James, John, and many of their successors, became the mightiest Powers even in a heathen Empire.

When the disciples came to face Calvary they ran for their lives. They were terrified. Peter hid himself that cold night; when he was confronted by the damsel, as he warmed his hands over the fire pot, for she charged he was one of Jesus' followers, and he swore and said he didn't even know Him. The rest followed a long way off. His only company on the cross was two thieves. After the Day of Pentecost we see different men altogether. The same Peter who weeks ago swore and said, "I never knew Him," - What a change! The same clay, the same knarred hands and gruff voice and rough mannerisms, tanned from the winds of the lake, but standing like a massive oak, giving His testimony of his encounter with Jesus. Hearken to Peter - "Ye men of Judea, and all that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken unto my words: these are not drunken, as ye suppose...but this is that, which was spoken by the prophet Joel!"

Now the Son had returned in the power of the Spirit. Behold a new day, fresher than the first day of creation! From henceforth He would come to indwell His people. Pentecost had arrived. The very same Spirit that rolled away the stone came to indwell the Lamb of God, to raise Him far beyond the gates of death, to raise His humanity up into the uncreated life of the Father. Pentecost, O blessed Pentecost Day, the day the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead came as a gift of our heavenly Father to indwell here below. This made the change in the disciples. Christ IN THEM made the difference. He had been WITH them, but now He was WITHIN them. No platitudes can give you this power, no sterile form, no static doctrine, no empty ritual can turn your heart and transform you into a God-man upon this earth.

Jesus prophesied that He would come again in the lifetime of the disciples - not only during their lifetime - but before the ministry He had given the twelve and the seventy
would be completed. How utterly amazing His words, believed not by one in a million Evangelicals and Fundamentalists today! Hear it! "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, TILL THE SON OF MAN BE COME" (Mat. 10:23). Look at His words! Can anything be more specific and definite as to persons, place, time, and circumstance, than this prediction of our Lord? It is to the TWELVE that He speaks; it is the cities of ISRAEL which they are to evangelize; the subject is His own SPEEDY COMING; and the TIME so near, that before the work He sends them to do is complete - HIS COMING WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE!

But if we are to be told that this is not the meaning, nor the half of it, and that Jesus speaks of another coming, to other evangelists, in other ages, and in other lands, a coming which, after nineteen centuries, is still future, and perhaps remote - then the question arises: What may not scripture mean? The grammatical sense of words no longer suffices for interpretation; the Word of God is a riddle to be guessed - an oracle that utters ambiguous responses; and no man can be sure, without a special revelation, that he understands what he reads. Strange, isn't it, that to-day it actually takes A SPECIAL REVELATION to embrace the simple truth He declared! Oh, where is He who walked the Sea of Galilee? Oh, where is He? He is with us now. He is with us all the days, even unto the consummation of the age. He has come to us in the wonderful Feast of Pentecost. He indwells our hearts by faith and this glorious Christ within is just the same today.

Today is the second thousand years since He came in the flesh, lived, ministered, died, resurrected, ascended into heaven, and returned as the Spirit. The second thousand years is drawing to a close and, blessed be His name! He is the same. He pursues His mission still and reigns in majesty over His Kingdom by entering into these temples of clay, and filling our spirits and our souls and our bodies with His own eternal presence and power, making us one with Him, members of His very own body, of His flesh, of His bone, and of His blood. He is redeeming a vast family of sons, into whom He is putting within them His mighty Spirit, inworking His glorious mind and nature, inscribing on the heart His Law of Life, so that we, who were destined from the beginning to be the revelation of HIMSELF to the creation, may complete His mighty work for the redemption of humanity.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing ..
Chapter 6

The Coming Of Christ In The Feasts
(continued)

The three primary Feasts given to Israel were the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Two of these Feasts have now been fulfilled and are still being fulfilled in the body of Christ today. The last Feast still waits a future fulfillment that will begin at the completion and maturity of the Christ-body at the end of this age. Every one of the Feasts of the Lord have not only a historical aspect, pointing back to something God did, and a prophetic aspect, pointing forward to something God would do; but every one of them has a personal and individual aspect in our lives experientially. Each Feast finds its fulfillment in our forward walk in God. In Passover we see a picture of our justification. In the Feast of Pentecost we have a picture of our baptism with the Holy Spirit, the "firstfruits" of our inheritance. In the Feast of Tabernacles we find a picture of our glorification, our entrance into the fullness of our inheritance and possession in God. In each of these Feasts, according to the Word of God, there is a coming, appearing, and manifestation of the Lord to His people in a spiritual dimension. While men speak of the "first coming" and the "second coming" of Christ, God's program is in THREES. God has promised to meet with man in THREE DIMENSIONS. "THREE TIMES in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the Feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD (Passover), and in the Feast of WEEKS (Pentecost), and in the Feast of TABERNACLES: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty" (Deut. 16:16). God says that He will meet with man THREE TIMES - in the three great Feasts of the Lord! To "appear before the Lord" designates not only an action on our part, but a reciprocal action on God's part. Not only must we appear, but HE MUST APPEAR! It is a joint-meeting in which WE APPEAR B-E-F-O-R-E H-I-M, even as He appears in His glory as He did to Israel of old.

It is a wonderful fact that God came down and appeared at each of the Feasts of Israel. The Lord first came into the midst of the children of Israel at the time of the Passover in Egypt. "For the Lord will PASS THROUGH to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, THE LORD WILL PASS OVER THE DOOR, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe this thing (the Lord passing in their midst) for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever" (Ex. 12:23-24).

The Lord also manifested Himself at the inauguration of the Feast of Pentecost. At Mount Sinai the Lord said to Moses, "Lo, I COME UNTO THEE in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will COME DOWN IN THE SIGHT OF ALL THE PEOPLE upon Mount Sinai... and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD DESCENDED UPON IT IN FIRE... and the whole Mount quaked greatly. And the Lord CAME DOWN upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the Mount" (Ex. 19:9,11,18,20).

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Finally, the Lord appeared at the Feast of Tabernacles on the occasion of the dedication of Solomon's temple. "And it came to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not minister by reason of the cloud: for the GLORY OF THE LORD HAD FILLED THE HOUSE OF GOD" (II Chron. 5:13-14). Is it not clear that the COMING OF THE LORD and the APPEARING OF THE LORD are associated specifically with the Feasts, and when the Lord commands, "THREE TIMES in a year shall all your males appear before the Lord," He is assuring His people that HE ALSO WILL APPEAR and meet with them in these THREE DIMENSIONS.

THE COMING OF CHRIST IN THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

For fifteen long centuries Israel had kept the Feast of Pentecost as a celebration of the time when God met with them in power and glory at Mount Sinai. On one Pentecostal celebration, when Jews from many places were gathered together in the city of Jerusalem to keep the Old Testament Feast, suddenly they heard a strange commotion coming from an upper room. While Jews in the temple continued to keep the old Feast, the one hundred and twenty followers of the despised Nazarene were experiencing the New Testament fulfillment of Pentecost. While the Jews were keeping the Feast of Pentecost fifty days after the Feast of Passover, the disciples were experiencing its fulfillment fifty days after the Passover Lamb had been slain on Calvary. God spoke with His people in an altogether new way from Mount Sinai. He did so again as the hundred and twenty received the spiritual experience of which Sinai was but a type. For, it is written, the one hundred and twenty "began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." God's presence came down in fire upon Mount Sinai. In like manner, as the hundred and twenty received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of FIRE, and it sat upon each of them." God wrote His Holy Law upon tablets of stone on Mount Sinai. But at the spiritual Pentecost He inscribed His Law upon the fleshy tables of men's hearts by the transforming power of His indwelling Spirit. There is the power of a REAL PENTECOST! The real Pentecost, precious friend of mine, is not signs and wonders and miracles, but the Law of God written upon the heart. Jesus walked out this glorious Feast upon earth, He fulfilled all the Law as the anointed One of the Father, and revealed the nature, mind, will and power of God before men. Now HE is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit! For us as members of His body - we keep the Feast of Pentecost when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, endued with power, transformed in mind and heart, receiving the earnest of our inheritance, the gifts and fruit of the Spirit ministered by love. The Lord Jesus Christ comes to us in a further dimension of Himself in the Feast of Pentecost. He comes as the Lord, the Spirit!

I GO TO THE FATHER

There came a day in the long ago in which our blessed Christ, feeling the limitation and restriction of His body of flesh, cried out in anticipation of spirit, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; BECAUSE I GO UNTO MY FATHER" (Jn. 14:12). Now there is a wonderful reason WHY those who believe on Jesus are going to do the works He did and even greater works. It is just BECAUSE. Do you know what "because" means? It means
that what follows is the reason or cause - the WHY - you will do these things. "The works that I do shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do; BECAUSE ..."

Because of what? **"Because I GO UNTO MY FATHER!"** Only moments before uttering this astounding statement Jesus had told His disciples that the Father was in Him and He was in the Father; but now, seizing upon the mysterious omnipresence of the Father and drawing its cloak of mystery even more tightly about His Person, He announces that He is "going" to the Father. The question follows: Where did Jesus have to go to get to the Father?

With words divine in wisdom and sublime in significance Jesus explained to the benighted woman of Samaria that "God is a spirit" and "the Father is a spirit" (Jn. 4:21, 23-24). What is a spirit? Webster's Dictionary includes in its definition of the word the following: "A supernatural, incorporeal, rational being usually invisible to human beings but having the power to become visible at will ... a being having an incorporeal or immaterial nature." The Hebrew word for spirit in the Old Testament is RUACH, and means BREATH or WIND. The Greek word for spirit in the New Testament is PNEUMA, which also means BREATH or WIND. The English word GHOST used in the King James version, though now somewhat obsolete and not in general use, is derived from the Greek PNEUMA. Its original meaning is exactly the same as the word "spirit" - meaning breath or wind.

All three definitions emphasize that a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Lk. 24:39). Similarly, Jesus indicated that the Spirit of God does not have flesh and blood (Mat. 16:17). So when the Bible says that God is a Spirit, it means that He cannot be seen or touched physically by human beings. As a spirit, God is invisible to the physical man. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, INVISIBLE, the only wise God..." (I Tim. 1:17). The word "invisible" comes from the Greek word EROSOT meaning "not seen."

So where did Jesus go when He "went unto the Father"? It is infinitely necessary that every child of God thoroughly understand that we cannot over-emphasize the value of knowing that our heavenly Father IS AN OMNIPRESENT SPIRIT. Thus, when our precious Lord "went to the Father," that is but another way of saying that He went TO THE SPIRIT! Can we not understand by this that our Lord was indeed saying, "Because I go to the SPIRIT. The Spirit is in Me, and I am in the Spirit; but because this physical Man goes back into an invisible spirit existence from whence He came - then ye shall do the works that I do now, and greater works than these shall ye do." Why? Because that Spirit can COME BACK to you!

Where did Jesus go? He went not to the vast empty space in the North. He soared not away to another planet, nor to some far distant galaxy. Nor did He ascend to that celestial Disney World in the sky with wonderful streets of gold and spacious mansions over every sun-kissed hill top, that the preachers love to preach about. Oh, no! He went into the spirit realm. When He was made flesh and dwelt among us He couldn't get into us with that body of Bethlehem's manger, that body that walked the dusty roads of Palestine, and which with sweetest compassion and tenderest mercy touched the sorrowing and afflicted multitudes with wonderful healing power. He had to go back to the Spirit in order to return and come into us by the Spirit. Because He is in a spirit existence He can now be in every one of us. Spirit can come into all of us at the same time.

As Jesus prepared to leave this earth realm, He promised His disciples that His departure would be their gain; the Comforter would take His place, to be to them far better than He
had been, or ever could be, in His bodily presence. This would be true because His own relationship with them had been very much external, and, in consequence of this, had not resulted in what might have been expected. He had been WITH THEM, and they were still very carnal, earthy. But the coming Spirit would be IN THEM; He, Jesus, would return to them as the Spirit, in an intimacy and vitality they could not know as long as He was outside them, merely WITH them. He would return to them, not in flesh and bone, but as the Spirit, as an Indwelling Presence, in the power of which they would have at their disposal, and as their very own possession, yea, even as their very own being, ALL THAT JESUS IS!

"...the Spirit of Truth ... He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME TO YOU" (Jn. 14:17-18). The thought of Jesus walking with men on earth, living with them, leading, teaching, guiding them, is so clear. But the thought of Jesus becoming a Spirit and hiding Himself within them, and speaking, not in audible sounds, but only in the depth of the life, was too staggering a thought for these yet carnal men. Their minds were yet blinded to spiritual realities. They still needed to be educated (as do multitudes of religious today!) to acknowledge that God desired to rule, not by outward law, but by an inward life. As long as Jesus was with His disciples as a physical being, He had to work from outward inward, and yet could never effectually reach or master their inmost parts. When Jesus went back to the Father, back into a spirit existence, He then returned as the Spirit to be IN THEM, that now He might work mightily from within, outward. Taking possession of the inmost recesses of their being by His Spirit of Life, He would cause them, in their surrender to His will, mind, nature and power, to personally become what He Himself is. The shaping of their life, the forming of their character, the development of their abilities, would be by the power of the Spirit of Christ, who really had become their spirit. On the wonder-filled Day of Pentecost that Spirit was gloriously poured out on the waiting disciples and marvelous works were wrought, and greater works yet shall be done because Jesus went back to the Spirit. He poured out His Spirit and came into us as He promised. The Spirit of Christ in His people would not just be a gracious influence from heaven, to encourage and inspire the children of God on their journey to heaven; rather, He would be the very SPIRIT OF TRUTH in the earth. He would be the VERY SAME JESUS who was with them, but now walking within them, in spirit form.

"The last Adam was made A QUICKENING SPIRIT" (I Cor. 15:45). It is impossible to bring the immensity of that statement into the realm of our human understanding. The resurrection of Jesus was the first step toward the last man Adam becoming a QUICKENING SPIRIT. But notice carefully, dear reader, what Paul says in Eph. 4:10: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, THAT HE MIGHT F-I-L-L ALL THINGS." As we read that stupendous declaration we must consider with great care and holy reverence the essential fact that the Christ was not born in Bethlehem's stable so that He might fill all things; He did not stoop to become a man in order to fill all things; neither did He die so He could fill all things; nor yet was He resurrected with a body of immortality and glory to fill all things. Not one of these events, wonderful beyond explanation, could enable the all-glorious Christ of God to be like the wind which blows sovereignly toward the north, the south, the east, or the west - the wind that lifts the dust of the earth on high, that stirs mighty oceans to rage in fury, the wind that blows where it listeth and fills the whole face of the earth and the heaven above with its life-giving vitality.
Two things, and two alone, were essential before Jesus could fill all things with himself. He must go away. And he must be glorified. He must go to the Father, ascending back into a spirit existence; and he must be received up into union and participation with the eternal Spirit, becoming of the same substance and essence of the eternal Spirit. The glorious truth is just this: Jesus ascended up far above all heavens to become universal. He became spirit to be universalized. He ascended that he might fill all things. It is majestic! Wonderful! Sublime! Do not mistake me. This is no longer the Jesus of Galilee who was so foully done to death by religionists more than nineteen hundred years ago; He is the same, yet not the same. He was limited then; He is unlimited now. He dwelt in a single body then; He dwells in a many-membered body now. It cannot but be that that human Jesus has entered into the full consciousness of God and grasped the scepter of omnipotence. That, and nothing less than that, demonstrates the eminence of His ascension and glorification.

Before the ascension, His presence was occasional; since the ascension it is constant. Before the ascension, His presence was formal; since the ascension it is vital. Before the ascension, His presence was approximate; since the ascension it is inner. Before the ascension, His presence was limited; since the ascension it is infinite. Our presence with one another is occasional, formal, approximate and limited; but His presence is constant, vital, inner and universal. Hallelujah!

**WHY JESUS WENT AWAY**

It was on the solemnest of nights that Jesus spoke one of the most marvelous truths concerning His coming again. Some months previous, on the last day of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, He stood in the temple and cried, saying, "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). This He spake of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive. On the night before His crucifixion Jesus celebrated the Last Supper 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 Eve.

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 Spirit 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. He speaks of separation!

This truth fell upon the disciples like a thunderbolt startling a summer sky. For thirty-three 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, walking among us. 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 could be very near! It seems a mystifying paradox, but He went away to be very near; He ascended far above all heavens THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS! He went away from being nearby, so that He could return and be closer to us even than the air we breathe, closer than the blood coursing its way through our veins!

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 airplanes. 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 might be thrown around them. But it cannot be. You have come to see Jesus, but you will not see Him! They have been there for 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 the 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 opposite 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 God in Jesus 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!

And yet, even today, untold millions of Christians have learned nothing of this simple, sublime truth. Many precious saints are just living for that day when Jesus comes, or they get to heaven, and they can SEE HIS PERSON, bask in His favor, and have PHYSICAL CONTACT with Him. Many picture themselves kneeling in reverence at Jesus' feet, as did Mary of Bethany, kissing His feet, gazing intently into His eyes, strolling hand in hand with Him down Hallelujah Boulevard, or sitting on one of the hillsides of glory for a day, leisurely talking things over with Him, asking all the questions they have always wanted to ask, and unburdening their heart of the many concerns they have so long desired to pour out to Him - personally. There are those among us who, like Thomas of old, want to put their finger on the print of the nails, their hand in His riven side. How the unspiritual heart cries out for the touch of the vanished hand and the sound of the voice that reverberated once over the Galilean hills!

But, my brother, my sister, we need to face FACTS! Do you realize that there are vast numbers comprising untold millions of people (Dan. 7:10; Jude 14) who have been saved by His grace? John saw them in Revelation 7 as "a great multitude which NO MAN CAN NUMBER!" And each and every one of these long, personally, and individually to speak to Jesus and bask in the ecstatic joy of physical fellowship with this resurrected MAN. Do you not realize that with such an innumerable throng about Him, you could not get within FIFTY MILES of Him? Let us suppose, for one moment, that there have been only 100 million persons saved during the past 2,000 years. That sounds like a lot of people, but it is less than half the number of people living in the United States right now. Fox' Book of Martyrs reveals that during the Dark Ages some 50 million souls were martyred for their faith in Jesus...because they refused to bow to the superstitions and idolatries of Rome. That doesn't include the millions of Christians who lived before and since. There are some 20 million Spirit-filled saints alive on the face of the earth TODAY! So you see, 100 million is merely a fraction of the number of people gathered out of all ages who make up that "great multitude which no man can number" who are redeemed by the precious blood of God's Lamb. But if there WERE only 100 million saints of God, and each scheduled a PERSONAL INTERVIEW with Jesus; should Jesus spend only TEN MINUTES with each; it would be exactly 1901.3 YEARS before your turn would come, and then another almost TWO THOUSAND YEARS until your next TEN MINUTE session with Jesus! And during all that time Jesus would not have attended to any matters in the entire universe other than these interviews twenty-four hours a day, unceasingly for four millenniums! It should be obvious to every thinking mind that KNOWING CHRIST, talking with Him, fellowship with Him, MUST BE UPON SOME BASIS OTHER THAN HIS INDIVIDUAL, PHYSICAL, HUMAN IDENTITY.

Ah, to bring the Christ back in the flesh, to know Him once more after the flesh, would be one gigantic step backward, an outrage of immense proportions, an absurdity! Do we not already KNOW HIM? Are not those who have not seen His earthly form more blessed, according to the words of Jesus, than those who saw and believed? O twice born men who through faith have been born of His life-giving Spirit, behold, we have fullness of fellowship with Him NOW. He speaks to us and continually manifests Himself to us in tenderest tones. Even now we delight in the blessed wonder of His glorious presence.
We walk with Him now in the Spirit, and unburden our hearts to Him at any hour of the day or night, and He communes with us in the garden of our hearts. And HOW do we know Him? Why, BY HIS SPIRIT! And it is through the FULNESS OF THIS SAME SPIRIT that we shall ultimately SEE HIM and KNOW HIM "AS HE IS". There is simply no other way! What, I ask, could His flesh body ADD to our relationship in Him? If our confidence is in HIS FLESH BODY, then we shall of all men be most miserable. What incredible limitation! We should be able to share with Him on that personal, human level ONCE EVERY 2,000 ... 4,000 ... 10,000... or 50,000 YEARS!

He went away THAT THE COMFORTER MIGHT COME. Oh that the eyes of men might be opened to see how truly it was expedient that He go away in His visible body of flesh that He might return as the invisible Spirit so that we might know Him by the Spirit and receive Him as our very life!

I am convinced that it is right here at this point where so many of the Lord's precious people need this teaching: "It is EXPEDIENT (advisable, desirable, advantageous, profitable, to your interest) for you THAT I GO AWAY." Like those disciples, so many sincere Christians have believed in Jesus with all of their heart, love Him, and seek to follow Him - but, the Jesus they believe in, the Jesus they love, the Jesus they seek to follow and obey, is the Jesus in the picture on the wall; the Jesus with piercing blue eyes, flowing chestnut hair, fine chiseled features, well trimmed beard, Galilean robe. It is the Jesus of Bethlehem's manger, of Nazareth's carpenter shop, of the sandy shores of the Sea of Galilee, of the Judean hills. The Jesus who preached to the multitudes, fed the five thousand, healed the sick with the touch of His hand, cleansed the lepers, and who, weeping, cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" Even the Jesus of the Judgment Hall, of the Via Dolorosa, of Golgotha's hill, of Joseph of Arimathea's garden tomb. with some it is even the Jesus of the resurrection; the Jesus calling tenderly to the weeping Mary in the freshness of the morn, Jesus walking along the road to Emmaus, Jesus appearing mysteriously to His disciples behind closed doors, or Jesus inviting the doubting Thomas to thrust his hand into His side. But, dear ones, "It is expedient for you that I go away." "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto YOU." "I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME TO YOU." Even the resurrected Jesus had to pass away from their midst before the exceeding great and precious promise of the Indwelling Spirit of Christ could be fulfilled.

How many of God's dear saints are still worshipping the Jesus of the flesh! Truly they believe on Him, love Him, and long to see Him when He comes. And yet, in their longing to see Him, some glad day after while! They find that He is not presently their satisfying portion, their All-in-all. There is yet such a lack in their lives; so much carnality, strife, struggle, weakness, insufficiency and limitation. The only reason can be this: they have not yet fully inherited the promise: "The Spirit shall be IN YOU ... He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." The absolute imperativeness of Christ's going away, the absolute reality of His coming again as the Indwelling Spirit, they do not fully understand nor appreciate. They have not been able to say with the inspired apostle, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet NOW HENCEFORTH know we Him no more" (II Cor. 5:16). "Knowing Christ after the flesh" - it is this that must come to an end, must make way for knowing Him in the power of the Spirit! AFTER THE FLESH: that means, in the power of the external, of words and thoughts, of efforts and feelings, of systems and methods, of ceremonies and ordinances, of influences and aids from without, from men and means. We must know Christ no more after the flesh, as He
was on earth, or even in resurrection. We are to know Him now AFTER THE SPIRIT, as the exalted and glorified Lord who has come to us as the Indwelling Spirit!

To many it is a difficult thing to set aside the Christ of the flesh, to know only the Christ of the Spirit; to set aside the Christ who works through the agencies of the external, through efforts, systems, ceremonies, methods, influences from without, of men and means, and come to know Him alone who works INTERNALLY after the power of an endless life. "As many as RECEIVED HIM (as Spirit), to them gave He power to become the SONS OF GOD" (Jn. 1:12). To all who honestly desire to become truly God-men, bearing the full image of the first-born Son, and in all things be well pleasing to the Father, the thought of Jesus' departure that His Spirit may now become our very own, and we be transformed and matured into His very own stature, will be welcomed with unspeakable gladness and gratitude. In this union the privilege we enjoy, the nobility we obtain as sons of God, the intimacy and fullness of fellowship and relationship with God we enter into all these are infinitely greater than anything experienced by men of God in any passing time or age. To have our Lord coming as the Spirit into our hearts, becoming our very own life, just as He was the Spirit of Jesus Christ on earth - surely this is a blessedness worth any sacrifice, for it is the means of the manifestation of God Himself. As the people of Jesus' day saw the full revelation of God in the Person of Christ Jesus, so the world of our day is yet to see a full and complete revelation of the Christ in His body. This is the consummation for which all other things since the foundation of the world were accomplished. The Word now begins to be fulfilled: "Behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them!" (Rev. 21:3).

KNOW HIM NO MORE AFTER THE FLESH

We do not wish to weary the reader with unnecessary repetitions, but it is our earnest hope that all may clearly see that it would be a monumental tragedy should we revert again to the knowing of Christ after the flesh - even His resurrected flesh that appeared before the astonished eyes of the wondering Thomas. I do not hesitate to say that the strongest temptation to every man is to guide himself by what he can see, 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 lifeless traditions of the church systems, of all the foolishness of candles and crucifixes and incense 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 of 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 Christ. It is trying to make believe that He is still here IN THE FORM.

If men cannot have the historical Jesus here in the flesh, they then 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 the realm of the seen and the temporal, for the things which are SEEN are TEMPORAL, but the things which are not seen are eternal, says the Lord. 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. They could not have Him in the flesh and in the Spirit too; His bodily presence would hinder the spiritual indwelling. They must part with the Jesus they knew before they could receive the GLORIFIED JESUS as the Spirit. Christ Himself had to give up the life He had before He could be glorified either in the heavenlies or in us. Even so, in our union with Him in the Spirit, we too must give up the Christ we have known in the past, however we have known Him, if indeed we are to become partakers of all He is by the 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.

The inspired writer of the book of Hebrews penned one of the most profound statements in all the Word of God when he wrote, "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9). The writer of this letter had a great task before him. He had to try to make some people see the meaning of a loss. In what tender and masterly fashion he did his work matters not to us for the moment. Suffice it to say one can scarcely conceive of it being done better. The letter was written to some Hebrews who could not reconcile themselves to the loss of the Temple, with its splendid ritual, its stately and impressive worship, its wealth of form and type, and its endless symbolism. While in some sense entering into the spirit of the New Day, they were still partially dominated by the habit of a thousand yesterdays.

We can only look with sympathy on those Hebrews in their difficult passage from the old to the new. It is not easy to abandon an established tradition. Habits of thought and conduct get a wonderfully strong hold upon nations and upon individuals. One can clearly see that the believing Jew would be very slow at times in realizing the meaning of the new conditions of spiritual life involved in his acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Messiah. So to these men in their passing confusion of thought - to these men who understood far better what they had lost in the passing of the Jerusalem Temple and ceremony than what they had gained in the formation of the living temple of God built of countless living stones destined to be the habitation of God by the Spirit - came the writer of this letter to the Hebrews, to enter into their difficulties, to show them that upon the loss against which they were feeling resentment and uttering it, there was being built an IMMEASURABLE GAIN which they but dimly appreciated.

"He taketh away the first that He may establish the second." The writer says, "I acknowledge you have lost something - something very beautiful and comforting, something that has met your spiritual needs for centuries. But I want you to look beyond
that loss, and find the splendid meaning of it, and see how that it is really the figure of a more glorious worship and a greater reality of life than ever Israel has known before." He taketh away. This is God's work. And God's taking is just the opposite of His giving!

Let us notice a few of God's firsts and seconds. God's seconds are always better than His firsts which He gives to mankind. Meditate deeply upon these: Cain - Able; Cain's sacrifice - Able's sacrifice; Ishmael - Isaac; Esau - Jacob; Letter - Spirit; First Covenant - New Covenant; Water baptism - Spirit baptism; First Adam - Second Adam; First earth - New earth; Old man - New creation; Jesus in flesh - Jesus in Spirit. The New Testament presents a more glorious message than the Old; the last Adam redeems what the first Adam lost; the message of God's grace unfolded in the New Testament far excels the Law of the Old. The second is greater than the first. It always is when God takes and gives. As someone has written, "In His great wisdom our God has arranged many things in pairs, or shall we say, by contrasting twos. Some of the 'firsts' may seem to be very good, and for a time quite acceptable, but in due time they are to be followed by the 'seconds' which are higher, better, and more desirable than the firsts. Perfection is found in God's seconds. Often the firsts are but a type and a shadow of the reality which is later to be found in the seconds. In the former we find the negative realm working out its purpose, and in the latter there is the glorious positive fulfilling its sphere. The more one ponders each fragment of truth revealed, the more they yearn to leave behind the realm of imperfection, fragmentary, and enter into the freedom of the Spirit of Life in fullness" - end quote.

The first is of the earth earthy - the second is of God from heaven. And that is an epitome of the whole process of salvation, both for the individual and for the creation. He taketh away the outward that He may establish the inward, the seen that He may establish the unseen, the material that He may establish the spiritual. Israel had a religion that appealed to the senses. It was to some extent spectacular. Its tendency was temporal and local. It was a religion of times and places. The believing heart could not cling to it and at the same time enter into the timeless and universal gospel of Jesus Christ. And so the vision of the eyes had to go that the vision of the heart might grow clearer. The vision of Jerusalem of Judaea had to fade that the child of God, born now from above, might see the New Jerusalem, the City of God, coming down from heaven - a city ever being built of lives transformed by heaven's life into the radiance of God's glory on earth.

There are two passages in the New Testament which, taken together, form perhaps the most perfect illustration of this principle of which we have been thinking that can be found anywhere. They are these: (1) I go unto My Father (2) I am with you always. Jesus Christ, took Himself from His disciples' eyes that He might give Himself to their hearts. They lost the first, the physical presence, that they might find the second the spiritual presence. And as we seek ever to have the Spirit of Christ and do His service, so in countless ways shall this great principle of true gain by seeming loss have effect on our lives. Ever we shall be losing the less to find the greater; losing the outward to find the inward; losing semblance to find realities; losing shadows to find substance; all the former things shall have passed away and all things shall have become new, praise His wonderful name!

How many millions of children have gone through Sunday schools, grown up, attending church all their lives, listening to preachers and teachers explaining Moses and Jesus of Nazareth; and if you ask them on their death bed, what they know of Christ; they picture baby Jesus, Mary's son growing up, or Jesus teaching the multitudes, laying His hands
upon the sick and suffering, and being nailed to the cross. They know that He came back from the dead for forty days, and then ascended into heaven, never to be seen or heard from again in that body of flesh. These know absolutely nothing about CHRIST THE SPIRIT, CHRIST AS HE I-S, THE GLORIOUS CHRIST W-I-T-H-I-N!

Ah, how do WE see Him? As He WAS, or as He IS? Is our understanding of Him as the lowly Son of man, great and wonderful as He was in that former state, or do we see Him as He IS in His exalted position at the right hand of the majesty on high? Do we see Him as the crucified One? It is wonderful to see Him in that way. Do we see Him as the One who endured the cross, despised the shame, conquered death and rose triumphant from the grave? Or do we see Him as the ascended One, the glorified One; the One who transcended the law of sin, rose above the confining, limiting physical laws of nature and ascended into the Spirit realm of God, the Head of all principalities and powers, far above them all; crowned with glory and honor; Lord and King of the universe; FILLING ALL THINGS WITH HIS QUICKENING LIFE. Do we see Him as a physical Man, or do we see Him as Saul of Tarsus saw Him on the Damascus road, as the Light of God brighter than the noonday sun. Do we see Him with gentle blue eyes, seamless robe, and feet shod with the sandals of yesteryear; or do we see Him as John the Revelator saw Him on Patmos with eyes as a flame of fire, His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters!

How we praise God for the coming of Christ in the Feast of Pentecost! Truly He has come as the Spirit to write the Law of God upon our heart. This is the power and glory of PENTECOST! Wonderful as was the presence of Christ in the world, that physical presence cannot be compared to the magnificent glory of the SPIRIT CHRIST dwelling in the heart of man. No outward manifestation of power can take the place of His indwelling presence. It is from within and not from without that the work of transformation is to be carried forward from glory to glory until we shine in that same image of Christ.

Though Christ had walked and talked with His disciples, eating with them, praying with them, teaching them, and continually demonstrating the mighty works of God among them, even giving them power to heal the sick and cast out devils in His name, yet at the time of His departure there was but little sign of any work of transformation within them. All was by grace. Peter was still capable of cursing like a sailor and lying like the devil! Judas was still capable of stealing, fraud, and acting a traitor. In the face of pressure they were all capable of forsaking Him and running away in despair. They were still very natural, carnal men, as almost all the Old Testament saints had been before ever the Christ of God walked the paths of earth. God in Christ had indeed been among them, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, but He was definitely not IN THEM!

All the evil in the world today, even as Jesus said, comes from within the evil heart of man. Therefore, since all evil begins within and not without, transformation must begin within and not without. A man who makes his New Year's resolutions to change and reform his habits has only an outward change, and usually temporary at best, while his heart remains unchanged. But the man who ceases his sinfulness and carnality because his heart is changed from within is indeed a New Creation man. Herein, then, lies the first and greatest blessing of the coming of the Lord in the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus had been with them, but now He would be IN THEM, renewing from within. He would become the dispensation of God into man by the Spirit. How wonderful it must have been to walk the hills of Judaea and the shores of Galilee with Jesus by their side! How much MORE WONDERFUL IT IS that Christ by the Holy Spirit now dwells within us, bringing forth that
same image of Christ and glory of the Father in our lives! Many saints entertain the notion that the return of Jesus in that singular body of flesh would mean the subjugation of all His enemies and the establishment of His Kingdom over all from pole to pole. Not so! Shall Jesus accomplish by His presence in the flesh what He has not been able to do by the awesome power of His omnipotent Spirit? Behold! the Kingdom of God is within!

A child may be given an acorn by his father - a tiny seed in which is locked the mighty oak that will one day tower upon the spot where it fell into the ground, under whose shadow man and beast will rest, and in whose enormous branches the birds of the air will build their nests. His father digs a hole in the earth and the child places the seed in it. In the darkness, hidden, buried, it is nourished and fed. Tiny roots push out seeking nourishment. Finally, spring comes and at the right moment there appears the first manifestation of the mighty oak. A tiny shoot appears. The father takes his child to see. "Isn't it wonderful!" he tells the child. "Look at that tiny shoot." The child begins to cry. "I want my acorn! Where is my acorn?"

In like manner, God our Father ordained that a New Creation should be brought forth in the image of Himself, to be born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed. He followed the same wonderful pattern that infinite wisdom had devised to produce all things from a seed. First He must bring into the world the holy and incorruptible One who was to be called THE SON OF GOD, for He Himself was to become THE SEED of an entirely new creation of incorruptible SONS OF GOD. Then, true to the pattern of sowing and reaping, that seed must fall into the ground and die; "For," said Jesus, "the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:23-24). It is the outer shell, the form of the seed, that dies - not the incorruptible life within. The incorruptible life is the CHRIST SEED, springing forth, first the blade, then the ear, and afterward to become the full corn in the ear, to become the life of the many sons of God, the new creation - a creation of transformed men and women, born again of the incorruptible seed of God's Christ. But, wonder of wonders! the babes in Christ, comprehending not that our Lord Jesus Christ was the GERM SEED of the new creation, while they behold the harvest of many sons in preparation, at once begin to cry and demand, "I want my acorn! Where is my acorn?"

They would in their childish folly cling to the physical, historical Christ of the flesh, demanding that He be brought down from heaven again in just that singular body of flesh and bones, were they able. Is it not therefore abundantly true that, if the incorruptible life sealed up within God's Christ was to be released into the new creation harvest, then God's Christ must die. How else but by death could incorruptible life be released that they who dwelt in death might through faith partake of the power of His life-giving Spirit? O what a death! O what a resurrection! O what an ascension! O what a glorification! O what an outpouring of HIMSELF! Who can fathom the depths of truth set forth in these words of our Lord: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU."

Praise God! He has come!
Chapter 7
The Coming Of Christ In
The Feast Of Tabernacles

Even though we have heard that we are living in such a day of miracles and sensational happenings that people are shock-proof, let us remind you that people are not shock-proof! Soon a series of prophetic fulfillments of a sensational nature will be transpiring right here on this earth that will shock millions of people who thought themselves to be shock-proof heretofore! Truly, we are living in a day of miracles. Every time we look at a new born baby we are looking at a miracle, and every time we see a giant plane take off the ground into the air with hundreds of people on board, we are looking at a miracle. However, these will fade into insignificance, compared to the miracles that are just ahead.

The prophetic Word of the Lord gives promise of a time to come when the Lord will move mightily by His Spirit. At that time the Lord will restore that which was lost all through the ages past and the long night of man's selfhood and rebellion against God. There is an event soon to take place which shall overshadow and eclipse all former, lesser, manifestations of God's glory and power in the earth. The glories of this great event will inspire, initiate, and bring to fulfillment the times of the restitution of all things. The grandeur, the splendor, the glory and the great power of God to be manifest at the time of this event is impossible for us to comprehend presently, for we are still living and moving, for the most part, in the realm of the "firstfruits" of God's Spirit. The grand and glorious event to which we refer is the coming of Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles!

In previous articles we have explored the coming of Christ in relation to the three great Feasts of the Lord in Israel. We need to understand thoroughly the truths concerning the three great SPIRITUAL FEASTS, of which the three annual Feasts of Israel of old were but types and shadows. God commanded, "THREE TIMES thou shalt keep a Feast unto Me in the year" (Ex. 23:14). Of the three Feasts the first was Passover. That foreshadowed Calvary. We are called to the SPIRITUAL FEAST of Passover in the experience of salvation. Jesus died and Himself became the sacrifice for our sins on the very day of the Passover Feast: "For even Christ OUR PASSOVER is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7). Israel of old was peculiarly a Passover company. They were saved by blood, the same as we are today; but their experience went no further because the time had not yet come for the outpouring of the Spiritual Feast of Pentecost. We are then called to the second Feast of the Lord when we are called to the SPIRITUAL FEAST of Pentecost in the baptism in the Holy Spirit. So, following the death of Jesus on the Passover, fifty days later we find that "...when the day of Pentecost was fully come ... suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). In Israel of old the Feast of
Pentecost was "the feast of the harvest, the FIRSTFRUITS of thy labors" (Deut. 16:9-12; Ex. 23:16; 34:22). Pentecost was the "firstfruits" of the harvest, and under New Testament economy it is fulfilled spiritually and is "the FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT" (Rom. 8:23), the firstfruits of our inheritance. Christ's coming in the Feast of Pentecost saw Him descend on a little flock as the Comforter, which coming Paul tells us was but "an earnest" (or sample) of the Spirit (II Cor. 1:22; 5:5). "Earnest" means merely a pledge or first installment. The balance must follow. The fullness is guaranteed by the first installment. In other words, HE IS COMING A-G-A-I-N to pour out ALL His glorious and eternal fullness in great power and glory!

The Spirit-filled believer anticipates the fullness of God on the basis of this humble beginning. The "firstfruits" of the Spirit is at once a possession, a rich, blessed, and unquestionable reality, and an initial endowment. As an initial gift, it stands in direct line with the expectation. The very fact of its reality is "the guarantee of... the full possession of salvation." The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our full inheritance (Eph. 1:14). "Who hath also sealed us, and given the EARNEST of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:22). This scripture tells us that a down payment has been made to us by God. When we put something in layaway at a store, we have to put down a certain percentage of money on the purchase. That money is the same thing as an earnest. Partial payment is given in anticipation of the complete fulfillment of the transaction. We have earnest expectations or foretastes of the Kingdom as we see it now on its very smallest scale.

Let us illustrate another way. In eastern lands it ever has been, and is, customary for there to be an intermediary in arranging a marriage. The Bible picture of this is in Genesis 24, where Abraham's servant Eliezer, goes on a long journey to find a wife for Isaac. He takes with him a good report of his master's son, and tells how that his father has made him heir of all his vast possessions, and he then shows the damsels and her friends SAMPLES of this wealth in camels and jewelry, and gives them some of the latter. Thus allured, Rebecca left her known circle and took a long, desert journey to become Isaac's wife, though she had never seen him. Thus did Paul the apostle speak to the saints: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2). Fulfiling the role of Abraham's servant, Eliezer, the apostle bestowed upon those who heeded his words a FORETASTE of the vast and immeasurable wealth of the Kingdom of God, by imparting to them the gift of the Holy Spirit with its attending love, joy, peace, righteousness and power in the measure known by our present experience. How bountifully the table has been spread before us with His presence and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost! How rich and wonderful, beyond explanation, has been the blessing and glory so lavishly bestowed! And yet, precious friend of mine, all that we have received up to this present time is but the "earnest" of the full inheritance which will be received when the betrothal is consummated at the marriage of the Lamb!

THE FEAST OF FULLNESS

There is a mystery about the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the only one of the three major Feasts of Israel that as yet has not had a New Testament fulfillment. Therefore it has not been celebrated in a parallel Feast by Christians the world over as has been the case with the other two Festivals, those of Passover and Pentecost. Truly we can say - Passover HAS come, Pentecost HAS come, and Tabernacles MUST come, for each is a part of God's great plan for His people. We have had the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost and both of these Feasts have been fulfilled IN THIS AGE IN THE CHURCH which is His body, and right here on earth. For some strange reason men seek to
postpone the last Feast to some future age, or give it to the Jews, or relegate it to some beautiful "Isle of Somewhere," and consequently the real spiritual meaning and import of the Feast of Tabernacles is completely obscured and lost. The grand truth is that like the others, the Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled in the body of Christ RIGHT HERE UPON EARTH. It will be fulfilled dispensationally, it will be fulfilled in us individually, and it will be fulfilled in us as the Corporate Man. The grand truth of this has been wonderfully quickened by the Spirit of God to multiplied thousands of saints around the world in these last days.

The Feast of Tabernacles must have been most picturesque and striking. At the Feast of Tabernacles Israel set aside seven days unto the Lord. From the 15th to the 21st day of the seventh month they left their houses and dwelt in booths built of various trees and rejoiced before the Lord. The booths were to remind the people of the deliverance of the Lord when He brought them out of the wilderness where they lived in booths and brought them into the land of promise. The 1st and 8th days of the Feast were extra sabbath days. There are several names for the Feast of Tabernacles. It is called the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Ingathering, the Solemn Feast, the Feast of Booths, the Feast of the Seventh Month, and the Great Feast.

There were seasonal rains in Palestine that pertained to this Feast. The Feast of Tabernacles was the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the agricultural year. At Tabernacles there were plenty of corn, oil and wine. This Feast, like the first two, was associated with the harvest. Whereas Passover was held at the time of the firstfruits of the barley harvest, and Pentecost was held at the time of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, when with the ripening of the grapes, olives, corn, figs, etc. the harvest was complete, Tabernacles closed the cycle. Therefore, we see that the Feasts were associated with a PROGRESSION IN HARVEST, and speak of the ongoing process of the development and maturing of HIS LIFE in the life of the believer.

At the celebration of Tabernacles, not only had the barley and wheat been harvested, but also all other grains, the fruit of trees, the olives, the grapes, all that could possibly serve as food or drink. The harvest was complete. "...the Lord thy God shall bless thee in ALL THINE INCREASE, and in ALL THE WORKS OF THINE HANDS, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice" (Deut. 16:15). Thus, this Feast speaks to us of the FULLNESS OF GOD, and therein lies the challenge to move on "unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST" (Eph. 4:13). Can we believe God for a full and complete appropriation of the Christ-life and the Christ-character? Can we believe that we can be conformed to the image of the Christ? Can we believe for the manifestation of the fullest measure of His power and glory? Oh, beloved, whereas the Passover realities represent our initial experiences as babes in Christ and the Pentecostal experience adds a further measure of His Spirit, the Feast of Tabernacles speaks to us of a completed harvest, a fullness in Christ, full growth and maturity in Him, and the full measure of His life, wisdom, nature and power!

What sets the Feast of Tabernacles apart from all the others is the abundance enjoyed during the Feast. It's the full harvest. Passover came right after the bleak winter season, and there was little food to spare. Pentecost marked only the "firstfruits" of the wheat harvest. But at Tabernacles there was plenty! Everyone looked forward to enjoying the full fruit of their labors. It was the close of the agricultural season when all the products from grainfield, oliveyard, vineyard, and the fruit trees were garnered. Hence the name, "Feast of Ingathering," under which it was instituted (Ex. 23:16; 34:22). It is the
ingathering of mature fruit or, to be more exact, of harvest. Only the mature fruit can be harvested.

Thus, the Feast of Tabernacles speaks to us of two things: abundance of fruit; and rest from our labors when the harvest is complete. All the Feasts are types of Christ. Each one, as a type, is complete and perfect in itself; but the last one, the Feast of Tabernacles, is the all-inclusive and greatest type. The lamb of the Feast of Passover as a type of Christ is indeed complete and perfect; yet it is a type of Christ in a much limited measure. As far as the Lord Himself is concerned, He is not limited at all, but as far as our experience of Him is concerned, there is such a limitation. When we come to the Lord and receive Him as our Salvation, the Christ we receive is whole, complete, and perfect; but as far as our experience of Him is concerned, we experience Him in only a small measure, just as the little lamb of salvation. From the time we experienced Christ as the lamb, we have always been progressing and advancing; we have continually made progress in our experience of Christ and received of Him more and more. This does not mean that Christ has become greater and greater. No, Christ is the same, He changes not! But as we grow in our appropriation of Him He becomes greater and greater TO US AND IN US. Day by day in our experience Christ is becoming greater and greater! At the stage of our experience in which we arrive at the last Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, the UNLIMITED CHRIST, Christ is unlimited to us, He becomes ALL IN ALL. The other Feasts are limited, we know Christ by measure in them, but in the Feast of the SEVENTH MONTH we know Him in all fullness and rest with Him in all His glorious and eternal abundance for ever more! All the other Feasts can be measured. There is an extent, a limit, to the features and realities of Christ they prefigure. Not so with the Feast of Tabernacles, here the harvest is complete, all the fruits of the land are gathered in, the people now rest and rejoice and eat to the full of the fruits of the land. Here Christ is known as the inexhaustible and immeasurable, and we rest from all our labors, and enjoy HIM as the fruit.

Oh, what a grand and glorious realm lies before us in the Feast of Ingathering! The day of the full fruit of the Spirit! The day of Perfection! The time of full and complete Redemption, spirit, soul, and body! The full and complete experiencing of HIMSELF! The fullness of Strength and Power and Glory! The Feast of Feasts! The strange part of the whole thing is this, that the whole purpose and plan of God for this day and hour is completely obscured and lost amidst the shout And euphoria over the "firstfruits," and most of the Pentecostals and Charismatics do not know what it is all about. They can see the healings, deliverances, miracles, prophecies, singing in the Spirit... and so forth; and they understand not that it is God in His great mercy inviting His people to enter on in to their full inheritance. They do not realize that all this is but the foretaste and earnest of their heritage, and that God bids them arise and come away with Him to the Great Feast that lies before!

There was much sacrificing of animals during this Feast. The first day 13 bullocks were sacrificed along with two rams and 14 lambs. Each day following for seven days of the Feast one less bullock was sacrificed, but still two rams and 14 lambs were offered each day. The sacrifices were not just burned up, they were eaten and there was more than enough to go around. Whereas at Passover and Pentecost there was only enough for the household, at Tabernacles there was plenty for all; the servants, the poor, the stranger - ALL could partake!
In all these types and previews we can see a glorious picture of the Latter Days. A time of harvest is coming, a great outpouring of blessing and love and power and glory will be upon the saints. Not an outpouring from heaven, but an out-pouring from the innermost being of God's matured ones, His HARVEST COMPANY, as mighty Niagaras of Living Water gush forth, a tremendous outflowing from the very Fountain-Head of the River of God which will send streams of salvation into all the world. It will be a time of deliverance and blessing and transformation such as we have never known. God will "tabernacle" with His people in a new and glorious way, and will be manifested in their midst with such power that the whole world will know it. He will make a great Feast, and all who respond to the invitation will be welcome at His table. The latter-day Harvest of Ingathering will be reaped from the entire world. All nations will participate in His Feast of Tabernacles. The mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above every other mountain.

"The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion" (Isa. 51:11). Joel, Micah, Isaiah, Zechariah, the Psalms, and other prophecies have given us the picture of the glory of the Latter House and of the fruitful Latter Day. "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them ... He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with him" (Ps. 126). "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let ALL the people praise Thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon. earth. Selah. Let the people praise Thee, O God, let ALL the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God shall bless us. God shall bless us; AND ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL FEAR HIM" (Ps. 67:3-7).

JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

It is a wonderful day for a believer when he becomes conscious of the fact of the INDWELLING CHRIST; that it is, indeed, the very Christ of God who has come in and taken up His abode within man, and He is no longer a distant Christ in some far-off heaven somewhere. No greater truth can enthrall the ransomed spirit of a saint of God than the blessed truth that Jesus Christ HAS COME AGAIN! Has He come to you, dear one? Has He come to you in the Feast of Passover, revealing Himself to you as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world? Has He entered into the deepest recesses of your being and washed you whiter than the driven snow? Has He come to you a second time? Has the Christ come to you in a second dimension of His presence and life and glory? Has He appeared to you as the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and Fire? Have you appeared before Him in the joy of the spiritual Feast of Pentecost? I have good news for you, my friend. God does not stop at Pentecost. JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

There are some who clearly see this blessed truth that Christ has come already as Saviour and as the Anointing Spirit, who then presume that the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was "the second coming of Christ" and that, therefore, all the scriptures pertaining to the coming of the Lord find fulfillment in our present walk in the Spirit. But these apparently overlook the fact that the entire New Testament was written AFTER PENTECOST - and it contains more than one hundred and fifty references to the coming of the Lord Jesus as being yet in the future.
However great the blessings may be with which His comings have already enriched believers and still continue to endow them, these blessings are merely the harbingers of the full harvest which the Lord has in store for those elect saints who "follow on to KNOW the Lord." It certainly cannot be said that the measure of the coming of Christ now experienced has brought the full realization of all the blessedness and glory that pertains to His coming again, and that it will be utterly in vain to look for any further coming of the Lord. As we have pointed out, the New Testament Epistles were written many years after the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, and these Epistles repeatedly refer to the coming of Jesus Christ as something that was still future at the time they were written.

When we turn to the New Testament we find the thought focused in the coming of the Lord, and connected therewith is the word "until". When the times of the blessedness predicted by the Old Testament prophets are brought before our attention by the Holy Spirit, He says that they will be brought in by the coming of the Lord, for God will "send Jesus Christ ... whom the heavens must receive (retain) UNTIL the times of the restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21). When the Spirit reminds the saints of the responsibility to fight the good fight of faith, it is "UNTIL the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Tim. 6:14). When the Holy Spirit points out the need of taking heed to the more sure word of prophecy which we have received, it is "UNTIL the day dawn, and the Day Star arise in your hearts" (II Pet. 1:19).

The apostle Paul added to the preponderance of evidence that, to the Spirit-filled saints in the Church, there was a coming of Christ that was yet future, when he penned these meaningful and encouraging words to the brethren at Thessalonica: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thes. 1:4-6, 9-10).

The same thought is expressed in Titus 2:13, "LOOKING FOR that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The words "looking for" are from the Greek word PROSDECHOMAI meaning LOOK FOR, WAIT, TO RECEIVE; thus A WAITING that keeps you LOOKING with the expectancy of RECEIVING! It requires this whole statement to actually give the full depth of meaning of this one word.

Paul wrote, "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience WAIT for it" (Rom. 8:25). There is much that we do not see, it has not yet been brought to us, nor can we generate it in ourselves, therefore, since a man can receive nothing except it be given him from above, all we can do is look, wait, and expect to receive at HIS appointed time, while patience has her perfect work, and we are duly purified and prepared so as to be ready to receive when it shall come. There is a change in the prefix "pros" to "apek" in this word, but the overall meaning remains the same, and we'd like to give a few verses which use this word, to enlarge the scope of that for which we are waiting. "WAITETH FOR THE MANIFESTATION of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). "WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). "WAITING FOR THE COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:7). "We through the Spirit WAIT FOR THE
HOPE of righteousness through faith" (Gal. 5:5). "And the Lord direct your hearts ... unto the patient WAITING FOR CHRIST" (II Thes. 3:5). "Be patient...unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman WAITETH FOR THE PRECIOUS FRUIT of the earth ... be ye also patient ... for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7-8). These saints were aware that the Christ had truly come and indwelt their hearts by faith. But it was as much a part of their walk in God to believe that He WOULD come, as to believe that He HAD come!

FROM PENTECOST TO TABERNACLES

Completeness and perfection, however much desired, are not obtainable through an "in part" possession. Once we understand this one great principle, we no longer condemn ourselves for not manifesting perfection here and now. It would be like giving a farmer a pound of seed and a bag of fertilizer and then expect him to raise enough food in one short season to satisfy the starving millions of Africa. A partial supply cannot produce a full result. As children of God, the Spirit of Christ dwells in us, we have received the EARNEST of our inheritance, but we are earnestly exhorted to "gird up the loins of your mind, and be sober, and HOPE TO THE END for the GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT unto you AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST" (I Pet. 1:13). We must, GROW IN GRACE and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, but don't demand completeness and perfection until JESUS CHRIST HAS BROUGHT US THAT GRACE AT HIS APPEARING WHICH WILL COMPLETE THE WORK WITHIN.

The Holy Spirit has left no doubt that the Christ has not returned in all the fullness of Himself. Christ has ascended into the heavens, and He has returned in a "firstfruit" measure of Himself, but His absolute fullness remains locked up, as it were, in the unseen realm, awaiting a day of manifestation. Now HE is the One "whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). In spite of all the Holy Ghost revivals, soul-saving crusades, healing and deliverance meetings, and signs and wonders and miracles wrought through the ages, we are yet to see the genuine work of restoration begun. So long as the heavens continue to veil from our view the manifestation of HIS FULLNESS, the "times" of restitution have not truly come to their hour.

The inworking of the Christ which we have known thus far, however precious and glorious it might be, is still IN PART - with carnality, sin, limitation, sickness and physical death still upon us, and suffering being used in the purification process. Ah, the Christ HAS come, and the Christ IS YET TO COME, for truly He came, and He continued to come; He comes, and He continues to come; and He shall come, and shall continue to come until He has come in all the fullness that HE IS. Yes, the heavens have received Him, His glory has been reserved in the invisible realms, and kept in store for the progressive unveiling and revelation of His power and majesty.

He has come in the foretaste of His omnipotence, working all through this present age in the hearts of the remnant, gathering out of each generation A FIRSTFRUITS, until the times of restitution. Then He shall be released, breaking forth in visible manifestation of the fullness of His nature, power and being, to begin the great work of restoring ALL THINGS back into God. How we yearn for that fullness! How our souls pant after Him! How we groan within ourselves, waiting for the glory that shall be revealed! He shall not remain forever withholden in the invisible sphere, but we shall RECEIVE OUT FROM the
heavens, for He shall come to us, and in us, and out of the invisible shall proceed the
visible manifestation, as the prophet foretold, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the
glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and
gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and HIS GLORY SHALL
BE S-E-E-N U-P-O-N T-H-E-E. And the nations shall come to THY LIGHT, and kings to
the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1-3).

Jesus Christ IS LORD, but He is not yet the Lord of lords, exhibiting fully that Lordship in
His body, to restore creation. If you don't understand that there are some things waiting
to be accomplished, then you need help in the scriptures. There are those who would try
and claim and appropriate to themselves the fullness and perfection of God right now.
They are already perfect, mature sons, filled with the fullness of God, immortal and
incorruptible, ruling and reigning with Christ - so they say. Their boast is louder than their
living, and their claims exceed their experience. The reports of their great power and
authority over the creation are highly exaggerated.

Christ is not coming to evacuate His poor, discouraged, bedraggled, defeated Church to
some distant planet to escape the ravages of the antichrist. HE, the Head of the Church,
is coming in power and victory to His body, to assume the Headship and Lordship over
the Church. When He was on earth He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the
air have their nests; but the Son of man hath no place to lay His head." I can assure
you, beloved, that Jesus was not in the least concerned about a place to sleep at night!
He was the Head, and He was perfect. But there was not a perfect body imbued with all
the fullness of divine life, ready for His Lordship. There was no place prepared for His
Lordship to rest, no body to put His Headship upon so that creation would see the
completed Christ, Head and body, in the glory and dominion of perfection. So the Holy
Spirit has been perfecting that body. He has been producing sonship. He has been
making a place for the Son of man to PUT HIS HEAD.

There was leaven involved in the ritual of the Feast of Pentecost, as the Lord
commanded, "Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals:
they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the
Lord" (Lev. 23:17). The loaves of bread would speak to us of God's people in union with
Christ. "For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that
one bread" (I Cor. 10:17). Hence in the "two" loaves of this new meal-offering we have
the completion of this new body of believers known as the Church, wherein all the
believers were "made ONE" by the grace and Spirit of Christ (Eph. 2:14). The firstfruits
of the wheat had been harvested, and now instead of a sheaf we have two loaves, a body
of believers, God's witness in the earth. The loaves were baked with leaven because
from the time of Pentecost right until now, the Church of Christ has never been really free
from division, sectarianism, and carnality. How wonderful it is to know that God knew
exactly what the Church would be like throughout her long history, and made the type to
fit accordingly!

Thus, the Feast of Pentecost is not the fullness. Pentecostal people love to call
themselves "Full Gospel"; there are people right here in little Crystal River who say,
"We're a FULL GOSPEL Church!" No they're not! I am asked the question, betimes:
What is the difference between what the Pentecostals and Charismatics preach and what
you teach? Indeed, there are vast and varied differences! But fundamental to them all is
the fact that they preach but TWO FEASTS, while we proclaim THREE. They preach two
Feasts and call them the "FULL GOSPEL". The truth is, they are but two-thirds Gospel, at
best! Pentecost is not the fullness! It's the firstfruits of the Spirit and the earnest of our inheritance. Pentecost included leaven, therefore it is "in part," and not the fullness.

I want you to see a principle, where God's mind is, where His heart is. It's to bring a people to maturity. When you live in a Church world that tells you that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the fullness of the Spirit you get into the same rut you came into in the Passover experience when the Baptists told you you received everything when you were first saved. Projections of that kind of thinking will do one thing - they will stagnate your growth. If you've got it all you don't need anymore; and if you have the fullness, what else can you have? It is alarming to some when you come along and say there is more than a Passover experience of the new birth, you can also receive a Pentecostal experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit like they had in the book of Acts. That bothers Passover folks! But not nearly as much as it bothers Pentecostal folks when you tell them that what they have is not the fullness, but merely the "firstfruits" of the Spirit and the "earnest" of their inheritance! That bothers them in the most horrendous way!

When you tell Spirit-filled people that they are just living on the "milk," they get bothered even more. But Heb. 6:1-2 gives us the foundation for the Christian walk which the writer says is "repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." All these are but the first elementary principles of the doctrine of Christ, for those, according to the apostle, who use milk! Now notice that one of these milk bottles is labeled "the doctrine of BAPTISM(S)." And what God knows is what I know and what I am telling you - the baptism in the Spirit, that blessed Pentecostal experience, precious as it is, is foundational, it is milk, it is just baby food! It's a springboard, not an ultimate. It's not an end, just a means to an end.

Now don't misunderstand me, and don't misconstrue my words. I would not for one moment minimize this foretaste, this firstfruit of the Holy Spirit which we have received in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Blessed Feast of Pentecost! I would not for one moment depreciate the great outpouring of the Spirit which began at the turn of the century, in which millions came to Christ and were transformed. Neither do I belittle in the least the glorious moving of the Holy Spirit which swept across the land and around the world beginning in 1948. I do not speak in derogatory terms of the speaking in tongues, prophecy, gifts of healing, laying on of hands, five-fold ministry and the mighty manifestations that accompanied the restoration of these gifts and ministries to the body of Christ. I myself have been a glad partaker of its glory. I may say with the esteemed apostle Paul, "I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than ye all." I would not deny it in life or in death. Since the day the Holy Spirit swept with indescribable bliss and glory into my life at the altar of a Pentecostal Camp Meeting, at the tender age of twelve, I have seen hundreds, yea, thousands, receive the power of the Spirit. Yet in my heart I know for certain that all the glory we have seen is but a faint shadow of the glory that shall be revealed at the Feast of Tabernacles, bringing the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation has groaned for six thousand years.

The purpose of the Holy Ghost is not to make you feel good, nor to enable you to speak in tongues, heal a few sick folks, and get your prayers answered. The purpose of the Holy Ghost is to baptize you with the Holy Ghost and Fire and purify your spirit, soul, and body, bring you into a realm with God where you are changed from strength to strength, from glory to glory, and faith to faith until you come into a walk with God where you begin to grow up into all the nature, wisdom, knowledge, power and glory of God. That's the
heart-cry of God in this hour. God wants to mature a people and fill them with all the fullness of God.

Then the glory of the Lord will fill the whole body of the sons of God in the fullness thus far known only by our glorious Forerunner and Head. His glory shall flow and flow and fill the earth. Then shall be fulfilled the words of the Saviour, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL YE DO." The power of God shall at last conquer the nations, and sin, and sorrow and death shall be swallowed up in victory. The coming of the Lord in power and great glory is at hand. The time of the Feast of Tabernacles draweth nigh. The Royal House of King-Priests after the order of Melchizedek is about to be revealed. In that day the lame man shall leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. The eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped. The desert and the solitary place shall blossom as the rose. Men will learn war no more. The times of the restitution of all things will dawn in awesomeness before the eyes of all nations. Heaven and earth shall kiss and all things shall be reconciled to God. It will be the time of the manifestation of the manifested sons of God when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

What I am proclaiming, announcing and declaring is that there is a THIRD experience in God. There is a visitation, an appearing and coming of the Lord called Tabernacles that is going to come to pass in the Church today, right here upon this earth, and the implications of this Feast go far beyond anything you or I could possibly imagine. Does not the scripture say that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it even entered into the heart of man the things that God has made available for those who love Him? People ask me what manifested sonship is going to be like. I do not exactly know. It is like trying to describe how a space ship works to a savage in the jungle. Most of the Church world today is like Sarah, laughing at the idea that God would visit His people again in a mighty way.

One cannot explain what Passover means to an unregenerated and unbelieving man unless God causes him to see it. Passover is distinct from anything that an unbeliever has ever experienced. There are those who have experienced Passover, having been born again by the Spirit of God, but they have no comprehension at all of what it is to experience Pentecost. It is like trying to explain the world of man to a worm. Today, there are people who have experienced both Passover and Pentecost and yet, they are as blind as bats to what the Feast of Tabernacles is going to be like. I am declaring that there is a THIRD REALM in God for us to experience. There is a fullness we do not yet have. This third dimension brings His Lordship. And this Feast, being the last, brings perfection! It will bring the consummation of our SALVATION, spirit, soul and body. This third dimension in God is the place where you and I, in the Spirit, move beyond the veil into the Most Holy Place of God's fullness. Blessed are they who are called to this great Feast, that which supersedes Pentecost, that which is the BALANCE OF THE MEAL of which Passover and Pentecost were merely the first courses! And the balance must therefore come, the remainder of the meal which will give strength to the laborers to go forth and accomplish great things for the Master. It is my deep conviction, precious reader of these lines, that the timing of this Feast is at hand. People ask, "Why haven't I heard this before?" If you search the scriptures, you will find that the Feasts were declared to be in their APPOINTED TIMES.
Great were the glories seen by men like Noah, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David and Solomon. Glorious were the manifestations of God's power that swept the Judean hills when our Lord spake as never man spake and healed, cast out devils, and even raised the dead to life again. Sublime beyond explanation were the holy visitations at Pentecost and in the years that followed as multitudes, both of men and women, were brought to the feet of Jesus Christ, and by the hands of the apostles God wrought mighty miracles and special signs and wonders until the world was turned literally upside down with the glory of the heavenly visitation. It would have been wonderful to have dwelt there then and to have rejoiced with them for all the wonderful works of God. Marvelous beyond description were the works of God as He birthed His infant Church! Blessed as were all those things and marvelous as were the results, yet more glorious still is the hope pulsating within the breast of all creation as "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, for the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD. Because the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:19, 21, 22). As J. B. Phillips so beautifully renders, "The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own."

The supernal glories that lie like the towering Mount Everest before us are beyond compare. The grandest event of all time is now at the doors. For almost two thousand long years the Lord has been gathering out of all nations an elect people and refining them in the furnace of affliction, transforming them in mind and heart by the deep dealings of His Spirit, and preparing them in wisdom and knowledge to possess the reins of the government of the world. And while we rejoice and praise God for all the mighty visitations of the past, and those glorious visitations we have experienced in our own lifetime, yet I know by the Word of the Lord that the next great move of God will be greater than all - the manifestation of the sons of God. Nothing is more certain than that. The Spirit witnesses all across the land and around the world that the long awaited revelation is at hand. The unveiling of the in-Christed is now at hand. The cry of the groaning creation and the prayer of the travailing saint are joined with the unutterable longings of the Holy Spirit, all crying in unison and harmony for the arising of God's deliverers. The desire of all nations is at hand. JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

Let the mountains reverberate with the sound of the message, let the hills shout aloud for joy, and all the trees of the forest clap their hands! For we now stand on the threshold of a new dimension of the Kingdom of God, and we must be prepared to receive HIM in fullness. As we earnestly look for His appearing, we are to receive ALL THAT HE IS, for when He appears all the traditions of yesterday will be swept away and the realms of limitation swallowed up in His surpassing glory. I cannot overemphasize this great and important truth: When Christ appears to His elect in the Feast of Tabernacles, we must then be prepared to receive Him in fullness. We cannot tell Him what portion of Him we will receive and what portion we will not receive. WE WILL RECEIVE HIM IN FULLNESS, and without any reservations or preconceived ideas, or we will not receive Him at all. Either we will go up and keep the Feast according to His Word, or we will miss the glory of His coming. Vast multitudes of Christians will not see Christ when He appears because of their tradition - but their time of visitation will come later. But for those who are willing to pay the price, to be thoroughly purged of all that is of the flesh, the world, and the devil, and are disposed to turn loose of the past religious traditions, the old forms and ceremonies, and the stagnant remains of yesterday's visitations, there awaits great glory and heavenly wealth, and a world-shaking ministry beyond the comprehension of mortal mind.
At the closing of this article I am deeply impressed to share the following vision received by an old prophet of God many years ago, one of the Lord's pioneers of this Gospel of the Kingdom in these last days. He wrote: "In that vision which lasted all night, the most wonderful vision I ever had, in which I saw the sons of God in action all over the world, ministering to the multitudes in every tongue and nation, to all people, I saw both men and women ministering. I saw them standing, suspended in mid-air, in the midst of a busy intersection of a large city, with all traffic stopped, and thousands of people seeing them with their eyes, and hearing them with their ears, regardless of distance, and without the aid of mechanical devices. I saw them speaking to a people of one language, and in a moment's time I saw them transported to another people of another language, speaking to them in their own language, having power over all mechanical devices and natural laws, so that they could cause every activity to cease, and every eye to be fixed upon them, until their message had been delivered.

"I saw them walk upon the water; and I saw the terror in the faces of the wicked, at the sound of their voices. I saw the professing Christians fall upon their faces in true repentance, crying out for mercy, and I saw them being genuinely converted. I saw the skeptics being convinced, and the blasphemy of the wicked, as they would rail and mock, only to be struck dumb or blind at just a word from the manifested sons and daughters of God.

"The vision lasted all night, as in my spirit I was living in that future time, when God will be manifested in fullness in His sons and in His daughters, while my body was back there in bed alongside my wife. Sometimes the scenes would make me weep and I would sob, my body shaking violently with pain and agony, whereas another scene would cause me to laugh with holy laughter, as I witnessed the genuine repentance of the shallow Church members.

"I'll never forget the vision of the young girl (the daughters of God) who spoke with the voice of many waters. Human language could never describe the quality of her voice. All I can say is, it was so filled with love and compassion, it would break the hardest stone, and at her command, every infirmity, every sickness, every blindness, every lameness was healed; every one was made perfectly whole, even those who had been lunatic from birth.

"Sister Britain got no sleep that night, and finally when the dawn was ready to break, she asked me why I didn't get up and write the vision. I did try, but could not hold my hands on the keyboard of the typewriter. Some unseen force held them aloft over my head. I walked the floor and wept, and begged the Lord to permit me to write some of the visions I had seen, to preserve them in black and white. At last He did, and I wrote just a very few of the visions I had seen, for a large book could not contain them all.

"What did the experience do for me? That vision set my soul aflame! Should I publish what I had written? What would people think of me if I did? Surely they would think me mad! I was just getting started in the writing and publishing ministry, and surely, I thought, that one message would cause all men to lose confidence in me! Finally with tears streaming, I said, I'm going to publish it, regardless of the cost. I know it's true! I know it's going to come to pass! And though all men turn against me, I'm going to publish it anyway! And so we did. We then waited anxiously to hear the reaction of the people. To our surprise, the message thrilled their hearts. THEY BELIEVED IT! They still believe it!" - end quote.
And now many years after, the old prophet has long ago passed from the scene. But today, not only the small number who were touched by his word, but multiplied tens of thousands of saints in every nation under heaven have been quickened to these wonderful truths. A vast army of saints is now in preparation for the greatest day in earth's long history - the Feast of Tabernacles, the manifestation of the sons of God.

Hallelujah!
Chapter 8
The Coming Of Christ In
The Feast Of Tabernacles
(continued)

All over the world in this particular moment in history, the Spirit of God is speaking to the elect concerning an imminent manifestation of Christ. The trumpet has sounded - the appointed time has come. Christians in every nation have heard the voice of the prophets, foretelling of this most awesome intervention of God's power that is about to sweep the earth.

The prophetic Word of the Lord gives promise of a time to come when the Lord will move mightily by His Spirit. At that time the Lord will restore that which was lost all through the ages past and the long night of man's selfhood and rebellion against God. There is an event soon to take place which shall overshadow and eclipse all former, lesser, manifestations of God's glory and power in the earth. The glories of this great event will inspire, initiate, and bring to fulfillment the times of the restitution of all things. The grandeur, the splendor, the glory and the great power of God to be manifest at the time of this great event is impossible for us to comprehend presently, for we are still living and moving, for the most part, under the economy of the "firstfruits" of God's Spirit. The grand and glorious event to which we refer is the coming of Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles!

The Feasts of Passover and Pentecost found fulfillment in our Lord Jesus Christ. But we have no record at all of the Feast of Tabernacles ever finding fulfillment in the early church or the New Testament economy. Now, inasmuch as this Feast did not find fulfillment in the early church, nor has it found fulfillment at any time in the New Testament order of things - what deduction should we make from that observation? We should deduce that if God fulfilled the first two Feasts, HE IS GOING TO FULFILL THE THIRD! And this third Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, REMAINS TO BE FULFILLED! The grand truth of this has been wonderfully quickened by the Spirit of God to multiplied thousands of faithful saints around the world in these last days.

What sets the Feast of Tabernacles apart from all others is the abundance enjoyed during the Feast. It's the full harvest. At the celebration of Tabernacles, not only had the barley and wheat been harvested, but also all other grains, the fruit of trees, the olives, the grapes, all that could possibly serve as food or drink. The harvest was complete. On the spiritual plane this points to the fact that God has been using His people everywhere to whatever degree He has prepared the vessel for that revelation of the Christ. There has come a beautiful unfolding of His purpose, the outflow of His life and the manifestation of Himself throughout this church age, right up to the present time. But there shall yet come the ultimate, the total, and complete revelation of Jesus Christ - not
a narrow, limited thing, not to get a number of people saved and filled with the Spirit, and healed and blessed and used - but the Kingdom of God coming with power and with glory, as an expression and a manifestation of God in His total capacity with no limitations, with all the power, with all the glory, all the might, all the majesty, all the authority, so that nations will be swept into the Kingdom of God, creation delivered, and the last enemy, even death, destroyed from off the face of the earth for evermore. What bright and glorious prospects loom before the vision of all who press on to the Feast of Tabernacles!

Since the church's birth almost every generation has known something of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Most of these moves would have to be characterized as something less than worldwide. They swept cities, states, even nations at times, but few were global. But now, even beyond the strength and influence of the celebration of the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost, there has been released from heaven in the last several years an even greater sense of expectancy. It is the expectancy that ALL HEAVEN is about to break loose in the midst of the Lord's elect on a worldwide basis. Do you identify with that expectancy? God is raising up voices in every hamlet and metropolis to say, "The earth is about to see the glory of God in a most remarkable way." I am convinced that a host of heavenly messengers has recently been released to every corner of the earth bearing the message, "And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it" (Isa. 40:5, NIV). What I am proclaiming, announcing and declaring is that there is a THIRD experience in God. There is a visitation, an appearing and coming of the Lord called Tabernacles that is going to come to pass in the church today, right here upon this earth, and the implications of this Feast go far beyond anything you or I could possibly imagine.

In those blessed days of the holy visitations at Pentecost and in the years that followed, there was an humble disciple, filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom, who spoke to the people and did wonders among them. But some of the religious crowd of skeptics doubted all that he said. The Bible tells us they could not resist "the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake," so they "stirred up the people" and set up false witnesses, accusing Stephen of blaspheming both Moses and God. Stephen's anointed wisdom told that religious crowd that the Lord would destroy the temple of stones, to fulfill the temple and the law IN A PEOPLE, and would change their customs and worship (Acts 6:13-14). That is exactly what the Lord did, but the religious Jews refused to accept the change that came. So today, more than nineteen centuries thence, Jews the world over continue to worship in their synagogues according to the Mosaic customs in apparent ignorance of the fact that the mighty God has forever abolished that order and replaced it with the higher order of His Spirit in the true church which is His body. Likewise there are vast multitudes of Christians today who will not believe the anointed wisdom of the Lord's messengers who are telling of God's purpose to again change the order and establish a new spiritual administration over the earth!

God is speaking to His people today and saying to us as He said to Israel at Mount Sinai, "You have kept this Feast of Pentecost long enough ... you have enjoyed this realm to the fullest. It is time to move. Pack up your tents and begin to move. Leave this realm; embrace the experience and use it, but move on in Me." I think there are more movements built around the Pentecostal mountain than any other experience from God. We have the "tongues" group, the "prophecy" group, the "revival" group, the "Jesus' Name" group, the "healing" group, the "deliverance" group, the "New Testament Church" group, the "praise" group, the "Word" group, the "faith" group, the "shepherding" group,
and many, many others. There is nothing wrong with each of these experiences and revelations when they are kept in balance. We need them working in our lives. But when we shift our bearings from GOD HIMSELF and place them on one or a number of these experiences and continue to go around and around them, as though these were the ultimate we are in serious trouble! These various experiences are not our inheritance, but merely a means of causing us to come unto that for which the Lord has apprehended us. God will plead with us to MOVE ON, He will woo and entice and urge us onward for a season, but if the call is not heeded, He will move on and those who will not heed His calling will march around and around their little mountain until they die in that terrible and dread wilderness! I have seen it happen so many times! Oh, my Father, give us ears to hear what Your Spirit would say to the churches, and grant us grace to move out and fulfill all your will!

The church world today has no vision for what is about to happen. All it can think about is getting raptured away into the clouds. Our prime concern is to prepare the ground for the truth concerning the Feast of Tabernacles, which surpasses the glory of Pentecost even as the noon-day surpasses the brightness of early dawn. If the saints of God could only catch a glimmer of the glory of the Feast of Tabernacles which even now looms before us, they could not possibly cling to the stagnant remains of yesterday's visitations. If the Passover was wonderful - and it certainly was - how much more wonderful has been Pentecost in its fullness! And if Pentecost is wonderful, how much more shall we expect Tabernacles to exceed it in glory? And even now as the-first faint rays of this glorious Feast begin to appear on the eastern horizon, we have every reason to rejoice - knowing that the days of deliverance and restoration are here. And little by little we can see how the pattern is being unfolded before our eyes.

There was a time when doctrine was the passion of my life. I was an avid student of theology and meticulously examined various doctrines. Some of them I rejected, and others I embraced. I thought it most important to search the scriptures and, from the letter of the Word, determine what is the truth about a great number of things. Then I got into the gifts of the Spirit and for a season miracles were happening and wonderful healings and deliverances, and the gift of prophecy gushed forth like rushing streams from the mountain tops. Then God began to open the realm of sonship to my wondering spirit, and He has brought me to the place over the past several years where my one and only desire is to SEE HIM and KNOW HIM. I am telling you that the Person of Jesus Christ is exciting me more than anything else that I have ever found in the Word of God or in the realm of experience!

I cannot emphasize too strongly the infinite importance of the APPEARING OF CHRIST. There is a people today who LOVE HIS APPEARING. Vast multitudes of Christians will be thrilled with the passing, temporal blessings of His next visitation, but the elect will behold the glory of Christ, and will be made ONE IN HIM in every aspect of Himself that He discloses. The nominal Christian will find great joy in the fact that a new anointing is present, and that glorious things are being accomplished throughout the earth, but the elect will SEE CHRIST and will be made glad PARTAKERS of His glory. CHRIST will be the theme of this next move of God in the earth. He is the great Subject, the central Person of all our desires and yearnings. We do not desire more messages ABOUT HIM, we are simply crying out to KNOW HIM IN ALL HIS GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL REALITY.
Though we find deep satisfaction in the sweet communion that we have with Him, and the secret converse we have together as He journeys with us through the wilderness, how oft our hearts long for a closer touch with our precious Lord! No words can express the rapture that is ours when we walk and talk with Him by the way; but we yearn for His FULLNESS, when all veils and limitations of earth shall forever pass away. There are times when He makes Himself so real that our small capacity can hardly stand the strain of such revelations. It is as though we were bringing a pint cup to receive the waters of Niagara; even the earthen vessel is almost carried away. But the day is coming when our capacity shall be so enlarged, that we can receive the full unveiling of our Lord and the glories that are His; and He will give us such revelations of the Father that we shall indeed enter into His joy and glory. Then we shall see Him face to face, and shall behold all things clearly, with nothing between to obscure the vision. This mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on the incorruptible. The Father's name will be written in our forehead.

**BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY!**

"Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. 3:11). "And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

There is an important and sublime truth contained in the passages just quoted. The word "quickly" is from the Greek TACHU meaning shortly, without delay, swiftly, SPEEDILY, or SUDDENLY." While there is significant truth, not understood by the average Christian or preacher, in the statement of Jesus two thousand years ago, that He would come shortly and without delay, it is to the thought of the SPEEDINESS or SUDDENNESS of the Lord's coming that I would now draw your reverent attention. This principle of SUDDENNESS adheres to almost all the "appearings" and "comings" of the Lord. Look closely for a moment at the following examples: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall SUDDENLY come to His temple ... He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:1). Here is a great one: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming SUDDENLY He find you sleeping" (Mk. 13: 35-36). "And SUDDENLY there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Lk. 2:13-14). "And SUDDENLY there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:2-4).

Then there is poor Saul of Tarsus, who ran headlong into a blinding "suddenly": "And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, SUDDENLY there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts 22:6-7). The angels' sudden appearance at the birth of the Christ child was "in the fullness of time". Centuries of prophetic voices accumulated until one night they poured out on a Judean hillside, scattering excited shepherds into a hasty search for the Messiah's birthplace. Pentecost took place because its time had "fully come," and suddenly the Spirit of the ascended and glorified Christ Jesus swept gloriously into the lives of those waiting for the promise. And we, too, are admonished by the Lord to watch diligently for His coming, "lest coming SUDDENLY He find you sleeping!"
The coming of Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles will break just as unexpectedly and suddenly and startlingly upon a sleeping church and an unbelieving world as did the coming of the Lord as the Passover Lamb and His coming in mighty Spirit-power on the day of Pentecost. It is my deep conviction, and I share it prayerfully, that the Lord Jesus will come forth in fullness in His elect body on the exact date of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the fall of the year (not necessarily this year - but the cry of our heart is ever, Come, Lord Jesus!).

The Feasts of the Lord portray distinctly the three primary manifestations of the Christ, and it is of immeasurable importance that we thoroughly understand that the comings of the Lord have ALWAYS TRANSPRIRED ON THE PRECISE DATES OF THE FEASTS WHICH FORESHADOWED HIS APPEARING. The Son, Jesus, was literally, physically born - not in December - but at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in October (see our booklet, FIVE REASONS WHY THE SONS OF GOD SHOULD NOT CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS, free, upon request). The Lamb of God, Christ our Passover, was literally and physically slain for us at the exact hour when the gleaming knives were put to the throats of the Paschal lambs all across the land of Israel. The faithful disciples in the upper room were keeping the Feast of Pentecost when the day was "fully come" and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. Today, we would say that a formation of jets had come in for a landing. There was a roar like the sound of a mighty waterfall. Suddenly, instantaneously, this energy, this snapping, crackling, popping Light filled the house. It played like static electricity over men until they were illuminated and radiant with divine energy. They stood and staggered under this power but were not drunk with new wine, they were suddenly charged with such a wave length of power that they were renewed in their minds, transformed in their natures, and went forth everywhere doing great signs and wonders and miracles, proclaiming the Word of God with power.

The Feast of Tabernacles took place on the 15th day of the 7th month, the month of Ethanim (around October), and lasted seven days. I do not hesitate to predict that the manchild company, the sons of God, will be born, literally and dramatically birthed upon the stage of this world, in a blaze of earth-shaking supernatural power and glory, during the Feast of Tabernacles time. They will be the "firstfruits" that will enter into HIS FULLNESS, the total incarnation of God upon earth. When the Lord comes in a mighty way once more at the Feast of Tabernacles, all flesh shall see the salvation and glory of the Lord. Whatever the year may be, the manifestation of the sons of God will take place when the Feast of Tabernacles is "fully come". That will be the greatest of all "spectaculars" the world has ever witnessed, when He erupts from within His many-membered body in the fullness of which Pentecost has been only a foretaste. The inhabitants of the earth will be terrified, yes, even paralyzed! Instantly they will know this is no natural phenomenon, no traditional religious service; while deep within, the Voice shall witness: TRULY, THIS IS THE SON OF GOD! The effulgence of His Person shall appear upon His chosen ones, the intensity of His brilliance, equating to that of seven suns, shining through the undulating "garment" composed of tens of thousands of glorified saints, a star-studded, super-spectacular, seven times the power of Pentecost, the likes of which has never been witnessed by man since the dawn of creation.

On Friday afternoon, Nov. 22, 1963, at 12:30 in the afternoon, President John F. Kennedy was shot to death by an assassin as he rode through the streets of Dallas, Texas. Within minutes, television and radio flashed the news across the nation and around the world. America was galvanized in a shock that brought us together unlike
anything except the explosion of the Challenger spacecraft. I'm sure I could ask each one
of you where you were and what you were doing when you heard the news of Kennedy's
assassination, and you would be able to tell me. I remember vividly where I was at that
time - at the airport in La Paz, Baja California, Mexico, preparing to fly across the Gulf of
California to the western Mexico city of Los Mochis. I shall never forget the feeling of
unbelief and shock. But there is another event coming, the magnitude of which the world
has never experienced, which will take the inhabitants completely by surprise, and I can
assure you, precious friend of mine, that you and billions of other people throughout the
earth will forever remember where you were and what you were doing THE DAY THE
SONS OF GOD WERE MANIFESTED!

In years past we were taught that Jesus would come again to this earth in a singular,
limited physical body. And when He made this world-wide appearance, all the church
would suddenly be raptured and taken up to heaven. Whenever I minister that the Christ
has ascended and been glorified, assuming again that glory which He had with the
Father before the world was, and that He now returns as a glorious Spirit-Being, filling all
things, and that W-E A-R-E HIS BODY, some tell me that I have taken all their "blessed
hope" away. But let me assure each reader of these lines that I have learned to never
take away anything unless I can give something better in return. I may take your "hope"
away, but in its place I give you REALITY.

Ah, God has not left us without a blessed and inspiring hope and ere we have finished
this series of articles, the Lord permitting, we shall disclose to you, what, to us, is a most
transeendent vision for the yet future fulfillments of the prophecies of the scriptures
concerning the coming of our blessed Lord, to be completed in a cycle of events so
stupendous and wonderful that we stand in awe as we behold them. Of this cycle, the
ministry of Jesus nearly two thousand years ago was but a miniature. There is that
glorious coming of Christ set forth by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the apostle
Paul, of which he says, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus
shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire ... when He shall
come to be GLORIFIED I-N H-I-S S-A-I-N-T-S, and to be admired IN ALL THEM THAT
BELIEVE in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would
account you worthy of THIS CALLING, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness,
and the work of faith with power" (II Thes. 1:7-11).

This facet of the Lord's coming is called His REVELATION - "When He shall be
REVEALED from heaven." When He comes in the Feast of Tabernacles His coming will
be greater than the singular Man Jesus appearing in the sky. When He comes He will
exhibit majesty, glory, power and such splendor as is now unknown and inconceivable.
He will be "REVEALED FROM HEAVEN" - that is, He will descend out of the glory of the
Father in heaven, and will come to be "GLORIFIED I-N H-I-S S-A-I-N-T-S, and to be
ADMIRED I-N ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE."

The ground of the admiration which HE will receive will be what will be seen, not in the
sky, not in Jerusalem, nor yet in that singular body which Thomas' thrust-out hand
touched and felt, but IN HIS SAINTS. That is, their graces, their love, their nature, their
glory, their wisdom, their perfections and powers will be the occasion of producing
admiration of HIM, for HE will be seen as the source and reality of it all. One translator
has rendered it, "and to be made marvelous in all them that believe." I have said it before,
and I now say it again, I am not so concerned about the MANIFESTATION of the SONS
of God; I look, rather, for the MANIFESTATION OF G-O-D I-N HIS SONS! There is
coming a day, the glory of which is indescribable, when the Christ shall be manifested in
an all glorious manner, and the source of His highest triumphs will be what is seen IN the
saints. His main honor, when He comes in the Feast of Tabernacles, will not be the
outward splendors, which Christendom is ever expecting, nor the angels which will
accompany Him, nor the display of His power over the elements and all laws of nature,
but the SAINTS who have been made ONE IN HIM, and through whom HE will be
revealed. He shall then be admired and glorified in His TRUE BODY to a total and
ultimate degree.

This appropriate honor of Christ in the church which is His body has never yet been fully
seen. His people on earth have, in general, most imperfectly reflected His image! They
have been comparatively few in number, and scattered upon the earth. They have been
poor and despised. They have been persecuted, and regarded as the "filth of the world,
and the off-scouring of all things." The honors of this world have been withheld from
them. The great have regarded it as no honor to be identified with the elect of God in any
generation, and the proud have been ashamed to be enrolled among the number of
those who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. At the Feast of Tabernacles all this
will be changed, and the in-Christed will show to admiring worlds what are the exceeding
riches and power of His grace.

There is a church, which is His body, "which is the FULLNESS OF HIM that filleth all
things" (Eph. 1:23). The church is the "fullness" of Christ. The "fullness" is a word not
easily explained in our language, but it is not what some people call it - the
"complement". Complement very often in men's minds means only supplement. And that
is exactly how most Christians view themselves in relation to Christ - just a supplement!
The real meaning of the word fullness is just what you would call a full blown rose with
every petal seen. The church - the rose - is here in a visible way upon earth - and now
ALL HE IS comes out through His body. Christ is the fullness of God, and the church is
the fullness or plenitude of Christ. Nothing, therefore, can be clearer than the fact that the
body of Christ, notwithstanding that it has manifested much carnality, weakness,
blundering and failure through this age, will come out in the end as the magnificent
exhibition of all the beauty of God's Christ. The saints shall be the expression and display
of the full glory of the incomparable Son of God, for they are HIS FULLNESS!

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

I want to take you back to that scene which transpired twenty centuries ago on the Last
Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Let me briefly describe to you how that "last great
day" was conducted. Early, early on the morning of that day, a million people and more,
who had been dwelling in tents and booths all around Jerusalem, arose, on the Last
Great Day of the Feast. Early in the morning, Priests and Levites, singers and players on
instruments, those that sounded silver trumpets, those that played on the golden harps,
the tabrets, viols, wind and stringed instruments, the great orchestra of the great Temple,
all gathered with the magnificent Temple Guard, with all the pomp and display of that
splendid, most inspiring, most touching, and Divinely-appointed ceremonial.

What was the scene? From the Temple there issued forth the High Priest, bearing in his
hand the Sacred Golden Vessel. With him were all the attendant priests of the Sanhedrin,
and all the pageantry and flourish of the Temple Guards. With the Urim and Thummim on
his breast, and all his attendants following in train, he passed through the Temple and
walked slowly and solemnly down the Temple Mount. The beautiful music that had come
down through the ages swelled forth in mighty volume. The sweet singers sang this song with joy, "With joy shall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation," as they went down the Temple Mount to the sweet, sweet stream of Siloam, that Sacred Stream which flowed out of the earth under the Temple Mount, and went away around Moriah and Zion, and then was lost in the gardens of Ophil - a strange river.

They went down to Siloam and the High Priest dipped the Golden Vessel into the clear, pure Water. Then having taken the Sacred Water, he reversed the procession, and passed up with the Water in his hand, while the choir sang, the instruments played, and the people chanted that great song, the twelfth chapter of Isaiah: "Behold, God is my Salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Yahweh is my strength and song; and He is become my Salvation; THEREFORE WITH JOY SHALL YE DRAW WATER OUT OF THE WELLS OF SALVATION." They swept upward to the Temple amid the hush of the multitude, whose hearts were touched by the inspiring scene. Then came the last great ceremonial on that Last Great Day of the Feast, when the High Priest, in the presence of all the people, took the Water he had taken from the Sacred Stream, and poured it out upon the Altar, while a great shout went up from the people, "With joy shall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation!"

Just at that moment a young Man, humble, an untitled Rabbi, stood forth before the multitude. Not as King did He come, but stepping forward He took the place, doubtless, of the High Priest. Standing there beside the Sacred Altar, He lifted up His hands to the multitudes on Mount Moriah, Mount Zion, and Mount Olivet, and cried with a Voice that re-echoed down the Valley of Hinnom: "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!" What a hush fell upon the people! What a wonder that any man should be so daring as to step forward and take the High Priest's place and declare that He Himself was the Sacred Fountain opened in Judah for sin and all uncleanness.

That day Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit, just as when at Sychar's well He said to that woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee Living Water." She did not understand. But, oh, how gently He made her know! Into that parched and weary woman's heart, who had had five husbands and was now living in shameless adultery, there came - into this barren, barren heart - the Water, a Well of Water, a Spring of Water, that made her a Messenger of God. She went into the city and brought out all the men of Sychar to the feet of Jesus. There is a thirst in the heart of every man for the Fountains of Living Water. The vast majority of mankind has mistaken the thirst they have for Living Water to be a thirst for some temporal thing. Vainly they imagine that their thirst can be quenched by partaking of the stagnant waters of earth's cisterns. Like lost sheep they wander through the wilderness of life seeking satisfaction and finding none. Place after place they roam in their pitiful search for the Fountain that satisfies, but find it they never can until at last they come to Christ. "If any man thirst," says Christ, "let him come unto Me and drink!" He becomes all in all to every searching heart. When Jesus comes, the thirsty soul finds the Fountain of Living Waters. There his thirst is slaked forever. Henceforth the River is in Him, a literal Niagara of Living Water springing up unto eternal life. "The River of God is full of Water."

With reverent heart and bowed head I now direct you to the wonderful truth that it was on this Last Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles, at the ceremony known as "The Pouring Out of the Water," that Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me
and drink. He that believeth on Me...out of his belly shall flow Rivers of Living Water." This He spake of the Spirit which they should receive. That the time would come when men would no longer draw their experience from wells of Divine provision, but an artesian fountain of Living Water would rise up in the soul, and flow forth unto humanity in mighty Rivers of Blessing and Life.

The Jewish people have always believed that their Messiah would appear on this last, Great Day of the Feast. In fact, they still believe it. This is why Jesus had to be there on that Day. He had an appointment to reveal Himself to Israel on that literal, typical Day and He did. He was right on schedule. He always is! As the Water was poured out on the Altar, it was customary for the priest to quote, as we have pointed out, from Isaiah twelve. He would have concluded with the words: "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." What irony there would be in those words! He knew nothing of the true Messiah who stood right before him; and yet there it was written, and he spoke forth these words in utter ignorance of the truth they conveyed: "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee!" There He stood, the Holy One of Israel, the very Fountain of Life, and the Substance of all their ceremonies and festivities. He does the same today. He stands in secret in our very midst, waiting for admittance. "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).

We must keep in mind that when Jesus appeared in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles two thousand years ago, He appeared as a physical man at a symbolic ceremony, and that ceremony was not the Feast of Pentecost, but the Feast of Tabernacles. It was at the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus presented Himself as the Giver, by the will of the Father, of the Holy Spirit as Rivers of Living Water. And yet, is it not true that we have always associated the Rivers of Living Water with the gift of the Holy Spirit received at the Feast of Pentecost? How dull of hearing and understanding is the carnal mind! We have looked to Pentecost as the source of the Rivers of Living Water, and in so doing have misappropriated the symbol entirely, and missed the larger fulfillment of the type! I have been greatly blessed and enriched by reading the comments of the late George Wylie on this subject. I am especially impressed to share the following words of wisdom and revelation from his pen:

"After surrendering my heart and life to the Master I heard of the infilling of the Holy Ghost, and sought it with all my heart. I was told that this would be the fullness of God. I expected that I would be filled with His fullness and have power to turn the world upside down and do all kinds of miracles and impossible things. How disappointed I was when I found that I didn't have that kind of power, and I wondered why. Later I discovered that far from being filled with all the fullness of God, I had merely received the firstfruits of the Spirit - far from fullness. What Jesus said about Rivers of Living Water flowing has not happened yet. O yes, we have seen little trickles and gushing little rivulets here and there, but nothing like mighty Rivers.

"Once I was visiting a church shortly after coming back from our missionary stay in Liberia, Africa. We saw the Lord do many wonderful things there; wonderful healings and transformed lives; but I still realized there was a tremendous lack. There wasn't the flow of the Rivers the Lord spoke of. There was a tremendous hunger in me and great desire for more of God, and to break the bounds of the limiting things that seemed to cling to me and hinder me from being what He had said I should be. The Elder asked me if I would
like to say something, so I just unburdened my heart, and shared the deep longing of my spirit to launch out into the deep of God. There was a song we often sang then:

Launch out into the deep, Let the shoreline go;
Launch out, launch out, In the ocean Divine;
Out where the full tides flow!

"I quoted these words and said how I longed to do just that, to launch out into the deep and be swallowed up in the Divine Fullness. The Elder's wife got up and said, 'Bro. Wylie, if you had been with us in the prayer meeting on Friday night, you would have been out in the deep.' I answered her, 'Sister, there is a world of difference in having a little shower of rain fall on you, and launching out into the depth of the Divine fullness.' O my, how can we be content with a little trickle when there should be Rivers flowing! I believe the day is here for these Rivers to break forth and flow as they ought to. The scripture says that this had not happened yet, when the Lord spoke these words, because that He was not yet glorified; but when He was glorified it would happen. As I am sitting here meditating on these things, and talking to the Lord about it, I said, 'Father, now that your Son has been glorified, why has it not happened as He said it would?' Do you know what He just told me? He said, 'The Christ has not yet been glorified.' As I considered those words I realized that the Head has been glorified, but the body has not yet been glorified, and when the rest of the Christ is glorified then the prophecy will be fully fulfilled. Then there will be Rivers of Living Water flowing in the totality of all that means!" -end quote.

None can deny that Jesus spake of the outpouring of the Spirit that would follow the glorification of the Head; but there was also a deeper teaching in His loud utterance, for, after all, Pentecost is just a stepping-stone to Tabernacles. What then, in brief, is the conclusion one is compelled to arrive at in piecing together these types and passages? That the blessing of Tabernacles proclaims the inward revealing of the life of Jesus Christ in a fuller and mightier way than ever before experienced; that whereas Pentecost is a "firstfruit" or "earnest of the Spirit," Tabernacles is a HARVEST, or greater manifestation, a flowing of the Living Waters in such power that even the mortal and corruptible workings in our flesh and blood shall be swallowed up in HIS LIFE, and shall overflow to a fainting and thirsting world in such glory and power that it shall change and transform all things.

It is the healing, life-giving stream that we read about in Ezekiel: "These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Eze. 47:8-9). Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of MEN." The manifestation of the sons of God shall eclipse anything we have ever read about in the Bible or church history! This Water has been flowing ever since Pentecost; we realize that; but soon it shall gush forth from HIS HARVEST COMPANY who have drunk deeply at the blessed Fountain-Head of Life, and shall empty into the mighty oceans of humanity, bringing life and blessing and salvation to a dry and parched wilderness where no life is. A great outpouring from beneath the very throne of God, the dominion of God personalized in His obedient elect, will send streams of salvation into all the world.
Truly, in a way never imagined by sinner or saint, the burning words of the prophet will be fulfilled: "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 40:5). Isaiah again enlarges on this prophecy: "The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52:10). It is true that this has happened in measure throughout this Gospel age, but it has never happened on the scale where all things are transformed under the Lordship of God's Christ. We have been made eye-witnesses of the firstfruits; now we await the HARVEST! We have been made glad partakers of the rivulets of Pentecost; now our souls pant for the gushers of Tabernacles!

**JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!**

The message of this article is just this: Jesus is coming again! He will never come again into the body of His humiliation, never again walk to rest upon the well, or sleep in the storm tossed boat, never to again be smitten in the face and spit upon and crucified. Can we not all thank God that that part of it is finished? "In like manner as ye have seen Him go away," so will be the manner of His coming. It was an hour of His Kingdom glory and the holy rapture of His translation. And so will He return. So He has returned. So He does return. His return on the day of Pentecost was in a mighty rushing sound, in tongues of flame, in prophetic ecstasy, in gifts of apostles and miracles. He came to fill His body, His church, with this power. Can we even begin to comprehend the greater glory of His coming in the Feast of Tabernacles? All this will be reproduced on a larger scale. It will be the FULL HARVEST of His life. He will come with the keys of death and the grave in His hands for His elect sons. He will come in power as the Judge of the living and the dead. He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords in sovereign grace to carry out the great work of reconciling and restoring ALL THINGS. Some presume that they have already received this anointing, already reign as kings in the Kingdom. Their lives and their ministries give the lie to their claims. I have not witnessed a power and a glory greater than Pentecost in any place, nor in any person, nor through any ministry anywhere on this terrestrial globe. Have you? But it is coming. You can count on it!

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was never intended to accomplish so great a purpose. God's purpose in this age has been, not to deliver the whole creation, but to "take out a people for His name" in order that, by His goodness to us in Christ Jesus, He might display in the ages to come the transcendent RICHES OF HIS GRACE (Eph. 2:7). Having accomplished His purpose for this age, the Lord shall then use the finished product from this age, a company of sons in His own image, to be the deliverers of creation.

We have heard many so-called Gospels. The world is full of poor deluded souls who are trying to establish their own particular creed of imaginings and mistakes. We try to go to the world, we try to tell them the message, by using all the world's own methods, to advertise, to appeal to their emotions, to entertain them with music. It only proves our impotence, that we have not left the world very far behind if we can return and employ the world's ways so easily. Today, everyone with a little bit of preacher's "itch" is attempting to get themselves a little congregation, a little following, to build a little kingdom. These all imagine that somehow they are going to go out and storm the world and "take the world" for Christ. But a new day has dawned, a day when the pure and unadulterated Gospel of the Kingdom must go forth to the whole world. Religionists have tried in vain to lift the world out of its shame by their ambitious programs and preaching their own ideas and the doctrines of the antichrist. It simply would not work. The world has grown steadily worse.
Their lofty phrases, and text-book prayers, and apologetic platitudes, and time-honored traditions have utterly failed. Now a new company is to go forth with a burning message of truth direct from the throne, and in the fullness of power reserved for this day. The anointing of the sons of God shall be an anointing WITHOUT MEASURE, and the message of these sons shall be a message stripped of all the ineffectual absurdities that have been preached throughout the years. Religionists have side-stepped, and mollycoddled, and back-slapped too long. Their day is done. The sun is sinking in the western sky of this age of the "in part" realm. A new day is dawning for those who have been quickened from above. A new army is being prepared for this new day, an army of the sons of God perfected in His image, filled with the precious mind that was in Christ Jesus, radiating the effulgence of His glory, demonstrating the omnipotence of His power. And there shall be an exultant victory. For now the day is dawning when "A-L-L nations shall come and worship before thee" (Rev. 15:4). "And... all the nations ... shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES" (Zech. 14:16). It cannot be denied by any that throughout this age all the nations that have come to worship the Lord have worshipped Him in the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost. But there is a day, glorious day! when all the nations shall know the Lord and feast with Him in the blessing and glory of TABERNACLES!

I believe I speak the truth when I say that many of us have reached the point of no return - there is nothing to go back to, not in the flesh, not in the world, not in the church systems; there is nothing out of which we have been drawn by the Spirit of God to which we would return; it is all so empty, meaningless, lifeless, worthless. Now we must FOLLOW ON TO KNOW THE LORD IN HIS FULLNESS. It is vain to come out, unless we are committed to ENTER IN. We are committed to a course which cannot be altered, for it is fixed in its destination - His throne! "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).

We do not desire the throne for what we can get out of it, for our own fame and fortune, but for the infinite potential it holds for blessing and restoring the creation. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature 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 creation GROANETH AND TRAVAILETH IN PAIN together until now" (Rom. 8: 20-22). Today, the world is full of broken hearts, the hospitals are crowded, the cemeteries are being filled, even nature itself is groaning. You go down to the seaside and you can hear the sob of the waves, you go to the mountains and you can hear the low sigh of the wind in the tree tops. Creation is groaning, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

It is not more preachers we need. It is not more radio broadcasts or television programs. It is not more missions and missionaries. It is not more tracts or even Bibles. It is not more programs and crusades. It is not another revival. All we need is the cry of the groaning creation and the prayer of the travelling saint to be joined with the unutterable longings of the Holy Spirit, all crying in unison and harmony for the manifestation of the sons of God. There is an elect people who, even as I pen these words, are being made participators in this grandest of all dramas of history. Their prayer, praise God, is soon to be answered. The long awaited revelation is at hand. The glorious Lord is soon to be revealed from heaven in flaming fire to be exhibited in great glory and power and admired IN HIS SAINTS.
Ah, my brother, my sister, do not sell creation short! Do not settle for less than God's best! All creation is standing on tiptoe, waiting and counting on you. If you love Israel; if you love the peoples and kindreds of the earth who know nothing of the Saviour; if you love the sad, the tormented the sick and the dying; if you love the burdened brute creation; if you love the mountains, the trees, the rivers and the oceans so mindlessly being destroyed under the hand of greed - you will joyfully welcome the hope of the manifestation of God in His sons; for it is the hope that shall bring to the groaning creation, emancipation from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the Children of God; to Israel her Messiah; to the heathen idolater, the knowledge of God; to the rebellious, correction; to the sick and dying, health and life incorruptible; to the Bride, the presence of the Bridegroom; to mute nature, blessed release from the cruelty of man and the blight of the curse.

You have kept the Feast of Passover. We trust that you have also kept the Feast of Pentecost. But will we now move on from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion, where we may keep the next Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles? The power of His presence will be manifested in a way never seen before. Let us go up to the Feast! Jesus will meet us there! Oh, my friends, let us listen for the sound of His coming!

In the crimson of the morning, in the whiteness of the noon,
In the amber glory of the day's retreat,
In the midnight, robed in darkness, or the gleaming of the moon,
I listen for the coming of His feet.

I have heard His weary footsteps on the sands of Galilee,
On the temple's marble pavement, on the street,
Worn with weight of sorrow, faltering up the slopes of Calvary,
The sorrow of the coming of His feet.

Down the minster aisles of splendor, from betwixt the cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with motion strong and fleet,
Sounds His victor tread, approaching with a music far and dim-
The music of the coming of His feet.

Sandaled not with shoes of silver, girded not with woven gold,
Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors sweet,
But white-winged and shod with glory in the Tabor-light of old-
The glory of the coming of His feet.

He is coming, O my spirit! with His everlasting peace,
With His blessedness immortal and complete,
He is coming, O my spirit! and His coming brings release;
I listen for the coming of His feet!
Once I read a story and it goes something like this. Bamba Gumba might be a tribal king. We will assume that he is. And we will assume that he rules in aboriginal splendor over loyal subjects in the wilds of Africa. We will also assume that he is a crafty ruler. In order to maintain his royal position unchallenged he must keep his subjects impressed as to his superior prowess; and in order to accomplish this he maintains a display of majesty and might such as none other before him has ever done. But in order to support an elaborate retinue as befitting his high estate he must occasionally devise means to augment the royal revenue. For this purpose we now picture him on his way to America. He has found that travel broadens one's outlook on life, and also that one who goes abroad enjoys certain distinctions and makes impressions on one's subjects which otherwise could not be hoped for. And so Bamba Gumba arrives in New York.

Here he takes in the sights, and obtains certain colorful ornaments of which his tribesmen of the hills are extremely fond, and for which they will gladly pay him many times the cost. But one day, while listening to a conversation, there is suggested to his alert mind a plan of extraordinary merit. He is of course well aware of the superstitious nature of his subjects; and here at last is a plan which will take advantage of that superstitious nature and yield him handsome dividends. He knows that, because of his unchallenged authority, and as a result of the high esteem in which he is held by his subjects, the plan cannot fail. And so he returns home, envisioning an end to all his worries in regard to finance.

As soon as he arrives he summons his under chieftains into conference. The plan demands immediate action. No time can be lost. This, he explains, is a matter of unlimited emergency; and steps must be taken at once to avert impending horrible disaster. In America he has learned of a plague, so dreadful that it is called by six different names, namely: park, roof, jail, car, table and road. But in his own language the proper word for all six is "oomph." This plague, unless proper steps are taken, is incurable when once contracted, and it may take almost any form. But he has good news. Certain occult powers have been conferred on him in America, and now he is able to deliver the sufferer from this terrible plague. This power will also immunize his subjects from contracting the plague in most cases. But only on one condition will he guarantee sure and certain deliverance. Has he not been to great expense to procure immunization for them? And surely they wish to show their appreciation for the sacrifices that he, their benefactor, has made! And so the condition of deliverance is that each citizen pay to him yearly a certain specified sum of the coin of the realm. Or if the payment of coin is impractical or impossible, then either corn or chickens of equal value will be accepted instead. And immediately we envision feverish activity in the vicinity of the royal chicken coops. The royal carpenters are hard at it building new accommodations for the expected increase in the royal poultry holdings.
I am sure that no one who reads these lines would ever allow himself or herself to be
deluded and carried away by such a fantastic invention as the foregoing! We are Spirit-
born children of God, free from bondage to dark superstition and offensive delusions. We
are intelligent, educated, Bible loving, church taught; we are of sound judgment. We
would never stoop to like ignorance. Six English words that all mean "oomph" - the very
idea! We are altogether too smart and too spiritual! But are we really as smart and as
spiritual as we think? Dear Reader, human nature is the same the world around. You and
I may think we are smart; but let me tell you, if you and I had been raised in the domain of
a Bamba Gumba, no matter how high our educational achievements might be, and no
matter what our mental capacities might be, if we had been raised in that environment
then, except for a miraculous work of grace, when others began carrying chickens to
Bamba Gumba, we also would start carrying chickens.

Ah, we laugh at even the thought of our being carried away with an "oomph" tale of a
Bamba Gumba. We sort of unconsciously pride ourselves that we are altogether too
smart to be fooled by any of the delusions of pagan religion, silly superstitions, or such.
But the cold facts are that from every denominational pulpit in Christian America, as well
as in every other nation on earth, is preached ignorance, just as offensive and just as
irrational as the invention here depicted to wheedle money, corn and chickens from the
poor benighted bushmen of Africa. And uncomplimentary as it may be, the fact remains
that not one in a million among Christians even have the ambition or spiritual discernment
to detect the lie.

The poor downtrodden bushmen of Africa are not the only people on earth who follow
Bamba Gumbas. For we in America - yes, even the Christians in America - educated,
freeborn and alert though they may be, have been reared under and persistently adhere
to just such offensive inventions, disseminated by men who, in spite of many degrees
and letters, and much professed wisdom, know not the truth, refuse to listen or learn and,
like so many parrots, repeat merely what they have been taught to say by others. For,
insane madness that it is, from practically every pulpit in America today are heralded
distortions of truth just as irrational as any scheme invented by any Bamba Gumba who
ever lived. And while we marvel at the credulity of the illiterate and unlearned in believing
such tales, and would unhesitatingly warn them to simply find out what the six English
words really mean: those six different words which Bamba Gumba represented as being
an "oomph," yet we just have not had enough holy inquisitiveness and spiritual initiative
to do the same thing ourselves.

For in the New Testament, in the original Greek, are found six different words and
phrases which have been represented to us as ALL meaning the very same thing - the
"coming" of the Lord or the "second coming" of Christ! And while a few scholars have
gone to the trouble to tell us what these six words mean, yet I do not hesitate to say that
not one Christian in a million has earnestly sought the Lord for spiritual wisdom and
divine understanding concerning these important matters. There is confusion in the minds
of many when they come to this great truth of our Lord's return and much of this
uncertainty stems from a failure to understand the diverse meanings of these six Greek
words which are used in connection with His coming. While Bamba Gumba's six words all
meant "oomph," OUR six words are all construed to mean "second coming"! Until the
great scriptural truths contained in these six Greek words dawn upon our enlightened
hearts by the quickening of the spirit of wisdom from on High, though we may be earnest
students of God's Word and feel satisfied with what we have, nevertheless, there will be
in our possession a great mine of eternal riches and heavenly wealth of which we are able to appropriate only a small portion.

The subject of this study was not chosen simply to make a play on words but to direct attention to transcendent realities of infinite importance. Words are wonderful things. They open vistas to the mind of man that are utterly limitless. They break hearts, or cause the despondent to sing with joy. An announcement of a birth or the sad news of a death alike are conveyed by words. Mighty empires rise and fall at the issue of words from the lips of great kings, and powerful generals. Words are among our most wonderful possessions. Through the centuries they have stood for certain meanings, and simple regard for truth demands that we treat words as they were intended to be dealt with. Important truths pertaining to the manner of our Lord's return have been long hidden by mistranslation. As we all know, the Bible was not written originally in the English language, hence we who use the English language must depend upon translations from the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, and the Greek of the New Testament. While in most instances in our English Bibles very little of the richness of meaning has been lost through mistranslation, there are exceptions in which profound truths of the divine plan have been long concealed by unwitting mistranslations.

The apostles spoke and wrote a language called "he Koine dialectos," and while a few generations ago this vernacular form of Greek was not fully known, the researches of archeologists have given us a complete and comprehensive understanding of the New Testament vocabulary. The Greek is a more precise language than the English. The English Bible uses a few terms which relate to the coming of the Lord, but there are actually six Greek words used in relation to the Lord's return. For the sake of simplicity we shall list these words, with the shades of meaning they present, and then go on to consider them in more detail.

1. PAROUSIA. This word occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament. It comes from the verb PAREMI which means "at hand," "to be present." The noun signifies "Presence." This verb emphasizes the actual personal presence of the one who comes. "Be patient unto the COMING (presence) of the Lord" (James 5:7). PAROUSIA never indicates the act of coming or the arrival of a person, but denotes the presence of one who has already arrived.

2. APOKALUPSIS. This word comes from the verb APOKALUPTO meaning "to uncover," "unveil," and stresses the appearing or revelation of one by means of an uncovering or unveiling. It is the disclosure of one who has been hidden under cover. "Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the REVELATION (unveiling) of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:13).

3. EPIPHANEIA. This word is to be found six times in the New Testament. It comes from a verb which signifies "to shine upon," "bring to light," "to appear," "to manifest." The noun is "manifestation," "brightness." It is the appearance out of darkness of a star that has been there all day, unseen and unperceived, and suddenly manifesting at night. This word is used in the sense of the glory or majesty that is revealed by the coming of the Lord.

4. PHANEROO. This word means to render apparent or make manifest, not necessarily a visible presence, but a perception. "When He shall appear (become apparent), we shall be like Him" (I Jn. 3:2).
5. ERCHOMAI. This word is used to indicate the actual act of coming, not, as with PAROUSIA, the presence of one who has arrived, but the event of coming. "Behold, HE COMETH (is in the act of coming) with clouds" (Rev. 1:7).

6. HEKO. This word stresses the point of arrival at a certain place, as I am come and I am here. "Hold fast till I COME (to you)" (Rev. 2:25).

Of course these six Greek words do not mean six different comings of the Lord; but the distinction between them enables one to see what the texts mean with reference to the coming of His presence, to His abiding presence, to the revelation or unveiling of His presence, to the manifestation or out-raying of the glory and majesty of His presence. By no means any of these words mean identically the same thing. For instance, both the word EPIPHANEIA and PAROUSIA occur in a notable verse: "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the BRIGHTNESS (epiphaneia) of His COMING (parousia))" (II Thes. 2:8). Actually translated the verse reads: "The MANIFESTATION of His PRESENCE."

It is obvious that He CAN be present without manifesting the fact; and the present One CAN manifest the full glory and majesty of His presence with a brightness above the noon-day sun. Yonder, on the mount of Transfiguration, He suddenly shone before His disciples till the midnight became as the midnoon of a cloudless sun; yonder, above the road to Damascus, so close to Paul and unseen, then shining out till the glory of the shining blinded him and made him fall from his horse prostrate in the dust of the highway; yonder at Patmos when He appeared unto John and so blazed forth in the manifestation of His presence that the disciple fell at His feet as one dead with the weight of the glory. He can be present and yet unmanifested, as yonder at the foot of the golden ladder Jacob slept with a stone for a pillow and awakening, cried out in holy awe, "Surely the Lord I-S in this place, and I knew it not!" (Gen. 28:16). The manifested and unmanifested presence of the Lord. The Lord present and no one aware of it; then suddenly revealed and every eye beholding Him. This is the teaching of the two words, EPIPHANEIA and PAROUSIA. As these two words are both applied to the coming of the Lord; as this great event is spoken of both as HIS EPIPHANEIA and HIS PAROUSIA, and the difference between manifested and unmanifested is absolute; as they are two things as well as one, two things as to MANNER and capable of being applied to the same thing as a fact; as both ARE applied to the fact of His coming, then the coming of Christ has in these two words two distinct aspects; the aspect in which He is manifested; another aspect in which He is unmanifested.

Betimes, in the throes of trouble and testing, the heavens have seemed as brass and God appeared to be a million miles away, when suddenly, the Lord shone forth out of our darkness to show His mighty hand of deliverance on our behalf. Ah, HE WAS THERE ALL THE TIME, as present as present can be, but in one instant He MANIFESTED His presence and our sorrow turned to joy, our despair to victory, praise His name! How often it has happened to us, as it did to Jacob, when he awaked out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." He was lonely, He was troubled, He was fearful, He was fleeing from his brother Esau, things were just not going in his favor at all. Exhausted, he took a stone for a pillow and laid down to sleep. And then he had his dream with the visitation of God. Then suddenly he realized that God was IN THIS PLACE, and he had not been aware of it, shadows of loneliness, shadows of weariness, shadows of emptiness, shadows of despair, shadows and more shadows had obscured any sense of the presence of God being with him. YET GOD WAS IN THAT PLACE, and
had been with him all the time. And God is in YOUR PLACE, precious friend of mine, wherever and however it is. He may only be present (parousia) or His presence may be manifested (epiphanieia), yet God is there accomplishment some precious things, whether you are aware of it or not. Through overlooking these important distinctions we have missed much heavenly wealth and glory that lies concealed within the six Greek words and which unfold the various facets of our Lord's coming. Our vision was greatly enlarged when we discovered by revelation of the Holy Spirit this multi-faceted splendor of HIS COMING!

The story has been told of a beautiful incident that occurred many years ago in the North of England. A young Salvation Army girl, only recently saved, was overflowing with the joy of the Lord and was eager to share her salvation with all others. Walking along the street of a little Durham city, she saw a tall, gray-haired man coming toward her and, stranger though he was, she stopped him and said, "Pardon me, sir, but are you saved?"

The tall stranger leaned over toward her and answered, with a quizzical smile playing on his kindly face: "My dear, do you mean ESOTHEN, or SOZOMENOS, or SOTHESMOAI?" The Salvation Army girl was bewildered - it was "all Greek" to her! She did not know that she had stopped bishop Westcott, one of the greatest of Greek scholars and an editor of the famous Westcott and Hort edition of the Greek New Testament. He had asked her, using three different tenses of the Greek verb: "Do you mean, I was saved, or do you mean, I am being saved, or do you mean, I shall be saved?" And then bishop Westcott, who was indeed saved and knew that he was saved, lovingly explained a little of the three tenses of the gospel to the young girl, and showed her something of the riches of her past salvation, her ongoing salvation, and her future salvation, from spirit to soul to body; and before they separated that earnest young girl knew more about the gospel and her Saviour than she had ever known before, and went away rejoicing that she had asked this tall stranger whether he was saved.

In like manner, when we are asked, "Do you believe in the coming of the Lord?" we may reply, "Do you mean His PAROUSIA, or do you mean His APOKALUPSIS, or do you mean His EPIPHANEIA, or do you mean His PHANAROO, or do you mean His ERCHOMAI, or do you mean His HEKO?" Ah - we believe in ALL His comings, and it all the facets of His comings!

In a map of the heavens a "d" appears beside some of the stars, indicating that although these stars to the naked eye are single points of light, the telescope reveals them to be double, or triple, and, in some cases, to lie one behind the other, separated by immeasurable space. Some time ago, on a stop-over in Guatemala, Central America, we visited beautiful Lake Atitlan which spreads out in the mountains at an altitude of 5,200 feet, an incredible sparkling blue against green and purple slopes. It is justly famed among the most beautiful lakes in the world. The majestic volcanoes Toliman, Atitlan, and San Pedro grace its southern shore with altitudes up to 11,595 feet. We took a boat ride along the shores of this sparkling, pristine mountain lake, the water so clear that, as I walked on the pier I could easily see thirty or more feet straight to the rocky bottom with perfect clarity. Traveling around the lake by car, observing from the high mountain vistas, there is a point at which the volcanoes appear to be but one towering peak. But as you draw nearer it becomes evident that there are not one, but three, and that these peaks lie one behind the other, valleys deep and wide stretching between.

As in the works of God, so also in His Word - distance and angle of vision count for much. Events that to the casual reader appear to be but one, as they are approached by
the telescope of divine illumination are seen to be separated into various facets and manifestations. Just as it could not be learned from the Old Testament, by the deductive powers of the carnal mind, that what seemed to be one coming of Messiah would resolve itself into two, first in humiliation and then in glory; so also it cannot be learned by careless study of our English versions of the New Testament that the return of our Lord is a many-splendored, progressive REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. Our God does not talk about the "first coming" and the "second coming - He talks about the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As we have stated again and again in this series, the scripture shows clearly and unmistakably that our Lord has already had many comings, many appearings, and shall continue to have many more. The truth is that He came; He continued to come; He comes; He continues to come; He will come; He will continue to come, praise His wonderful name!

A friend recently wrote in a letter regarding these things: "What a tremendous expansion of heart, mind, and spirit this revelation invites, what a turning of the diamond like the many-faceted wisdom of God in first this direction and then that direction, what a reaching out in all directions to lay hold on HIM in whatever form He should appear, in whatever manner He should express, in whatever dimension He should move. I am completely overwhelmed by the power of this word. It has the strange dual effect of simultaneously lifting me up to soar in my spirit into the high realms of His truth and of reducing me to rubble before the majesty of His life! Quite frankly, I hardly know what to do with myself in the wake of its impact. I am absolutely beside myself with wonder. Oh, listen to the sound of His comings! Surely, what I feel tonight is akin to what Elizabeth felt when the babe in her womb stirred at the sound of the voice of one favored by and blessed of God."

THE PAROUSIA

The Greek word PAROUSIA is translated as "coming" in your King James Bible, and that is where a lot of the problems with the so-called "second coming" begin. The word actually means "along side" or "presence." And there are many, many scriptures that the Bible projects as talking about the "coming" of the Lord that are not talking at all about a physical descent of Jesus from the sky. They speak rather of His coming in us, His appearing through us, and the glory of the fullness of the presence of the Lord in the midst of the church, the presence of the Lord in the earth.

The effect of error on the work of the early translators is apparent in many of the prophecies pertaining to the return of the Christ. The theory which developed during the Dark Ages held that the Christ would return to earth as a sort of glorified man. In this form He was suddenly to appear in the sky, be visible to the entire human race for a short time, and then as He approached closer to the earth it was to be enveloped in flames, the unconverted of the human race whisked off to a place of eternal torture, while the saints would be taken to heaven. All of this was to begin and to be completed within one twenty-four hour day.

This distorted conception of the return of Christ, and its purpose, caused the Church of England scholars to translate the Greek word PAROUSIA by our English word "coming," when its real meaning is "presence." In their twisted theology there was simply no way in which Christ could be present in the earth for more than a few hours. He was to return, and rapture His people almost immediately away to heaven, so they could not conceive of His coming meaning His PRESENCE. The word PAROUSIA is used twice in the New
Testament when it does not apply to Jesus, but to the apostle Paul. These uses of the word establish its real meaning. Paul expresses others' appraisal of him, saying, "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence (PAROUSIA) is weak" (II Cor. 10:10). And again, writing to the saints at Philippi, Paul says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence (PAROUSIA) only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

It can be seen at once that the use of the word "coming" to translate the Greek word PAROUSIA in the foregoing texts would have given an entirely wrong meaning to Paul's words. In these passages it is the PRESENCE of a human being that is involved, so we understand what Paul means. He is not discussing his "coming" or "arrival," his "journey" to them, but his actual presence in their midst. So we need only to move from the understandable into the realm in which we do not fully understand in order to realize what the prophecies mean which discuss the PAROUSIA of our Lord; that meaning being His ACTUAL PRESENCE, not His "coming."

PAROUSIA is formed from the present participle of the verb "to be" (EIMI), with a prefix meaning "alongside." It means to be near or to be present. It is clear that it describes not an event, but a STATE or CONDITION, that involves duration, a period of time. It is defined by Liddell and Scott as "a being present, presence." In each place where it is translated "coming" in the King James Bible, the Revised Version has "Greek: presence" in the margin. The Greek antonym for PAROUSIA is APOUSIA meaning "un-presence" or "absence," and is used in the passage quoted above from Phil. 2:12 wherein Paul says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence (PAROUSIA) only, but now much more in my absence (APOUSIA), work out your own salvation..." No translator would think of rendering APOUSIA as "going"; so neither should PAROUSIA be rendered as "coming." It is "presence" contrasted with "absence." The word simply means "present." It would be the answer that a soldier would give to a roll call. Two thousand years ago the "coming" of the Son of God to this world took place in a split-second of time when He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary; but it was followed by His parousia or presence in this world for almost thirty-four years; many events took place during that time of His PRESENCE.

This is without doubt one of the most important truths in the whole New Testament. Nowhere does PAROUSIA mean "coming" or "coming again." The whole church world proclaims that the "second coming of Christ" is the HOPE OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. It is not His coming that is the hope of the church, but IT IS HIS P-R-E-S-E-N-C-E which is the hope of the church and the hope for the world. The PAROUSIA is a LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, not simply a flashing of Jesus across the skies. From the hour of the first dawn of creation's light to this present moment no soul of man has ever been brought into relationship with God or transformed into His image apart from the effectual MANIFESTATION OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Archeological discoveries reveal that the Greek word PAROUSIA was used in ancient times to describe the visits of kings or emperors to various cities and provinces of their realms. The word was what we might call a "royal word." Throughout the papyri there are references to the entry of monarchs with great pomp and circumstance into ancient cities or nations which are called the "parousia of the king." Mention is made of special taxes being levied, and large supplies of wheat being provided for the "PAROUSIA" - not for the moment when the king arrived, but for his stay in the locality, as when in England the flag
on the palace proclaims the presence of the queen in the metropolis, and tells us that the court is in London.

One discovery reveals that taxes to pay the expenses of such a visit were raised by issuing a special PAROUSIA coin. Since royal visits were usually few and far between it was the custom of the ancients to strike new coins to commemorate the occasion. These would be minted with the "likeness" of the victorious general, or the reigning ruler who was "present" to judge his people, impressed on each new coin. In instances where it was a conquering general who was making his parousia, striking down the former king or taking him captive, the coins of the old realm were "called in." They were then smelted and new coins poured in homage to the new King. As many numismatists have observed one can follow the travels of Caesar Hadrian by studying the many commemorative coins struck in the places where he made his parousia.

In like manner, on the spiritual plane, when the Lord Jesus Christ conquers our self-will and casts down the flesh from its place of rule in our hearts, He replaces the old coinage of Adam's "likeness" with the new coinage of the Spirit which bears His own image. This will be complete when the POWER OF HIS PRESENCE has completed its wonderful work upon our lives. Praise God, the day shall surely come at the close of the wonderful times of the restitution of all things when there will be no "coinage" in earth's realm, as well as in heaven's, which does not bear HIS glorious "likeness" for all creation will be restored into harmony and oneness in Him again! Even now, a FIRSTFRUITS has been ushered INTO HIS PRESENCE, And in the words of the old hymn, "What a wonderful change in my life been wrought since Jesus came into my heart!"

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy... to stand before the Son of man" (Lk. 21:36). Arise, O child of God, and stand before the Lord! Cast aside the restricting shroud of man's traditions, and take unto you the mantle of truth as it is IN HIM. Who knows what it means to "stand before the Son of man," but they who PASS OVER INTO HIS PRESENCE. The PAROUSIA is the ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF CHRIST and to stand before the Son of man is to awake to the wonder and glory and majesty and power of HIS PRESENCE. It is the FULLNESS of all that one can conceive of as being the reality of His promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM," and again, "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the age" (Mat. 18:20; 28:20).

The PAROUSIA is THE GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE and THE PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY. So little has His presence been realized by those Christians who fill Sunday after Sunday the pews of the harlot church systems, that even many who are baptized in the Spirit have more fear of the power of the adversary than they do have of the knowledge of the majesty and presence of the King of Glory. His presence is not always best known in the realm of soulish worship, with its clapping, dancing and shouting, nor in the manifestations of religious fervor. Praise God for the reality of rejoicing in Him, but many have discovered that they thought God was only in the Cathedral, so He called them out from there. We thought God was in the great revivals with signs and wonders and miracles, so He separated us from this. We thought the presence of God could be conjured up by much singing, clapping, and shouting, so He sent fiery trials, strippings, and separation even from this. Finally, isolated and all alone, then He says, "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art..." (Gen. 13:14). I am with you IN THIS PLACE, perhaps obscured by the shadows, but I am there, working within to conform you to My image, and bring you forth in My likeness. Though we share an existence
apparently filled with nothing but the mundane happenings of the routine, YET GOD IS PRESENT AND ACCOMPLISHING GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS within. God reveals Himself to the humble in the lowliest of disguises, but the proud who never look beneath the surface, fail to find Him even in the greatest of His manifestations.

It is time for God's people to wake up to the true and real meaning of the PAROUSIA of our Lord Jesus Christ. The word PAROUSIA is used three times in the second epistle of Peter (1:16; 3:4; 3:12). In the first instance it refers to the Divine Presence which burst forth from within Jesus at His transfiguration. In this passage Peter describes the glorious manifestation of God on the mount of Transfiguration as the "coming," the "parousia," the "presence" of Christ. Now Christ had already come in the flesh; the four men had already walked together up the mountain; but here was a "coming" of the Lord not previously known. And so he says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the POWER and COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him on the holy Mount" (II Pet. 1:16-18).

"The POWER and PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ" refers not to His arrival on the holy Mount, but to the manifestation of His STATE OF BEING during that period of time in which the disciples were "eyewitnesses of His majesty." Notice how the apostle associates the POWER and the PRESENCE of Christ with the GLORY OF GOD that appeared in the hour of Christ's transfiguration. In fact, the Lord Himself explains that this manifestation of the GLORY was in reality, the very Kingdom of God. In each of the three accounts where the scene is recorded the story is preceded with the remark: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the KINGDOM OF GOD" (Lk. 9:27). Matthew describes it as "the Son of man COMING in His Kingdom" (Mat. 16:28). Mark refers to it as "the Kingdom of God come with POWER" (Mk. 9:1). Peter combines the two statements in the words, "The POWER and COMING of the Lord Jesus Christ." The effulgence of the power and glory of God's presence erupted from the inner life of the Christ of God and Peter uses the word PAROUSIA to describe this blessed experience. And, dear reader of these lines, as the majesty and dominion of HIS PRESENCE grows, increases, develops, and is released from the inner sanctuary of your regenerated spirit, emanating, overflowing, enveloping, manifesting HIS GLORY - you, too, and all about you, will know and behold the transcendent wonder of HIS PAROUSIA.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN HIS BODY

We will never be able to understand God's great and eternal purpose in the body of Christ until first we see Jesus as the PATTERN SON. Over the past forty years we have heard much about signs and wonders. Great crusades have been held under large tents and in huge auditoriums, where vast multitudes of people have witnessed mighty demonstrations of the healing, delivering and wonder-working power of God. Some of these, of course, were spurious ... clever tricks foisted upon the people to deceive and mislead God's people, to magnify the flesh and glorify man, preachers making themselves millionaires by their flamboyant deception, using trickery to rob the simple, the widow, the well-meaning, and thousands of the Lord's precious little ones. But not all of these signs have been of the devil. The very fact that, there is a counterfeit proves that there is a genuine, for no one counterfeits that which does not exist. In our day, as in
olden times, God is showing forth His power and making known His Presence by many signs and wonders.

The writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that this glorious gospel "at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with SIGNS and WONDERS, and with divers MIRACLES, and GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, according to His will. . ." Mk. 16:17 says, "... SIGNS shall follow them that believe..." Notice that it does not say that believers follow after signs ... too much of this is being done today! Verse twenty says that they went everywhere preaching the Word, and the Lord worked with them, "confirming the Word with SIGNS following." Signs are given to be seen and heard about. The beloved prophet Daniel exclaimed, "I thought it good to show the SIGNS and WONDERS which the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation" (Dan. 4:2-3).

But I would not dwell upon the many signs and wonders that God is giving forth in this hour, and there are many. A greater sign than all of these has been given and it is this marvelous and glorious wonder, God's greatest sign, of which I would write today. JESUS is God's greatest sign! In Isa. 7:14 the prophet by inspiration cried out, "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel." Contrary to the notion held by many the Sign was not the virgin, nor was it the virgin conceiving, nor yet the miraculous birth - but rather it was the One who was born and brought forth into the world in such a manner - Emmanuel, GOD WITH US. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS" (Mat. 1:23-25). Ah, beloved, Jesus was and still is God's GREATEST SIGN.

Now a sign is that which points to something, and this man Jesus - His birth, His life, His ministry, His miracles, His words, His death, His resurrection, His ascension points unerringly to something beyond Himself. You see, the SIGN was not fulfilled when Jesus was born and walked this earth, for He was not the fulfillment of the Sign - He WAS HIMSELF THE SIGN! "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign... and shall call His name Emmanuel." When Jesus came the Sign was GIVEN. But a sign is not fulfilled when it is given. It is fulfilled when that to which it points comes to pass! The babe lying there in Mary's arms; the young boy disputing with the lawyers and doctors of the law; the Christ of God proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom; Jesus of Nazareth anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power going about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, raising the dead; the Son of God disclosed in majesty and power on the mount of Transfiguration, His raiment shining exceedingly white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them; the Lamb of God dying on Calvary's hill; Jesus the Christ raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; Christ ascended to sit on the throne of the Majesty on High - all this is the greatest SIGN God ever gave to the earth, and it shall not fail. That to which it points shall most surely come to pass, praise His glorious name! Jesus Christ is THE SIGN which points unerringly to that great thing which God is doing in the earth, the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD!

Many centuries before Jesus walked on earth the Holy Spirit spoke prophetically through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath
given Me are for SIGNS and WONDERS..." (Isa. 8:18). We discover in Heb. 2:13 that the One who spoke those marvelous words was actually our Lord Jesus. And He says that He is for a Sign. And so are the children (sons) that God hath given Him, those who are to be conformed to His image, the body of the Christ, the overcomer. Hallelujah! All the sons of God together are but a Sign, the firstfruits of God's creation, pointing to a vast harvest yet to be gathered into the Kingdom of God in that glad day when Christ has subdued ALL unto Himself and delivers up the Kingdom to the Father that God may be All-in-all, everything to everyone - everywhere.

Perhaps some reader of these lines is beginning to question... If Jesus IS the Sign, and the scriptures most plainly show that He is, then who or what is the FULFILLMENT of that Sign? Our precious Lord does not leave us in doubt, for the Bible very plainly reveals this great mystery. This is the wonderful secret that was revealed to the apostle Paul, which He calls "MY gospel." For it was Paul who saw the glorious truth of the BODY OF CHRIST, the PERFECT MAN, the SONS OF GOD, the MANY-MEMBERED MAN that God would make after His own image and likeness to reign over all things upon earth and over the vastnesses of infinity forever (see I Cor. 12:12,27; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10; Eph. 4:13; Rev. 21:7; Rev. 2:26-27; Rev. 3:21).

Yes, Jesus is a Sign. His life is a Sign pointing to, and a pattern for, His anointed body. Those who are in His body shall follow in His steps and be conformed into His image. This thing of which Jesus is a Sign is a SON COMPANY, born from above, filled with His Spirit, possessed of His glorious mind, caught up into the purposes of God, processed through Father's faithful dealings, and anointed for rulership... to sit on the throne with Him. This body of people, though composed of a multitude of saints throughout the world and gathered out of the ages, yet is seen in the scriptures as ONE BODY, spoken of as God's ONE PERFECT MAN, the OVERCOMER, and the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD. As we have already said, how this body comes into existence and what happens to it and through it can be learned by studying the Pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. And although there will be unnumbered multitudes of people saved by the grace of God through the precious blood of Jesus, and we do thank God for these dear ones, yet the high purposes of God are tied up in that company of saints who press their way toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Consider now what is next in order for the people of God today! Would you like to have a true prophetic insight into God's purposes and plans? Then study the Pattern, the Sign. See how the baby Jesus began to grow up into mature manhood. Except for one brief glimpse of the boy Jesus at the tender age of twelve, we know nothing of how He grew from babyhood to manhood. Yet we know that He did. And though the growth of His body in this hour may appear to be imperceptible from day to day, its progress is sure, and in the Father's appointed time it will come to the full maturity of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. Let us look at the boy Jesus. When we do see Him, where was He? What was He doing? See Him there, He is in the temple, His mind upon the things of God... astounding the lawyers and the revered doctors of the law with His knowledge of God and the depth of His revelation, while the other children are playing their religious games in the market-place. The doctors of the law cannot understand this lad, who someday will be God's Man, neither can they answer His searching questions. See how He is about His Father's business, recognizing at least in a measure who He is and His divine calling.

See Him at Jordan laying down His own life and giving Himself into the hands of His Father in such a way that He became a vehicle for the expression of God. God reveals
His might in the storm and His power in the lightning. He has expressed His creative ability in the majesty of the universe. But only in Jesus, His Son, could He truly reveal and express His own divine nature. So the Son, as a man, laid down His own rights, His own thoughts, His own will and ways, and became a visible means of expressing that which was divine, that which was invisible. No man can see the invisible God. But He has One to truly represent Him, One to express His love, His grace, His goodness, His knowledge, His wisdom, His glory, His authority and dominion in heaven and earth. He has One like Himself, in His own image, and at Jordan He placed this One publicly as HIS SON. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," declared the Father’s voice from heaven.

From His anointing at Jordan, Jesus entered a ministry for three and a half years that destroyed the powers of hell, and shook this world to its very foundations. HE IS THE PATTERN. Looking unto Him, we see our course set before us. "Be of good cheer," He said, "I have overcome the world." Never once was anyone turned away that came to Him. There was no disease too strong or too advanced, there was no limb too crooked, there was no eye too blind, there was no storm too violent, there was no demon too powerful, there was no sinner too wicked. He was victorious over every devil, over the elements of nature as the winds and the waves obeyed His mighty voice, over every evil force. He had entered into that realm that the enemy had usurped from Adam, and had won it back. Glory to God! What a wonderful Saviour!

What does this mean to you and me, my brother, my sister, who have received the call to follow the Lamb? We don't yet see all things under the feet of God's CORPORATE SON (Heb. 2:8), but (verse 9), "we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour." We see the Head of this body supremely victorious, waiting until the body comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that His enemies become His footstool. The Head is victorious, triumphant and crowned! But this glorious work He began will be carried forth until His whole body, even the feet, shall rise to the place of authority and power that He has. Now in these last days there is coming forth a body of people, raised up by the Holy Spirit of God, who are not content to let Satan and the carnal mind rule here on this earth. They are crying out for deliverance and interceding for the Kingdom of God on earth. They know not how this can be done, for it truly looks impossible! But having heard from heaven they gladly embrace the hope. The Spirit of God is now revealing truths that have been hidden from ages and from generations. Hope is springing up in the hearts of the saints, God’s "called out ones," and they are beginning to see that we can follow Jesus into that which is beyond the veil, into the Holiest of All, into the fullness of God. These are looking not to die, but to live; not for eventual victory in heaven, but for victory right here on this earth.

Can our finite minds comprehend even in a measure what this shall mean, to walk in the STATE OF BEING Jesus was in? To have dominion over the elements, the beasts, the birds, over the most powerful devils and the worst diseases. Yes, even victory over death itself, the last enemy to be conquered. Some claim now to have already conquered death, while they are still afraid of a mad dog, still fasten their seatbelts on the highways, or still fear an attack of the flu. Precious friend of mine, death is the last enemy to be conquered. But fall it must, before the mighty power of God working through the enchristed, His body. And Jesus said that the works He did, we would do also, and even much GREATER WORKS (Jn. 14:12). This power is not given for us to gratify our carnal appetites with bread made from stones, nor for sensationalism, nor to build a kingdom for ourselves. Jesus was tempted with all these things, and He overcame them. And so will
those who follow His pattern. Praise God! What a destiny! How marvelous the plan of God! How glorious the path of those who walk with God!

Do not mistake it, my friend - Christ is coming literally, personally, bodily. The appearance and presence (parousia) of Christ is IN HIS BODY. "Now YE ARE the BODY of Christ." The PAROUSIA, the PRESENCE of Christ is in the Body. Consider now with reverent honesty the inspired words of the apostle, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven ... when He shall come to be glorified I-N HIS SAINTS, and to be admired I-N ALL THEM that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:7, 10). That is the presence, the coming of the Son of God in and through the Christ Body. And He is coming, coming, coming, from glory to glory, from experience to experience, from inworking to inworking, until we know the POWER AND GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE in all the fullness of HIMSELF.

We know that we have a token of His presence, being "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). We have received the firstfruits of His presence and, even now, there are occasions when others do sense His presence in us, and we become a particular manifestation of the Christ to them in their need. If just this "in part" measure of our present possession can betimes shake individuals, families, communities, cities and nations for God, what will it be like when we are filled with the fullness, and literally become the embodiment of HIS PRESENCE in the earth? No wonder we read, "The creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). When HIS PRESENCE, consciously so, comes on the scene, there are changes, regeneration, restoration, and ultimately all creation will be released, delivered from its bondage to vanity, the tyranny of change and decay.

"Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because He cometh to judge the earth" (I Chron. 16:33). "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord..." (Ps. 97:5).

When God's PRESENCE becomes PERSONIFIED in the mature and perfected body of Christ, and God sends His sons forth throughout the land, then all the exalted kingdoms of man will melt like wax before them. It will not just happen because of what they say, or what they do, but because of WHO THEY ARE - BECAUSE HIS PRESENCE IS WITHIN THEM IN SUCH POWER AND MAJESTY AND GLORY AND FULLNESS. What an hour! The "end time" is not the waning and vanishing of the glory of the Holy One. The "time of the end" is the manifestation of the consummation of the FULLNESS OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD.

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the presence of the Lord. Look! The farmer keeps looking for the precious fruit of the earth, exercising patience over it until he gets the early and the late rain. You, too, be patient; make your hearts firm BECAUSE THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD HAS DRAWN CLOSE" (James 5:7-8).
Chapter 10
The Parousia Of Jesus Christ
(continued)

The Greek word PAROUSIA is translated as "coming" in your King James Bible, and that is where a lot of the problems with the so-called "second coming" begin. The word actually means "along side" or "presence." And there are many, many scriptures that the Bible projects as talking about the "coming" of the Lord that are not talking at all about a physical descent of Jesus from the sky. They speak rather of His coming in us, His appearing through us, the glory of the fullness of the presence of the Lord in the midst of the church, the presence of the Lord in the earth.

The word PAROUSIA is used twice in the New Testament when it does not apply to Jesus, but to the apostle Paul. These, and other, uses of the word establish its real meaning. Paul expresses others' appraisal of him, saying, "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence (PAROUSIA) is weak" (II Cor. 10:10). And again, writing to the saints at Philippi, Paul says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence (PAROUSIA) only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). It can be seen at once that the use of the word "coming" to translate the Greek word PAROUSIA in the foregoing texts would have given an entirely wrong meaning to Paul's words. In these passages it is the PRESENCE of a human being that is involved, so we understand what Paul means. It is not discussing his "coming" or "arrival," but his actual presence in their midst after having arrived. So we need only to move from the understandable into the realm in which we do not fully understand in order to realize what the scriptures mean which discuss the PAROUSIA of our Lord; that meaning being His ACTUAL PRESENCE, not His "coming." And many of these references are not future tense!

This is without doubt one of the most important truths in the whole New Testament. Nowhere does PAROUSIA mean "coming" or "coming again." The whole church world proclaims that the "second coming of Christ" is the HOPE OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. It is not His second coming that is the hope of the church, but IT IS HIS P-R-E-S-E-N-C-E which is the hope of the church and the hope for the world. The PAROUSIA is a LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, not simply a flashing of Jesus across the skies. From the hour of the first dawn of creation's light to this present moment no soul of man has ever been brought into relationship with God or transformed into His image apart from the effectual MANIFESTATION OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

The PAROUSIA is the ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF CHRIST and to stand before the Son of man is to awake to the wonder and glory and majesty and power of HIS PRESENCE. It is the fullness of all that one can conceive of as being the reality of His promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM," and again, "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the
end of the age." The PAROUSIA is THE PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY and THE GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE.

Do not mistake it, my friend - Christ is coming literally, personally, bodily! Yes, He comes literally, for the Lord IS literal, actual, REAL! He comes personally, for He IS truly THE PERSON of all persons! And He comes bodily, for the appearance and presence of Christ is IN HIS BODY. "Now YE ARE the BODY of Christ." The PAROUSIA, the PRESENCE of Christ is in the body. Consider now with reverent honesty the inspired words of the apostle, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven ... when He shall come to be glorified I-N HIS SAINTS, and to be admired I-N ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE in that day" (II Thes. 1: 7, 10). That is the presence, the coming of the Son of God in and through the Christ Body. And He is coming, coming, from glory to glory, from experience to experience, from inworking to inworking, until we know the POWER AND GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE in all the fullness of HIMSELF.

Woe! unto those who stand gazing intently into the starry heavens to behold One coming again to occupy some remote spot of God's earth, to sit in a royal chair in Jerusalem or in London, in a body of limitation and restriction, concealed behind walls, accessible only by appointment. "Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; GO NOT FORTH: behold, He is in the secret chambers; BELIEVE IT NOT. For as the lightning (sun) cometh out of the east and (gradually) shineth even unto the west, so shall be the PRESENCE of the Son of man" (Mat. 24: 26-27). Millions are waiting to see Jesus descending through the air, a shining body of FLESH, with the scars, as crucified; expecting Him as He WAS, and not AS HE IS, they seriously err, and blind themselves to the truth, as did the Jews at His advent in the flesh. If they knew WHAT to expect they would not gaze into the skies, nor would they set their faces toward the throne in Jerusalem, nor yet, the throne in London to behold the man, the carpenter of Nazareth; for the highly exalted King of glory comes as the sunlight, as the ever-increasing effulgence of God's glory, making His presence and influence felt and known the world over. Wherefore, "Go not forth."

The PAROUSIA OF JESUS CHRIST, the PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD is a past, present and future reality. His PAROUSIA is the ongoing, progressive unfolding of Himself. How often we have yearned for a deeper consciousness of His presence, and wondered where we could find His presence, that is, visible manifestations of His presence, that specific sense of being in the very presence of the Christ in a literal and conscious manner.

The Old Testament is replete with occasions when God manifested His presence in some form or manner so that the people knew they were IN His presence, and all these manifestations were climaxed when Jesus Christ came forth as the visible expression of the invisible God, being "the brightness of His glory, and the express I image of His person" (Heb. 1:3). The Bible does not tell us how in the morning of the world God manifested His presence and walked with man among the trees of the Garden, but this we read, "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the PRESENCE of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden" (Gen. 3:8). Obviously this was more than just the consciousness of the cosmic omnipresence of God, there was some kind of a local manifestation of which they were very conscious, and which they felt they could hide themselves from.
Then we read in Gen. 4:16, "And Cain went out from the PRESENCE of the Lord." Thus we know that there was some form of expression accommodated to sinful man, and from which it became his nature to flee. We would not in any way infer that the presence of God was disclosed merely in some earthly figure, with arms, legs and torso, as a man, for GOD IS SPIRIT, but God is able to so manifest Himself in His glorious presence that we are consciously aware of Him, and know that we are before His face. God manifested His presence in remarkable and awesome ways to Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Ezekiel and scores of others throughout the Old Testament dispensations.

But the greatest manifestation was when Jesus came, EMMANUEL, God with us. Jesus said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." He knew He was the visible expression of the Father. There were brief moments when certain individuals also came to know who He was, though for the most part "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (Jn. 1:10-11). "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Cor. 2:8).

PAROUSIA

As stated earlier in this series, I believe every word that the Bible says about the coming of our Lord; I don't believe what the harlot church system says about it, nor what the television evangelists say about it, nor even what some Bible translators say about it; but I certainly believe what the Bible says about it!

We have amply demonstrated that the Greek word PAROUSIA, generally translated "coming," literally means "presence." In the following texts relating to our Lord's coming the word PAROUSIA appears in the Greek text and should be translated PRESENCE; and in giving the texts we are using the word PRESENCE. "What shall be the sign of Thy PRESENCE?" (Mat. 24:3). "So shall also the PRESENCE of the Son of man be" (Mat. 24:27,37,39). "They that are Christ's, at His PRESENCE" (I Cor. 15:23). "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus Christ at His PRESENCE?" (I Thes. 2:19). "...He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thes. 3:13). "We which are alive, and remain unto the PRESENCE of the Lord shall not prevent (hinder) them which are asleep" (I Thes. 4:15). "Be preserved blameless unto the PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thes. 5:23). "Now we beseech you brethren, by the PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto Him" (II Thes. 2:1). "Be patient therefore brethren, unto the PRESENCE of the Lord" (James 5:7). "Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the PRESENCE of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:8). "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His PRESENCE?" (II Pet. 3:3-4).

"Come now and let us reason together," saith the Lord through the lips of Isaiah; and again, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa.1:18-19). Let us therefore reason together with Him by giving thoughtful, prayerful, and reverent consideration to the scriptures He has provided, using this key word PAROUSIA in connection with the so-called "second-coming" of Jesus. Let us do this with hearts hungering and thirsting after righteousness and willing minds open to conviction by the blessed Spirit of Truth through the inspired Word, and willing to abandon false opinions
and conceptions born of faulty translation and traditional teaching; remembering that He has shined forth with ever-increasing light since the beginning of creation; is shining forth now, and will continue to shine forth until the darkened hearts of all humanity have been warmed, melted, and returned to God; remembering that He has been, is now, and will continue to be entering, accompanying, bringing in, filling out His Kingdom, that wonderful realm in Christ in which all humanity shall eventually find their life when His Spirit has been poured out upon all flesh; and remembering that we of this age are merely a few specially chosen for His name to be used as instruments for future ages in the expansion of His Kingdom; it is not at all strange that He should now desire to tell us of His PRESENCE and the glorious work planned for and to be accomplished IN AND BY HIS PRESENCE in this age and in vast ages yet unborn. With these thoughts in mind let us now prayerfully examine the following scripture passages.

I THES. 5:23-24. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

This incorrect translation of the Greek text suggests that the apostle Paul believed that those believers at Thessalonica would be preserved physically, enjoying health and longevity for 2,000 years, until the so-called "rapture." Those of you who are qualified to read the Greek text may be surprised to learn that the Greek words meaning "until" (MECHR, HEOS, ACHR) are not to be found in this passage. These verses say nothing whatever about being preserved "until" or "unto" the coming of the Lord. The word translated "unto" is the Greek preposition EN which is the equivalent of our English word IN. The Greek preposition EN clearly defines LOCATION or POSITION. Dr. Robert Young, author of Young's Analytical Concordance, in his Literal Translation correctly translates the verse, "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved unblameable IN THE PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Concordant New Testament renders, "Now may the God of peace Himself be hallowing you wholly; and may your unimpaired spirit and soul and body be kept blameless IN THE PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Diaglott reads, "And may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your whole person - the spirit and the soul and the body - be preserved blameless IN THE PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ."

You see, precious friend of mine, there is a whole world of difference between being preserved blameless UNTIL THE COMING of the Lord, and being preserved blameless IN THE PRESENCE of the Lord! Is it not by HIS ABIDING PRESENCE that we are able to be kept and preserved blameless, faultless, without blemish or spot? It should be apparent that the primary thrust of this scripture is a sanctification and preservation of the whole man in a state of holiness and perfection by the power of the presence of the Lord. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4). This is utterly amazing! Vile sinners such as we - assured that it is the purpose of God in election and predestination that we should be WITHOUT BLEMISH before the Father! Such a condition is first stated to be true in our forerunner, Christ: "...the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb WITHOUT BLEMISH" (I Pet. 1:19). Wonder of wonders! that there should be a people, a firstfruit company, a royal priesthood, a seed of blessing which is AS FREE OF BLEMISH as is the precious lamb of God Himself! Dear chosen one of God, dare you believe it? Ah, if this were not the case, why would God be dealing so severely in your
life? "Now He that hath wrought us for this self same thing is GOD" (II Cor. 5:5). Thank God - HE shall perform it!

That our Father shall bring this work to its final consummation and present us FAULTLESS is certain! Ah, under the searchlight of His holy presence, have you not beheld your own weakness and unworthiness and despaired that your life could ever be conformed to the image of God's lovely Son? True, in your own strength and initiative such a feat can never be performed, but the word is sure: "HE HATH CHOSEN US ... THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME before Him!" Chosen - to be without blemish! What a calling! And the One who has so chosen is the same who is well able to bring it to pass! "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath HE reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, TO PRESENT YOU HOLY AND UNBLAMEABLE AND UNREPROVEABLE in His sight" (Col. 1:21-22). Furthermore,"...unto HIM THAT IS ABLE TO KEEP YOU FROM FALLING, and to PRESENT YOU FAULTLESS before the presence of His glory" (Jude 24). He - I-S A-B-L-E! He - is able to PRESENT YOU FAULTLESS! Yes, beloved, He can and will do it. Let us trust Him. Perfection is not a thing He gives us apart from Himself. Perfection is nothing but Christ Himself, most compassionately and most faithfully intervening in our daily life, most really and fully giving and living HIS LIFE IN US. The mighty CHRIST WITHIN is the guarantee of our perfection as sons of God.

Holy, without blemish, unblameable, unreproveable, blameless, without spot or wrinkle - all are related terms. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH" (Eph. 5:25-27). There is much difference between a spot and a wrinkle. A spot is "a stain coming from defilement," indicating an eruption of unrighteousness in one's life. A wrinkle is "a fold, a drawing together." A wrinkle is a blemish, though there may be no defilement with it. A garment may be spotlessly white with no stain upon it, but if it is wrinkled, its beauty and usefulness are marred. A wrinkle is a blemish revealed UNDER PRESSURE, bespeaking a weakness, such as discouragement, distraction, confusion, immaturity, etc. - not defilement, no wickedness, evil or sin involved, but marring the beauty and usefulness, nonetheless. The body of Christ, God's house of sons shall not have even a wrinkle! Our precious Lord is going to cleanse the members of His body with the washing of water by the Word and make them whiter than snow. The hand of the Father will smooth out every wrinkle by the intense heat and pressure of His dealing hand, until the body of Christ appears in all the glory and beauty of CHRIST'S COMELINESS.

Holy and without blemish! In linking holy and without blemish so closely, the Holy Spirit would lead us to rejoice in the Father's declaration, to reach out after nothing less than to be fully holy AND mature - without blame, without lack, fully furnished and COMPLETE IN CHRIST in every aspect of our being. The hour is coming and now is when the sons of God who are coming into the image of the firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, find themselves drawn irresistibly by the Spirit into the state of being of that blessed company of the 144,000 redeemed ones John beheld in vision upon the holy mount of Zion: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth... and in their mouth was found no guile: for they are WITHOUT FAULT (blemish) before the throne of God" (Rev. 14:4-5).

NOW, can we not understand what Paul really meant when he expressed the confidence that the Thessalonians would be preserved BLAMELESS I-N THE PRESENCE of the
Lord? Oh! what a mess men make of God's Word! This beautiful passage of scripture has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the so-called "second coming" of Christ! When the simplicity of the wording in the Greek language is understood, how PLAIN it all becomes! But precious and simple truths such as these have been altogether lost by the religious systems in general. The world is altogether too full of babblers of every description, who resist the truth of God to the uttermost. It is high time for the truth to be told in no uncertain terms, and high time for all who love the truth to abandon the pews and doctrines of Babylon to be truly separated unto the Lord in this momentous hour. Truly, as we seek HIS PRESENCE and live and walk in the POWER OF HIS PRESENCE, in ever-increasing measures we shall experience the mighty operation of His life within that conforms wholly into the image of God! And so, we shall be preserved BLAMELESS IN AND BY THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD right here and now!

I THES. 3:13. "To the end (purpose) He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming (parousia, presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." Young's Literal Translation says, "To the establishing your hearts blameless in sanctification before our God and Father, I-N THE PRESENCE of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." Rotherham translates this "in the presence," and the Diaglott "in presence." Would any Christian argue that the inspired apostle meant to state that the saints cannot be established in holiness until "at the second coming" of Jesus at some indefinite future time? Certainly not! He meant that they should be established in holiness right here and now. If that be so, which we believe all will readily admit, then why not so state it and also in so translating it give Jesus full credit for the work accomplished since we must be established by, in and through His work in us here and now as the ABIDING HOLY GHOST. Would it not, then, be better to lay aside our prior theology and translate this "to the end He may establish your hearts - in, by, through or throughout the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with His saints" here and now and future? Oh, righteous Father! Take away the veil of blindness that has been over our spiritual eyes!

JAMES 5:7-8. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. 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. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Young's Literal Translation reads, "Be patient then, brethren, till the PRESENCE of the Lord; lo, the husbandman doth expect the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, till it should be getting the early and late showers. You also, then, be patient; establish your hearts, for the PRESENCE OF THE LORD IS NEAR."

Are these early church saints enjoined to wait for a distant "coming" of Jesus, which they are told is "drawing nigh," but which would not have happened yet 2,000 years thence? The subject here is not Jesus crashing someday down through the skies; it is rather His coming as the "former and the latter rain" upon the earth. There has been a general misunderstanding of the passage under consideration, for it is clear that the Lord's coming as rain, the former and the latter, is a SPIRITUAL VISITATION in the midst of His people. The rain bespeaks of the pouring out of the presence and glory of Christ as the
quickening Spirit, as He moves to give forth His presence in blessing and restoration. The coming of Christ unto His own is as the rain, and this truth is clearly stated by the prophet Hosea, "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 the former rain unto the earth" (Hos. 6:3). Therefore, rain represents the visitation of the Lord to His people. How the saints of God are thirsting for these living streams from heaven!

How little do we realize that God is more anxious for the "latter rain" than we are! And why? Because He is the Gardener; and He is waiting for the Harvest when His people will grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. He is looking for the Feast of Ingathering when He might gather in the precious produce of a vast field of people fully conformed to the image of that first "seed" that was cast into the earth. Praise God, He sends the rain, the former and the latter rain, with refreshing showers of blessing in between. "Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain." And then we are admonished, "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the COMING (PRESENCE) of the Lord," for in a very real sense the coming of the latter rain IS the coming of the Lord upon His people. This great Ingathering is the Harvest for which the Husbandman has been waiting since the foundation of the church.

In Palestine the first, or early rains usually come in the month of September, after the long, hot summer in order to soften the ground that they might plow the soil and plant the grains before winter comes. The early rains furnish the moisture for the germination and first growth of the seed. The latter rains occur in March and serve to fill out the heads of grain and bring the growth and maturity necessary for harvest. That which God established in the natural is designed by Him to pattern His workings in the spiritual realm. Thus we know that for God to be true there MUST be two great, worldwide outpourings of the Spirit upon mankind, interspersed by various localized showers of blessing.

The mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost proved to be the former rain moderately. It is beyond the ability of any man to fully comprehend the far-reaching results of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This glorious outpouring of the Holy Ghost was not only a real experience to those who received it, but a heavenly visitation that shook the entire earth as nothing either before it or since has ever done. The entire course of history was changed thereby. As one has written, "So great was that outpouring that by the end of the century one twentieth of the entire Roman Empire had been converted to Christ, and by the year A.D. 300 Christianity far exceeded paganism. Following Peter's sermon at Pentecost, three thousand souls were saved and the day following another five thousand were saved. In the days following multitudes both of men and women turned to the Lord. Mighty signs and wonders were done by all the apostles. By Paul's hand God wrought special miracles. The sick were brought and laid in the street that the shadow of Peter falling upon them might bring healing to their bodies. The glory of that former rain beggars description. Truly they had been baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost and the heavenly 'wind' was blowing whithersoever it listed. This was a mighty manifestation of THE GLORY OF GOD. This was GOD'S GLORY falling as rain among the people and filling their hearts with joy and gladness, transforming their lives and making them sons of God" -The Page.
I do not hesitate to tell you that there is coming a great and glorious outpouring of the Spirit in these latter days which will be the fulfillment of the "latter rain." For some 85 years now mercy drops have been falling, and betimes windy showers of refreshing and quickening have swept across the face of the earth. The last or most recent shower of latter rain blessing came during the years 1948-1953. 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 angels above can begin to describe the SURPASSING GLORY of the outpouring in these last days. The latter rain is coming, the manifestation of the PAROUSIA or PRESENCE of the almighty Christ of God, and compared to it the former rain was a flickering candle before the burning brilliancy of a noonday sun, or a trickling stream compared to the vast ocean currents beyond the power of man to either produce or control. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that wonderful day of Pentecost was the former rain, but never let the truth grow dim that this same Jesus shall come in great power and glory as the latter rain. Then will come the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation has groaned for six thousand years. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His Body. His glory shall 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. According to James 5:7-8 the PRESENCE of the Lord has ALREADY DRAWN NEAR. His PAROUSIA has already been revealed. Let us, then, be patient unto the fullness of the blessing, the PRESENCE of the Lord, until the Holy Spirit be poured out in all the fullness of HIMSELF!

I COR. 15:22-25. "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; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Young's Literal Translation correctly expresses it thus: "For even as in Adam all die, so also in the Christ all shall be made alive, and each in his proper order, a first-fruit Christ, afterwards those who are the Christ's IN HIS PRESENCE, then - the end, for It behooveth Him to reign till He may have put all the enemies under His feet - the last enemy is done away - death." Rotherham says that the second order of those made alive in the Christ is those who are "the Christ's IN HIS PRESENCE." The Diaglott reads, "in the presence of Him." In each case the Greek preposition EN is correctly rendered by the English IN, and what an infinite difference there is between people being made alive "AT His COMING," or people made alive "IN His PRESENCE"!

Let us now see how it is that "in Christ" all shall be MADE ALIVE. The whole chapter of I Cor. 15 deals with resurrection. The word resurrection is so inadequate to express the true thought or idea that the Holy Spirit is conveying to us. The common conception of this word carries with it the idea of opening all the graves in the world and the arising out of them of the physical bodies of those who have died. But since death is something more than physical bodies, you can be assured, dear ones, that resurrection is something far beyond bringing bodies out of tombs. To have a false or limited view of the resurrection is to have a false and limited view of God's work throughout the ages until now. If our view of the resurrection is dwarfed, then our whole view of God's plan is dwarfed.

So we read that in Christ ALL SHALL BE MADE ALIVE. The contrast is not between corpses and walking bodies, but between the dying process and the life process in God.
The Greek text actually reads, "As in Adam all ARE DYING, SO in the Christ shall all be made alive." The terms "are dying" and "shall be made alive" are in the incomplete tense in the original, which denotes an action in progress. The long drawn out activity of death in dragging men down to sin, sorrow, death and the grave is put in contrast with the ceaseless activity of life imparting holiness, power, incorruption and glory. All who endured the first shall enjoy the second. Here is a message for mankind which should lift it above its misery! The process of His life, and hence, the process of resurrection has already commenced with us! Truly, "He HATH QUICKENED us together with Christ ... and HATH RAISED US UP" so that "if ye then BE RISEN with Christ, seek those things which are above" (Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:1).

To be "made alive" is more than some instantaneous event to take place some time in the distant future. "Made alive" is not a blasting open of graves and the coming forth of the bodies that have been buried in them. "Made alive" does not point to some future event when people will go soaring off into the heavens. When Jesus stood before the tomb of Lazarus, He rebuked Martha for looking for some manner of event in the far distant future and told her that the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE WAS STANDING THERE BEFORE THEM. "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE." The resurrection and the life had just walked into town! Oh, saints of God, do you not see that the eternal Father in the Christ was and is the resurrection? "I live by the Father," Jesus declared. The resurrection was not some THING that happened to Jesus, not some EVENT of which He was a partaker, not some DAY marked by the calendar. The resurrection was and is A MAN! "I AM" - there it is! "I AM the resurrection and the life." To possess the Man, to put on the Man, to enter into union with the Man is to have resurrection, for the Man IS the resurrection. "In Christ shall all be made alive."

There is a wonderful Law known to men of science which is called the Law of Biogenesis. This Law demonstrates that during all of recorded history life has only come from pre-existing life. No human power has ever been able to produce life out of inorganic chemical substances. 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 some kind. The inorganic world is staked off from the living world by 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 forever 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.

As we consider these thoughts may God Almighty grant us 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? 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 living substance of the 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 enabled 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 the 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).

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). This higher life of God reaches down into the EARTH WHICH WE ARE, seizing upon the earthly elements of our natural life, quickening, transmuting, changing, transforming, raising us up into the blessed realm and kingdom of the Spirit.

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. 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 hid with Christ in God and God will raise me up to find my existence in the realm of His divine life and glory.

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 certainly 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.

Truly the resurrection is not a future hope - it is a present reality. As those in Adam "are dying" so in Christ men "ARE being made alive." Receiving of His life we find it to be a RESURRECTION LIFE. The word "resurrection" is from the Greek word ANASTASIS meaning - a standing or rising up. It denotes much more than our English word resurrection which we term to mean a restoring to life again. The Greek word means the WHOLE PROCESS OF ADVANCING AND RISING UP UNTIL THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE REALM IS REACHED, and our goal is nothing short than full conformation into the image of God that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him. Resurrection is the process of STANDING UP and ADVANCING, it is arising from the dust and the low realm of the earthy, to bear the image of the heavenly. Resurrection is the process of having our life lifted up from the earth, to be raised to the heavenlies, joined in one with the fullness of the Spirit of God. Our alienation and separation from God, with all the dreadful attending sorrows, are already beginning to end in this life as through Christ we ARE MADE ALIVE! And, blessed be His name, in Christ shall A-L-L be made alive!

And just how shall all be made alive? IN and BY and THROUGHOUT THE ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF THE LORD, saith the scripture. Becoming Christ's, and abiding IN HIS PRESENCE is the Biblical formula for being "made alive"! "As in Adam all are dying, so in the Christ shall all be made alive, but each in his own order, a first-fruit Christ, afterwards those who are the Christ's IN HIS PRESENCE." How much more reasonable, logical and demonstrable is this than the erroneous time-worn theory that it is Jesus streaking across the heavens, and blowing a trumpet, that will raise the dead out of their graves! The apostle Paul in strict harmony with this principle wrote, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus from the dead DWELL IN YOU, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT THAT D-W-E-L-L-E-T-H I-N Y-O-U" (Rom. 8:11).

The life that quickens (makes alive) the mortal (dying) body is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Jesus comes riding on a cloud and suddenly "zaps" the bodies of men with a current of divine energy, instantly transmuting them into shining incorruptible beings. This is the vague form in which many babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable 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 in 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 soul. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a seed, which a man took, and SOWED IN HIS FIELD."

Incorrutable life is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He "passes this way," nor from the weekly refreshing that comes to our souls as we gather together in our church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship and encouragement of those of like precious faith, and the ministry of every precious member of the body of Christ, but I declare to you that the life incorruptible, immortal, and eternal can only be experienced by yielding to the CHRIST WITHIN, conscious of His voice, His hand guiding, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the mind and the body into the image of Him who created them. Glory to God!

MAT. 24:27. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming (parousia, presence) of the Son of man be."

In order that we may get a correct understanding of this verse and its momentous spiritual vision, we must give consideration to the word translated "lightning," since this translation has given rise to a most erroneous concept of the coming of Jesus. It has led Christian people, almost without exception, to look forward to that blessed event as an instantaneous affair, which shall flash suddenly across the heavens and startle the world with its vividness. But nothing could be farther from the truth and nothing could have befogged our vision more.

The Greek word translated "lightning" in this passage is ASTRAPE. The meaning, as given in Strong's Concordance, is "lightning; by analogy, glare; bright shining." So we see at once that scholarship recognizes this word as meaning a "bright shining" of light which might arise from a source other than a flash of "lightning." It is so used, in fact, in Lk.11:36 where we read, "If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the BRIGHT SHINING (ASTRAPE) of a CANDLE doth give thee light."

Let us now pose a question. Does "lightning," as we understand the English word, always "come out of the east and shine unto the west?" Does it not flash from north, south, east or west according to the location of the clouds which are charged with either positive or negative electricity? And yet, the "bright shining" here spoken about is expanded to shining "from the east even unto the west." Again, if the coming of the Lord is portrayed by "lightning," it would be only in limited areas and over only portions of the earth from time to time. Is such a view consistent with the scripture that "every eye shall see Him and every knee shall bow?" And yet the same people who liken His coming to the "lightning" will likewise zealously uphold the latter view. Let us no longer be children in understanding!

But, I ask, what light does ALWAYS come out of the east and shine even unto the west? Does not the light of coming day arise always in the east, gradually brightening the horizon until the sun becomes visible and its rays illumine the eastern sky and "spread as a carpet" over the countryside, city and hill, bathing all in its warmth and beauty as it
shines even unto the west? Has not our Lord Jesus been likened unto the "Sun of righteousness" to "arise with healing in His wings?" And the Psalmist hath declared, "The Lord God is a sun... the Lord will give grace and glory" (Ps. 84:11). Praise God, the Sun of righteousness has arisen in our heart and He giveth grace and glory for "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14). The light of that Sun has shined brightly into our darkened soul and is bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel. Dear reader, you may have Him flashing for a brief moment across your cloudy, dark, stormy earthly sky if you so choose, but we are glad to see Him with SPIRITUAL EYES and behold His grace and glory as it spreads over the whole world of mankind from east to west until it shall embrace the whole human race, bringing warmth and beauty and life where all was, and still is largely, spiritual darkness and death.

Yes, dear friends, His coming, His parousia, His presence is not to be an instantaneous, brilliantly blinding light flashing across the natural heavens from any local quarter as the word "lightning" might and does incorrectly portray; but His coming, His presence, has been, is now and shall be like the DAWN OF A NEW DAY that constantly increases from the first faint rays of spiritual light until the soul and body of the individual are flooded with the noonday brightness of the blessed Sun of righteousness. And so it shall be universally until that light has brought every created being into subjection to our Lord and He shall reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet, for "the entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). Shine on, O King eternal!
Chapter 11

The Parousia Of Jesus Christ

(continued)

In previous articles we have amply demonstrated that the Greek word PAROUSIA, generally translated "coming," literally means "presence." This is without doubt the key to one of the most important truths in the whole New Testament. Nowhere does PAROUSIA mean "coming" or "coming again." The PAROUSIA OF JESUS CHRIST, the PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD is a past, present and future reality. His PAROUSIA is the ongoing, progressive unfolding of Himself. How often we have yearned for a deeper consciousness of His presence, and wondered where we could find His presence, that is, visible manifestations of His presence, that specific sense of being in the very presence of the Christ in a literal and conscious manner. The PAROUSIA is the ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF CHRIST and to stand before the Son of man is to awake to the wonder and glory and majesty and power of HIS PRESENCE. It is the fullness of all that one can conceive of as being the reality of His promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM," and again, "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the age." The PAROUSIA is the PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY and the GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE.

THE DEPARTED CHRIST

The doctrines and creeds of most churches of our day have developed around and focused upon six events in the life of the Christ. These are known as the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, Pentecost and the Second Coming of Christ. But because the fourth of these, the Ascension, has been so falsely interpreted and distorted by the unspiritual minds of tradition-bound theologians and teachers, the church world has come to the wrong conception of the last two - Pentecost and the Return of Christ.

If one did not search the scriptures, but listened only to church preaching, hymns and doctrines today he would surely gather the idea that the Christ has gone somewhere. No one seems to know where He is, but He is in some far-off heaven somewhere literally and permanently seated upon a majestic throne. At any rate, all are quite sure that He has left planet earth, for did not the disciples see Him go? And so the vast majority of Christians are convinced and firmly believe the New Testament affirms that Christ is no longer on earth. But let us SEE!

The longer I travel in my pilgrimage along the blessed pathways of the celestial kingdom the more I become aware of the mighty significance of every word breathed into the sacred pages of scripture, which our heavenly Father has graciously given for our understanding, training and guidance. How carelessly we peruse its pages! How casually we read its astounding and earth shaking statements! How lightly we pass them by and
how thoughtlessly we contradict their plain and simple pronouncements, teaching instead for doctrine the traditions of men! What an infinite transformation would be wrought in our understanding and experience should we dare to believe A-L-L that the scriptures have spoken concerning Him!

When our wonderful Lord Jesus was holding precious communion with His beloved disciples in those heaven-blessed days following His resurrection, on one occasion when He appeared in their midst, we read, "And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted" (Mat. 28:17). What! Are they still doubting? Why, even Thomas has been convinced by now! Are they still doubting? Ah, it does not mean that. Let me briefly give you the scene, not so much from the English translation but from the finer reading of the Greek in which Matthew wrote the record.

It was like this. The eleven were gathered at the appointed place, but Jesus had not come. He was not late - He was never late - but according to their reckoning He was late, and He had not come. Peter goes down to the brow of the hill, which commands a view of the path winding up the hillside, to see if He is coming, but there is no sign of Him. Another disciple goes down to see if He is coming and returns, shaking his head. The Master has not arrived. Is He really coming? And suddenly, as before, He is there. He is there - not immediately in their midst, but just a little way from them. He is suddenly there! and no one had seen Him arrive. Of course, as before, it is probable that He had been there all the time and suddenly He made Himself visible to them and they all saw Him. As they looked upon Him suddenly appearing yonder before them, the majesty of His person compelled them to worship. It is the "prostrate" word for worship, the word which means that they were flat on their faces before Him. And in the very act of worshipping, some doubted.

Wavering worshippers! Do you know anything about that? This message seems to me to be always urgent upon those who follow on to know the Lord. It is so tragically possible still to worship Christ and yet, in the very act of worshipping Him, to waver. Now this word "doubted" is an unusual word: it only occurs twice in the New Testament and both times are in Matthew. When Peter walked on the water and was saved by his Master, Jesus said unto him, "O thou of little faith! Wherefore didst thou doubt?" It is the same word; and it is only on these two occasions, then and there, that this word is used in the New Testament. It means literally "to stand in two ways at once". I don't think I can illustrate it, but I think you will see what it means. Anyway, you will from Peter walking on the water. One moment he was looking at his Lord, and walking by faith: the next moment he was looking at the waves, and walking in fear. Then again looking at his Lord and receiving strength: but immediately a big wave makes him lower his victorious gaze and he is once more frightened and floundering. Wavering - standing in two ways at once - vacillating back and forth between the spirit and the flesh - one moment full of faith, the next moment full of fear. A very unsatisfactory way of walking and living! As James says, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed: let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord."

Ah, then I think I see what this means. I think I can sympathize with them, methinks I have done it in my own soul again and again. As they looked at Him standing there suddenly before them, they were compelled to worship, so glorious was He, so commandingly majestic. As some of them lifted their gaze from their prostration on the ground, they looked into His eyes and they saw something that was so challenging there that they knew He had big things for them: they knew that He was calling them to
something great: and as they looked at Him, worshipping Him, they shrank, some of them, from what they knew He was going to give to them and demand of them. I think He must have had His flint face on that day. They wavered! Wavering worshippers!

Do you not remember some great experience, some glorious meeting, some wonderful manifestation of God's presence, some mighty move of His Spirit, some awesome unveiling of His glory when the Lord Christ was so exalted before you in the power of the Holy Spirit that you were worshipping Him. There was nothing else to do - you had to worship Him. Did you waver as you worshipped? In the face of His glory, at the majesty of His presence you caught an enthralling glimpse of the glory set before - the glory of sonship to God, the holy expectancy of being made like Him, conformed to His image; the awesome wonder of sharing His mind and His wisdom, His authority and His power; the calling to be a joint-heir and co-ruler with the Christ in the marvelous work of redemption and restitution, to restore the creation into God again. This high and holy calling, known only by revelation of the Holy Spirit of Truth, is a jewel and a prize to be greatly cherished and revered by God's elect. What a vision! What a hope! But - did you waver as you worshipped? Is it not true that in the very face of the ecstasy of the moment of divine illumination and quickening we are at once distraught by the haunting voice of the carnal mind pressing its demands upon us: You will never make it to perfection! Our inherent weaknesses and persistent faults, our unconquered carnality and obvious mortality present themselves before us, magnified like weird mocking monsters dancing hideously in the twilight, taunting, jeering, scorning, sneering, condemning - just who do YOU think YOU are? A son of God? - indeed! You will never be a son of God! You wretched little pretender! You can't make it, such a high and holy calling is forever beyond your grasp, you will never be an overcomer, you claim too much, its not for real! Oh to worship Christ without wavering!

No wonder they wavered! For look what He had to say to them. "Jesus came," --you see, He came right up to where they were now, came close - "and spake unto them, saying" -- and, Oh, what a word is this! You have noticed the four "alls"? "ALL power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go ye and disciple ALL nations, baptizing them into the Name, teaching them to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you - literally - ALL the days, even to the consummation of the age." Consider His power. "All power is given unto Me..." All authority (exousia, not dunamis) hath been given to Me in heaven and on earth! His power! That position our ascended Lord occupies today. All authority in heaven and on earth is in the loving hands of our living Saviour. His power! Consider His plans. "Go ye therefore and disciple ALL nations..." Consider His principles. "Teaching them to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Consider His PRESENCE. "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALL THE DAYS - perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion - to the very close and consummation of the age" (Mat. 28:20, Amplified). "All the days" - Sundays and Mondays. All the days! Days of sunshine and blessing and glory - days of thundercloud and turmoil and trial. ALL the days! Days when everything goes right and days when everything goes wrong. Days when you have the victory and days when you suffer defeat. "All the days I am with you!" Throughout the march of the centuries an innumerable multitude of men and women have claimed these beautiful words as the unfailing promise of our lovely Lord Jesus. But, precious friend of mine, that is not a promise! I dare say you will find it in the Promise Box, but it is not a promise.. He did not say, "I WILL be with you all the days." it is better far than a promise; it is a FACT! "I AM with you always" - making no conditions - not saying: "If you do this,
that and the other, I will be with you" - but stating as an accomplished, perpetual, unchanging fact the complete assurance of a constant and age-lasting PRESENCE OF THE CHRIST with us. How much plainer can any statement be? Yet the preachers today confidently affirm that HE IS GONE! "Christ is in heaven," say they, "but His Spirit is with us here," as though His Spirit were somehow not HE HIMSELF. Who is the Lord, anyhow? "Now the Lord I-S THAT SPIRIT" (II Cor. 3:17). Mark, in the last verse of His Gospel tells us, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the LORD WORKING W-I-T-H THEM and confirming the Word with signs following." After He ascended HE WAS RIGHT THERE WITH THEM STILL. Glory to God!

When the holy Christ of God uttered His wonderful proclamation, "And, lo, I AM with you always," that proclamation forever established that in truth the Christ NEVER WOULD DEPART. There is a wonderful difference between ascending and departing. Jesus said, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father" (Jn. 20:17), but never, once did He say that He would depart from them. For hath He not said, "I will NEVER L-E-A-V-E, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). That which the church today regards as the departure of Jesus, was never so regarded by His disciples. Rather it meant to them a CONDITION OF POWER, for He told them that He must "go away" that the Comforter might "come." None of the Gospel writers felt that the "taking up" involved any departure of the Christ. It never did mean AN END of His presence to any of them. But on the other hand, it really meant a far greater realization of His presence than they had ever experienced. Their statements that He continued to work with them, that He said He would be with them to the end of the age, and their fullness of joy all testify to the fact that they believed He was still with them and had not gone anywhere else. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH I-N ME" (Gal. 2:20). In the last chapter of Luke's Gospel and the first chapters of its sequel which we call "The Acts of the Apostles," the pen of inspiration has faithfully recorded the facts surrounding the ascension of our Lord and His coming to us as the Spirit. Jesus led His faithful little band of followers out of Jerusalem as far as the village of Bethany and while speaking to them He stretched out His hands in blessing upon them. When He blesses, His feet lift from the grass and, still blessing them He rises upwards. They follow Him with their gaze, until a cloud intervenes and receives Him out of their sight. Only out of their sight. Not out of their company. Only His BODILY PRESENCE was denied to them. Had He not said, "Lo, I am with you always"? In a sense He did not really go away: HE ONLY WENT OUT OF SIGHT. And in ten days' time, He was to come to them in a closer way than ever by His indwelling Spirit.

That cloud intrigues me. "And a CLOUD received Him out of their sight." "Received Him out of" is one word in the Greek meaning "to take under". It signifies to take up by placing one's self underneath, in the style of a hiker carrying a backpack, or as a waiter holds a tray. It is one of Luke's medical terms. Weymouth in his translation puts it thus: the cloud "closing beneath Him, hid Him from sight." Don't tell me that was the sort of cloud which spills the rain and from which the lightning flashes. No! No! That Cloud is the Cloud of the Glory of God, the Shekinah, described in Eze. 1:4 as "a great cloud ... and brightness."

A cloud is perhaps the best known Eastern symbol for the swirling, lustrous radiance which hides "the face of His throne" (Job 26:9). The Hebrew term translated "cloud" in Ezekiel is AWNAUN, a word which is occasionally used of a nimbus or thundercloud, but which is repeatedly used for THE GLORY CLOUD OF YAHWEH. The first appearance of AWNAWN, "cloud," as a technical term for the Shekinah is found in Ex. 13:21 wherein we read, "And the Lord went before (the Israelites) by day in a pillar of a CLOUD, to lead them the way." It was this "cloud" which Ezekiel saw while he was with the exiles in
Babylon by the Chebar Canal. The Glory Cloud is the "chariot" of Yahweh, composed of myriads of celestial beings, the spirits of just men made perfect, the armies which are in heaven, the heavenly hosts of the spiritual world. "Behold," declares the prophet, "the Lord rideth upon THE CLOUD, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it (the cloud)" (Isa. 19:1).

Just as the CLOUD "covered the mount" at the giving of the Law (Ex. 24:15-18), so, also, it "covered the tabernacle" when it was completed. "And the Glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the Cloud abode thereon, and the Glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 40:34-35). Many years later, when Solomon had finished the work of the temple, "The Cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the Cloud; for the Glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" (I Kings 8:10-11). It will be observed that "The Cloud" and "The Glory" are equated as synonymous, for The Cloud "filled the house" and The Glory "filled the house" are stated in parallel fashion.

This is the Cloud of HIS GLORY into which the triumphant saints of God are to be caught up. "And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the CLOUDS" (I Thes. 4:16-17). There is no definite article in the Greek text before the word "clouds," to make it THE CLOUDS, which would thus identify them as the clouds of the lower atmosphere surrounding our earth. Where the identifying article is missing, it speaks of quality, or is used as a descriptive term. The Greek word "cloud" it often used of a large body of individuals in the Greek Classics, and it is also so used in Heb.12:1 speaking of that great "cloud of witnesses" which surround us. Thus our "catching up" is being brought into that higher spiritual sphere, where we shall become one with that whole great cloud of witnesses, that "general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23). What a glorious UNION of forces when those of our generation upon the earth, and all those overcoming saints of all former ages who have gone on before us, are joined together, becoming an indestructible force in the full, total and complete manifestation of His majesty, power and glory at the manifestation of the sons of God!

The Resident within the shimmering Cloud of Glory is just the Lord Himself, the source of the dazzling light, for it is HE who causes the celestial host to shine forth, thus forming the "cloud" and manifesting His glory thereby. Yes, He shall be revealed TO US, shall complete all of His work and purpose in us, lifting us up into higher realms of the Spirit, and completing that UNION WITH THE WHOLE BODY OF THE FIRSTBORN. Then shall He be revealed IN US in fullness as Paul explains, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty messengers, in flaming fire ... when He shall come to be GLORIFIED I-N HIS SAINTS, and to be ADMIRED I-N ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE in that day" (II Thes. 1:7-10).

I would draw your reverent attention to the following two scripture passages. "Behold! He cometh WITH CLOUDS" (Rev. 1:7). "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, The Lord cometh WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF HIS SAINTS" (Jude 14). Or, "Lo, the Lord comes in holy myriads of Himself" (Literal translation). If you will take a few minutes to meditate upon these two verses you will begin to realize that the Lord coming WITH CLOUDS and the Lord coming WITH SAINTS is not two separate events, but just the same thing. The "cloud" that received our Lord
Jesus out of their sight on the day of His ascension, was the same "cloud" which revealed the majestic Person of Yahweh on Mount Sinai and in the Tabernacle and Temple of old, and the very same "cloud" with which He comes again and into which His elect is gloriously caught up. It was the Cloud of celestial spirits swooping down from realms of glory to bear Him up in triumph to the sphere of authority, power and blessing which should thenceforth flow forth as a mighty river of life through the channel of His body upon earth. They came, say the Greek, and they wrapped Him round, some of them underneath Him, and into their presence He passed, and the eyes on earth beheld Him no longer. From the eternal and omnipresent realm of the spirit He occupies the omnipotence of the throne of the universe; from that throne He gives the Holy Spirit of HIS PRESENCE to all who believe.

May the blessed Holy Spirit open the eyes of our understanding that we may see that beyond the veil of the flesh is the realm of God, the realm of the Spirit, and it is there the Christ of God dwells, and it is there He must be touched, seen, known and experienced. He did not "leave us" for He promised He never would; His "disappearance" from the sight of men was not a lessening of His PRESENCE with us in any way. Rather it was an intensification of that PRESENCE. For the Christ was transferring that PRESENCE from one body to many bodies. He was expanding and enlarging His power and influence and character greatly among men. That expansion and enlargement has continued throughout the centuries, and the body of Christ has continued to grow and develop in preparation for the full and total and complete manifestation of His life when every elect son of God has come forth finally from Father's hand full grown in the mind, nature, will, power and dominion of Almighty God.

Our testimony joins in harmonious accord with that of the beloved disciple John when he declared, "WE KNOW THAT THE SON OF GOD IS COME." He is here now in the world, IN US, and it will have to be through us that the world will come to the knowledge and experience of this PRESENT CHRIST. The enveloping and overwhelming of HIS PRESENCE - this is the PAROUSIA of Jesus Christ! With this precious truth in mind let us now reverently consider a couple more texts touching on the PAROUSIA of our Lord.

**HIS PRESENCE AND THE GATHERING UNTO HIM**

**II THES. 2:1.** "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (parousia, presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto Him..." This scripture has been much used to substantiate the rapture teaching by assuming that the PAROUSIA of the Lord was a future event and likewise "our gathering together unto Him." When we endeavor to receive the revelation of spiritual truth, we are at once brought into conflict with the pre-conceived ideas of time-honored tradition. I exhort the saints therefore to lay aside every concept that they have received from man which they have not thoroughly investigated upon their knees with an open Bible and in holy brokenness before God. The mists and darkness of carnal minds and lifeless creeds have obscured the meaning of this beautiful passage from all but a few, but those words - "by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "by our gathering together unto Him" - precious friend of mine, have reference to very present reality which was first spoken of by the Lord Himself when He said, "For where two or three are GATHERED TOGETHER in My name, there AM I IN THE MIDST of them" (Mat. 18:20). There you have the two ingredients: The presence of the Lord, and the gathering together unto Him.
The Concordant New Testament translates this passage thus: "Now we are asking you, brethren, for the sake of the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to Him..." Rotherham's translation reads, "But we request you, brethren, in behalf of the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him..." The Diaglott makes a still clearer translation by the rendering, "We entreat you, brethren, concerning the presence of the Lord of us Jesus Anointed and of us assembling to Him," which portrays the Lord as then and there present and their gathering, or assembling, to Him to be then and there. In other words, the apostle was beseeching the saints at Thessalonica that AS THEY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER OR ASSEMBLED UNTO THE LORD IN HIS PRESENCE they should not be shaken in mind or be troubled by the fact that the Day of the Lord they awaited was not to immediately break in its fullness of glory upon them.

We read so much into the scriptures that simply isn't there! To suit our purpose of emphasizing what the scriptures REALLY say, in contrast with what most people THINK they say, we shall paraphrase seven well-known verses from the Gospel of John, chapter fourteen, in keeping with the popular teaching of our day. To hear the preachers expounding the things of God it should read something like this:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in hell, believe also in heaven. In heaven there are many mansions: you know I have told you this and have described its beautiful golden streets many, many times. I am going to heaven to prepare a mansion just over the hilltop for you, and if I go and prepare a mansion for you, I will come again and take you away to heaven, that where I will be you will be also. And you all know well that I am going to heaven, and you know the way to heaven. And Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we didn't know you were going to heaven and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man shall ever get to heaven but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: but when you get to heaven you shall know Him and you shall see Him" (in. 14:1-7, Paraphrase).

Strange as it may seem, the subject of the fourteenth chapter of John is NOT HEAVEN! Jesus rarely spoke of heaven in the traditional sense during His teaching ministry. For Jesus came, not as a revelation of some geographical or astral location, but as the expression of a glorious PERSON. And that Person is the FATHER. It may come as a shock to some who read these lines, but the word heaven, or any synonym thereof, does not appear even once in this entire chapter! But the term FATHER is used some TWENTY-THREE times! It should be obvious to any thinking mind that the thrust of Christ's words was to bring His disciples into a living relationship with the almighty and infinite Father. Said Christ, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and HE TO WHOMSOEVER THE SON WILL REVEAL HIM" (Mat. 11:27). Armed with the understanding that the key word in John, chapter fourteen, is FATHER and not HEAVEN, we might examine the profound truth here uttered by the lips of the Son of God.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto MYSELF; that where I AM, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, but by Me."
It would be of utmost profit for any of us to diligently consider this important question: Where does Jesus say He will receive us to? "I will come again, and receive you UNTO ME." To understand the deep meaning of this significant statement we must see by the spirit of wisdom and revelation just WHERE CHRIST IS. The Lord has never anywhere promised to carry us off to a beautiful Isle of Somewhere, but in the tenderest tones He assures us that He is Himself the WAY TO THE FATHER. "I am the WAY ... no man COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, but by Me." Jesus is the WAY! The way to where? Why, bless your heart, He is the way to the Father! The WAY is not a route through the Milky Way, the WAY is a PERSON! And the DESTINATION is likewise a PERSON. "No man cometh unto the FATHER, but by ME." It is IN CHRIST that we are enabled to enter into intimate relationship and vital union with the Father.

Before either the firstfruit company or the rest of creation can be brought to the Father it is vitally necessary that there be a GATHERING UNTO THE CHRIST. It is my deep conviction that this is the grand truth the Holy Spirit is pointing to in I Cor. 15:24-28. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. And when all things shall be subdued UNTO HIM, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

From the earliest times of antiquity the Lord has spoken through the mouths of His anointed prophets foretelling this wonderful GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO CHRIST. The patriarch Jacob, at the time of his death, acting under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and with the spirit of prophecy upon him, called all his sons together to tell them what their posterity should become in the purposes of God. Laying his bony, trembling hand upon the head of his son Judah he prophesied, saying, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh (Christ) come; and UNTO HIM SHALL THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE BE" (Gen. 49:10). Paul asserts, as we have shown, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM..." (II Thes. 2:1). It seems to me that these two passages compliment and explain each other, and that both clearly point to the oft repeated term "in Christ" or "in Him." Again and again, the Holy Spirit of God sets forth that privileged position IN CHRIST. "Therefore if any man be IN CHRIST, he is a new creature ... and all things are of God who hath reconciled (harmonized, gathered together) us TO HIMSELF by (in) Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 5:17-18). Again, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN CHRIST: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE all things IN CHRIST, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even IN HIM: and you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; and hath RAISED US UP TOGETHER, and made us SIT TOGETHER in heavenly places IN CHRIST JESUS."

God was in Christ. And it is there, in Christ, that God reconciles and gathers together the world and all things unto Himself. When a man or a woman becomes a member of Christ's body he or she commences to be rooted and grounded IN HIM. From Him we draw our life as roots draw their food and sustenance from the earth, and it is by the life of Him that we are built up and grow to be a holy temple (the many mansions) in the Lord, an habitation for God through the Spirit. The wondrous parable of the Vine and the branches, with the accompanying command, "Abide in Me, and I in you," has been to us a source of rich instruction and edification. And though we feel as if we had but very
imperfectly learned the lesson of abiding in Him, yet we have tasted something of the joy that comes when the soul can say, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I do abide in Thee."

Many years ago the saintly Andrew Murray penned these inspiring and challenging words: "You know what abiding in Him is. It is to consent with our whole soul to His being our life, to reckon upon Him to inspire us in all that goes to make up life, and then to give up everything most absolutely for Him to rule and work in us. It is the rest of the full assurance that He does, each moment, work in us what we are to be, and so Himself enables us to maintain that perfect surrender, in which He is free to do all His will. Let all who do indeed long to walk like Christ take courage at the thought of what He is and will prove Himself to be if they trust Him. He is the TRUE VINE; no vine ever did so fully for its branches what He will do for us. Honor Him by a joyful trust that He is, beyond all conception, supplying you with His infinite fullness, the TRUE VINE, holding you by His almighty strength. And as your faith thus looks to Him, instead of sighing and failure, the voice of praise will be heard repeating the language of faith: Thanks be to God! he that abideth in Him does walk even as He walked. Thanks be to God! I abide in Him, and I walk as He walked" -end quote.

But this is not all. You find in I Pet. 3:18, "Christ, also, hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." There we have the great object of Christ's work. "That He might BRING US TO GOD." Christ came and died and rose again to bring us to God. Listen to what we read in the book of Hebrews, about the better hope of the New Testament "by which WE DRAW NIGH UNTO GOD." Listen to what we read in the same chapter, "He is able to save completely them that COME TO GOD BY HIM."

You know there is a great difference between the way to a house and the house itself. I may be traveling through the most beautiful scenery, on a lovely, pleasant day, with delightful company, and enjoying every step of the way, and yet, I am not content to stay there always. I have gone into that way to bring me to the end, the object of my journey. Christ is the way; what is the end of the way? The end is God - the Father. Christ wants to bring us to God. You often find Christians so occupied with Christ they never get time for God. You ask me, is there any difference between going to Christ and going to God? A very great difference! In Christ I have the gracious and merciful side of God's character. But that is not all of God's character I need to know. In Christ I have the condescension of God coming near to me, but the object of that condescension is to bring me to that place where I can come unto Him - to be one with the Father and like the Father in every way. You can never have all that God has provided unless you learn the lesson that Christ is going to win your heart that He may bring you back to God. Just think, Christ was not, in Himself, self-sufficient when He was on earth. He lived every day with the thought within Him: There is One greater than I, and My blessedness is to live in dependence upon Him, with a will given up to His will and in a trust that counts upon His working. And if I am to be in Christ and Christ in me, what was His life must become my life; fellowship with the Father and dependence upon the Father.

Christ came to bring me to God. I not only need faith to realize that He is in me and I in Him, but by faith I need to give myself up to His working, that as a living Person He shall reveal the will of God perfectly in me, and so breathe into me His own disposition and His Own life. Christ is to dwell and live in me. I am not to count Christ as a separate being, dwelling in my heart as a locality, but Christ is to be in my heart, in my life, in MY thinking, living and willing, as the very life of all I do, so that He lives Himself out through me. So
Christ is formed in me, and God sees the very figure, the very form of Christ within me. And as Christ is thus manifested within me in His disposition and Spirit, the nearness of God becomes more intimate and the fellowship with God becomes more close. Oh! beloved, God wants us to come nigh to Him in Christ.

Christ suffered, that He might bring us to God. What did He suffer? Nothing was too great. He endured All, that He might bring us to God. Are you willing, my brother, my sister, to take the time and trouble that you may be brought nigh to God? If that has become the object of our desires we will understand the work of Christ far better, and our understanding and knowledge of that work will bring far more abundant fruit. Jesus came to reveal the Father, and to bring us back to the Father, by degrees. He came to save the world, this is true, but beyond that He came to reveal the Father. He is the way to the Father. By Him we can return to the Father. As one has said, He did not fence everybody in to a "Jesus realm." Jesus knew the limitations of our human realm; He also knew the source of fullness, and so He said, "I go to My Father, for My Father is greater than I" (Jn. 14:28). Know this, my friend, and you will understand a great truth: THE FATHER IS GREATER THAN ALL REALMS OF SONSHIP. Fatherhood is the position of being part of the life-giving force.

From the pen of another ready writer let me quote the following words of truth and wisdom. "There is a ONENESS WITH THE FATHER, a relationship which He would have us enjoy, where we receive directly from Him all that we need. Jesus also spoke of that dimension when He said, 'In that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, HE will give it you' (Jn. 16:23). This surely bespeaks of a deeper relationship with our God. The evidences of our salvation being clearly revealed, the mediatorial work of the Son being complete in our personal behalf, we shall have DIRECT ACCESS TO THE FATHER. This does no despite or injury to our Saviour, rather it redounds to His glory, for it reveals that His workings in us have been successful, and that we are now prepared to enter into a deeper relationship with Him, able to approach the Father in His name, or, might we say, having received His name, we stand in the character and nature of all that His name implies.

"While we praise God for all that HE DOES, and IS DOING in the hearts of men, and for whatever is being wrought in groups, churches, etc. still we hear the cry over and over again, 'Where can we go to find the answers we need?' For NO MAN has been found worthy to open and to read the book' (Rev. 5:4). Indeed, we find that the more we progress towards spiritual maturity, the less anyone else has an answer for us. Paul once wrote, 'He that is spiritual judgeth (discerneth) all things, yet he himself is judged (discerned) of no man' (I Cor. 2:15).

"Others, who are just beginning their walk with Christ, come to you, or to some group, and receive help. Prophecies are given, words of exhortation, edification, and comfort come forth, and they receive the answers they need. Yet you find for yourself there are none who can discern for you - in fact, far too often they do not even understand your question, let alone get an answer for it. We look for a Seer, a Prophet, one who can draw out of the deep the water of life to satisfy, and 'there is no man able.' Why? Because God now purposes to bring us, yes, if necessary, TO PRESS US into a new relationship with Himself, until we learn to go directly to our Father and receive from Him all that is needed for the occasion. While we appreciate our spiritual brethren, their love, their fellowship, their counsel, yet we are being brought to the place where we have to say, 'I'll go to the Father, for MY FATHER IS GREATER THAN ALL.' Thus we find ourselves being brought
to the threshold of a new dimension, a deeper relationship than we have experienced heretofore. While others run from meeting to meeting, from preacher to preacher, from brother to brother, God places within your heart that deep yearning to GO TO THE FATHER. If He can give my brother a word of prophecy for me, why can't He speak it directly into my own heart? He can, and He does! When we learn to go to Him, and not just lean upon others for our 'group therapy.'

"For this cause I bow my knees unto THE FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named' (Eph. 3:14-15). 'From whom every FATHERHOOD in heaven and upon earth is named...' (Rotherham Translation). 'From whom every family in heaven and earth is named - THAT FATHER from whom ALL FATHERHOOD takes its title and derives its name' (Amplified Bible). While much can be said for sonship, and what it means to become a mature son of God, led by the Spirit, and always doing the will of the Father, yet we find that there is a purpose for this fully qualified state of sonship, a purpose on which there has been very little teaching. Obviously the time was not ready for such instruction, the sons are yet in the throes of their travail and preparation. But the more the grace of God inworks His divine purpose for this coming into maturity and being received of God as a true son, the more also He begins to unveil that GLORY to which we are called, and of which we shall be partakers, and this includes the glory of fatherhood.

'All of the training and discipline of bringing a child to maturity, to where God can invest in them the fullness of His Spirit, to where they will AT ALL TIMES be motivated and controlled by the Spirit, all of this is now leading into a deeper dimension - where the crowning glory of sonship is manifested in fatherhood. If all the ways of natural life are normal, no young man is content to just stay at the age of recognized maturity, strong, qualified to be on his own. But soon there awakens within him that desire to be able to produce out of himself, be it in the field of creative activity, birthing a business of his own, developing an established practice in his chosen profession, or raising a family and establishing and providing for his own home. But regardless of how his energy is expended, he desires to accomplish something, to make a name for himself, to raise up out of his own efforts that which testifies to his ability. In the realm of our spiritual application, we find this holds a tremendous word of truth. God is doing more than just bringing His chosen remnant to maturity so that they can stand in full strength, but He is also leading them on in to fatherhood. And while it is true, we are already projecting our vision beyond experience in these spiritual realms, yet God is placing a vision before His own, a goal set before, and then HE will bring them into the fulfillment thereof.

"Jesus, the very man Christ Jesus, knew His position as a SON, but He also knew of His position as Father, and that it was expedient for Him to return to that realm from which He would be able to impart, pour out of Himself, that flow of the Spirit which we now need to bring us to maturity. He had condescended to men of low estate, manifest in the flesh, becoming an offering for our sins, but when the sacrifice was complete, He was ready to ascend far above all principalities and powers, that He might again be the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. 'He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. AND HE GAVE...' (Eph. 4:10-11). Yes, returning into His fatherhood position He began to give, imparting out of Himself, sending forth the Spirit into our hearts, whereby now we are able to cry, 'Abba, Father.' HE IS OUR FATHER, for from Him we have received grace for grace. And when He shall have finished imparting of this superabundance of His grace to us-ward, we shall have that same sufficiency which He possesses, and be able to impart to others. Therefore, we
repeat, the challenge is not just to become a 'son', but to go on, and being filled with His fullness, so that we become LIFE-GIVERS, even as HE became a life-giving Spirit. IT IS FROM HIM THAT WE SHALL DERIVE OUR FATHERHOOD.

"THERE IS A FATHERHOOD REALM! A position in God where we shall be able to impart life. How we have wept in days gone by, and how there still yearns within us that deep desire for His fullness, when we see someone in need, and find that we do not have that 'substance' to be able to meet that need. If there be any love and compassion within us, of course we can pray, encourage, share the burden, but we still cannot impart life. We take them to an altar and pray with them, but we cannot save them, it is a sovereign act of God. We hold up their hands in praise, tell them to hang on - to let go - and highly confuse them as to how to receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit, but we could not, and cannot impart the Spirit to them. We are not yet fathers! But God is going to bring His remnant to that place where He can receive them INTO HIMSELF, and by reason of this union they will have something to impart. Now it is self-evident that inasmuch as from our Father God all fatherhood takes its title and derives its name, and inasmuch as those who enter into this realm in God are filled with His fullness, and are partakers of His divine nature, so that they might beget the same, then it follows that the attributes of our own Father are to be found in these 'fathers' " -Ray Prinzing (end Quote).

We are forced to the conclusion, then, that when Paul says, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (parousia, presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him," he speaks of something higher far than the childish notion of Jesus streaking across the heavens like a flaming meteorite while bodies arise from the cemeteries to be "gathered together" unto Him in the upper atmosphere. It is not a physical or limited thing at all, it bespeaks a realm of SPIRITUAL REALITY. It is not a gathering together of physical bodies unto a certain place, but a gathering on a spiritual plane of experience unto the person of HIMSELF. The Christ is gathering a people together IN HIS PAROUSIA, IN HIS PRESENCE that He may bring them to God. God is not one place, and Christ another place, and we another place. It is not even necessary that the Lord should return from some far-off heaven to this earth in order to raise the dead. All that He has undertaken to do He can do from anywhere, for He is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all! The power of the voice, or the touch, or the manifestation of the Son of God is not diminished by distance. He who at Cana could heal the son of the nobleman at Capernaum, twenty miles of hill and vale notwithstanding, could if He chose to do so, empty the graves of earth without moving a millimeter from His present position. But the glorious gathering together unto Christ has nothing whatever to do with either time or space. It is an event of spirit, and truth and reality.

And as the apostle shows in the verses which follow this grand statement in II Thessalonians, chapter two, there is a Day yet to come - O glorious Day! - the Day of Christ, the Day of many sons come to glory, the Day of perfection and maturity, the Day of fullness and triumph, the Day of power and dominion, the Day of creation's deliverance and restoration back into God. But the dawning of that Day is rooted in a FIRSTFRUIT COMPANY that LIVES IN HIS PRESENCE, being GATHERED TOGETHER UNTO HIM, and there IN HIM, brought by and through Him, unto the glory of THE FATHER - FATHERHOOD!

II PET. 3:3-4. "Then shall come in the last day scoffers ... saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."
The King James Version gives, "Where is the promise of His coming?" but again the word "coming" is the Greek word PAROUSIA meaning "presence". A free translation would be, "Where is the promise of the presence of Himself? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Or it may be phrased, "Where is His promised presence - seeing that all things continue on as from the beginning of creation?" That is, where is the FULFILLMENT of the promise? The scoffers imply that the promise has utterly failed; that the Christ is not present; that there is not the slightest evidence that His coming has ever been accomplished; that they who believe He is here now are certainly deluded! What is the reason scoffers say such things? Well, partly because Christians are saying just the same thing! That is, that the Lord is coming at some future time and they are not holding forth the truth of HIS PRESENCE.

The fact that all things continue to go on as they have always done is proof, to the carnal mind, that the Lord is still away. The sun rises and sets; the tides ebb and flow; the seasons follow each other in the usual order; men are born, live and die; one generation succeeds another, as has always been the case; nations rise and fall; there are wars and rumors of wars; sin abounds; and all external evidence points to the belief that these conditions will continue as they have always done. So - WHERE IS HIS PROMISED COMING? the scoffers demand.

The world lieth in the lap of the Wicked One and is dead in trespasses and sin and the natural man understandeth not the spiritual things of God, neither can he for they are spiritually discerned. Scoffers belong to the world, but how much more pitiful when we find that the great mass of Christians, who are supposed to be children of light and to have spiritual discernment, are failing to "receive Him because they see Him not" but continue to gaze into the skies. While Christians century after century have eagerly scanned the heavens for signs of the appearing of the Lord, they have forgotten to live in the glory of THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST here and now. Now that the Lord is beginning to open our eyes to the message of life for this hour may He grant us grace to walk gladly in the brighter light of the enlarged vision. It is my earnest prayer that the believing heart of every saint separated unto God by His Holy Spirit may be gripped by this blessed truth: It is possible for saints here and now to live in the constant and continual presence of the Christ who walked the shores of Galilee; the Christ who healed the sick and raised the dead; the Christ at whose voice demons fled like darkness before piercing light; the Christ who spake as never man spake; the Christ who lived and died and rose again and ascended on high; the Christ who has been given all power in heaven and in earth; this mighty Christ walks with us still, yea, walks WITHIN US, closer to us even than the air we breathe or the blood that courses its way unceasingly through our veins. As the days have passed, especially in recent months, there has come to me the ever-increasing assurance that I am dwelling and walking in the PAROUSIA OF JESUS CHRIST - His PRESENCE. The Christ is no longer far away; 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 again from the dead? The WORD (Christ) is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart" (Rom. 10:6-7).

Let all God's elect rejoice in the truth I now present. Lay hold upon it as you would a precious jewel because its truth uncovers the secret key that will unlock the door to great spiritual experience and understanding. The moment the solemnizing fact of CHRIST'S PRESENCE grips your heart and fills your mind by the Holy Spirit, the REALITY OF HIS ABIDING PRESENCE will begin to transform your life. How wonderful the presence of
Christ! Where is His promised presence? Ah, He who told us in words that cannot fail, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age," now abides with us forever, whom, "having not seen, we love; IN WHOM, though now we see Him not (with physical eyes), yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Pet. 1:8).
Chapter 12

The Apokalupsis Of Jesus Christ

In the New Testament, in the original Greek, are found six different words and phrases which have been represented to us as ALL meaning the very same thing - the "coming" of the Lord or the "second coming" of Christ! And while a few scholars have gone to the trouble to tell us what these six words mean, yet I do not hesitate to say that not one Christian in a million has earnestly sought the Lord for spiritual wisdom and divine understanding concerning these important matters. There is confusion in the minds of many when they come to this great truth of our Lord's return and much of this uncertainty stems from a failure to understand the diverse meanings of these six Greek words which are used in connection with His coming. Until the great scriptural truths contained in these six Greek words dawn upon our enlightened hearts by the quickening of the spirit of wisdom from on High, though we may be earnest students of God's Word and feel satisfied with what we have, nevertheless, there will be in our possession a great mine of eternal riches and heavenly wealth of which we are able to appropriate only a small portion.

In previous articles we have amply demonstrated that the Greek word PAROUSIA, generally translated "coming," literally means "presence." This is without doubt the key to one of the most important truths in the whole New Testament. Nowhere does PAROUSIA mean "coming" or "coming again." The PAROUSIA OF JESUS CHRIST, the PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD is a past, present and future reality. It is the fullness of all that one can conceive of as being the reality of His promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM," and again, "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the age." The PAROUSIA is the PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY and the GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE.

THE UNVEILING

This brings us to the second Greek word we shall consider - APOKALUPSIS. This word has been translated in the Bible by various English words such as lighten, revelation, manifestation, coming, appearing and revealed. We can easily understand how the translators could use such a variety of word-meanings to describe the word APOKALUPSIS, but it was not really because APOKALUPSIS held various shades of meaning in the original tongue. To know the past of an individual helps us to understand him better. To know the life history of a word makes its present meaning clearer and more nearly unforgettable.

In English, for instance, the word rostrum is defined as a place where one stands in giving a speech. But originally this Latin word meant "a bird's beak," such as the beak of a hawk or sparrow. But now this meaning does not even enter one's mind when he hears or reads the word. In the days when Rome was a world power naval vessels were constructed with long sharp prows for ramming enemy ships, because of the appearance, it came to be known as "the bird's beak," and this portion of the vessel was considered a
trophy of war. The captured rostrum was taken to the Coliseum at the time a victorious
commander went there to receive the acclaim of the people, and he would stand in the
rostrum to receive his trophy and to give his speech.

The Greek word APOKALUPSIS is a derivative of APOKALUPTO. APOKALUPTO is a
compound word composed of APO, meaning "off" or "away," and KALUPTO, meaning "to
cover up." Thus APOKALUPSIS means to take the cover off, to uncover, unveil, reveal or
disclose. It implies the drawing away or removal of everything that veils or hides, and
therefore it is always opposed to concealment or secrecy, as in the following passage:
"There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed (uncovered)" (Mat. 10:26). Our
English word "revelation" has become for many a word that signifies a strange belief or
some far-out-doctrine, which should be handled as something delusive and dangerous,
and avoided if possible. But this is just the opposite from the biblical meaning of the word,
and the consideration we need to give to that which is revealed. That which is uncovered
is no more a mystery, nor can it any longer be a threat. It is open to view, whether
positive or negative, and can be considered without fear since it is no longer shrouded in
darkness or mystery.

In the following texts the word related to our Lord's appearing is from either the Greek
APOKALUPSIS or APOKALUPTO. "Even so shall it be in the day when the Son of man is
REVEALED" (Lk. 17:30). "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be
compared with the glory which shall be REVEALED in us" (Rom. 8:18). "So that ye come
behind in no gift; waiting for the COMING (unveiling; revealment) of our Lord Jesus
Christ" (I Cor. 1:7). "To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be
REVEALED from heaven... in flaming fire ... when He shall come to be glorified in His
saints" (II Thes. 1:7-10). "That the trial of your faith ... might be found unto praise and
honour and glory at the APPEARING of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:7). "Hope to the end for
the grace that is to be brought unto you at the REVELATION of Jesus Christ" (I Pet.
1:13). "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory
shall be REVEALED, ye might be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Pet. 4:13). "The
REVELATION of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1). "For the earnest expectation of the creature
waiteth for the MANIFESTATION (unveiling; revealment) of the sons of God" (Rom.
8:19).

Only by REVELATION, UNVEILING can we know the Christ of God or behold Him in His
ineffable glory. When the light of the Holy Spirit shines in, the mists that have hung like a
cloud over our minds, obscuring the King in His beauty, are cleared away. Then the
realities which were once unseen become clearly visible and that which was once seen
through a glass darkly is now seen face to face and that which was once known only in
part is now known as we are known. The word "unveiling" is certainly the clearest
possible translation of the word APOKALUPSIS. On the basis of this "unveiling" of our
wonderful Christ, we may, then, expect the APOKALUPSIS to be understood not as a
matter of His COMING, but merely of SEEING. It is not at all a question of our Lord
making some change in location, as "coming" from high heaven back down into the
atmosphere of this planet; it is, rather, the matter of Him who is already present with and
within us BECOMING UNVEILED - uncovered, disclosed, revealed in the power of the
Holy Spirit that we may truly BEHOLD HIM in the fullness of Himself. It would be one
thing for you to "feel a presence" in your room, but something greater should that
presence become visible, so that you SEE CLEARLY what was once veiled in obscurity.
Since APOKALUPSIS means to reveal, or unveil, there must be something to unveil or which may be unveiled. That something must be PRESENT or it cannot be unveiled; and it must be hidden from sight or it cannot be disclosed. This is exactly what we have shown in foregoing articles concerning the Lord Jesus, namely, that He is PRESENT and that He is hidden from sight of the natural eye because "the Lord is that Spirit." But, praise God, we are now to find that His invisible presence, parousia, is to be revealed, disclosed, uncovered, unveiled, and that, too, to the whole world in due season. Are we looking for a so-called "second coming" of the Lord? Emphatically we are NOT looking into the sky for such a thing BUT, most emphatically, we ARE looking forward for the disclosure, uncovering, revealing of the Lord NOW PRESENT BUT HIDDEN in Spirit form. Truly, the APOKALUPSIS of Jesus Christ is a yet future vision for the great mass of Christians as well as for the world, and to all of us there is yet much to be unveiled.

Retaining the foregoing in mind, let us now note briefly the following scriptures. "We greatly rejoice ... that the trial of your faith ... might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing (apokalupsis, disclosure, uncovering, revelation, unveiling, manifestation) of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:6-7). Prayerful pondering of this scripture is all that is needed to grasp the meaning of the honor and glory that shall be ours, not in being caught up into the starry skies out of the trials which produce the honor and glory, nor in Jesus coming riding upon a cloud in the upper atmosphere, but when He is UNVEILED TO THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS MANY-MEMBERED BODY OF SAINTS bringing deliverance to the entire groaning creation through the manifestation of His grace, glory and power which shall yet bring a larger measure of life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Again, "So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming (apokalupsis) of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:7). Ah, we are waiting for the marvelous apokalupsis, disclosure, unveiling of Jesus Christ, that which transcends HIS GIFTS, wonderful as they are, as He manifests the fullness of the Son of God and His great, many-membered Christ body, but we are no longer gazing into the sky for His so-called "second coming" at some indefinite future date. Praise God, we are beholding the handiwork of our God on every hand today as He moves the nations like pawns on a chess board in mighty preparation for the closing events of this age and the ushering in of the more glorious age to come.

The great Italian sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, told of receiving a block of marble with one flaw. Because of this flaw, no artist would submit a design - except one. In the public square of Florence a fence was built around that piece of marble, and a little shack was erected for the artist. For two years the sculptor labored. Then on a certain day a vast multitude of the citizens of Florence assembled in the public square; the fence was torn down, and the shack was taken away. At this unveiling all of Florence beheld the result and marveled. Since then, Italy and all the world has marveled at Michelangelo's "David". In that block of marble was a statue; others did not see it, but Michelangelo did. And, precious friend of mine, in the lump of clay which is you, the almighty Father sees an image too - the image of Jesus Christ! And God is working unceasingly and tirelessly to form the image of His Son in you. No truth has come with more soul-gripping force and power to the elect of the Lord than the beautiful hope of sonship to God. Well indeed may we yield ourselves into the hands of heaven's skilled sculptor that HE may form His Son in us, for the mind of omniscience has ordained that that sonship should be the HOPE OF ALL CREATION. It is for sonship that the whole creation groans in a sort of universal
travail while it eagerly waits to see the glorious sight of the sons of God coming into their own (Rom. 8:22-23).

Oh! God unveil our minds, unveil your word, unveil your great and eternal purpose, unveil yourself, unveil your glory, unveil the mysteries of your kingdom. Take away the veil from our eyes. Let us consider for a moment the holy hope spoken of by the apostle Paul when he penned these soul enthralling words, "Even the mystery which hath BEEN HID FROM AGES AND FROM GENERATIONS, but now is manifest to His saints ... which is CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY" (Col. 1:26-27). The glory spoken of here is not heaven as has been generally supposed, but SONSHIP. That is the highest and most glorious glory that God has ever given or ever will give. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them," said Jesus (Jn. 17:22). "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. Moreover, whom He did predestinate them He also called, and whom He called He also justified, and whom He justified He GLORIFIED" (Rom. 8:29-30). This is glory; this is glorification; this is SONSHIP. The only hope of sonship, the only hope of glory, is for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to dwell in you and control and order every step of your life. "As many as are led BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD." Christ in you is the hope of glory. Christ in me is the hope of glory. Not Christ in the sky or Christ in Jerusalem. Sonship is not what I am, but WHAT HE IS. Sonship is not what Christ is APART FROM ME, but what HE IS IN ME. Sonship is Christ FORMED IN ME, REVEALED IN ME.

There is yet another act of God that transcends by far anything that has ever been known. It is the REVELATION, the UNVEILING of Jesus Christ. It is the REVELATION and UNVEILING of the sons of God. The last book of the Bible is called, significantly, the REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. It is interesting to note that when we come to the sixth verse of the first chapter it speaks of how HE "hath made US kings and priests unto God." As the revelation progresses with THE CHRIST always as the central figure, we next find Him standing IN THE MIDST OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS with a special message and call to the OVERCOMERS out of these various churches. Thus, in the unveiling of Jesus Christ, we also come to the UNVEILING OF THE OVERCOMERS - those who eat WITH HIM of the tree of life, live WITH HIM free from corruption and death, share WITH HIM a new name, rule WITH HIM over the nations, walk WITH HIM in resplendent white, dwell WITH HIM in the city and temple of God, and sit WITH HIM upon the Father's throne from whence He rules over all the vastnesses of infinity for evermore! And so, through the book, again and again, we see this many-splendored unveiling - THE SON and the sons, THE LAMB and those with Him on Mount Zion, THE WORD and they that are with Him who are called, and chosen and faithful. Time would fail to speak of the two witnesses, the woman clothed with the sun, the manchild caught up to the throne, the bride of the Lamb, etc.; but all are facets of this unfolding revelation of THE CHRIST and His anointed ones, His many brethren, prepared as salvation unto all the ends of the earth.

There is coming a day when all the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God. With a heart of understanding and a spirit bright with the hope of God's eternal purpose the apostle penned these meaningful words, "...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to REVEAL (apokalupto.; unveil) HIS SON I-N ME" (Gal. 1:15-16). As one has written, "Let us open our hearts that God may speak to us and show us what a son of God really is, for the greater works (Jn. 14:12) of which Jesus spoke are not to be performed by
ordinary believers, but by THAT VAST FAMILY OF SONS who are now nearing the hour of manifestation. They are that chosen company, selected from many ages, who through fires and furnaces of affliction have been brought into that same glorious IMAGE OF JESUS CHRIST. These sons of God are LIKE HIM. They are EXACTLY like Him. They are IN HIS IMAGE (Rom. 8:29). They are IN HIS IMAGE AND AFTER HIS LIKENESS. They are so completely SONS OF GOD and so completely LIKE HIM, so completely BORN OF HIM, so completely OF HIS MIND and WILL and PURPOSE their one difference is that He (the blessed Jesus) IS THE ELDEST IN THAT VAST FAMILY OF SONS and they with Him are THE BRIDEGROOM, the LAST ADAM IN ALL HIS COMPLETENESS" -The Page.

With all emphasis I must declare that we are now hastening toward the hour of the long awaited UNVEILING of the sons of God. For many millenniums all creation has groaned and sighed under the thralldom of sin and sorrow and death, but our heavenly Father had a purpose wonderful and glorious beyond words to express when IN HOPE He subjected the whole creation to the desolation of the curse. "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, Amplified). Ever since that day and because of that hope which springs perennial within the bosom of every man and all things, "...the whole creation waits expectantly and longs earnestly for God's sons to be made known - waits for the revealing (apokalupsis), the disclosing of their sonship" (Rom. 8:19, Amplified). Everything is gathered before an UNVEILING. Everyone is in expectation. All the people are gathered then finally the great moment comes when the veil is removed and the statue (or whatever it is) is brought into view. What a day!

The blood, the sword, the fire, the cross, and the dealings of the Holy Spirit have not been working in us through these many years in order to make us ready for a harp in heaven. It has been in order to prepare us to be an habitation of God through the Spirit. And, Why? In order that the hour would come that Christ Himself once fully formed in us, would be able to be manifested not only in His works and gifts, but IN HIS PERSON. Until now we have manifested the works of God through the gifts of God, we have witnessed to what salvation has done for us, but now God wants us to be the revelation of HIMSELF. The gifts and the works were only to bring us to the Person. The hour is upon us when there must be a full and complete UNVEILING of the Person of Jesus Christ through us. For years we have been saying: "If the world could only see the works of God!" Well, we have shown them His works and it was not the answer, for so often the works, the signs and wonders and miracles, fascinated the eyes of the curious and blessed the people's flesh, but did not impart unto them the glory of the Son of God. God did not save the world by works, He saved the world by a Person. "These were 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 which comes by believing IS A PERSON. "I AM the life," says Jesus (Jn. 14:6). And the book of Revelation is not the book of the revelation of powers hidden through the ages, or the book of the revelation of historical or future events, but it is the book of the UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST. All through the book we see Jesus Christ. In the faithful witness, in His coming in clouds of witnesses, in His presence in the midst of the candlesticks, in the Lamb, in the 144,000, in the manchild, in the city, in the temple, in the throne - all is the flowing out of HIMSELF. Of course, when you have Him in all of His glory, majesty and Person, automatically you
have His works. If He is who He is, He can open every seal, perfect His body, judge the
eations, manifest His mighty power, deliver creation, and restore all into Himself again.

Is it not a miracle that God is bringing us to this hour when there is that awareness in us
that there must be an unveiling, a revelation, an indwelling and expression and
manifestation of a Person? "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears, for they
hear," the Spirit testifies. It should not be difficult for even the least of saints 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 processings of God, particularly during
the last few years, in order that Christ may be fully formed in them. In order that God
would 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 His gifts - wonderful though His gifts are but conscious of
GOD HIMSELF. Not proclaiming the works, but unveiling the Lord Himself as life, light
and love. This is once more "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit" (I Tim. 3:16).

I cannot emphasize too strongly that 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. Salvation is
merely a by product of A SAVIOUR. "The Lord is become my salvation" (Ps. 118:14).
"The Lord is our light and our salvation." He not only sends light through some inspiration
from the scriptures, but Jesus Christ who IS the light of the world BECOMES OUR
LIGHT. This is the realm of which it is said, "When that which is perfect is come, 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 revelation and manifestation of the
Christ of God.

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. Light from the scriptures separates
because one may have more light than another, but when Christ Himself is our light and
our life, He brings unity. There is no division, separation or fragmentation in the unveiling
of Christ. "Is Christ divided?" (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 is in our state of development it is
based, for example, on the same experience of salvation, the baptism in the Spirit, or
light from the scriptures. But when we were Fundamentalists rejoicing in our experience
of salvation we would still fight! Or, if our union is based on the same expression of divine
healing, or deliverance, or speaking in tongues, or church government, or water baptism,
is it not true that we would still quibble. When our union is in CHRIST and in HIM
becoming our all in all, then all ground for pride and self and division is gone. "If any man
be IN CHRIST, he is a new creation" (I Cor. 5:17). This is the unity Jesus prayed for: "I in
them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one" (Jn. 17:23). O may God
bring to full expression this great mystery of the indwelling Christ. It is such a marvelous
mystery that we cannot comprehend it.
Up to this present time we have had a revelation, but mostly of His gifts and works. Oh, occasionally there would be a bright shining of His presence and in the midst of the activity you could see His face. But practically everybody who has had a vision of God's Christ has only seen His face. When John saw Him in the book of Revelation, he did not just see His face, but he could describe His head and His hairs white as snow, His eyes as a flame of fire, His voice as the sound of many waters, His right hand holding seven stars, His mouth out of which proceeded a two-edged sword. His countenance as the sun shining in its strength, yes, he could even tell you about His feet which were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. Ah, my beloved brethren, the revelation of Jesus Christ has only been in part so far. We know in part, and we prophesy in part, but in these last days there must come AN UNVEILING of the whole Christ. Christ must be seen in all of His glory, in the whole of His body, in a full and marvelous unveiling of Himself. This old world will not end in tragedy some dark night when sin sweeps in like a flood and the devil is winning. NO! History does not end in failure. I have read the last chapter. With the eyes of faith and revelation I have beheld the final act, the closing drama. All of human history will be consummated with the full and complete revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ in His overcoming body as salvation and light and life unto all creation. Press on, saints! We are on the winning side!

UNCOVERING THAT WHICH IS HIDDEN

Jesus Christ Himself is the Son of God because in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). But I do not hesitate to add that the fullness of the Godhead that dwells in Christ our Lord has not yet been UNVEILED before our wondering eyes. In his letter to the saints at Colossae, the apostle Paul begins in the second chapter, saying, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; IN WHOM ARE HID all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

ALL - not merely some - of the rich and valued treasures of wisdom and knowledge are contained in Christ. Therefore any search for them outside of HIM is doomed to failure. The deep meaning of Paul's words is that in the Christ is stored up all the divine treasures of wisdom and knowledge - not PARTIAL wisdom, not a few FRAGMENTS of knowledge but ALL - the fullness of all things dwells in Him. It is not necessary to go elsewhere, investigating human systems and sciences, eastern philosophies or man-made religions, to gain either wisdom or knowledge. All these are embodied in JESUS CHRIST. They are "hidden" in Christ as in a treasure house - but in the sense that they are so concealed that they can be shared by those who are willing to make the effort to secure them. "Those that seek shall find," is the law of the Kingdom. More and more fully can Christ be known. Larger and larger are those priceless stores which must be sought and can be found IN HIM. No other revelation of God is needed, but in Christ are boundless riches yet undiscovered even by the very elect.

"So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous ... and preserveth the way of His saints" (Prov. 2:2-8).
Our God delights to conceal a thing as well as reveal it. Part of the route Jesus walked on earth was the path of "concealment." Rather than bursting forth upon the scene in unbridled omnipotence to silence all His enemies, divine wisdom caused Him to withdraw from their midst, to walk in solitude, to be humbled, esteemed as nothing, mocked and ridiculed, rejected of men. As someone has pointed out, there is in our God a glorious humility which is in tremendous contrast to the ego of man. Man continually wants to be seen and heard, seeking positions of power and prominence, yet our great Creator hides Himself, so that men will have to "SEEK the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from everyone of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:27-28).

Long centuries ago the patient patriarch Job testified, "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him: but He knoweth the way that I take: and when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job. 23:8-10).

Ray Prinzing penned the following words which I feel certain bear eloquent testimony to the experience of us all. "There are many other times when we go seeking God, for a clearer revelation of Him, to 'feel' His presence, and develop more of a God-consciousness, and I dare say, He seems not to be found. HE HAS CONCEALED HIMSELF. And though we run to this meeting and that meeting, phone this preacher, and write to another to see if there is a 'word for us,' all of our chasing and beating the air is an exercise in futility - and then we settle down, to say, 'I cannot see Him. BUT He knoweth the way that I take...' For the moment I do not know where HE IS, but He knows where I am - and when HE has tried ME, I will come forth as gold - because HE will perfect that which concerneth me. Bless His holy name!

"ALL THE TIME HE KNOWS WHERE WE ARE! 'Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do' (Heb. 4:13). And it becomes a WALK OF FAITH to know that when HE has hidden Himself, still it is IN HIM that we live, and move, and have our being, and that He continues to draw us onward by His grace, even during those times we are not consciously aware that something is being changed within us. And I dare say, as one man expressed it, 'Sometimes His silence is awesome.' But whether it is a time of silence, or a time of the inflow of life and revelation and keener spiritual awareness, in either case, we can say, all is well, because we are HIS, and HE knows the way that we take. 'I will wait upon the Lord, that HIDETH HIS FACE from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given Me for signs and wonders in Israel from the lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion' (Isa. 8:17-18). 1 WILL WAIT, because He is hidden, but I will also continue to look for Him - 'Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation' (Heb. 9:28). And then, without a pause, the prophet goes right on - BEHOLD - the very word challenges us to SEE! But what is it that is to come OUT OF HIDING? God was not idle when He was concealed. HE had been busy reproducing Himself in secret. And now says, 'Behold, I AND THE CHILDREN' which are to be for SIGNS AND WONDERS. Yea, they are the demonstration and manifestation of what HIS GRACE shall do in all of creation, as 'IN CHRIST shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order' (I Cor. 15:22-23)." -end quote.
The apostle Paul taught us, "For as far as this world is concerned you have died, and your new, real life is HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD" (Col. 3:3-4, Amplified). The awesome potential and unfathomable fullness of our new life is HID with Christ in God, so do not be surprised if you are not able to display the power and glory of this new life on all occasions. Were you to be a blazing revelation of that life to all men NOW, it would wreck the wonderful purpose of His hiding in you. There are seasons when the Lord's people are gathered together, and in times of holy meditation, contemplation, prayer, praise, and seeking, when the Spirit of God moves in an unusual manner, there are glimpses into the hidden realms in God. But when we return to the routine of the day, and the monotony of every day living, where the world beholds us, is it not true that the vast majority of our associates are completely unaware of our identity. The life of God within is veiled, and they see you, but there is no comeliness nor spectacular manifestation so that they flock to you to see what you have. You may rejoice all you will in your sonship, but chances are the world about is no more conscious that you are a son of God than were they that the "firstborn" was God's beloved Son. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world KNEW HIM NOT" (Jn. 1:10). How we have yearned to manifest the fullness of that life concealed within our earthen vessel! Oh, yes, we often would like to appear before men in glory NOW. We would show them how spiritual we are, putting on such a display of power and glory until their eyeballs would sizzle and every mouth would be stopped and all would bow low in reverence before us, acknowledging that God is in us of a truth. We would let them see what great and mighty sons of God we are! But this very attitude reveals the fact that we are not fully DEAD to self with all of its ego and pride. And to try and manifest that which GOD HAS HIDDEN for its own germination, protection, growth and development, only results in a pseudo-spirituality, and can indeed cause the abortion of that "holy thing" which has been impregnated within. So HE continues to sanctify us, separating us from the world, from the flesh, from self and it is by the inworking of HIS CROSS which purifies, separating the precious from the vile. There are, praise God, those times of refreshing given to the saints when we do manifest out of that "in part" development of His life, but it ever falls short of HIS FULLNESS, and even then God draws again the veil, so that His inner work may continue and not be hindered by the attention of the outer-world.

The mystery of Christ is the greatest mystery of all the ages, this mystery which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." HIS LIFE hidden now within us shall totally transform us, spirit, soul and body. HIS LIFE shall not forever be concealed within, for I testify to you that we are soon to see it unfold. "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in the splendor of His glory" (Col. 3:4, Amplified). Ah - there shall be A REVELATION, AN UNVEILING of His life, His glory, His people, and because we have long been hidden IN HIM, we shall also share in that revelation - partakers of the divine glory. When all the mixture of flesh and spirit manifest through us in gross confusion, kingdom building, Babylon personified, has been sifted, purged, separated and brought to death because we share the awesome "fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death," then shall HIS LIFE be finally unfettered, unhindered, unobstructed, and HE SHALL APPEAR in all the fullness of Himself and WE SHALL APPEAR WITH HIM in the splendor of His full-orbed glory! Our life shall not always be hid. He who is our life shall be manifested. Why should we want to be known in this day of His rejection? Let us rest with Him at God's right hand and wait until His time has come. But when His hour strikes, then our time will have come - and He will not be glorified apart from us!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
The book of Revelation opens with the statement: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." The word "revelation" comes from the Latin REVELATIO, an unveiling. The Greek word is APOKALUPSIS, the removing of a veil. By transliteration APOKALUPSIS is our word "apocalypse." The Revelation is the apocalypse or the unveiling of Jesus Christ. Many Christians would object strenuously if we said that the book of Revelation was anything other than a REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST just as it declares itself to be and, yet, the whole content of the book has been and is still shrouded in a veil of highly symbolic language that has defied the understanding of natural men for centuries, and to the most spiritually minded much of its real meaning is still partially hidden, although, with the increasing light of the Holy Spirit of Truth shining upon its pages, we have been entering into more and more of its hidden truths, howbeit, we have yet much to learn of the full and complete vision.

Now, we have already pointed out that that which is to be revealed, unveiled, or disclosed must BE PRESENT, else it is impossible to disclose or uncover it. If this book with all of its mystifying language and symbolism, is an APOKALUPSIS, revelation, disclosure, uncovering, unveiling, manifestation of JESUS CHRIST, then it follows that He must be present, not coming in a future sense as to distance, but here and now present although His presence, parousia, is veiled, hidden from our natural sight. Did He not say, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age?" If, then, we are to understand THIS revelation, disclosure, uncovering, unveiling, apokalupsis of Jesus Christ, it must be only as the Holy Spirit unlocks our understanding to this wonderful book and the realities of its message. This is just what has been and is taking place as the light of His invisible presence shines into our darkened minds and brings to us a revelation, a disclosure, an unveiling, an apokalupsis of Jesus Christ and our hearts are made to exult and marvel at the wonders of our God.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ..." This significant statement at the very beginning of this book, is the inspired key to all the contents which follow. This is not merely a revelation of historical or endtime events, but the unveiling of a Person - CHRIST. In fact, one of the reasons that the book of Revelation has been so misunderstood is because men have thought it was the unveiling of events that are in the future. It is not the unveiling of events but the unveiling of a Person who has not yet been seen in all of His glory and beauty. Today He is like a statue that has the veil put over it, awaiting the day when the veil shall be removed and He shall be seen in all of His glory.

It is the thought of some that the Revelation is a book filled only with that which is frightful and sensational. There are figures of wild beasts, monstrous creatures; there are convulsions of nature, thunders and lightnings and earthquakes; there are trumpets of judgment and bowls of wrath. But all of these are incidental. They are the freaks one sees in the side show. The main event is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. This unveiling is the central truth, the primary meaning and prevailing purpose of this book.

Actually, at Christ's coming in the flesh two millenniums ago He was not revealed; rather He was concealed. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," John said. The Word (Christ) was made flesh, taking upon Himself the tabernacle, or tent, of flesh. Just as God had manifested Himself back in the Old Testament through a tabernacle, with all sorts of coverings and curtains that shut man out from Him, so the Lord Jesus came in a tabernacle of flesh. He was put in the concealing wraps of a human body. God was not revealed when Christ came the first time, except in measure to a few - a Simeon, a Simon Peter, and a small company of followers. It still can be said, "No man hath seen
God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Christ, when He came in flesh, declared God; He exegeted Him, explained Him, let Him out in the open where, for the first time, one can see the heart of God. Yet we have not seen GOD. The coming of Jesus was not the revelation of Jesus Christ. The unveiling of Jesus Christ is set forth in the New Testament as a hope and reality unto which God's elect is still moving.

Peter admonishes us, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST" (I Pet. 1:13). Without a doubt, we cannot comprehend THE ABUNDANCE OF GRACE which shall be brought to us and to all men, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This present age has been an age of IN-PART manifestations during which all spiritual manifestations, including the gifts of the Spirit, have been IN-PART. Although this present age has been referred to as the age of grace, nevertheless even grace has been in part. But when Christ appears and is fully revealed or unveiled, then GRACE SHALL COME TO A GREATER FULLNESS. Praise God! Methinks that the real age of grace has not even begun yet, as the apostle says, "That in the AGES TO COME He might show the exceeding RICHES OF HIS GRACE in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ" (Eph. 2:7).

Understood as THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST and immediately the book is changed from a history book to a SPIRITUAL BOOK relating the progressive unfolding of the very victory and triumph of the Christ of God. The saints have heard the term "apocalypse" and it conjures up ideas of the wrath of God, tribulation, destruction and the end of the world. Yet the word APOKALUPSIS from which our English word "apocalypse" is derived, carries no negative connotation in the Greek. Our word "revelation" is likewise the Greek word APOKALUPSIS. The whole book of Revelation is the Apocalypse that is so important to us. It is the revealing of Jesus Christ. If we try to read and understand Revelation without knowing that Jesus Christ is intimately involved, we will spend all our time trying to understand and explain facts, such as: How many horses are there, and what colors are they? Why are they running? Who is the woman sitting on the beast? Who is the antichrist? What does the number 666 mean? And we miss THE REVELATION! We realize that all these concepts are symbolic and represent SPIRITUAL REALITIES, but the importance of the book is its purpose - the unveiling of God's Christ.

Each part of the record, of the woes, thunders, vials, beasts, in all their sundry and various situations, are all to serve but one purpose, and are allowed to exist for one end, namely, to BRING FORTH A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. And this revelation comes to its magnificent conclusion when He that sits upon the throne proclaims the wonderful fiat: "Behold, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW" (Rev. 21:5). The Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ. In, by and during that unveiling, many things are made to appear in the true light. That means that all the evil things which appear do so BECAUSE of the true light, and in THAT LIGHT they are made to appear in their true character: JUST WHAT THEY ARE. It is the LIGHT OF THE LAMB which causes that to be so. Both in the Glorious City and in the book itself, "THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF." For He is the true light which lights all men, coming into the world. Now He comes into the world, and the world was made by Him, and saved by Him, and the world SHALL KNOW HIM - as the whole Bible teaches God's objective to be. And He will come to His own and they will receive Him, FOR THAT IS THE NEW COVENANT.
One can never understand correctly the book of Revelation if his eyes are engaged with some side issue. The unveiling of "the beast" and his "image" are side issues. That is, they are unveiled as the RESULT of the flooding light issuing forth from God's blessed Lamb. In that true light of God, the negative realm appears AS IT IS, for what it is, in order that it may be duly brought to judgment, dealt with, and eradicated from our lives. The fiercest beast I have ever known in my life was the beast of old Adam's nature, the carnal mind, the seed of the serpent lurking within my own bosom. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? How I praise God with joy unspeakable and full of glory for the penetrating light of heaven's Lamb which uncovers the subtleness and deceitfulness of this wild beast, the bestial nature lumbering about in MY EARTH! It is not the uncovering of these evils which throws light on the Lamb. The unveiling of the Lamb, as the Word of God, the Spirit of righteousness and wisdom and glory, the King and LORD of creation exposes all that is not of God, that it might be once and for all dethroned from mind, heart and action. As the daylight destroys and removes the darkness - in the very nature of things - so the unveiling of Jesus Christ is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God destroying, removing, swallowing up the power of the flesh, the world and the devil IN US. The daylight FILLS the world just as truly as the night darkness ever did. Even so, the light of God shall fill the world, our world, and the world outside of us as truly as the darkness of sin, sorrow and death has done. Before it is all over, every creature in heaven, earth and hell shall have had a revelation of the Son of God.

Thank God! the "apocalypse" is a thing of rarest beauty and divine majesty rather than a frightening, dreadful and fearful time as the preachers proclaim. True, not all the uncovering is glorious at the time, the woes and thunders are fearful experiences, and the occurrences of the beast and the dragon, with their rise and fall, are shuddering to the natural mind, but viewed from the position that all is the consequence of HIS UNVEILING, and results in a new heaven and a new earth, indeed ALL THINGS NEW, so overwhelms and enthralls us that we can but respond in glad unison with the revered Seer of Patmos, "EVEN SO, COME! LORD JESUS."

The book of Revelation sets before us a glorious Person, with the veil removed from Him, and with the veil removed from our eyes so that we may look upon Him and see with the beloved John that the important things are:

1. The Judge - not the judgments.
2. The Lamb - not the dragon.
3. The Seven Spirits of God - not the spirits of devils.
4. The Rider on the White Horse Who has Four Names - not the four horses.
5. The Throne of God - not the seat of the beast.
6. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah - not the beast out of the sea.
7. The Faithful and True Witness - not the false prophet.
8. The 144,000 Sons of God on Mount Zion - not the beast out of the earth.
9. Those who have The Father's Name on their Forehead - not the mark of the beast.
10. The New Jerusalem - not the city Babylon.
11. The Bride of the Lamb - not the harlot riding the beast.
12. The Glory of God - not the darkness that covers the earth.
13. The Unveiling of Jesus Christ - not the antichrist.

There is a dimension of the revelation of Jesus Christ that transcends the speaking of words, the writing of books, and the preaching of sermons. The unveiling of Jesus Christ
is the need of the hour and the hope of creation. If God does not give a special ministration of the spirit of wisdom, righteousness and power to meet the need of creation, it will not be met. There are no buttons to press that can deliver mankind from the power of sin and death or solve the complex and frightening problems that exist in the world today. The further we move in God the more helpless and totally empty we become, for our nothingness is magnified in the light of HIS GLORY.

The hour for the unveiling of God's Christ is at hand. May God grant to each of his apprehended ones the understanding that from this time on God is not interested in the little "blessings" He has bestowed on you. From now on it must be "WHEN CHRIST WHO IS OUR LIFE SHALL APPEAR..." If there is a mind in us, it must be the mind of Christ, not our religious mind that has been cultivated through the years until it is devoted and full of the Bible and stayed on God. From now on it must not be your mind stayed on God, it must be HIS MIND IN YOU. What we have witnessed to of the work of God, His salvation in us, His peace in us, His victory in us, are a product of the work of God; but God's purpose is not that we shall be the work of God, but that there shall come a revelation of a Person, that will be Christ. It will not be a revelation about God, but the UNVEILING OF GOD IN US.

Are you willing, my brother, my sister, to have nothing but the PERSON? Are you willing to lay aside the gifts and the blessings and forget the experience to have the Person? The hoary headed old prophet, Simeon, took up the baby Jesus in His arms and declared: "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." The salvation He saw was not a blessing or an experience, it was THE BABY. What the Spirit is saying is that God must have a people in whom the Lord is BECOMING rather than DOING. That is what the manifestation of the sons of God is, that is what the revelation of Jesus Christ is, and there will never be a revelation of Jesus Christ if all I can talk about is His gifts and His blessings and His works. His works are not Him - HE IS A PERSON. Paul said, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," not, "It pleased God to reveal His gifts through me and give me some great experiences." And when he prayed, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you," Paul did not mean that they should receive a little more cleansing with the blood, a little greater anointing in the gifts, die a little more death and so on. There came an hour when Paul knew that the works of the Lord would not be sufficient, but that the LORD HIMSELF had to be put on in all fullness, so that instead of having a revelation of the acts of God, there would be THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST.

"Blessed Father! let it be so in us. Let Christ be fully formed in me and in all who read these lines, and in all the elect body of Christ. Lord, let the work of doing for us come to an end, until it shall be Christ formed in us. Mighty God! cause Jesus Christ to become in us our peace, our joy, our salvation, our wisdom, our victory, our power, our life, that from this moment on there shall only be the expression of HIMSELF, the revelation of His own Person and Being and Nature. O God, let that divine Nature, that divine Person of the Son of God be fully manifested in us, that the creation that is groaning for the unveiling of Jesus Christ will see Him unveiled in His body, unveiled in His church, unveiled in His ministry, unveiled in His king-priests, unveiled in His sons, that every eye shall SEE HIM. Amen!"
Chapter 13
The Epiphaneia Of Jesus Christ

In this study we approach the third Greek word related to the "coming" of our Lord Jesus Christ - EPIPHANEIA. This word is to be found six times in the Greek New Testament. It comes from a verb which signifies "to shine upon," "bring to light," "to appear," "to manifest." The noun is "manifestation," "brightness." The lexicographers define it, "an appearance, show, display, grandeur, splendor." In its use in classical Greek, it applies to the invisible divinities that become visible. It also applies to the appearance of the sun after the passing away of the clouds. The best possible translation is MANIFESTATION. The EPIPHANEIA of Jesus Christ is ultimately the FULLNESS OF THE MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF to the saints, the world and creation!

This word is found in the following texts where, with one exception, it is, in the King James version, rendered "appearing." "Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the APPEARING of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:14-15). "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His APPEARING and His kingdom" (II Tim. 4:1). "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord... shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His APPEARING" (II Tim. 4:8). "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious APPEARING of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13). "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the BRIGHTNESS (epiphaneia) of His coming (parousia)" (II Thes. 2:8).

Let us consider for a few moments the difference between the three Greek words presented thus far. We have shown that the word PAROUSIA means "presence." It is the fullness of all that one can conceive of as being the reality of our Lord's promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM," and again, "And, lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the age." Nowhere does PAROUSIA mean "coming" or "coming again." The PAROUSIA is the ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF CHRIST and is a past, present and future reality. The second word, APOKALUPSIS, means "to take the cover off, to uncover, unveil, reveal or disclose." It implies the drawing away or removal of everything that veils or hides. Since APOKALUPSIS means to reveal, or unveil, there must be something to unveil or which may be unveiled. That something must be PRESENT or it cannot be unveiled; and it must be hidden from sight or it cannot be disclosed. This is exactly what we have shown in foregoing articles concerning the Lord Jesus, namely, that He is PRESENT and that He is hidden from sight of the natural eye because "the Lord is that Spirit." But, praise God, we are now to find that His invisible presence, parousia, is to be revealed, disclosed, uncovered, unveiled, and that, too, to the whole world in due season. Are we looking for a so-called "second coming" of the Lord? Emphatically we are NOT looking into the sky for such a thing BUT, most emphatically, we ARE looking forward for the disclosure, uncovering, revealing of the Lord NOW PRESENT BUT HIDDEN in spirit.
form. Truly, the APOKALUPSIS of Jesus Christ is a yet future vision for the great mass of Christians as well as for the world, and to all of us there is yet much to be unveiled.

Let us now notice that the EPIPHANEIA of Jesus Christ is something greater and grander by far than either His PAROUSIA or His APOKALUPSIS. God poured out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Christ came to His church as the blessed Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, the indwelling Christ, the Lord, the Spirit; but that was not the EPIPHANEIA of Jesus Christ. From that time until now the Christ of God has dwelt within the regenerated hearts and lives of vast multitudes of men and women who have by faith received Him; but this is not the EPIPHANEIA of Christ. Jesus has been with His people for these twenty centuries, to aid, to comfort, to teach, to quicken, and to bless; but this is not His EPIPHANEIA.

Let us SEE! The PAROUSIA is the reality of His presence with us - though hidden and unseen. The APOKALUPSIS is the drawing aside of the veil or covering that hides Him from view, enabling us by the spirit of revelation to behold the King in His beauty. The EPIPHANEIA is the MANIFESTATION or OUTRAYING of Himself which follows the unveiling. The manifestation is consequent upon the unveiling; when that takes place the hidden One is no longer hidden but seen. Once brought out into view He then springs into action, bares His holy arm, arises in His strength, and the MANIFESTATION of His presence commences. This truth is expressed in a notable verse: "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the BRIGHTNESS (epiphaneia) of His COMING (parousia)." Actually translated the verse reads "THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS PRESENCE."

Ah - He can be present and remain unseen, and truly this has been one of the more difficult aspects in this tremendous calling of God upon His elect as He has made known in our hearts the beautiful hope of sonship - that secretness, aloneness, hiddenness of His working. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (Isa. 45:15). How often He veils Himself, and we cry out like Job, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say unto me. Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him" (Job 23:3-9). At times such as this we yean to see the manifestation, the awesome display of His working - that we might behold His glory and bask in the sunlight of His love. He can manifest His presence, and manifest it with a brightness above the noon-day sun. The EPIPHANEIA is just this MANIFESTATION of the fact that the Lord is present; the very manifestation of the presence of Himself. Thus we see that the EPIPHANEIA refers to the operation and display of His power and glory which make manifest in an open and discernible way the reality of His presence. It is not just one manifestation somewhere in the indefinite future, but a constant, continuing, progressive and ever-increasing manifestation. Certainly, the presence of Christ has not been manifested to the world in general. Therefore we endeavor to "keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the APPEARING (manifestation) of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:14-15). The indwelling Christ must become manifest to the outer world. The parousia, the inward presence of Christ, is to have ultimately an outward manifestation and demonstration.
In these articles on the appearing of Christ, it is not our purpose to merely present another Bible study or more doctrinal views. Rather it is our earnest desire and holy responsibility to present CHRIST and the glorious hope of HIS APPEARING, and to encourage all who read these lines to prepare for the MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST to, in, and through His "many brethren." All of the Lord's overcomers are indeed "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of Christ" (Tit. 2:13). "If God is so wonderful," mused the little Italian girl, "why doesn't He show His face?" And that, precious friend of mine, is precisely what He will do! The Psalmist cried out, "Turn us, O Lord. Cause Thy face to shine and we shall be saved" (Ps. 80:3,7,19). It is only as we turn in the direction of the unveiled glory that we can know transformation. You can read the history of great revivals, you can think of the great visitations of yesterday, you can reminisce all you want. There is not enough power in such things to transform you! Transformation comes only in the light of the present glory and manifestation of Christ Jesus. Praise His name!

May almighty God help us to turn in our thinking, in our heart and spirit to behold Him and see Him as He is, not as He was. The Bible says, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more (i.e. no longer merely as a man)" (II Cor. 5:16). I dare say there are untold millions of Christians today whose experience does not go much further than a bit of knowledge of the historical Jesus they read about in the four Gospels. Oh! that we may see and know Him by the spirit! We must see the revelation and manifestation of Jesus Christ as King and Lord! There is a vast difference, brothers and sisters. The apostle Peter saw Him day after day, performing the miracles. Peter walked with Him and he knew Him to some degree. There was something of revelation coming through in the manifestation of Christ's power. And one day Jesus said, "Whom do men say that 1, the Son of man, am?" And His disciples said, "Some say you are John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." "But whom say ye that I am?" inquired Jesus. In that moment Peter had an experience; he received a revelation. The veil was drawn aside, he looked by the Spirit and saw into the interior of this One he had known as Jesus. Peter saw Him as the anointed and glorious Son of God. He saw something different that day and declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He saw through that veil of the flesh!

Another day Jesus said, "There will be some standing here, who shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1). And He took with Him Peter, James and John and went up into a mountain. There these men saw something magnificent. The Lord Jesus' very countenance and His whole Person was changed. He was clothed with a quality and a degree of glory they had never seen before in all the days previous to that hour. They beheld another glory, but it was the same Person. It was the same Jesus Christ, but another glory! And this, without question, left a deep, lasting impression upon Peter. He wrote years later, "I will endeavor that you may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were EYEWITNESSES of His Majesty" (II Pet. 1:15-16). Ah, Peter had experienced the unveiling and manifestation of the Son of God!

Saul of Tarsus met Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. Saul did not see a man six feet tall with piercing blue eyes and a neatly trimmed chestnut beard. He saw a light and a glory that was brighter than the shining of the sun at noonday. It was the glory of Jesus Christ appearing in a different form. It was the manifestation of the Christ of God in power...
and glory. What I am saying is there are many modes and forms of the manifestation and appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. As much as I know at this moment, I am seeking to prepare myself for His manifestation in this hour. Oh Lord, make YOUR APPEARING! Break forth out of the midst of us! We are longing to see you!

THE APPEARANCES OF CHRIST AFTER HIS RESURRECTION

It was the early morning of the most important day in the history of the world. Jesus had died three days before and was laid in Joseph of Arimathea's newly-hewn tomb. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of her beloved Master early in the morning after the Sabbath. Mary looked into the tomb and saw, shockingly, two messengers in brilliant white, one sitting at the head of the sepulcher and the other at the feet right where Jesus' body had lain. Amazed, she saw the grave clothes between them and noticed the napkin that had been used to cover His face rolled up and laid on a nearby rock shelf. Tears streaking her face and her sobs quieted by the shocking sight she saw, she heard one of the men say, "Woman, why are you crying?" She answered, with a voice that was shaking with fear and grief, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I don't have any idea where they have laid Him."

She backed out of the tomb, turned towards the pleasant garden place where a few other people seemed to be gathering, and found her way partially barred by another stranger who spoke to her, and he also wanted to know the cause of her sadness. She thought this man was the gardener, and supposing that he had been in the vicinity most of the time since Jesus had died, she didn't think it strange that he said, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" She looked at him and said, "Sir, if you are the one who has carried Him away, please tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Suddenly, with the tone of voice and accent with which she was familiar, and which on many occasions had stirred her very soul, He now spoke to her, saying, simply, "Mary!" What was that tone? That familiar timbre of voice? This man did not look like Jesus. He was not dressed as Jesus had always dressed. But it was the unmistakable voice - the voice of Jesus. In that wonderful heaven-blest moment she knew. It was Jesus! Stunned almost to the point of fainting, she exclaimed, "Master!"; reaching out a hand, incredulously, thinking, "It can't be! But it is!" She tried to take His hand. Jesus withdrew His hand and said, "No, don't touch Me! I have not yet ascended unto My Father - but I want you to go to My brethren and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and to your God." Mary knew that she had seen Jesus, but she knew also that now He was different. She hurried up the pathway, went back into the city, and came to the disciples' hideout. She related every word that had been told her - but the disciples looked at her as if she were crazy.

Later that same day two of Jesus' disciples were strolling along toward a village called Emmaus which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. As the men were walking along the roadway, Jesus came up behind them, having stepped out of His spirit dimension and again assumed a body of flesh and bone. He looked so totally different they couldn't have recognized Him, and since He seemed to be walking their way, they continued to speak wonderingly of the shocking events of the past few days, not suspecting the stranger who was strolling along beside them. It was then that Jesus broke into the conversation. They were amazed that a stranger could have been in the environs of Jerusalem, yet seemingly not know of the events that had occurred. He said to them, "What kind of things?" They answered Him, "About Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in work and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and rulers gave
Him up to be sentenced to death and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who would redeem and set Israel free. Yes and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things occurred. And moreover, some women of our company astounded us and drove us out of our senses. They were at the tomb early in the morning, but did not find His body; and they returned saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive! So some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and they found it just as the women had said, but Him they did not see."

We had hoped - we had trusted - and now everything has been dashed into despair, for He was crucified! Our world came tumbling down around us, ending in death. And now suddenly there is this other report that He is alive again. Now we are totally confused, we don't know what to believe. Ah, how often has this been repeated in the lives of the Lord's people! A man arises claiming to have the anointing of God upon him, God's man of faith and power for the hour, his star rises with brilliance, his message seems to give new hope to them, when suddenly it all falls down again - he is proven to be but a huckster, a religious racketeer, faking the gifts, off with a woman, etc. until people become cynical and wary of anything new, they will not trust any man. And well they ought to feel this way. But wait - God has a remnant, God has a man, a many-membered man, THEY ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP, His very own nature, character and quality of being worked into them. And, blessed be God! yet again the divine CHRIST-LIFE shall be manifested in power and glory on this earth, and before the face of all nations. Praise His wonderful name!

As the men walked along the road to Emmaus, after their hopeless tale about His death, burial, and the puzzling empty tomb, Jesus, seeing their doubts chided them, "Oh, you foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in everything the prophets have spoken! Wasn't it thoroughly planned that Christ should suffer all these things and enter into His glory?"

There followed a quick synopsis, as they walked along, of every major prophecy from Genesis to Malachi, with Jesus interpreting to them in every scripture the events concerning His own life and ministry. Jesus opened their understanding, He gave them the real reason, the divine purpose behind all these events. There was a QUALITY, A MEANING that stretched far beyond anything they could have dreamed of. So also, were our eyes to be opened in this day, we would see a depth in God's purpose in our inworkings which would astound us. No wonder it is written, that when the revelation of His purpose is ultimately brought forth, "The kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (Isa. 52:15).

They were amazed that this stranger could know all of these things, wondering at his words, as they drew close to Emmaus. When they made as if they would turn off the main road to go to the village, it appeared as if this stranger would go further. Cleopas and the other disciple begged Him to stay with them, saying, "It's almost evening, and the day is nearly gone." They went in, and after a light supper was prepared, sat down to eat. Just at the beginning of the meal, as was custom, they asked their guest to bless the food. He picked a piece of the flat bread, blessed it, broke off a piece, and gave one to each of them. At this moment, Luke says, "their eyes were opened" and they knew who He was! With all of His gracious words ringing in their ears, talking rapidly and earnestly all the way along the roadway to Emmaus about the things the Christ would have to suffer, His life, His calling, the training of His disciples, the manner of His death, and His resurrection, they sat-in absolute astonishment as, having reached out to take a piece of
bread, and with a jolt realizing it was Jesus, even as they looked at Him smiling at them across the table, He vanished!

They cried out in a combination of ecstatic joy, fright, doubt and wonderment! Shaking their heads, they looked at one another in absolute astonishment. With their scalps prickling and every hair standing almost on end, they sat in stunned silence. Had this really happened? But the piece of bread was still in their hand, and THEY had not broken it! The place was set, the meal was steaming in its common bowl, and yet Jesus, who had just been sitting across from them, unrecognizable to them at first, had instantly disappeared! They said, "No wonder our hearts seemed to burn within us while He was talking so earnestly to us on the way as we walked along, and gave us such understanding of the scriptures!" Hastily, they took a few quick bites of the meal, got up, and began to trot along the road to Jerusalem as fast as they could, until they found the private place where the disciples had been huddling in fear.

When the eleven were all gathered together, they related "how the Lord is risen indeed and has appeared to Simon!" They were busily explaining all about the conversation, the stranger who had appeared to join them, relating all the things He had said to them, while the astonished disciples were listening with a mixture of doubt and wonderment, when, shockingly, Jesus flashed into human form right in their midst! They were frightened almost out of their wits! They thought it was some spiritual apparition and were terrified! They knew they had locked the door, because they were terribly afraid their hideout would be discovered by the religious leaders or Roman soldiers, and they themselves be made to suffer some terrible persecution for being His chief followers.

Jesus said, quietly, "Peace be to you!" Astonished, they stepped back, eyes wide in dumbfounded amazement. With a smile on His lips, Jesus said, "What's bothering you? Why are you reasoning around in your minds? See, these are My hands and My feet! It is I, really!" As if to give emphasis to the fact that He was in their midst again with bodily form as a human being, in the very same body which had been quite literally resurrected, CHANGED INTO SPIRIT (although manifested as flesh), and that He now possessed the ability to instantly materialize once more in His fleshy form, asked, "Have you got anything here to eat?" As their startled eyes widened, He sat down with them at the table, and began to eat the fish! Following the meal Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you. Even as the Father has sent Me and commissioned Me to fulfill His purpose on this earth, so I am commissioning you." He breathed on them each, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit! Whatsoever persons' sins you forgive, they will be forgiven; and whatsoever persons' sins you retain, they will be retained." Following this brief encounter, Jesus dematerialized again! The disciples were left in bewildered, excited amazement about this stunning event.

It happened repeatedly - in many parts of the country, with different groups at different times. On one occasion, as attested to by the apostle Paul years later, more than FIVE HUNDRED of those who had known Jesus were gathering together in a special meeting when He had appeared before them, and THEY ALL SAW HIM!

Mary had seen a "gardener." Two of the disciples had seen and conversed with a "stranger." The eleven in the upper room saw the Master as He formerly appeared. Later, a group of them saw Him on the lakeshore, and thought it was a "fisherman." He was with them forty days after His resurrection, but they saw Him only on a few brief occasions. The entire time that He was manifest to them, had it all been crowded into one
day instead of being at intervals during the forty days, would probably have been less than twelve hours, or one eightieth of that entire time. This being true, it is evident that He was present with them UNSEEN about seventy-nine eightieths of that period of forty days. And even when they did have MANIFESTATIONS, they were not (except once, on behalf of the doubting Thomas) in a form exactly like the one they had known so intimately for three and a half years, and had seen but a few days before. It is not once intimated that they knew Him by the familiar features of His face, nor even that He was recognized by the same appearance as in other manifestations. Yes, He was different, so different that they were puzzled to understand Him, and to know just how they could still be His disciples.

**IN A DIFFERENT FORM**

The Lord Jesus comes to us in different ways. There are many modes and forms of the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are going to have another manifestation, beloved. It is dawning. It has begun even now. Praise the Lord! It is the same Lord Jesus, but manifested in a further unfoldment of Himself, progressively bringing us to the realization of His fullness.

"After that He appeared in ANOTHER FORM unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country" (Mk. 16:12). He appeared unto them in another form - not another Person. It was the same Christ and Lord. But there was some difference of manifestation. That is the plain truth coming to meet us out of the region of mystery where for us the final truth of things dwells. After His resurrection Jesus was to His disciples Jesus with a difference. He was the same, and yet not the same. There was something about him that differentiated Him from the Christ of the Garden, and the hillside, and the country road, and the seashore. The disciples never doubted that He was the same Jesus with whom they had passed through the corn-fields, and traversed the Palestinian highways, and voyaged on Gennesaret. But the human form which was soon to pass from their midst already seemed to be playing a lessening part in their recognition of their Lord. In a little while they should see Him no more - that is, as a man sees his fellow man. Soon the vision of the living and ever-present Christ was to be internalized, reserved wholly for the inward eye of every quickened and transformed spirit. But it would appear that already, in anticipation of this new order of things, the old order was changing, and the outward form of the Master was already becoming less and less an essential medium for the revelation and recognition of His unchanging personality. This much may be gathered from the record of those blessed days between the resurrection and the ascension.

The story of the appearances of the Christ between the resurrection and the ascension tells us that, in the knowing of Jesus by those to whom He manifested Himself, the spiritual senses predominated over the physical, and the spirit played an ever larger part in the work of perception. It is abundantly clear that it was no apparitional and illusionary Christ that the disciples recognized; but it is equally clear that they who had been wont to recognize their Lord in precisely the same way as they recognized one another, now needed that their physical senses should give way to the spiritual faculties of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened that they might KNOW HIM.

Form plays so large a part in our physical and material reckonings, judgment by appearance is so necessarily a part of our life in a world of appearances. But all who would be sons of God must learn that, even as the same Christ came to Mary
Magdalene, to the disciples on Tiberias, and to the two who journeyed to Emmaus in forms which they did not immediately recognize as Him, so that spiritual life which Jesus revealed, and for which He stood, and ever stands, may take unto itself more than one form of manifestation as it makes its way into the hearts and lives of men. "He appeared in another form." He is always doing that. Would that we were able always to find Him! Would that our faith were deep enough, would that our love were broad enough, would that our insight were keen enough, to recognize Him in all the forms and fashions of His coming unto the children of men!

Some find the Christ as Mary Magdalene found Him suddenly when He called her name. Some find Him in the doing of His will, as the disciples who cast the net in Tiberias, and found it was their Master and Lord they were obeying. Some go the journey to Emmaus - the way of many a heart-burning, many a meditation, many a mind and spirit struggle and find Him in the breaking of bread at His hand. At the core of all spiritual experience there lies the same eternal truth, for it is the same Christ who meets us all; but many are the forms experience can take. Some find Him in the blessing, others with Job upon the ash-heap of stripping and desolation, who, being brought very low and tested to the uttermost can shout the triumphant declaration: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee!" (Job. 42:5). Therefore, let not the man who has met the Master in the garden of Joseph doubt that He was ever seen on the shore of Tiberias; and let not him who hath found Him on that dawn-lit beach think it improbable that He ever walked and talked with the travelers to Emmaus.

"HE APPEARED IN ANOTHER FORM." It is the same Christ revealing Himself to men in another form. So, my brother, my sister, as we ponder the mysterious manifestations of the risen Christ among the faithful and devout disciples, let us remind ourselves that this same Jesus is ever in our midst, and we must be ready to recognize Him as He becomes manifested to us from day to day, and from glory to glory, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRIST

We will never be able to thoroughly comprehend Christ's presence, His unveiling, or His manifestation until we understand these wonderful truths in terms of the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ. This is what the Kingdom of God is all about, the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ, the marching forward of God. There are different degrees and different types of the manifestations of Christ. Individually as well as corporately we have had manifestations of our Lord Jesus in times of worship, prayer, singing, healing, prophecy, and in the walking out of the will of God in our lives. They are all part of the revelation and manifestation of Christ. In some way Christ comes through. Every manifestation of Christ serves a purpose. And how often He appears in "yet another form!"

Historically there have been times and seasons of the manifestation of Christ. In those heaven-blest days of the early church the Christ of God was poured forth in such power and glory that it is beyond the ability of any man to fully comprehend the far reaching results of His operation through the apostles and prophets and saints of that generation as they brought to the face of the earth another unique expression of the glory of God. The Christ of Galilee had disappeared from their midst, but again there was a going forth of Jesus Christ, released in another form through a many-membered body. It was a heavenly visitation that shook the entire earth, changing the course of history and the destiny of nations and empires. This was GOD'S GLORY arising upon the people and
filling their hearts with joy and gladness, transforming their lives and making them sons of God. Truly, it was the MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST.

Late in the fourth century a Scottish lad by the name of Patricius (Patrick) had spent six long years of his young life subjected to the unspeakable horrors of slavery deep within the forests of Ireland. In this foreign land he served a Druid chieftain, who put him to work feeding the swine. In the midst of his dreadful solitude he had a dream one night. In that dream he had a vision and a voice said, "Lo, thy ship is ready!" The next morning he fled his captors and staggered two hundred miles through the dense forest of Ireland, finally arriving at the sea. And when he came out of the woods, there was a ship, waiting to sail, loaded with Irish wolfhounds. He asked passage on the ship but was angrily cast out. As he walked dejectedly away, someone ran after him and told him to come back, that they had changed their minds. And so, Patrick left the land of Ireland. He sailed to Gaul and after some years returned to his home. But he could never get out of his mind those Irish Druids that had held him captive. For years, he planned the revenge that he was going to have upon his captors. But it was a different kind of revenge; it was a noble revenge in which he would bring to them the light of the gospel. He could hear the thousands of souls in those darkened forests, crying for the Bread of Life, and there was none to break it, he said. Finally, after twenty years had passed, during which he watched the westering sun go down over that benighted island, and his heart would return to those people, one night he had another vision and someone came with a handful of letters and at the top it said: THE VOICE OF THE IRISH. And suddenly, he said, "We pray thee, holy youth, come and henceforth walk among us." He believed that he had been called by God to return to the land of his slavery. So, he set sail for Ireland. There he landed on those inhospitable shores and plunged into the depths of the forests and confronted the fanatical Druids and proclaimed the gospel. He confronted the Druid kings and priests and he overwhelmed them with the power of the gospel. "And the Lamb shall overcome them" (Rev. 17:4). And so mighty was his missionary endeavor that he crossed Ireland from one side to the other, time after time. There was hardly any place in the Emerald Isle where the breath of the revival brought by Patrick did not reach. The results were astonishing! He found the island a completely pagan and savage land, and left it almost totally converted to the Lord Jesus Christ and transformed in mind and heart. Who can deny that this mighty accomplishment was the result of the MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST!

The glorious manifestation of the Christ of God stirred and shook Scotland in the days of John Knox. In Knox's day all of Europe was sunk in the mire of darkness, ignorance and corruption. Scotland was the most backward nation in Europe at that time, its morals were the most degenerate; its church was the most corrupt; and the entire scene was one of gloomy despair. In the midst of this gross darkness Knox went into a garden in Scotland and knelt for hours in agonizing prayer. He finally lifted up his hands to God and cried in a mighty voice: "Great God, give me Scotland or I die!" God gave such power to Knox, and sent such a wave of the glory of God, until the whole nation was brought under the mighty regenerating hand of God and the entire life of Scotland was totally transformed by the Spirit of the Lord.

At times God has raised up mighty men and, as it were, pulled apart but a little the veil, giving a glimpse of the force of a ministry filled with the fullness of His power the harbinger of greater things to come. Such men were John Wesley and George Whitefield who turned England to God in the eighteenth century. Such a man, also, was Charles
Finney, an attorney, who upon being apprehended of the Lord left his vocation, waited upon and then followed the Lord. When he entered into a town often all the taverns, theaters, pool halls and houses of prostitution would close, not because of some law, nor out of respect for religious gatherings, but because there was no longer any need for them, there simply weren't any customers, the whole town had turned to God! One man wrote of Finney, "No one has ever approached the gigantic stature of the mighty Charles Finney, who alone, without an evangelistic society, without a radio or television program, without a computer, without 10,000 partners TO APPEAL TO, or a business manager, WON TWO AND A HALF MILLION SOULS TO CHRIST. A hundred like Finney WOULD WIN THE ENTIRE AMERICAN NATION." But - it was not Charles Finney who turned England to God. I do not hesitate to tell you that that mighty move of the Lord was naught but THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST as HE appeared in "yet another form."

At the turn of this century, in the country of Wales, in an hour of great apostasy and degeneracy, many hundreds of people began to fervently pray for God to move in that land. After many months the flood gates of heaven were opened and the Holy Spirit swept as an overflowing stream over the nation. Vast multitudes of people were mysteriously moved upon by the "wind" of the Holy Spirit and sovereignly swept into the Kingdom of God. Soon the valleys and the mountains of the entire land were ringing with the high praises of God. The mighty tidal wave swept hither and thither - men knew not how or why. Visitors from all parts of Britain and the Continent began to flock to Wales to see the "great sight" of God breaking forth in supernatural power upon the sons of men. Practically the entire nation was turned to God by the MANIFESTATION OF JESUS CHRIST THE LORD!

No less striking and wonderful has been the manifestation of Christ in power and glory in the great Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit which came first to America, and then to the world, at the turn of this century and continues to this present hour. I am thankful for my Pentecostal heritage and for those Pentecostal experiences, but I am even more grateful that the Lord in His mercy opened the eyes of my understanding and permitted me to see and experience something of that manifestation of Christ to His people in those hallowed years following 1948. Great and wonderful beyond the telling was the glory of the Lord that erupted in mighty signs, wonders and miracles, in divers gifts of the Holy Ghost, in prophetic utterance and direction by the laying on of hands, in the song of the Lord in the mouth of vast multitudes as the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and the music of celestial choirs on earth went sweeping up the sky steeps. And it is precious to me now that out of this gushing fountain of HIS MANIFESTATION was birthed the precious "present truth" of sonship, the Kingdom of God, and the reconciliation of all things! Truly, the Christ appeared "in yet another form."

LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING

We have not yet witnessed the magnitude of ministry that shall be revealed through the manifested sons of God. God is preparing His perfected and mature body, anointed with the fullness of the seven-fold Spirit of God, and this enchristed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history in these last days with ten thousand times more power than a St. Patrick, a Wesley, a Whitefield, a Finney, or any of the revival showers of this century. God has moved deeply upon my heart in these days to prophesy to God's elect that there is coming a great and glorious MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a fresh revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's going to come in the midst of a people who truly "love His appearing," and I see and hear
signs that already He is beginning to come. We are standing on the threshold of a new and fresh and transcendent manifestation of our Lord. These things are burning like a furnace inside of me. I am being quickened by these things. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a part of this manifestation that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself in our midst in a new way, and through us to creation. I am asking God to unveil and manifest Himself to me in these days in a fuller way. Oh God! do a new thing. Are you, precious reader of these lines, hungry for that today? Are you anxious and eager for the Lord to appear? Are you truly looking for His appearing, the manifestation of Himself, His EPIPHANEIA?

The whole earth and all creation is waiting for the glory of the Lord to be manifested. The dealings of God in your life and mine are fraught with divine purpose. There is something far greater ahead of us than walking on streets of gold or flitting about in white night gowns strumming harps. This was the mentality instilled into me as a young man. Thank God there is a heaven, but I want to tell you something. All the dealings of God toward us - the cross, the suffering, the processings, the blessings, the glory - are all intended to put something of His nature and character into us. This working will enable Him to be made manifest in this old dark world in which we live. God has purposed that righteousness and glory shine forth before all the nations. This is going to be done through those who are being transformed into the likeness of His Son. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall fill the earth. His power will shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before HIM. The harvest of this age shall be gathered.

Oh, how our love for God grows when once our eyes envision the wonders of His marvelous purposes, which were purposed in Christ before the world began! Have you noticed the precious understanding of Paul when he penned his fatherly letter to Titus his own son in the faith, when full of the Holy Ghost, his soul aflame with the revelation of God's magnificent plan, how he made known the hope of God's glory to his beloved son? "The grace of God," says the apostle, "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men" (Tit.2:11). This has already taken place, we all know: the all-saving grace of God has appeared where ever the gospel is proclaimed, in the measure that it is proclaimed, "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (2:12).

But is this all? Is the grace of God appearing to all men "in this present world" all there is to God's great purpose? Is there no portion that goes beyond what we have heard, known and experienced of His grace in "this present world"? Is there no expectation which will surpass the limitations of this age of sin, sickness, travail and death; this age of the duality of good and evil, light and darkness, sin and salvation, victory and defeat, hope and despair? The King James version adds - "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13). Young's Literal Translation is more true to the Greek text when it says, "Waiting for the blessed hope and MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." The Diaglott adds its testimony: "Waiting for the blessed hope, even the APPEARING OF THE GLORY of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

A wonderful experience awaits the child of God when for the first time he sees that there is an expectation right here upon earth of the MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST. The message is clear - the "grace" of God has already appeared: the "glory" of God is going to appear; and THIS IS WHAT WE LOOK FOR - THE
APPEARING AND MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY OF OUR GOD AND SAVIOUR! It is not "the glorious appearing," but the "manifestation of the glory," although the manifestation of the glory will certainly be most glorious! And where is His glory to appear? In the same scene where the grace of God has appeared! "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the GLORY WHICH SHALL BE REVEALED IN US. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD (who reveal the glory)" (Rom. 8:18-19). This is not a statement about our anticipated removal into some far-off heaven somewhere, certainly not this, but the forth shining of the fullness of God's glory right here upon earth. The Tabernacle of Moses reveals the order. In the "outer court" you may have His blessings. In the "holy place" you may have His gifts, or some overflow of His presence. But in the "most holy place" you deal with the Majestic One Himself! You can taste of blessings from God, learn about God, and periodically experience His operations, but never really get to H-I-M. Beloved, in this wonderful hour we are being brought unto God! We are BEING brought unto an expression of the GLORY OF GOD, the likes of which none of us have ever known! And it is destined to affect the whole earth, to forever alter the course of history, and once for all chase away the night of darkness, sin and death!

His seed has come into us, we have been born of the Spirit of God, God is having a people in whom is the Spirit of His Son, so that there is a relationship with the Father and a forming and a revelation and an outflow of the Father's character, mind, and will. For what reason? So that God can appear IN THE MIDST of His apprehended ones and so that God can appear THROUGH His people at any time He wants and in any form He needs to appear. "When He shall come to be glorified IN HIS SAINTS, and to be ADMIRED IN ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). Long centuries ago the prophet Malachi asked the burning question, "Who may abide the day of HIS COMING? and who shall STAND when HE APPEARETH? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi (the priesthood), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness" (Mal. 3:2-3).

The unveiling (apokalupsis) of Jesus Christ prepares the way for the manifestation (epiphaneia) of Jesus Christ, and the manifestation of Jesus Christ is the appearing of Jesus Christ. As I have stated earlier, there are many different modes and types of the manifestation of Jesus Christ. "Who shall abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when HE APPEARETH?" Ah, Jesus Christ has come as Saviour and has appeared in saving power in the midst of all the saved ones. He has come as Baptizer with the Holy Spirit and has appeared in the glory of the anointing in the midst of all the Spirit-filled ones. He has come as Healer and has appeared in miracle-working wonder in the midst of all the healed ones. How we praise God for all of these appearings - but now He must appear in "yet another form" - as KING, as LORD, as PRIEST, as the SON OF GOD, as G-O-D.

Jesus Christ wants to reveal Himself in dimensions far beyond those of Saviour, Baptizer and Healer. "Who shall STAND when He appeareth?" asks the prophet. I tell you in truth that it is those who have been MADE ONE IN HIM in that in which He is appearing. When He appears as Saviour it is the saved ones who STAND WITH HIM IN THAT APPEARING. When He appears as Baptizer, it is the Spirit-baptized ones who STAND WITH HIM IN THAT APPEARING. When He appears as Healer it is the healed ones who STAND WITH HIM IN THAT APPEARING. Those who KNOW HIM in the manifestation of Himself are able to stand with Him as the embodiment and expression of His
manifestation in that realm. God is teaching us the way of overcoming, the reality of His authority and Lordship. Why is He establishing that authority and that Lordship in the hearts of His elect? Because He is the Lord and Head of the body, the church. Of course you will never know His Lordship, except by the Holy Spirit: "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The Lordship of Jesus Christ must be set up in our hearts, where His will becomes our delight. Why does He want us to come into lordship and authority? So He can appear in the midst as the LORD OF LORDS! If we are not lords, ruling with authority, He cannot come as Lord of lords. He is not Lord of slaves. He is not Lord of babies. He is Lord of LORDS! Why is God bringing many sons to glory? That in the midst of all the sons Jesus Christ might appear as the pre-eminent One, THE SON among the sons!

"Well," you say, "why does He not appear as King of kings?" Because most of us are beggars. "Oh, God, please bless us; Lord, do this, do that; give us this, give us that." And if He appeared as King of beggars we would be ashamed before Him at His appearing. In all our poverty, in all our need, in all our self-pity, in all our limitation, foolishness and carnality, should suddenly the Majesty of the heavens, the blessed and only Potentate appear, why right away we would fall with our faces in the dust in shame before Him. But if we are standing as kings in the presence of God, reignining in life, undefeated and victorious, overcomers and conquerors in all things, rejoicing because His throne is in our hearts, then we welcome the King of the kings in the midst of the kings! And we can STAND when HE APPEARS!

Do we love His appearing? Do we want God to make us a people for Himself, so that in whatever form He desires to appear, He can appear in the midst? The inspired apostle John has taught us that when HE APPEARS WE MUST BE LIKE HIM. It says, "We shall be like Him," but it also means, "We must be like Him." Can we not see that if we are not like Him in the way He wishes to appear, He cannot appear in that form? We are HIS BODY, the vehicle, the expression and manifestation of the Christ. Because we are His body, whenever He manifests Himself, He will manifest Himself in the form of that body, in whatever form the body is. If He must appear as Saviour, He must appear among and through saviours. If He must appear as Deliverer, He must appear among deliverers. If He appears as the Chief Cornerstone, He must appear among living stones. If He appears as the Son of God, He must appear among many brethren conformed to His image. If He appears as High Priest, He must appear among the priesthood. If He comes as Lord, it must be among other lords. If He comes as King, He must be king in and through other kings. If He is going to be revealed as GOD, He must be revealed among the gods (Ps. 82:2,6).

"Who shall stand when He appeareth?" When He appears as King, only the kings can stand with Him, everybody else has to fall before Him. When He appears as Lord, only the lords are able to stand with Him, the rest will bow before His appearing. When He appears as Judge, only the judges (I Cor. 6:2; Dan. 7:22) can stand with Him, all the rest will cringe before Him. And when He appears as High Priest, only the priests, those elect saints born of a priestly heart, possessed of the priestly nature, are able to stand with Him!

This is the glory of the EPIPHANEIA - the MANIFESTATION OF JESUS CHRIST! May all who read these lines continue to yield their lives under the mighty hand of God, unto his processing, waiting for that blessed hope, the MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST!
Chapter 14
The Epiphaneia Of Jesus Christ
(continued)

The third Greek word related to the "coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ is EPIPHANEIA. The lexicographers define it, "an appearance, show, display, grandeur, splendor." In its use in classical Greek, it applies to the invisible divinities that become visible. It also applies to the appearance of the sun after the passing away of the clouds. The best possible translation is MANIFESTATION. The EPIPHANEIA of Jesus Christ is ultimately the FULLNESS OF THE MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF to the saints, the world and creation!

Let us now notice that the EPIPHANEIA of Jesus Christ is something greater and grander by far than either His PAROUSIA or His APOKALUPSIS. The PAROUSIA is the reality of His presence with us - though hidden and unseen. The APOKALUPSIS is the drawing aside of the veil or covering that hides Him from view, enabling us by the spirit of revelation to behold the King in His beauty. The EPIPHANEIA is the MANIFESTATION or OUTRAYING of Himself which follows the unveiling. The manifestation is consequent upon the unveiling; when that takes place the hidden One is no longer hidden but seen. Once brought out into view He then springs into action, bares His holy arm, arises in His strength, and the MANIFESTATION of His presence commences. This truth is expressed in a notable verse: "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the BRIGHTNESS (epiphaneia) of His COMING (parousia)." Actually translated the verse reads "THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS PRESENCE."

The story of the appearances of Christ between His resurrection and the ascension tells us that it was necessary for the spiritual faculties to be quickened in order to perceive the Lord in His varied manifestations. Almost on every occasion when the Lord manifested Himself to His disciples it was as it had been with the men who walked the road to Emmaus. "After that He appeared in ANOTHER FORM unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country" (Mk. 16:12). He appeared unto them in another form - not another Person. It was the same Christ and Lord. But there was some difference of manifestation. That is the plain truth coming to meet us out of the region of mystery where for us the final truth of things dwells. After His resurrection Jesus was to His disciples Jesus - with a difference.

"HE APPEARED IN ANOTHER FORM." It is the same Christ revealing Himself to men in another form. So, my brother, my sister, as we ponder the mysterious manifestations of the risen Christ among the faithful and devout disciples, let us remind ourselves that this same Jesus is ever in our midst, and we must be ready to recognize Him as He becomes manifested to us from day to day, and from glory to glory, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus comes to us in different ways. There are many modes and forms of the
appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are going to have another manifestation, beloved. It is dawning. It has begun even now. Praise the Lord! It is the same Lord Jesus, but manifested in a further unfoldment of Himself, progressively bringing us to the realization of His fullness.

LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING

There is one wonderful trait that identifies the sons of God, and that is that they LOOK FOR HIS APPEARING - indeed, they LOVE HIS APPEARING. Paul taught the Thessalonians to "wait for His Son from heaven" (I Thes. 1:10). The word used (wait) is instructive. It is a word which would not be used of a patient sitting in a dentist's chair; nor of a sick man dying of an incurable disease, resignedly waiting the end. The word involves eagerness, longing, expectancy. It expresses an earnestness and intensity of desire which can only be characterized by the magnificent phrase - "that BLESSED HOPE."

Oh beloved reader of these lines, what scenes are before us! What grand realities! What brilliant glories! May we live in the light and power of these things! How we love His appearing in all the wonderful ways in which He has already appeared and in those in which He shall yet appear! We will never be able to thoroughly appreciate the Christ's appearing until we understand clearly this wonderful truth in terms of the progressive revelation of Jesus Christ. There are different degrees of the manifestation of Christ. One of the biggest lies ever foisted upon gullible babes in Christ is the foolish notion propounded by the church systems that there is to be but one single "appearing" of the Lord at some indefinite date in the future. I would have to tear my Bible all to pieces if I taught that. The grand truth is that He appears unto His elect from glory to glory, in ever-increasing unfoldments of Himself. He appeared; He continued to appear; He appears; He continues to appear; He shall appear; He shall continue to appear. Praise His wonderful name!

We are distinctly told that men SAW the Christ following His resurrection. "To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, having been seen of them forty days" (Acts 1:3). And in Acts 10:40-41 we read: "Him God raised up the third day, and gave Him TO BE MADE MANIFEST, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead." The list of those who saw Him is given in I Cor. 15:5-8. He appeared to CEPHAS. He appeared to the TWELVE. Then to above FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN at once. Then He appeared to JAMES. Then to ALL THE APOSTLES. "Last of all," Paul says, "He appeared to ME also." That doesn't mean that after Paul He would never appear to anyone else - if that were true, how could WE look for and love His appearing? Many years after Jesus appeared to Paul He appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos! Time had marched on. The glory that John had seen in the days of Jesus of Nazareth was now a thing of the past. It had done its work, and had left an indelible impression upon John's being and its mark upon the world. But, nonetheless, it was a thing of the past. Likewise, the glory of the New Testament Church had risen to great heights. The disciples had gone throughout the entire civilized world and spread the glad tidings of redemption through Jesus Christ, and the ushering in of the grace of God. But we find that by the time John arrived on Patmos there was a waning. All the other apostles had vanished from the scene. Even the great Paul was dead. The glory of God upon that infant church had lifted. There was a scattering, and much persecution and tribulation. There were also many problems, with heresies, confusion and rampant carnality.
John was at this time waiting for a further revelation from God. He was not lamenting and saying, "Oh, if I could just tell about those good old days with Jesus when He was here ... if only we could have continued in those blessed years of joy and victory and glory in the early church." He was not trying to recapture the glory of the past. He was there for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus in that day! Thus a tremendous unveiling came in that bleak island. The Lord Jesus appeared to John in a glory greater far than any glory in which He had beheld Him hitherto. And this manifestation of Christ was the herald of a new and glorious dealing of Christ in the midst of His people!

But let us go back to Paul for a moment. "Last of all He was seen by me also." Saul of Tarsus was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. He came in religious zeal breathing threatening and slaughter Against the disciples of the Lord. He was a man who was filled with indignity and hostility and bitterness. If he found any Christians, men or women, he sought to bind them and bring them to Jerusalem where they might be tortured and killed, if they refused to recant of this Christian heresy. He went to the High Priest to secure papers to go to Damascus. As he drew near, there suddenly shone a light from heaven so bright as to pale the sun by comparison, and it caused him to be thrown from his horse to the ground! In this blinding light Saul heard a voice which called his name, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Trembling with astonishment, Saul asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" The reply thundered back, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

In that moment Saul saw a vision that was to change his entire life. Everything was changed in the brilliance of that light. His world was turned upside down - rather, right side up! His right, he discovered, was wrong; his faith was unbelief; his earnestness was treason; his truth was error; his zeal was rebellion. Everything suddenly turned topsyturvy and he realized that this Jesus, whose name just a moment before had been an epithet, an object of derision, of laughter, of scorn, of hatred, now suddenly was the Lord of glory, the All Holy One, the Altogether Lovely One, the Creator and Redeemer of the world! In that moment Saul was changed from the persecutor to a disciple. He fell to the ground a sinner, and rose a saint; he fell to the ground a sighted man who was blind, and rose a blind man who could see. He saw the greatest sight in all the world. He saw his God for who He really is. In that moment Saul bowed low before the God of grace and power; he was brought to submission to Jesus Christ. And through Paul's life and ministry the church was established throughout the far-flung Empire and the course of history was forever altered.

Skeptics down through the centuries have tried to explain that conversion and the dramatic events it precipitated. But, precious friend of mine, there is no explanation other than the SUPERNATURAL SOVEREIGN WORK OF GOD. That is our God! And I do not hesitate to tell you, beloved, that God is getting ready to move again! All over the world in this particular moment in history, the Spirit of God is speaking to His apprehended ones concerning the imminent manifestation of the sons of God. The trumpet has sounded, the appointed time has come. Elect saints in every nation have heard the voice of the prophets, foretelling of this most awesome intervention of God's power that is about to sweep the earth and shake all nations.

Although Jesus Christ appeared in glory to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, that was not by any means the end of His appearing in Paul's life. Nearly thirty years later, in recounting his experience before king Agrippa, Paul reiterated the words of the Lord Jesus spoken to him that eventful day: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I HAVE APPEARED unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of
these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I WILL APPEAR unto thee" (Acts 26:16). "I W-I-L-L APPEAR!" Ah, the Lord obviously appeared to Paul more times than just the one initial experience. In fact, Paul said of the gospel he preached, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). Is it not plain to be seen that the appearing of the Lord in Paul's life was an on-going reality from glory to glory? He was TAUGHT by the REVELATION of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! Only one who had encountered the Lord in a personal and real way could pen these meaningful words: "For I have RECEIVED OF THE LORD that which I delivered unto you..." (I Cor. 11:23). The Lord appeared to Paul and continued to appear to him throughout his ministry, imparting the transforming truths he proclaimed.

APPEARANCES OF CHRIST TO INDIVIDUALS

I say again - I repeat it with assurance of His Word of truth - "looking for His appearing" does not mean gazing into the skies for Jesus to flash down from heaven on a cloud. There are many modes and forms of the appearing of the Lord Jesus. EACH MANIFESTATION IS ON THE PLANE OF CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PERSON TO WHOM HE APPEARS, AND EACH IS DESIGNED TO MEET A NEED. Understand this truth, my beloved, and you will comprehend a great mystery of the Kingdom of God. Every man and woman on the face of the earth, regardless of spiritual stature, should, on the plane they are on, LOOK FOR HIS APPEARING, for men are always transformed thereby. It is impossible to emphasize too strongly the fact that the Christ appears to men right where they are and on a level of manifestation they are capable to receive. He appears to us in greater and greater glory as we walk on with Him. That is why we see, in the scriptures, an ascending scale of glory with each manifestation of Christ. There was one degree of glory in His appearing in Bethlehem on the night of His miraculous birth. There was a greater glory when at Cana of Galilee He turned the water into wine, showing forth His glory that His disciples might believe on Him. In that glory He walked and showed Himself to Israel with mighty signs and wonders for three and a half years. Greater still was the glory disclosed in His astonishing resurrection and the manifestations that followed. And the glory seen by Saul of Tarsus along the road - the glory brighter than the noonday sun shining in its strength - was greater still. But the glory witnessed by the beloved Seer of Patmos as transfigured he beheld One standing in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks - was greater and grander than all! Oh, yes, my beloved, in our individual lives and corporately, the appearing of the Lord is ever "FROM glory, TO glory!"

Some time ago a friend shared the following experience which wonderfully illustrates the point I am endeavoring to get across. "Last fall, the Lord began to show me what was the cup that passed to Jesus in the Garden. It was not physical death. No one could ever convince me that Jesus was afraid of physical death, because He has released me from such fear. If I am not afraid, then He could not have been afraid either. No, that cup which He so dreaded was something far more than death to His physical being. I saw that it was that cup of Proverbs that says, 'Look not on the wine when it is red in the cup, for at last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.' That word, 'red' is, in the Hebrew, 'Adam.' "Look not upon the cup when it is ADAM!" The dregs of that cup, while looking beautiful and sparkling and clear on the top, are shown to be a serpent. It was that cup that was passed to Jesus in the Garden, and that brought from His holy lips, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me!' And then-the Lord quickened to me that word which says, 'Babylon hath been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord.' It was the cup of Babylon, with all her dead forms and perverted, twisted, carnal doctrines that the Father
offered Jesus. He who was pure ESSENCE, free from all dead form, to become identified with form! Such love!

"THIS is the real death that Jesus Christ died - and is still dying! It is the death that He died from the foundation of the world, and has continued to die again and again, in every age - as He has stripped Himself of His glory, come down to be contained in forms - candles sitting on an altar, images placed around a wall, doctrines that belie His very nature - identifying - pouring His anointing into them to bring forth a measure of His life! This is the sacrifice of Christ Jesus! As I sat in a meeting one Sunday morning, I saw it so beautifully illustrated. There the Spirit of God was moving among the people, their pastor just having been filled with the Spirit not long before...the Spirit moving amongst all that foolishness of crucifixes and candles, of ritual and form, even in clerical garments. But Christ was there - in Life! MOVING, yet fixed to the cross of that dreadful tree of legalism and form! I sat there and looked at the altar and the idolatry there and murmured a prayer of thanksgiving: 'What a God you are to allow Yourself to be brought down so far IN ORDER TO SERVE!' Nailed to the cross of form, shedding the blood, which is the New Wine of the Spirit, the very essence life of Christ" - end quote.

There is a remarkable testimony of the appearing of the Lord, altogether as sovereign and glorious as that of the apostle Paul, that comes to us from one of England's great preachers of the eighteenth century, a man by the name of William Huntington. His testimony begins at a time of hopeless confusion in his young life when he was searching after God but was helplessly enslaved by the unyielding shackles of sin, fear and ignorance. He wrote: "While I was standing on my ladder, sinking in despondency, or rather despair; wishing for more books of prayers, and fretting because I could get none that would suit my case; behold, suddenly a 'great light shined round about me,' quick as lightning, and far superior to 'the brightness of the sun.' My hair stood upright, and my blood rankled in my veins, for fear this was to bring me to my dreadful and long-expected end, for I knew not as yet which class I was to die a member of, not being pardoned. I now came down from my ladder, and stood looking this way and that, but could see nothing except the vision. I cried out, 'What is it? what is it? what is it?' fearing it was something to bring me to my end, and that I should have no part in that sweet line of promises and invitations which I saw belonged to the elect, who are emphatically styled heirs of the promise. Immediately I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me in plain words, 'LAY BY YOUR FORMS OF PRAYERS, AND GO, PRAY TO JESUS CHRIST; DO NOT YOU SEE HOW PITIFULLY HE SPEAKS TO SINNERS?' These are the words VERBATIM, for I think that I shall never forget them.

"I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but went to my little tool-house to pray, yet I cannot remember that I had at that time any faith in the Saviour or expectation of being heard or answered - to all appearance I was sunk too low for that. I rather thought this vision was to bring me to my final end. Therefore I trembled in myself, and was almost desperate, fearing that I should shortly sink under that awful line of curses. When I came into my little tool-house, to the best of as I usually had done - that is, I pulled off my blue apron, and covered my head and face with it; for I was like the poor publican, I could not even look up to God - I was afraid He would damn me if I offered to do it. I kneeled down, and began to pray extempore, the language of one desperate, precisely thus: 'O Lord, I am a sinner, and Thou knowest it. I have tried to make myself better, but cannot. If there is any way left in which Thou canst save me, do Thou save me; if not, I must be damned, for I cannot try anymore nor won't.'
"The very moment the last sentence dropped from my lips, 'the spirit of grace and of supplication' was poured into my soul, and I forthwith spake as the Spirit gave me utterance. I immediately prayed with such energy, eloquence, fluency, boldness, and familiarity as quite astonished me; as much as though I should now suddenly speak Arabic, a language that I never learned a syllable of. And the blessed Spirit of God poured the sweet promises into my heart, from all parts of the scriptures, in a powerful manner, and helped my infirmities greatly by furnishing my faltering tongue with words to plead prevalently with God. Yea, that blessed Spirit enabled me to compass the Almighty about with His own promises, which were so suitable to my case, that His blessed Majesty could not get out of His own bonds. It came to pass that, after I had been wrestling in this manner for about the space of a quarter of an hour, behold, Jesus Christ appeared to me in a most glorious and conspicuous manner, with all His body stained with blood! He appeared in His aspect as one greatly dishonored and much abused, and yet inclined to pity me. I turned my eyes from Him, but He pursued me, and was still before me. I fell to the ground, and laid on my face, but could not shun the sight.

"The more I strove to avoid Him, the nearer He approached, the vision opened brighter and brighter, and the deeper impression was made upon my mind; and the more I condemned myself, and tried to creep into darkness from His sight, the more He smiled upon me, and the more He melted, renewed and comforted my soul. When I found I could not shun Him, nor shut out His dissolving beams, I arose from the ground, and went into the garden. Here I found that all my temptations were fled; my hard thoughts of God, and the dreadful ideas I had of Him in His righteous law, were dissipated; my sins, which had stood before me during so many months, with their ghastly and formidable appearance, had spread their wings and taken flight. My darkness was dispelled by the rays of the Sun of righteousness, and life and immortality appeared in such a glorious point of view, that I swooned in the soul-renewing and soul-transporting flames of everlasting love. All the horrors of the damned, and my meditations upon their irrevocable doom, vanished; confusion and despair sank into oblivion; the self-existent Jehovah, the God of armies, had put all to flight, and kept both throne and field alone, waving the banner of eternal love. I went into the tool-house in all the agonies of the damned, and returned with the Kingdom of God established in my heart. O happy year! happy day! blessed minute! Yea, rather, blessed be my dear Redeemer, who 'delivereth my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.' JESUS CHRIST WAS COME - it was the year of Jubilee with me" -end quote.

Another testimony of the same magnitude comes from far away India. Sadhu Sundar Singh was born of wealthy parents, September 3, 1889, at Rampur, in the state of Patiala in North India, the youngest son of his father, Sundar was brought up in the midst of luxury. His parents were Sikhs by race, but in religious thought and practice were almost as much Hindus, frequenting the places of worship, reading the sacred books and keeping in close contact with the teachers of both religions. Alluding to this period of his life, with a playing upon words which was characteristic of his speech, Sunday Singh said, "I was not a Sikh, but a seeker-after Truth."

By age sixteen he had read the Granth of the Sikhs, the Muhammadan Quran, and a number of the Hindu Upanishads - a remarkable achievement. But it was all in vain. His mother had taken him to priests and sadhus (holy men) who might point out to him sacred texts which would show him the way; and for some time, under the direction of a Hindu sadhu, he practiced a form of Yoga - one of the methods, much esteemed among Hindus, of seeking identification with the Supreme Spirit, and the resultant peace and
illumination, by concentration leading up to a state of trance - but with no avail. There was no peace! With the Bible he first became acquainted at the Presbyterian Mission School in his village, but it repelled him as being utterly subversive of the religion of his fathers and offensive to the proud traditions of his Sikh blood. He little thought that from this unlikely source he would ultimately gain the Peace he so earnestly sought.

The story of his conversion is best given in his own words, quoted from one of his addresses. "Preachers and Christians in general had often come to me and I used to resist them and persecute them. When I was out in any town I got people to throw stones at Christian preachers. I would tear up the Bible and burn it when I had a chance. In the presence of my father I cut up the Bible and other Christian books and put kerosene oil upon them and burnt them. I thought this was a false religion and tried all I could to destroy it. I was faithful to my own religion, but I could not get any satisfaction or peace, though I performed all the ceremonies and rites of that religion. So I thought of leaving it all and committing suicide. Three days after I had burnt the Bible, I woke up about three o'clock in the morning, had my usual bath, and prayed, 'O God, if there is a God, wilt thou show me the right way or I will kill myself.' My intention was that, if I got no satisfaction, I would place my head upon the railway line when the five o'clock train passed by and kill myself. If I got no satisfaction in this life, I thought I would get it in the next. I was praying and praying but got no answer; and I prayed for half an hour longer hoping to get peace.

"At 4:30 A.M. I saw something of which I had no idea at all previously. In the room where I was praying I saw a great light. I thought the place was on fire. I looked around but could find nothing. Then the thought came to me that this might be an answer that God had sent me. Then as I prayed and looked into the light, I saw the form of the Lord Jesus Christ. It had such an appearance of glory and love. If it had been some Hindu incarnation I would have prostrated myself before it. But it was the Lord Jesus Christ whom I had been insulting a few days before. I felt that a vision like this could not come out of my own imagination. I heard a voice saying in Hindustani, 'How long will you persecute Me? I have come to save you; you were praying to know the right way. Why do you not take it?' The thought then came to me, 'Jesus Christ is not dead but living and it must be He Himself.' So I fell at His feet and got this wonderful Peace which I could not get anywhere else.

"When I was converted by the vision of Christ a power like electricity entered my soul and took possession of it. With it came the joy I was wishing to get. This was heaven itself! When I got up, the vision had all disappeared; but although the vision disappeared the Peace and Joy have remained with me ever since. I went off and told my father that I had become a Christian. He told me, 'Go and lie down and sleep; why, only the day before yesterday you burnt the Bible; and you say you are a Christian now.' I said 'Well, I have discovered now that Jesus Christ is alive and have determined to be His follower. Today I am His disciple and I am going to serve Him' " -end quote. Sundar Singh devoted His life to the Lord and became an Indian "sadhu" or wandering "holy man," traveling across India proclaiming the love of God in Christ Jesus. He was a true mystic --receiving innumerable visions of the spirit world, and abundance of revelations of that bright realm which lies beyond the vale of flesh. It is interesting to note in passing that one of the spiritual truths revealed to the Sadhu by the Spirit of revelation from Jesus Christ was the wonderful truth of the ULTIMATE SALVATION OF ALL MEN. Blessed be God!

I am certain that many of my readers who are of mature years remember reading or hearing the "Betty Baxter Story." I personally heard Betty Baxter give her extraordinary
testimony more than thirty-five years ago, and have never forgotten the profound impact it made on my young life. She began by saying, "As far back as I can remember, I can never recollect a day without pain and agony in my body. From the time I was just a baby, and all my life-long I suffered pain in my body. From the time I was an infant when the doctors said I was born abnormal, there was something wrong with my spine and with my heart. My daddy began to take me from one doctor to another. He took me from specialist to specialist, to clinics and hospitals. Every doctor, after X-rays, gave the same answer - there was nothing that could be done for me. At the age of eleven I was taken to the large University Hospital in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I was kept there almost three weeks as they X-rayed and did tests, trying to find out whether there was anything they could do, at least for the pain and suffering in my body. When the three weeks were up they told my parents that there was nothing that medical science could do for me, and sent me home to die.

"I grew worse as I was shut away from the world in my bedroom at age eleven; my spine curved, my chest sunk in, until at the age of fifteen when they stood me up I stood as tall as my four year old brother. There were knots the size of hen's eggs beginning at the base of my neck, one after the other down to the base of my spine. My arms were paralyzed from my shoulders to my wrists, I could only move my fingers. My head was twisted and turned on my body. And in this condition, with all hope given up for me, my parents were advised not to spend any more money on doctors as there was nothing medical science could do. My mother was a devout Christian who deeply loved Jesus. She was desperate, she didn't want me to die. She began to read and study God's Word. She found the answer to what she was searching for in the Word of God. One day, very excited, she came to my room and exclaimed, 'I've found the answer! It says here that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. It says here that ALL things are possible, if you can only believe.' She said, 'Betty, this lets me know that if I have faith and really believe, you're not going to die, but God is going to heal you, bring you out of that bed, make you whole, and you will walk by His power.' "

There is neither time nor space to relate the numerous details that ensued. There were many and varied crisis' in Betty Baxter's condition, climaxing in an out-of-body experience as she came to the river of death, only to be turned back by the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, on a hot August afternoon, sitting in the living room in a big overstuffed chair piled high with pillows, as she prayed, the Lord Jesus spoke in an audible voice beside the chair, and said, "I am going to heal you completely on Sunday afternoon, August 24, at three o'clock." He gave her the day and the hour. Following a number of consequent events we now take up the thread of her story again.

"August 24 finally came. Daddy and my brothers and sisters went to Sunday School and Church. That afternoon mom had invited a few friends together to pray for me. At a quarter till three she came into my bedroom, leaned over my bed and said, 'It's fifteen minutes till three. Do you want mother to carry you and put you in the big chair in the living room?' I told her, 'Yes,' and thought, 'fifteen minutes! And I've waited over fifteen years for Jesus to come and heal me.' They carried me into the living room and put me into the chair with the pillows with my head resting on my knees and my arms hanging at my side. When I'm happy I always cry. So the tears were rolling down my cheeks because it was time now for me to be healed. My baby brother knelt in front of me and shook his little head and said, 'Don't cry any more Sis, it will only be a minute and you'll be bigger than I am.' They knelt around my chair and mom said, 'It's ten minutes now, what do you want us to do?' I replied, 'Start praying, I want to be praying when he
comes.' The last thing I remember hearing was my mother saying, 'The hour is come; you won't fail me, will you Lord? You're going to come and heal her because the hour is come.'

"Then I didn't hear any more. There was no wind that day but suddenly a great rushing wind swept through our living room. The drapes swirled in the wind; a door slammed somewhere, and then the wind subsided and all was silence. In this calmness and stillness I knew now that Jesus would really come. My eyes were glued to the opposite side of the room; I watched and waited, it seemed I dare not breathe. As I looked I saw taking form before me a white, fleecy cloud. As I watched, stepping out of that cloud was the Lord Jesus Christ! He stepped forth out of that cloud dressed in flowing garments of glistening white. His face shone with a radiance so bright that I closed my eyes and opened them again while my eyes grew accustomed to His brightness. He stood there a tall man with outstretched arms. I can't describe Him to you. If I were an artist I could not draw Him as He really was. He came walking toward my chair and the closer He got the better I felt. But I felt so unworthy, too unworthy for Jesus to touch me - but if I can touch His garment I know I'll be healed. My fingers reached out trying to touch His clothes, and in the stillness I heard my mother cry out, 'Jesus! You'll have to come closer, she can't reach that far.' But He didn't come closer, and soon the strength that was in my fingers was gone and they fell at my side. He showed me by this that my last feeble effort had failed. It must be HIM and Him alone to heal my body.

"As He stood there I saw beside Him two rows of trees and they stood tall and straight. As I watched, one in the center began to bend until the tip of it touched the ground. I wondered why the one little tree was all bent over while the others stood straight and tall. Then I saw Jesus walk through that row of trees. When He got to the little bent tree He reached out His hand and placed His hand where it was bent and with a loud crack and pop the tree straightened up like the others. I said, 'That's me, alright! He's coming by today. He'll put His hand on my spine, the bones will crack and POP as the vertebrae go into place, and I'll be straight like other girls.'

"Then He took a final step and stood just beside the chair. He leaned down and looked straight into my face and said, 'Betty, you've been patient, kind and loving. Henceforth I promise you joy, health and happiness.' With the final word, 'happiness,' He stretched forth His hand and my body became tense waiting for the hand of Jesus. I felt a hot sensation rush through my body. Two hot hands were placed on my fallen organs and I felt everything inside of me move into place. I knew that internally I was healed. Two hot hands - as hot as fire - took my heart and squeezed it and for the first time I could take a deep breath without gasping and I knew that my heart trouble was gone. And then I felt His hand pressed on the very center of one of the knots on the center of my spine - there was a tingling sensation as though I had touched a live electric wire, the bones snapped and cracked as the vertebrae went into place. In the presence of those who were there they saw the knots fade and disappear. My hip snapped into its right position, my paralyzed arms were raised high and in ten seconds I stood on my feet straight as I'm standing tonight, healed by the mighty power of the Lord Jesus Christ!" end quote.

A sister in Christ relates how that in recent years in Agra, India, she met a former "holy man" (sadhu) from the Hindu religion who had had a strange and marvelous experience. While he was praying in the temple, he heard an audible voice speak to him in a language he did not understand. He looked all over but could not find anyone. So he went to his "guru" and told him what had happened and asked him if he could explain it to
him. The guru asked him to repeat the words that he had heard and when he did, the guru turned pale for he understood it, as it was in English and he knew the English language. The words that he had heard were, "Jesus is Lord, worship Him." When the guru told this to the sadhu, the sadhu asked who Jesus Christ was. He had never heard of Him. The guru said, "He is the God of the Christians. And He is the greatest of all Gods." "Then, why didn't you tell us about Him?" asked the sadhu. "Because if I had, you would have killed me." "What must I do then?" asked the sadhu. "You must go and search for Him, apparently He is calling you to be His disciple." So that is how the sadhu came to Agra where he found a missionary. He gave his story to him and asked him where he could find this Jesus Christ. Through the ministry of this brother, he was led to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is still serving Him today. When this same sister was in India in 1983 she learned that Jesus Christ had appeared to the gypsy people along the Rajasthan and Gujarat border and they were coming out by the score, looking for Him. He has appeared to the Nepalese and to many others.

Just this past year a precious brother on our mailing list wrote and shared his experience. He said, "I have met with considerable criticism over the past for having put forth this understanding. In 1942, I was baptized in the Holy Spirit on the kitchen floor at home on the farm. The Lord Jesus appeared to me at that time, and because of this I have been unshakable in certain knowledge. He has appeared on various occasions since, but not in the same way. If He can appear to me, there is no reason why He would not appear to any saint."

SEEING THE LORD

While we praise God for all of these beautiful experiences of those who have received a manifestation of the Lord, let us never lose sight of the principle that EACH MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST EXISTS ON THE PLANE OF CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PERSON TO WHOM HE APPEARS. He will always appear on the level and in the manner and form that men can receive Him and that meets their need. You will note in connection with all the appearances of the Lord related in this article that in every case the Lord manifested Himself in a physical form to either an unconverted person or to a saint who had as yet received no call or vision of the deep things of God. Let not those who grow up into the stature of the Son of God imagine for one moment that Christ will appear to them in the same mode or form as He appeared to sinners and to babes in Christ!

After His resurrection the blessed Christ of God appeared to His followers in various forms. Mary saw Him as a "gardener." Two of His disciples saw Him and conversed with a "stranger." The eleven in the upper room saw the Master as He formerly appeared, but not as crucified, with scars. Later a group of them saw Him on the lakeshore, and thought it was a "fisherman." But Thomas doubted. He said that he would not believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead unless he could see the nail prints in His hands and feet and the spear wound in His side.

There are few recorded instances of Christ's appearings more enlightening than the account of Christ's personal revealing of Himself to Thomas. Eight days later, while they were gathered in a room with the doors closed, Jesus suddenly materialized in their midst. They were awe-stricken. Jesus looked straight at Thomas and said, "Thomas, come here!" Thomas took several hesitant steps forward, eyes searching the face, studying intently to see if there were anything familiar about this person whose voice
seemed identical, yet filled with an even greater note of authority. "Come on," He said, "Go ahead, Thomas, I want you to put your finger right here into My hand." Thomas reached out his finger and actually put it inside the large tear in Jesus' hand where the bones had been separated and the flesh grotesquely torn. Thomas' finger was tingling from its contact with the cold flesh and bare bones of Jesus' hand. The figure took off His outer garment, and pulled up His shirt underneath to reveal a gaping, livid wound in His side. Jesus said, "Go ahead, put your hand into My side!" Trembling with fear, Thomas reached out and actually put his hand completely into the gaping aperture that had been left by the Roman spear. Thomas' stomach was churning, his mind reeling, his eyes glazed with shock. It was He! It really was! This was in fact the very same Jesus he had himself seen proved dead, standing here before him alive! His legs went limp and he fell at His feet, at those mangled feet, and he looked up into that compassionate face and there was wrung from his soul, from the very depths of his being, a confession, and He cried, "MY LORD AND MY GOD!" In that instant, as though some mighty wind had swept away the cobwebs of his mind, Thomas' doubts disappeared and he KNEW that He was alive; and he could SEE, and he could understand!

The undeniable truth is that Jesus appeared with the nail prints and the wounded side ONLY TO DOUBTING THOMAS. Can we not see by this that unless Jesus chose to show the scars they were not visible - that for the moment He descended to the point of CONSCIOUS THINKING where Thomas, who could only believe by seeing with the human eye, could see? NO BLESSING WENT WITH THOMAS FINDING OUT ABOUT THE RESURRECTION. Jesus said kindly, "Because you have seen Me you have believed! I'll tell you, B-L-E-S-S-E-D are they that have NOT seen and yet have believed!" Blessed are they that have not seen Me in this form with the scars - for He appeared to many - and yet have believed! Blessed are they who receive Me in whatever form I manifest Myself. Blessed are they who do not cling to any manifestation that is past. Blessed is the one who does not have to handle with his hand the unseen things of the Spirit. That one WILL be able to see and handle and experience the hidden things of God, the all-glorious Christ revealed WITHIN.

Believers as a whole are not moving to that. They hate to hear it and the majority of Christians refuse to admit it, but they are one and all "DOUBTING THOMASES." They will not believe that "this same Jesus" has returned unless and until they SEE HIM AS THOMAS SAW HIM. "Except I shall see - I will not believe," said doubting Thomas, and he has and will have his innumerable successors as long as time remains. The cry of almost all Christian people today is, "We want to see Jesus." Men think it is so spiritual to want to see Jesus with earth-bound eyes. We used to sing a song and one line in the chorus said, "And I shall know Him by the nail prints in His hands." We have sung that, in order to KNOW Jesus, we would have to see the nail prints. Oh fools, and slow of heart to believe! We have preached about poor old doubting Thomas, but the great majority of God's people really are "doubting Thomases." They have to see the print of the nails and the wound in the side of Jesus. They are telling the Lord that He MUST manifest something which they can see and understand by the flesh. Something they can handle. And I do not doubt for one moment that there is in the church of God today a vast THOMAS COMPANY unto whom the Lord will manifest Himself in just such a manner. But I do not hesitate to tell you that there is NO BLESSING attached to any appearing of our Lord which is necessary to accommodate unbelief! There is great blessing and heavenly wealth stored up for those who will lay aside the grave clothes of yesterday's manifestation to receive Him as LIFE ON A HIGHER PLANE.
Several months ago a dear sister from Arizona shared by letter the following incident which is both interesting and instructive. "Many years ago when I was involved in some prayer groups where people were talking about the Lord having appeared to them, I had an interesting thing happen to me. I spent one late evening in my living room, leaning on a hassock, where a Bible was also resting. I was praying up a storm, trying to get the Lord to materialize and appear before me. Yes! I know it is humorous now - but what I learned was a gem. While I was working so hard at praying, my elbow hit the Bible, knocking it to the floor. The sound startled me in the darkness and I jumped about three feet off the floor in panic. Then I was quiet and the Lord spoke to me in that still, small voice. First, He asked, "What would you have done if I had appeared?" I realized, then, that I would have been terrified! Then most simply He said, "You are looking for me wrongly; you will not find Me or see Me this way or in this form." I knew then that He had come to me - that was almost twenty years ago" -end quote.

Yes, HE CAME, but not in the form the sister expected. Seeing with the natural eye and hearing with the natural ear are not all there is of seeing and hearing. "No man hath seen God at any time" thus, yet all God's children have seen Him, and known Him, and held communion with Him. We HEAR God's call, our "high calling," we HEAR the voice of our Shepherd, and are constantly LOOKING unto Jesus, and while we see not yet all things put under Him, we do SEE JESUS crowned with glory and honor and with unveiled face we BEHOLD the glory of the Lord and are changed into the same image, for God hath shined in our hearts giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the FACE of Jesus Christ.

"And they shall SEE the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mat. 24:30). "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall SEE Him" (Rev. 1:7). Every one who is a scholar knows that the words "see" and "know" are identical in their spiritual meaning. When I tell a brother something He did not see before, and I am trying to get him to see it, all at once there passes over his face the illumination which indicates intelligence. He says, "Brother Preston, I see it!" What does he mean? He does not mean that he sees anything with the eye of flesh. He means that he "knows" it. I talk to a blind man who has no eyes to see at all. I explain something to him and presently he says, "Brother, I see it." Does he see anything? No! But he KNOWS it. How many times in the day do you say, "I see it." Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall SEE GOD." Suppose I give you the meaning of this passage: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall KNOW God." The apostle Paul said, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall SEE the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). The real message of this verse is just this: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall KNOW the Lord." It is the pure in heart who see God, who know God.

As one has written, "In the midst of turmoil Job cried, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and He shall stand in the latter days upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I SEE GOD: Whom I shall SEE FOR MYSELF, and MINE EYES SHALL BEHOLD, and not another.' He was positively sure in his own mind that in some distant future day he would SEE GOD, but what he did not know was that AT THAT VERY MOMENT God was leading him into the coveted experience. Within a few days he would shout with ecstatic joy, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: BUT NOW MINE EYE S-E-E-T-H THEE!" (Job 42:5). It is easy to put off spiritual experience for the millenniums to come, but God would have us enter them now. 'That I may KNOW HIM' was the ceaseless longing of Paul's heart. Too many sermons are preached ABOUT GOD, but too few people come to KNOW HIM personally. You can
never know people by hearing about them even from their closest friends. You must see them, know them, and understand them personally. However vivid a description may be given of an individual, you could still pass him on the street without knowing who he was or even live in the same house with him without knowing he was the person in question. So also it is with God. You will know many things about Him by hearing, but you will only KNOW HIM when your eye SEES HIM. 'No man can see God and live,' but that does not mean that he will live the same anymore, but will live as God lives in the Spirit" - The Page.

To see the Christ with the understanding, to perceive Him with our spirit, to know Him experientially dwelling in our "deep," our innermost life, this is the vital necessity for our day. The place where you really find Christ is WITHIN. "Christ liveth in me." As His life matures within, as HE grows up within you, you can continually LOOK FOR HIS APPEARING, HIS MANIFESTATION. From the deep of your spirit He will move in His operation outward into soul and body, reconciling, changing, transforming all. That is the greatest place you will ever SEE HIM.

"Even so, come (manifest) Lord Jesus!"
Chapter 15

The Phanerosis Of Jesus Christ

The cry of the deepest in man has always been to see God. It was the cry of Moses and the cry of Job, the cry of psalmist and of prophet; and to the cry there is heard the distant sound of approaching answer. In the fullness of time the Son stepped forth with the startling proclamation that He Himself was the appearing of God before men. "If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth Us. Jesus saith unto him, 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; and how sayest thou then, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (Jn. 14:7-10).

This brings us to the fourth Greek word associated with the so-called "coming" of the Lord. The noun is PHANEROSIS and the verb PHANEROO. This word means "to appear" or "manifest." The word EPIPHANEIA which we have already considered also means "manifestation" - but with a difference! PHANEROO is often used when someone is manifesting someone else, as when the Son manifested the Father, or when we manifest the indwelling Christ in our lives. EPIPHANEIA means to manifest oneself, not someone else; and it not only means to manifest oneself but to manifest oneself fully. We can have a partial manifestation, one that is not complete; but when the Lord said He would manifest Himself to those who keep His commandments it was a form of this word that He used. This is not a partial manifestation, but complete and perfect.

But when the pen of inspiration employs the word PHANEROO it speaks not so much of God manifesting Himself TO us, but, rather, God manifesting Himself THROUGH us! It is someone manifesting someone else - the Christ and His body of the enChristed becoming the manifestation of GOD in the earth. Let us consider a few examples where the word PHANEROO is used. "I have MANIFESTED (phaneroo) Thy name unto the men which Thou hast given Me" (Jn. 17:6). "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be MADE MANIFEST (phaneroo) in our body" (II Cor. 4: 10). "When Christ, who is our life, SHALL APPEAR (phaneroo), then shall ye also APPEAR with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was MANIFEST (phaneroo) in the flesh..." (I Tim. 3:16). "For the life was manifested... that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was MANIFESTED (phaneroo) unto us" (I Jn. 1:2). "In this was MANIFESTED (phaneroo) the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (I Jn. 4:9).

"For in Him (Christ Jesus) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him" (Col. 2:9-10). Jesus Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. What often confuses people is that they forget that what is made visible on this earthly plane is one realm, and the glory of the SPIRIT realm is another. The Fatherhood realm...
is of spirit, to beget after Himself, for "He is the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9). Yet to become manifested in a visible realm of flesh and blood, He took upon Himself the creaturely form of His own creation, and became also the SON OF MAN. "GOD was manifest in the flesh..." (I Tim.3:16). And now, members of His body, of His flesh and of His bone, our mission to MANIFEST HIM is one of the most glorious parts of our conformity to our Lord. He says it plainly in the most solemn moments of His life: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (Jn. 20:21). After the Lord had fulfilled His mission on earth He ascended into heaven, and became to the world the Unseen One. And now He has given over His heavenly mission to HIS SONSHIP COMPANY, having entered into them in mighty spirit power to perform it. They must so represent Him, the Invisible One, that from seeing them men can judge what He is. Every son must so be the image of the Father - must so exhibit in his person and conduct the same love, grace, and power, as animated the Christ, that from them the world may know what God is like, and be touched by Him. Oh, my soul! take time to realize these heavenly thoughts: The purpose of sonship is to reveal glory and to minister the life of the great Father in the heavens.

SEEING GOD

The wonderful purpose of Christ's PHANEROSIS, His appearing and manifestation, is that men may SEE GOD. One of the sweetest of all the beatitudes is: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." This may, in some respects, be called the greatest of all the beatitudes; for surely of all things, the most sublime is seeing God. The word "see" in the original tongue is interchangeable with the word "know," and must be so understood. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall KNOW God." "Oh, I see!" is an expression frequently used to denote comprehension and knowledge. The scriptures often employ the term "see" in exactly this manner. It is essential to understand this if we are to find harmony in the many prophetic statements which tell of Christ's coming.

Rev. 1:7 is a prophecy descriptive of the manner of Christ's return, and those who will be affected by it. We quote: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." This text has been misused in an attempt to prove the erroneous theory that Jesus will return as a flesh and bone man and be suspended in the sky until every individual throughout the whole earth has had an opportunity to see Him. But this crude interpretation of the prophecy is quite out of harmony with the Bible's use of language. Example, how the Bible uses the function of the eye to symbolize discernment. After Job's long experience of calamity and trial, and the revelation of God's heart to him, he cried out in communion with God, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: BUT NOW MINE EYE S-E-E-T-H THEE!" (Job 42:5). All will concede, we believe, Job did not see God literally, but he saw Him, nonetheless. Jesus said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see" (Mat. 13:16).

To "see" means to KNOW. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall KNOW God." A pure heart is one to which all that is not of God is strange and jarring. A heart that has no desires but for the glory of God, whose affections all center in Him, whose delight is in His perfect will, such an one will truly see and know the Lord. It is better to know God than even to see Him by the eyes of sense. There were many who saw Jesus who did not know Him. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him and hated Him, some of them. You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless you had purity of
heart you could not know Him to be the Christ. It is only purity of heart which gives purity of sight.

When we turn our telescopes upon the stars and see them in their beauty and glory; when we see that one star differs from another star in glory, and when we see masses of stars in beautifully variegated colors, we see God in the heavens. We see God in the beautiful thoughts which He has given in His Word. We see God in the lives of men and women who have God in them. We see God Himself if our eyes are opened to see things which are heavenly. We see in the apocalyptic vision how John the apostle saw Jesus; how he describes the wonderful revelation of Christ; how he fell at His feet as dead when he saw Him. His spiritual eyes saw Him. After all, purity of heart is the attainment of spiritual eyes. I believe it is possible to see a vision we never have seen because of the grossness of our sight.

The following words by George Hawtin bear eloquent testimony to the truth I now proclaim. "I have often thought of the wonderful words 'no man can SEE GOD AND LIVE.' Oh how often we have quoted that wonderful passage as proof that we may not hope to see His face. Will you allow me reverently to say something else? Though it is true that no man can see God and live, it is equally true that no man can see God and die. Men do not die in God's presence, neither do they live AS THEY USED TO LIVE, but they are TRANSFORMED. Hallelujah! They are changed; they are transfigured; they come into THAT SAME IMAGE of Him who created them. In whatever measure God reveals Himself to man, to that same measure you are changed and nothing can avoid that conclusion. There is no possibility of any man's ever being the same again or living as he used to live once he has personally met the Lord and his eyes have beheld Him, the King in His beauty. 'As for me,' said David, 'I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness.' My own heart answers Amen. That is when I, too, shall be fully satisfied" -end quote.

There are a few scriptures which seem to indicate that it is not possible for us to see the Lord. The Lord said as much to Moses: "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (Ex. 33:20). John goes further: "No one has ever seen God" (Jn. 1:18; I Jn. 4:12). And Paul takes it to the ultimate: "No man has ever seen or can see" God (I Tim. 6:16). It is as if invisibility is an indubitable attribute of God (I Tim. 1:17).

But if we will search the scriptures we will see that men DID see God! There are passages in the Bible where seeing God is spoken of as a deadly danger. Gideon feared for his life when he saw the angel of the Lord, but the Lord consoled him and told him he would not die (Judg. 6:22). Manoah and his wife both feared themselves doomed: "We shall surely die, for we have seen God" (Judg. 13:22). The possibility of seeing God is the background of the fear of the consequences. Thus Moses "hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God" (Ex. 3:6). Isaiah, seeing the Lord sitting on His throne, lamented "Woe is me! For I am lost ... for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:5). However, there are also passages in the Old Testament that do not include this fear for the consequences of seeing God. In particular Moses, in his unique position among Israel, spoke "mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark sayings" and he saw "the form of the Lord" (Num. 12:8). Moses, Aaron, Abihu, and seventy elders "saw the God of Israel" and He "did not lay His hand on them" (Ex. 24:9-11).

Jacob declared that he had seen God at the place he named Peniel, which means "the face of God." The record states: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: FOR I
HAVE SEEN GOD FACE TO FACE, and my life is preserved" (Gen. 32:30). These scriptures would appear to be contradictions and illustrate our need for the light of truth and understanding in this matter. On the one hand God told Moses that no man could see Him and live, while the record shows clearly that JACOB SAW GOD FACE TO FACE, and his life was preserved. And, indeed, if no man can see God and live, then God's word to Moses has reference to THE SOULISH LIFE, which is actually death! Jacob SAW GOD AND HIS LIFE WAS PRESERVED, indicating that this life which was preserved was the life of the spirit, the true life of God, the divine quality of life which is beyond the veil of tears and sorrow and pain.

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 God 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 the 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 dimension 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 seen and known 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 a "knowing" of something of the life and glory and reality 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.

As long as our eyes remain closed to the CELESTIAL REALM, we will never see God as He is. Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. There is a most enlightening passage of scripture in Jn. 1:18. "No man hath seen God at any time." Were we to discontinue reading at this point, we would abandon all hope of ever seeing God. However, if we will continue reading we will discover this amazing truth: "...the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, HE HATH DECLARED HIM." Let us now give earnest attention to the rendering given by the Amplified Bible that our souls may bask in that blessed hope that is laid out here in the vivid words of this translation.
"No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son, the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him - He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him, and He has made Him known."

Therefore, our conclusion must be that God can be seen by those to whom it is given, for Christ hath declared Him. The Greek word used for "man" in this passage (no MAN hath seen God) is OUDEN and has reference to ONE MAN. This word comes from another Greek word which has to do specifically with ONE MAN: the man alone and without Christ. Therefore, the man alone and outside of Christ does not and cannot see God. On the other hand, the man IN CHRIST can see God and will be changed. He who sees God will not continue to live the same, but will experience a wonderful and glorious transformation as, like Jacob of old, HIS LIFE IS PRESERVED. The whole matter becomes easier to understand when we read further in John's Gospel: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, SAVE HE WHICH IS OF GOD, HE HATH SEEN THE FATHER" (Jn. 6:46). And the promise was previously given in this chapter: "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which SEETH THE SON, and believeth on Him, MAY HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6:40). As we see the Son, we also see the Father, for the Son hath declared Him.

To SEE GOD is a holy privilege, reserved for those who are IN CHRIST. It is given to those elect saints called to the high calling of God IN CHRIST JESUS, or for those who are "OF GOD" according to Jn. 6:46. Jesus encouraged His followers to behold the Father, when He said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9). Jesus then promised the Comforter, saying, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but YE SEE ME: Because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (Jn. 14:19-20). That one scripture alone should be sufficient to establish once and for all that SEEING CHRIST speaks of something far more than beholding a human form riding upon a cloud. "The world seeth Me no more; but YE SEE ME." Ah, only those who have eyes to see do see! But, praise God, the day shall surely come when "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM!"

Consider now these words of wise counsel penned by another writer: "In order to see God and have that single eye toward Him, we will have to lay aside all the doctrines of men and the theories about Him which only clutter our vision and obscure the reality of His glory. The world is full of doctrines made up of half-truths, speculations and ideas about God and His truth which only tend to be an opiate dulling our spiritual senses and filling our vision with the cloudy mists of unbelief. But the elect shall BEHOLD THE LORD, seeing Him who is invisible to the natural man, and they shall inherit the fullness of the promises contained in the wonderful and glorious SPIRIT OF ADOPTION. The Psalmist expressed the wishes of all the sons of God, when he said, "Arise, O Lord, deliver my soul from the wicked... from men of the world, WHICH HAVE THEIR PORTION IN THIS LIFE ... AS FOR ME, I WILL BEHOLD THY FACE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: I SHALL BE SATISFIED, WHEN I AWAKE, WITH THY LIKENESS" (Ps. 17:13-15). This indeed is our wish and desire, for within the heart of every true son of God there beats the lively hope of THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION, and the intense desire to be delivered of the spirit of this age, "from men of the world, which have their portion in this life." We seek to behold the face of the Lord in righteousness and will only be satisfied when we awake in His likeness. Things of this world mean nothing, for our only ambition now is to SEE HIM AS HE IS" -The Living Word.
It is important that we keep in mind the enlightening truth that the Greek word PHANEROO, used of Christ's appearing, is most often used when someone is manifesting someone else, as when the Son manifested the Father, or when we manifest the indwelling Christ in our lives. The sons of God are apprehended to BECOME GOD'S CHRIST, that they, too, may REVEAL THE FATHER. This brings us to a passage of scripture, the truth of which is seldom, if ever, heard among the people of God. The preachers and teachers invariably misapply it, but it is fundamental to our understanding of the manifestation of the sons of God and the appearing of Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth Himself, even as He is pure" (I Jn. 3:1-3).

I have quoted from the King James version which reads, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Some other translations say the same thing and some say we are the children of God. That is the proper rendering as the Greek word is TEKNON which means little children or a child, instead of the Greek HUIOS which means a full grown son and is correctly translated "son" in Rom. 8:14, 19 and other places. Beloved, now - right now - we are the little children of God. And this is no small thing! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God, therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him (the Father) not." Children of our heavenly Father! The offspring of God! This is our present calling and standing. We are already born of God, and the life we have from Him is Christ. This is not a question either of hope or of attainment. The grace of God has already given us life in Christ, and Christ's relationship with the Father.

Every believer is NOW a child of God; but does this give him a place of honor in this world? If any of us were a son of the queen of England, what an important place in that land would such a relationship give us! Indeed wherever we might be in the civilized world we should receive the honors due to her Majesty's son. Thank God we are HIS children! And what dignity, what honor, what place of importance, may we expect in this world as CHILDREN OF GOD? Ah, the more like the Son of God we are, the more we shall share His place of rejection in this evil age!

"Now are we the children of God; but it doth not yet APPEAR (phaneroo - is not yet manifested) what we shall be: but we know that when HE shall APPEAR (phaneroo) we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Here we have the truth brought out with great clearness and force. We know what we are - God's children. But "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The word - appear - is the Greek PHANEROO, meaning MANIFESTATION. What we shall be is not yet manifested. And what shall we be? What do all little children become? Why, ADULTS, of course! The children become sons. Sonship is a higher realm than just being children.

The future the Father has planned for His sons is away beyond our ability to comprehend or even imagine. I am overwhelmed with awe when I think of what is ahead for us. Rom. 8:18 reads, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Phillip's rendering of this is beautiful: "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." Oh! the glory of it. Who can express it! Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9). I have heard preachers attempting to describe the future glories with the most flowery language; but it didn't come anywhere near the truth. The human mind is not capable of conjuring up a picture of what the Father has prepared for His own. We can let our imagination run as wild as the wind and it will not come anywhere near comprehending the grandeur of what the Father has in mind.

Paul prayed for this understanding for us when he wrote, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling..." (Eph. 1:17-18). Can we know what this glorious hope is? Is there any way we can begin to comprehend it? Yes, but I doubt that we can begin to grasp the glory of it in its fullness; but the scripture says, "God reveals it to us by His Spirit." As we are able to receive some small measure of the wonder of our calling the Spirit will reveal it to us in a measure. As the Spirit begins to open the eyes of our understanding how different it is from what preachers have been telling the people for centuries, of a glory land where all is eternal day with nothing to do but sit on a cloud, play a harp, and own a little cabin somewhere in a corner of heaven.

The manifestation of the sons of God has not yet taken place. When they are manifested they will receive in the whole universe of God the honor due to those who are in this wondrous relationship. "We KNOW that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him." This is fully revealed to faith; we know it with divine certainty. But WHAT WE SHALL BE has not yet been manifested; if it had been, who could withhold the place of dignity due to a son of God? Thank God its manifestation hastens apace, for "when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." When He is manifested, we are like Him. No wonder that HE should be glorified and admired IN us when we are seen in His likeness. Precious counsel of God, that "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!" Thrice blessed accomplishment when the saints are so manifested in "the image of His Son" that it is evident they are the "many brethren" of that "firstborn." Sovereign pre-eminence is His! but they are owned as "brethren;" they are MANIFESTED "sons of God" - the "many sons brought to glory."

To be like Him, made in His image and likeness is the purpose of God for His sons. It is not only His purpose for His sons but also for the whole human race. This is what He had in mind when in the beginning He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness." He wasn't speaking here of the first man Adam with his wife, Eve; He was referring to the entire human race which will ultimately, in the ages to come, be brought into this same likeness. There is a firstfruits company the Lord is working on now, bringing them into this place where they will be LIKE HIM. This is the Father's purpose for this day, to bring this company to perfection and into His likeness. These are His elect, His chosen ones, His foreknown whom He did predestinate to be conformed into the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

You will never understand what it means to be a son of God until first you clearly see who it is that "appears" or is manifested in our text. The preachers have been wont to quote the words, "But we know that, when HE shall appear, we shall be like HIM; for we shall see HIM as HE is," and then apply the "He" and "Him" to our Lord Jesus Christ. This
passage has been used untold thousands of time to confirm some sermon on the "second coming" of our Lord in clouds of glory to "rapture" the church. But nothing could be farther from the truth. Notice that this passage and those which form its celestial setting, make NO REFERENCE TO JESUS CHRIST. The plain, unequivocal truth is that Jesus Christ is not mentioned even once in these verses! It has nothing whatever to do with any "second coming" of the Lord Jesus. John is not here concerned with the historical Jesus. John clearly declares that by the Father's abounding love WE are now "the children of GOD" children of the FATHER - not Jesus. Then he goes on to say, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when HE (the Father - not Jesus) shall appear, we shall be like HIM (again, the Father); for we shall see HIM (the Father) AS HE IS." John is speaking to SONS and is declaring that when THE FATHER shall appear to His sons "we shall be like Him" and shall then see the Father "as He is." The entire passage addresses the relationship of the Father to His sons and the sons to their Father, and makes no reference whatever to the "coming" of Jesus Christ.

There is certainly no lack of fantastic and distorted notions among Christians which they imagine to be truth. In the same way the teachers and preachers have taken these verses that teach of the Father and have interposed Jesus Christ, so they also have taught from these same verses that by beholding Jesus as He is we will be changed into His likeness. It is a wonderful and blessed truth that " beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18). But it is an untruth and fabrication to teach that precious fact from I Jn. 3:1-3! It says nothing about seeing Jesus as He is. It is the Father. No one but the Father and His sons enters this passage. "Behold, what manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us ... and we know that when HE (the Father) shall appear, WE (the sons) shall be like HIM (the Father); for WE (the sons) shall see HIM (the Father) as He is."

With all emphasis I must declare that it is not "seeing" the Father as He is that changes us into His likeness, rather, it is our becoming like Him which enables us to see Him as He is. "We know that we shall be like Him; FOR we shall see Him as He is." The fact that we see Him as He is is the evidence, the proof, the demonstration that we are finally LIKE HIM. How could we possibly "see Him as He is" in any state of being less than exactly like Him? Natural minds discern the natural. Spiritual minds discern the things of the Spirit. Natural minds cannot discern the things of the Spirit because they each belong to two distinctly different realms. "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).

For natural minds to comprehend the spiritual is equally as impossible as for worms of the earth to comprehend things human. Humans are of a higher order than are worms. Worms may see men, and may observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. The worm has no comprehension of what it sees. It discerns only things pertaining to its own realm. It has positively no understanding of the ways of man, or of the meaning of his movements, or words, or habits. Even men on different cultural, religious, and educational levels do not comprehend that which pertains to another. How much does a janitor or garbage man comprehend of the speech and knowledge and world of the nuclear physicist! How much does a single girl comprehend of motherhood! Likewise, heavenly beings are of a much higher order than are humans. There is no common ground of knowledge. Therefore humans are totally incapable of comprehending that which pertains to that higher order. And so, until humans receive of God's Spirit - the
Spirit of God is that which KNOWS (I Cor. 2:11) - until men receive of God's Spirit, it is impossible for them to have any understanding, either of God, or of His Word or ways. And then after men are born of God, the depth of their knowledge is wholly in proportion to their growth in divine life. Children do not "know" their parents "as they are" nor do they comprehend the import of their words and actions.

Let me illustrate. When I met the girl who was later to become my wife she had four brothers, all living at home. When I visited Lorain at her house, one of my earliest recollections is of the almost daily feuds that erupted between the eldest son and his mother. He was a teenager at the time, self-willed, head-strong and rebellious. His head was literally filled with grandiose ideas and schemes and he had more wisdom and knowledge and was smarter by far than either his father or mother. The situation became so intense that finally Kenneth left home (Florida) and traveled to New York with a friend. There he got a job, and, as the years rolled on he met a girl, married, settled down and began to raise a family. Afterwards he and his little family moved down to Florida and lo, and behold! built a house just one block from his parents. I shall never forget the day I walked into my mother-in-law's kitchen and she and Kenneth were sitting at the dining room table, deep in discussion, reminiscing about the turbulent times they had passed through when he was a teenage boy at home. I overheard Kenneth saying, "Mama, I don't know why you didn't beat the pants off of me!" I thought, "Old boy, your memory must be failing you - she almost did!" But as I stood there that day, in one blessed instant of time the Holy Spirit flashed a revelation to my spirit. I saw that for the first time in his life Kenneth actually saw his mother AS SHE IS. No longer was she the ignorant, stupid, insensible, misunderstanding, mean and repressive woman he had known as a boy. It was truly remarkable what a vast storehouse of wisdom and knowledge and understanding she had gained within the brief space of a few years! But she hadn't changed - he had!

Now he could see her as she really was BECAUSE HE HAD BECOME LIKE HER. Growth, experience, maturity, responsibility - these were the factors that caused him to now view his mother from the mature perspective of a man, an adult. Ah - at that moment the revelation broke within my bosom, sweeping like a giant tidal wave through my understanding: WE CAN ONLY SEE GOD AS HE IS WHEN WE BECOME LIKE HIM! It is not seeing Him as He is that transforms us into His likeness; it is transformation into His likeness that enables us to see Him as He is - THE FATHER OF LOVE. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed..." The intent of I Jn. 3:2 is to show that at the time of HIS APPEARING or HIS MANIFESTATION His sons shall already be in the state of BEING LIKE HIM. It is a work that must be accomplished previous to His manifestation, a prerequisite for His manifestation, indeed, He CANNOT APPEAR until we are like Him and see Him as He is!

There must come within our being the harmony of the outer and the inner, when He appears we must appear like Him. He cannot appear to the outer world in any more capacity than we give Him to appear. When we appear LIKE HIM then that which He is appears through us. He cannot manifest through anything less than the image of Himself. The greater cannot flow through the lesser without restriction and limitation. To be like Him, to see Him as He is, guarantees the manifestation of Himself through us!

Hawthorne has given profound truth in pictorial form in his allegory, "THE GREAT STONE FACE." The young man, Ernest, had heard, when a child, from his mother's lips, the local prophecy, that some day there would come to the valley an exact resemblance
of the Great Stone Face which they could see in the neighboring mountain, and being the
greatest and noblest personage of the time, should be a great blessing to those among
whom he lived; and he had taken the prophecy more seriously than the other inhabitants
of the valley. As he had greater faith, he had the power of seeing more clearly than his
neighbors the grandeur of the strange stony outline, and the hope of its fulfillment entered
more deeply into his life. When one and another came and seemed to be the fulfillment of
the prophecy, he saw they did not answer to the word, but the Great Stone Face seemed
to say, "Fear not, Ernest, he will come." As he thus dearly cherished the hope of the great
man's coming, he gave himself to doing good, and so mighty became his character that
the people said, "The man resembles the Great Stone Face." His belief so molded his
actions, that the hope configured his features, so that without his conscious knowledge or
effort Ernest had himself BECOME THE FULFILLMENT of the prophecy. So with the
manifestation of the Father - He shall appear, we shall be like Him when He appears, we
shall see Him as He is, and we shall become the very fulfillment of HIS APPEARING!
Hallelujah!

EVERY MAN THAT HATH THIS HOPE

Are we LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING? If we are there is something we should be
doing now. Listen to this! "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 BE
LIKE HIM; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him
PURIFIETH HIMSELF, even as He is pure." Many are looking for His appearing and
quote this verse seemingly believing that a sudden transformation into His likeness shall
take place at His appearing. Not so! There will be no sudden transformation, my friend,
when we see Him at His appearing. We had better get our eyes on Him now, purifying
ourselves to be even as pure as He is pure. How does one purify himself? We purify
ourselves in obedience to the truth (I Pet. 1:22). When He comes near, when He speaks,
when He deals - obey, abandon, yield yourself!

"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. Having therefore these promises,
dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit,
perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (II Cor. 6:17 - 7:1). We have something to do
about this. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," "Have no fellowship
with the unfruitful works of darkness" for "what fellowship hath light with darkness, what
concord hath Christ with Belial, what part hath he that believeth with an infidel, and what
agreement hath the temple of God with idols, for ye are the temple of the living God,
therefore... let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit,
perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

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 every 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 low 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
also be 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 inspired George MacDonald wrote: "None but the pure in heart see God; only the growing-pure hope to see Him. Even those who saw the Lord, the express image of His person, did not see God. They only saw Jesus - and then but the outside Jesus, or a little more. They were not pure in heart; they saw Him and did not see Him. They saw Him with their eyes, but not with those eyes which alone can see God. Those were not born in them yet. Neither the eyes of the resurrection-body, nor the eyes of unembodied spirits can see God; only the eyes of that eternal something that is of the very essence of God, the thought-eyes, the truth-eyes, the love-eyes, can see Him. It is not because we are created and He uncreated, it is not because of any difference involved in that difference of all differences, that we cannot see Him. If He pleased to take a shape, and that shape were presented to us, and we saw that shape, we should not therefore be seeing God. Even if we knew it was a shape of God - call it even God Himself our eyes rested upon; if we had been told the fact and believed the report; yet, if we did not see the GODNESS ... we should not be seeing God, we should only be seeing the tabernacle in which for the moment He dwelt. In other words, not seeing what in the form made it a form fit for Him to take, we should not be seeing a presence which could only be God. To see God is to stand on the highest point of being. Not until we see God - no partial and passing embodiment of Him, but the abiding presence - do we stand upon our own mountain-top, the height of the existence God has given us, and up to which He is leading us. That there we should stand, is the end of our creation. This truth is at the heart of everything, means all kinds of completions, may be uttered in many ways; but language will never compass it, for form will never contain it. We not only may, but we must so KNOW HIM and it can never be until we are pure in heart. Then shall we know Him with the infinitude of an ever-growing knowledge" -end quote.

Had you been beside Moses during his forty days in the heart of the cloud, when He saw God face to face, you would not have seen Him if you had not been holy. Had you stood beside the Martyr Stephen, when he beheld the glory of God, and the Son of man standing beside Him, your eyes would have discerned nothing if you had not been holy. Yea, if it were possible for you to stand within the pearly gate (were there such a thing!); you would not see the sheen, as it were, of sapphire; you would carry with you your own circumference of darkness; and the radiant vision would vanish as you approached. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The one condition for seeing God in His Word, in nature, in daily life, in circumstances, in the darkness and pain of the present travail, in the affairs of men and nations, in closer-fellowship, in intimate communion, in vital union, yea, in all things, is holiness of heart wrought there by His own indwelling. My brother, my sister, follow after holiness as men pursue pleasure; as the athlete runs for the prize; as the votary of fashion follows in the wake of the crowd.

EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM
It should be abundantly clear that only SONS conformed to HIS IMAGE can ever S-E-E GOD. "And we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." But the hope that now looms bright before us, HIS FIRSTFRUITS, is the same hope that abides for ALL MANKIND. Truly, "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," and just as surely, "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM" (Phil. 2:10-11; Rev. 1:7). What a hope!

Another beautiful illustration is found in Lk. 2:25-30, when Simeon, who had received the promise from God that he should not see death until he had SEEN the Lord's Christ, came by the Spirit into the temple, when Joseph and Mary brought in the child Jesus. "Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: FOR MINE EYES HAVE S-E-E-N THY SALVATION." What kind of eyesight is this? A little babe in the arms of his mother, and yet Simeon's eyes were opened to see - not just the form of the babe, but THY SALVATION! This certainly was not an uncommon sight, mothers were constantly coming into the temple with their children, to do for them after the custom of the law. And no doubt there was a vast multitude of other people in the temple on that day; they, too, saw the babe in the arms of his mother, but they did not see THY SALVATION, for having eyes, they saw not - "and the world knew Him not."

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 GOD" (Luke says: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God"), God is saying the same to the world today, in saying to us who have received the call to sonship: THE SONS OF GOD ARE TO BE THE SALVATION OF GOD UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. "That they might be unto Me for a people, for a name, for a praise and for a glory" (Jer. 13:11). The unveiling of the sons of God is the unveiling of the glory of God. "This people have I formed for Myself. They shall show forth My praise" (Isa. 43:21).

When the glory of God is to be revealed, which is the salvation of God, it will be the unveiling of the sons of God. For "saviours shall come up on Mount Zion and shall judge the mount of Esau" (Ob. 21. God is raising up in these days a church of living stones, over whom Christ the capstone is reigning. God is raising up today sons, who are in union with the first begotten of the Father, "the firstborn among many brethren." God is raising up lights today who will "shine in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation." So all flesh must see the church, all flesh must see the body of Christ, all flesh must see the sons of God, for they are the hope of all creation (Rom. 8:19-20). In Isa. 49:6 God said to His elect: "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that THOU MAYEST B-E M-Y S-A-L-V-A-T-I-O-N UNTO THE END OF THE EARTH."

When the Kingdom of God fills the earth, the earth will be filled with righteousness. WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. The earth will be filled with righteous sons! When the glory of God is revealed, the earth will be flooded with the light of God. WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. The earth will be flooded with a glorious shining people! 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. The earth will be filled with a fully-saved people!
And let me say today, the reason the world will know the church and the body of Christ and the sons of God to be the salvation of God, is because God is pouring 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 their eyes enlightened to SEE in the body of Christ the salvation of God, to SEE in the sons of God the glory of God and the salvation of God. Yes, my beloved, both statements are wondrously true: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," and "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and EVERY EYE SHALL S-E-E H-I-M!" Glory to God!
Chapter 16
The Coming Of The Morning Star

Astronomy is the oldest science that is known to man. Last night on top of Mount Wilson and at Palomar in California men kept a lonely vigil through the night looking at the stars, and they are looking at the stars in a new way. They are looking at them for a new meaning. Actually, they are looking out there trying to find a place for man to go. The Word of God turns man’s attention repeatedly to the heavens. "The heavens declare the glory of God... day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Ps. 19:1-2). The heavens do not speak English, yet they speak to every Englishman and every American. The heavens do not speak French, but they speak to every Frenchman. They do not speak Spanish, still they speak to every Spaniard. They speak in every language to every people. The Old Testament closes with God directing man to look to the heavens. God says, in effect, "Look up to the heavens, and don't miss it, because it's important!" "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). The Old Testament closes pointing a finger to the East, to the sunrise, proclaiming that all who fear the Lord are to look in that direction because there is the promise of sunrise. The Old Testament is expectation, it doesn't conclude anything. But it points to the heavens. It points us to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Sun of Righteousness, arising with healing rays over the horizon of this earth-realm. And, brothers and sisters, that is a fitting figure, because the Lord comes to usher in a NEW DAY.

The Old Testament ends with the glorious promise of the arising of the Sun of Righteousness. But the New Testament does not begin with the Sun of Righteousness. Wise men came from the East and walked down the streets of Jerusalem and said, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His STAR in the East." Not the sun, but the star. God hung in the heavens something supernatural, something new, something divinely glorious - a star. And out of the East, these men who had been studying the stars, began to converge on Jerusalem. And if you think there were just three little wise men there, you need to read the story again. There were probably three hundred! I don't think for one moment that three men from Persia could have caused such a commotion in Jerusalem. Matthew says that at their appearance king Herod was troubled - greatly disturbed - and THE WHOLE OF JERUSALEM WITH HIM. They came from every direction. They came from all the countries of the mysterious Orient. And they said, "We have seen His star, and we've come to worship Him."

Now how did they come to associate the coming of Christ, as a King with a star? If you want to know where they got it you will have to get into the gondola of a heathen prophet and go up with him. Back in the book of Numbers this heathen prophet who had a message from God said this, "I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a STAR out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth... out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17-19). "I shall see Him, but not now (the One of whom I am speaking is not present yet): I shall behold Him, but not nigh (this is
not going to happen within the foreseeable future): there shall come a STAR out Jacob…"
Out there in a pagan, heathen land there was given this prophecy to the Gentiles that a
STAR was coming! They were to watch for a star, if you please. They had that prophecy
in that area of the world. They were looking for a star, and when they saw it they
converged on Jerusalem.

The star in Matthew chapter two is just the beginning of this matter in the New
Testament. If we go to the last book, the book of Revelation, we see two things: the first
is that the Lord Jesus is the star, not the evening star but the Morning Star (Rev. 22:16);
secondly, we see that all the stars mentioned in the book are people. We have so
frequently discussed the symbolism of the book of Revelation that there will be no need
to remind those who read these lines that every sentence in this marvelous book has a
symbolical and figurative significance and stands for some SPIRITUAL REALITY. The
language of the Bible is the language of symbols.

The sweet singer of Israel ran his skilled fingers elegantly across the strings of the harp
while by inspiration of the Holy Spirit he intoned these majestic words: "The heavens
declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day
uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor
language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and
their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun" (Ps.
19:1-4). Surely there is something more referred to here than a mere wonder excited by
the works of the Creator! When we read the whole Psalm and mark its structure, and
note the words employed, we are emphatically told that the heavens contain a revelation
from God; they prophesy, they show knowledge, they tell of God's glory, and set forth His
purposes and counsels.

On a clear, moonless night the stars overhead are a wonderful sight. If the weather is
warm, we can easily become engulfed in the awesome spectacle. The overwhelming
variety, the mind-boggling distances, and the intriguing patterns soon capture our
imagination. Only the cool night wind or the reminder from the back of the neck that we
are not accustomed to looking up for so long will bring us back to earth sooner than we
might like.

A star is a huge ball of glowing gas in the sky. The sun is a star. It is the only star close
enough to the earth to look like a ball. The other billions of stars are so far away that they
are no more than pinpoints of light - if they can be seen at all. There are more than 200
billion billion stars. Suppose that everyone in the world were to count the stars. Each
person could count more than 50 billion of them without the same star being counted
twice. Stars are enormous objects. The largest stars would more than fill the space
between the earth and the sun. One star can measure more than 100 million miles
across! We can hardly imagine the great distances that separate the stars. The star
nearest the sun is more than 25 million million miles away from the sun. But even this
great distance is only one-billionth the distance from the sun to the farthest stars. Gazing
upon the multitude of stars that shine in the nocturnal heavens, one might despair of ever
reading anything intelligible in their design - they seem to be so scattered, so entirely
without order, spread with such confusion over the face of the sky. And so far away, so
silent.

Some time ago our daughter took an aptitude test to discover her career abilities, or what
she is best at. She came across questions that were expressed in this way: "A group of
four things are set before you; three of them have something in common and one of them seems out of place. Find the one that does not belong." How about a little test right now. In the first chapter of the Bible we read "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also" (Gen. 1:16). Again, "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (Gen. 1:14). Of the four things set before us in this verse did not one of them seem strangely out of place? Some one is asking, "What four?" Notice again: "...and let them be for SIGNS, and for SEASONS, and for DAYS, and YEARS." Does one of them seem out of place? It would be obvious to everyone with even an elementary knowledge of astronomy that the heavenly bodies have a great deal to say about our YEARS, our DAYS and our SEASONS. But how are they SIGNS? What is a sign? Perhaps the best way to answer our question is by answering another question first. What, precisely is the purpose of a "sign"? Is it not to proclaim a message? To give information? To tell a story which is important to the one who put up the sign? A sign is also something arbitrarily selected and appointed to represent some other thing. To SPIRITUALLY comprehend the creative record, we must admit that God intended these orbs of light as expressions of some special teaching; something different and higher far than what is naturally deducible from them. Stop there for just a moment. Ask yourself what the inspired Psalmist means when he says that every day speaks to him and to us. What does he mean when he declares that every night is a showing forth of KNOWLEDGE? To whom does he refer when he says that there is no place on earth where the language or speech of men is spoken that "their voice is not heard"?

FINDING CHRIST BY THE LIVING STAR

There are signs in the heavens! There are stars revealed in the Word of God which portray the plan and purpose of God. In this study we want to consider the mystery of the Morning Star, the identification of the Morning Star and what it represents to us in the spirit. The Morning Star is mentioned twice in the book of Revelation and is involved with Jesus and with the promise of the Lord to the overcomers. What or who is the Morning Star? Come and see! "And, behold, I COME QUICKLY ... I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last ... I am the root and the offspring of David, and THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR" (Rev. 22:12-16).

The Lord Himself is the Morning Star. I do not hesitate to tell you that to see Christ is to behold the Morning Star. To know Christ is to know the Morning Star. To experience Christ is to experience the Morning Star. How can we find Christ? How can we see and touch and experience the Christ? This was the same problem that confronted the wise men of old. One thing is certain. To find Christ is a living matter; it is not by a knowledge of the Bible and doctrines and Church traditions. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. There is no doubt about this - it is an historical fact. The strange thing, however, is this: far away from the so-called Holy Land, far away from the religion of the Jews, far away from the glistening walls of the temple, far away from the sacred books of the Law, far away from the bleeding sacrifices, far away from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and all the fervent and incessant religious activities, there appeared a star bearing the revelation of the Christ in a heathen land. It did not appear to the Pharisees or the priests or the scribes or even to the king of Israel, but to men in a pagan land. Today, all the Churches, all the preachers and teachers tell the people that they must find and know Christ by the Bible. But the first case of finding Christ in the world was not by the Bible! The wise men were not reading the Bible as they rode along the way to Jerusalem. These men had
seen something that no man before them had ever seen. Their eyes and minds and hearts had received the sweet sound of a message so transcendingly glorious that it compelled them to make a journey that lasted for two whole years.

You see, precious friend of mine, merely to hold the Bible in your hand and read Micah 5:2 (revealing that Christ would be born in Bethlehem), as did the scribes in Jerusalem, is not sufficient. You may read all the prophecies and all the promises and all the great statements of God's wonderful plan and purpose and provision. You may confess after you have read it that you have got it. You may name it and claim it, but you have not seen it. The chief priests and scribes in Israel knew the scriptures forward and backward, but the Lord did not appear to them. He went far away to a heathen land to reveal the Christ to some heathen, not through the scriptures, but through something which no human hand can ever touch - a heavenly star! To hold the book in your hand is easy, but to look unto the star is another matter. Like so many Christians of our day, those priests and scribes rejoiced in and revered the things they read in the book, but their hearts could not comprehend nor were they able to recognize the vital truth and reality of the message. They had the book, but their eyes had never seen the star - so they could not find the Christ! No one knows just when or where or how the star will appear. But I can assure you of one thing - you may attend the greatest seminary and understand all the theology and receive the highest degree conferred upon one in that, and never see the star or find the Christ. We may think that the star should have appeared to the priests praying in the temple, but it appeared to pagans in a distant land.

Oh! that we may see this star. What is the star? The star is the LIVING REVELATION, the QUICKENING VISION of the Christ wrought in the heart by the illuminating activity of the Holy Spirit. The star is not the dead letter of the Word, the outer shell or husk of the truth. What is needed today is not the knowledge of static creeds and lifeless traditions, not empty ceremonies and impotent programs, not more religious activities, but the heavenly vision, the celestial glow and gleam, the holy brightness and brilliance of THE STAR, the vision that carnal concepts can never reach. Ah, my friend, what have you? Do you have the Bible, do you have religion, do you have Church meetings, or do you have the star? Do you know all the verses, claim all the promises, and stand on all the doctrines, or do you have the heavenly star? Are you clinging to the dying embers of yesterday's revelation and yesterday's move of God, or are you following the on-going path of the Living Star?

You see, the wise men need not to have gone to Jerusalem at all. The Christ child was not in Jerusalem. And when they did find Him they found Him not in Bethlehem, but in Nazareth; not in a stable, but in a house (see our booklet "Five Reasons Why The Sons Of God Should Not Celebrate Christmas" - available upon request). When the wise men arrived in Jerusalem king Herod called the chief priests and scribes together and inquired of them where Christ should be born. The scribes were the Bible Professors of that day. Immediately they answered, "Bethlehem!" And they showed him chapter and verse - Micah 5:2. But did any of them hurry off to Bethlehem to find the King and worship Him? Not one! They were troubled by the news, but no one had revelation enough to go see what had happened. The Jewish leaders had all the religious head-knowledge, all the theology and dogmatics, but the wise men had the Living Star!

Then the wise men departed from Jerusalem, and we read this astounding statement, "Lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them...when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." When you get into religion, you miss the star, but
when you leave religion, the star appears to you. Things have not changed in two thousand years. I would impress upon every saint of God who treasures the beautiful hope of sonship to God that you cannot get living guidance from the ministers of the harlot church system; you cannot receive the heavenly vision in religion; you have to leave. When they departed from Jerusalem, lo, THE STAR WENT BEFORE THEM till it came and stood where the young child was. The heavenly star led them to the very spot, into the living presence of the Christ. This is all we need. Let no one misunderstand my words. I am not saying we have no need of the scriptures. Do we need the knowledge of the scriptures? Of course we do! The wise men had, without doubt, received the wonderful prophecy handed down from generation to generation, uttered long centuries before by the prophet Balaam, proclaiming, "There shall come a star out of Jacob!" How else would they have known what King they sought? This was very helpful. BUT THEY COULD NEVER HAVE FOUND THE CHRIST WITH THAT INFORMATION. Only the living guidance of the star could bring them to the Christ.

We want to see that star today. Oh what bursting there must have been in the bosom of the Seer of Patmos as the sublime words of Jesus swept like a thunderous tidal wave over his awakened consciousness! "I AM the root and the offspring of David, and THE BRIGHT AND THE MORNING STAR." From the desolation of Patmos John had beheld the natural Morning Star many a time after a night of storm, floating in the infinite spaces of the morning darkness. In our solar system the Morning Star is that bright planet - Venus which at some seasons of the year appears so beautifully in the east, at the darkest hour of the night, leading on the morning - the harbinger of the day. Paul said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:2). The hour spoken of by the apostle is that time just before the dawn - the darkest part of the night. It is the time of the Morning Star. The Morning Star is the last great star of the night season, the brightest star of all the stars that adorn the canopy of the heavens at night. In fact, it is still visible as the sun spreads its first rays over the horizon. It is the last star to disappear into the surpassing glory of the dawn.

THE STAR THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE

The appearance of Christ as the Morning Star is a most glorious manifestation of the Lord to His elect. It is amazing how one fresh word of revelation from the Lord can change the whole course of our understanding and give us renewed hope and a fresh vision of the necessary dealings and processings of God in our lives to usher us onward into His fullness. I have been inspired and encouraged with this precious truth. This is indeed a revelation of the Lord's purpose and ways that has inspired within new understanding, confidence and anticipation of the glory that lies before. It is my deep desire that all who read this message shall be encouraged in their forward walk in Christ.

There is a remarkable and illuminating passage of scripture in II Pet. 1:16-19. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a LIGHT THAT SHINETH IN A DARK PLACE, UNTIL THE DAY DAWN, AND THE DAY STAR ARISE IN YOUR HEARTS."
There has been a world of misunderstanding and misinformation connected with these significant words of Peter. Peter said that we have a sure word of prophecy. We are admonished to give heed unto this sure word of prophecy until the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts. It cannot be disputed that most Christians have carelessly assumed that that sure word of prophecy is the holy scriptures. But the sure word is not the Bible! Peter does not merely state that we have received a sure word of prophecy. I would draw your reverent attention to his exact words. This is very important. "WE A-L-S-O have a M-O-R-E sure word of prophecy." Then he goes on to say in the subsequent verses that the prophecy came not in OLDEN TIMES by the will of man: but "holy men of God SPAKE as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21). The message is just this: in OLDEN TIMES holy men of God SPAKE as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and this record is the scriptures (vs. 20). But now, WE A-L-S-O have received a word - a M-O-R-E SURE WORD of prophecy. We also ... likewise ... in like manner ... furthermore ... in addition to ... beyond that which was spoken in olden times...WE ALSO have received a word of prophecy which is even MORE SURE than that uttered of old. And what is this more sure word of prophecy which we now have? It is the revelation Peter and the disciples received on the holy mount with Christ!

The record of the dazzling-glory of Christ's transfiguration is gathered from the accounts of the three Gospel writers. "He was transfigured before them," says Matthew, "and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." To this Mark adds this descriptive sentence: "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." Luke in his account adds the significant statement, "His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening." The significance of the word GLISTER is that that which glistens is merely reflecting light as a bright object might reflect the light of the sun, but that which glisters shines from light that comes from within itself. It was in this manner of animated illumination that Jesus was seen in transfiguration. The light which He really is was shining as the sun from within Himself. He IS LIGHT, even as a star IS LIGHT.

With overwhelming awe these three men awakened from the drowsiness of their sleep, for they had been sleeping (Lk. 9:32), to gaze in wonder at the magnificence of the transfigured form of their Master. It was many years after this heavenly event that Peter wrote, "We were eyewitnesses of His majesty." The word MAJESTY occurs only three times in scripture. Once it is translated MIGHTY POWER, once MAGNIFICENCE, and once MAJESTY. It speaks of splendor, beauty, glory and power and that which overwhelsms the human mind, enlightening the believer to the beauty of holiness, subduing the nature and inciting to the depths of veneration and adoration. As we consider this marvelous experience we should especially notice this most meaningful statement spoken when our Lord Jesus Christ received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR YE HIM" (Mat. 17:5).

What did Peter, James and John see on that mount? There was the blessed Lord Jesus, with Moses and Elijah, the type of two things - the law and the prophets. There you have two men - the greatest of all lawgivers, and one who epitomizes in the most splendid manner all that the prophetic mantle embodies. And in the presence of these the heavenly Father gives all glory and honor unto His Son with the command to the disciples: "Hear ye Him." HEAR HIM! When the disciples heard it they fell on their faces, seized by alarm and struck with terrifying fear. All their life times they had been instructed to give the utmost respect and unfailing obedience to every sacred word of Moses and
the prophets. But Jesus came and touched them, and said, Get up, and do not be afraid. And when they raised their eyes they saw no man but Jesus only. The message is clear - the law and the prophets have forever passed away, and today there is just THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD. "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). This voice of the Son of God, the indwelling testimony of Jesus, the inward illumination of the Christ within as the spirit of prophecy, IS THE MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY WHICH WE HAVE.

Hear what the apostle says about this more sure word of prophecy. "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto A LIGHT THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE, UNTIL the day dawn, and the DAY STAR ARISE IN YOUR HEARTS" (II Pet. 1:19). Two-foldedness is the teaching here, both in type and antitype; they fit each other in the law of the analogue as hand and glove, and each bears conclusive witness of the other. First, there is the light that shines in a dark place. Second, there is the Day Star that arises in the heart, bringing in the dawn or brightness of the day. Every person understands what the Morning Star is. The Morning Star appears at the darkest part of the night. It rises above the horizon suddenly just before the blackest part of the night. It is seen and greeted only by a few who are watching for it. The rest of the world is asleep. Only astronomers and heaven gazers and waiters-for-the-dawn see the Morning Star. The sun, on the contrary, floods the whole world with light and awakens and gives life to all nature. Before its illuminating rays the darkness and shadows of night are scattered. The Morning Star is not daylight. You never saw a man wakened up in the morning by the Morning Star. You must get up early to see the Morning Star. What wakes people up in the morning is the streaming sunlight - it is daylight. The Morning Star is all very good for a man in the dark morning, but the Morning Star is not the day.

Two-foldedness is the thought which leaps along all the lines proclaiming the coming of our Lord as Light: He comes as the Morning Star, as a light shining out in the darkness; and then He comes as the Day Star, as the sun arising in all its strength and majesty, bringing in the day. The most notable of all stars is that star which is called the sun. The sun is the center of our solar system. All the planets of our solar system revolve around the sun. In the scripture the sun is called the Day Star - it is the star of the day. It is the one star in God's vast universe which gives us the light of day. And just as the natural sun is the center of our physical solar system, so the spiritual sun, or Day Star, is the center of our spiritual solar system. The Day Star typifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He is spoken of in Mal. 4:2 as the Sun of Righteousness who arises with healing in His rays. Peter calls Him the Day Star which arises IN OUR HEARTS. The entire Kingdom of God revolves around this Sun of Righteousness who is the Day Star. The saints of God revolve around the Lord Jesus Christ, the center of our spiritual solar system. Those who would do away with the central supremacy of THE SON are manifestly "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness to the age" (Jude 13). HE is the center of all things in God to His creation. When does the Day Star appear? The Day Star appears when the night season ends. The Day Star, the arising of the sun, signals the ending of the night. The darkening of the sun in scripture always speaks of the obscuring of Jesus. Any time the operation and manifestation of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus is blotted out through apostasy, carnality or unbelief, the darkness of night falls upon the hearts of men.

Do you inquire what is the Morning Star? It is the Lord Jesus Christ. And what is the Sun of Righteousness? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord Jesus seen, experienced and known in a totally different dimension. The symbols proclaim it. The Morning Star is a
symbol. The rising sun is a symbol. The Morning Star comes before the sun. It gives no shattering, awakening signs of its coming. It comes at the hour when the night is disputing with the morn. It comes when all the lowlands are in depths of darkness, when the mountain peaks stand out against a tremulous sky, and the myriad stars seem like the eyes of watchers waiting for the dawn. It shines with noiseless softness upon the earth, like a golden lamp let down by an invisible chain. It poises itself for a brief moment on the rim of the night and the rim of the morning, like a note of unuttered song. It quivers there for a space as though it were a tear from the eye of God, sorrowing that so many should sleep and miss the one transition hour from darkness into light. It disappears and the earth seems full of a strange hush. Then there are mists that rise like wraiths above the streams. Shadows and shapes come and go. Voices are calling to each other. Things are in motion and undefined. The star has come and gone and the interval between the star and the sun is on. The sun comes after the star is gone, or the star disappears because of the surpassing glory of the sun. The sun comes like one who has a bow, and he goes forth conquering and to conquer. He shoots his gleaming arrows upward and they fall slanting into the eyes of men to waken them. All the heavens own the coming. They turn into rose and amber and purple of amethyst; they flame and flash, they seem to swoon in glory till the edge of heaven and the edge of earth melt into one undefined, shivering, unequal line of splendor; all the land is flooded and drowned in light, and every mountain, every valley is disclosed.

These symbols have been applied by divine authority to the coming of Christ. His coming is compared to the Morning Star. He comes to us like that bright and morning star. He comes while the darkness of our carnal minds is disputing with the morn of holiness and truth. He comes when all the base emotions and desires of the flesh are in deepest darkness; when the mountain heights of pride, ego, self-centeredness and self-will stand out in their self-appointed majesty against the heavenly ways and divine will of the precious mind of Christ Jesus. He descends in noiseless softness as the star of the morning, indicating an imminent change, a transformation, that the morning comes; it is a pledge of the faithfulness of God, it is intermingled with the first rays of the light of the sun, it comes as a herald to announce the arrival of a light so bright and so powerful and so glorious that all must be transformed before it.

His coming is also compared to the sunrise. He will come, a bow will be given unto Him, and He shall go forth conquering and to conquer. There will be the "light of His arrows and the shining of His glittering spear." He shall arise with healing in His wings. Aye! But the healing shall be the health of fire consuming iniquity, the fire that leaves neither root nor branch of evil. By the purifying, transforming, healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness we shall be changed into His likeness, the night in us swallowed up by God's great Day. The coming of Christ is as star-light and sun-rise. And how we praise God for both!

I WILL GIVE YOU THE MORNING STAR

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father. AND I WILL GIVE HIM THE MORNING STAR" (Rev. 2:26-29). I want to show you a mystery about the Morning Star. We have indicated to you that the Day Star is the sun, because it is the Day Star that brings the dawn, the day. The sun typifies Jesus Christ in all His blazing glory bringing in the fullness of light and dispelling the night. Anyone who possesses even an elementary
knowledge of astronomy knows immediately that the Day Star and the Morning Star are not the same star. The Morning Star is a different star than the Day Star. And Jesus, in speaking to the overcomers who shall rule the nations, says to these overcomers concerning this power to rule the nations, "I'm going to give you something; I'm going to give you something called the MORNING STAR." That Morning Star embodies within it the nature and qualities of your power over the nations, and indicates the purpose and result of that rule.

The Morning Star is promised to all who "overcome" and who walk with Christ in blessed submission to God. Inasmuch as Christ declared Himself to be "the Morning Star" and He promised to GIVE this Morning Star to all who overcome, then it is obvious that something unique and special of Christ is imparted to the Lord's faithful overcomers. This is a "coming" of the Lord you will seldom, if ever, hear anything about from the preachers and teachers of the harlot church system. The television evangelists, who love to flaunt the "rapture" before their undiscerning audiences, know nothing of this coming of our Lord as the Morning Star. But the giving of the Morning Star involves an impartation of the Christ. The Morning Star is a glory of the Christ within, as HE shines in the darkness of our weakness and inability and frustration GIVING A VISION OF AND HOPE FOR THE DAWNING OF THE FULL DAY. During our spiritual growth unto full stature, the Christ within has been developing from experience to experience, from strength to strength, from hope to hope. And now He comes to impart to a people the glorious hope of the day - THE TOTAL VICTORY AND COMPLETE TRIUMPH OF THE CHRIST LIFE WITHIN THE ELECT, AND THE WONDERFUL BLESSING AND DELIVERANCE OF ALL MANKIND THAT ENSUES.

How pathetic that for vast multitudes of believers today their one cherished hope is to escape this planet and live forever in some far-off heaven somewhere. And they would abandon the teeming billions of earth to writhing endlessly in the unspeakable horrors of damnation and hell, while they flit about in white night gowns over the Elysium fields of that glory world above. These poor deluded souls have absolutely no concept of God's glorious DAY prepared for all mankind! Their sole interest appears to be in saving their own necks, along with the trifling hand full of saints captured from the hands of an almost-omnipotent devil.

Again, I ask, when does the Morning Star appear in the natural world? Just before the dawning of the day! Who sees it? The one who has been watching during the dark and dreary hours of the night. Anyone acquainted with natural things, or who has traveled by night, knows that the appearance of the Morning Star is hailed as the intimation that day is at hand. In the morning darkness it shines with a most wondrous, clear, silver light, dazzling as a gem of rarest hue. Someone once wrote, "At 4:00 A.M. I awakened and looked out my window which was half covered by frost, and half was clear, and there I saw the bright morning star. As I lay there for a while beholding the brilliance and beauty of that star, I slipped away into sleep. When I awoke again the brilliance of the sun flooded my room." Is it not thus with God's Christ, with God's Day? Now we see Christ, the bright and morning star, the firstfruit, the forerunner, the prototype, the sample and first specimen of what God has purposed and planned for each and every man and woman of Adam's race. The bright and morning star! The star of hope that tells us the long night of sin and death is almost over, and the Day is not far hence.

How plain, how practical the application! There is a remnant of God's people over the whole earth that have taken heed to the word of prophecy as to a light that shines in a
The Morning Star has shined in their hearts, foretelling the approach of Eternal Day at the arising of the Sun of Righteousness. This remnant have fixed their eyes upon Jesus, they are looking away from all the darkness of this world, from the chaos of sin, sickness, pain, rebellion, crime, drugs, war, hatred, injustice, fear and death stalking the earth; and they are looking away from the seeming hopeless carnality of their own lives, away from people, away from limitation, from everything to the Everlasting Hills of God. There is to be a restoration! Today we see a terrible lack of things being right, or in divine order. There is a divine order for creation, an order of life and harmony. There is a proper order for animal life, vegetable life, and human life. But all things are out of order, in frightful chaos. The curse must be lifted, every enemy put under our feet. Divine order for the universe must be restored. All creation is groaning and crying for release from the curse of sin, decay and death. And everything hinges on that body of SONS that are to be manifested in that perfect state of divine order. And those who receive of this victory and glory, the wonderful mind of Christ, conformed to the image of the Son, with a full and complete triumph over sin, carnality and death, in spirit, soul and body - do not these make up that blessed company TO WHOM IS GIVEN THE MORNING STAR? And, in thus receiving the Morning Star, do they not in turn BECOME THE MORNING STAR? Flooded with HIS LIFE AND LIGHT they become the herald, the harbinger of the near-approaching dawn.

Praise God that we are living in the times of this restoration. It is the greatest day in the long history of man. It is at hand. I know it's at hand because I see a people being pressed and processed into the very life of God. Not only you and me, but all creation as well will thrill to what God brings about in this grand and glorious restoration! "The creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21). The Word of God, as well as the witness of the Spirit, makes us know that this is not for some other generation. It is now! It is here! Be ready! Prepare yourself! Cast aside all doubt and fear! The Morning Star is being given to the saints of the Most High! Victory over every enemy is arising in a people - the MORNING STAR COMPANY!

Ah, yes, the mists and shades of night are all about. In fact, it is darker than ever before. That tells us what time it is! Sin abounds. The love of multitudes has waxed cold. The wanton harlot, Mystery Babylon the great, sits exalted astride the nations and reigns as a queen over the earth. Violence fills the lands. As in the days of Noah, every imagination of the thoughts of men's hearts is only evil continually. But in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation is a people - a people whose hearts have been charged from above - a people who have been given the Morning Star - and they hail the rising orb of light that tarries but a little until the Sun of Righteousness brings in the dawn. The whole creation shall be gladdened by the dawning of "a morning without clouds" - the opening of a bright and never-ending DAY OF GLORY! Those to whom the Morning Star has been given, those blessed saints unto whom has been committed the word of universal reconciliation, those who have received the call to sonship, who yield themselves unto God to be transformed in mind and heart, in spirit, soul and body, conformed into the image of God's Son; these, I declare, ARE GOD'S MORNING STAR COMPANY. And as of old, the morning stars are now prepared to sing together, and all the sons of God shall again shout for joy!

On a personal level, all that ultimately shall be fulfilled collectively and universally, is first accomplished individually within God's elect sons. The meaning to the individual of receiving the Morning Star is that a new day is prepared to dawn in our experience. It
signifies the awakening of the heart, the quickening of the mind, the infusion of light and understanding, the up-springing of hope and purpose, and the stirring of faith to apprehend new heights and realms and realities in God. A whole new state of consciousness is coming to fruit in us. A new day lies before us. And the Morning Star is the Christ within bringing into focus the consciousness and energy of that fresh unfoldment of HIS LIFE.

All of the vision is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ who is the "I AM." So we look for the new day, HE IS THE NEW DAY, and its dawning reality within is vitally a part of HIS COMING. He is that "LIGHT that shineth in a dark place," and as He comes to us, finally "the day dawns, and the day star arises in our hearts." And in very truth, for us the new day has begun!

What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought
  Since Jesus came into my heart;
I have light in my soul - for which long I have sought,
  Since Jesus came into my heart!

Yet what we now have within as the Morning Star is but the foretaste of that greater dawning still to be realized. And there are periods of time when it seems to us that HE TARRIES, for we understand not what He meant when He said, "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father" (Jn. 16:16). We long for Him, yearn for Him, we thirst for the fullness of His life, and we find it difficult to wait even "a little while." We can watch the clock, scrutinize the changes taking place within, observe the signs of the times, analyze every prophecy spoken, and fret ourselves with the "time element," or we can set our gaze firmly upon Him, knowing that HE HAS APPOINTED THE TIME OF THE DAWN, and He will bring us to His time.

Yes, the night is far spent, praise God! There are cycles of the DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL as the Spirit brings to light realms of darkness within us of which we were not previously aware, until we are overwhelmed with our own darkness. The dark cycles sweep over us, pressures from within and without, deep-rooted tentacles of the self-life, carnal reactions that lay undiscovered, corruption hidden in the depth of the heart, until just the appropriate circumstances are arranged by Father's wise hand to draw them forth. But, praise God! there is within that darkness THE LIGHT THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE, CHRIST WITHIN AS THE MORNING STAR, INSPIRING HOPE OF THE DAWN. It is common with man to judge after the seeing of the eye and the hearing of the ear, and during the black of the night we despair that release will ever come. But there is another realm, deeper yet, the realm "of spirit," and we can commune with our own spirit which becomes one with His spirit, and find there is a light within, the Morning Star, as the Psalmist said, "The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness" (Ps. 18:28). "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Ps. 19:2). The workings of God come in these cycles of night and day. God sends the blessings, the movings of the Spirit, the quickenings, the illuminations and they carry you through a time of darkness. Then as things seem to ease up a bit, pressures lift, victory breaks through, and a morning appears. Glory streams through your day. The Sun of Righteousness has arisen. Yet comes the next cycle of processing, the shadows deepen into darkness, and you cry out for the Lord to enlighten your darkness, and, bless His name! fresh quickenings from within carry you through another night of testing.
"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. YE ARE ALL THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT, AND THE CHILDREN OF THE DAY: WE ARE NOT OF THE NIGHT, NOR OF DARKNESS" (I Thes. 5:1-5).

I know what the church system has taught, but they taught a lie. They teach that the Day of the Lord is the seven-year tribulation at the end of the age. They have no scriptural foundation. The Day of the Lord is that special period of time, not twenty-four hours, and not one singular time, when the Almighty God actively manifests Himself in dealings to end unrighteousness and establish the reign of His righteousness. Many individuals and churches and nations through history have encountered their own unique "Day of the Lord," their Hour of Visitation. I am making known a DAY unto you, beloved, and the day I am proclaiming is the Day of the Lord, and it is upon us now. We must not be established upon the traditions of the elders or the doctrines of men. We must allow the Holy Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God to unfold Christ, that we may know Him when He appears, in whatever form or manner He appears, that we miss not the Day of Visitation as did the Jews of old. A great light shined in the darkness, the greatest light that has ever been upon this earth and yet, to this day, they are living and walking in darkness. The very glory of the Father was revealed to them as the scripture said it would be. All God ever could be or ever shall be was manifested in Jesus Christ. No greater light could have shown unto them than that light, because the Light of lights was there to see. Most of them did not recognize Him, neither did they suspect that the Lord of glory was right there in the midst of them. If they had entered into Him, He would not have declared that another day yet remained for the children of God. Don't let us, dear ones, miss our "Day of Visitation." Let us not fall short of that which He is speaking unto our hearts, that we might hear His words and instructions and begin to walk in the light of that glory. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." The Jewish nation was not ignorant of the teaching of the scripture concerning His coming; but they had drifted so far from God in their hearts, that when that day arrived they knew it not because it took the Holy Spirit to reveal it.

The Day of the Lord always comes as a thief in the night. There have been many seasons of the Day of the Lord. I admonish all who read these lines - be established in YOUR DAY. It's a new day, the Day of the Lord. It is coming in like a thief. Christ's presence is beginning to fill the whole earth and the glory of God is risen upon a people. This is not a fallacy, this is the immutable Word of the Lord. This is the very truth, the very understanding as the Spirit has made it known unto His people, that they might know the counsel of God for this very day. Though multitudes continue to walk on in darkness, you shall walk in light. Many stubbornly cling to those things which are passing, the relics of a former day of glory, but those whose hearts have responded to the call are taking hold of those things that are new. The former heavens He shall roll up like a scroll and set aside. There is a new heaven and a new earth for you today, saints of God!

"And the evening and the morning were the FIRST DAY" (Gen. 1:5). God's days always begin with evening, pass through the travail of night, and joy comes in the morning. Most Christians who rejoice in the truth of the PRESENT DAY OF THE LORD have altogether
missed the awesome words thundered by the prophet in Amos 5:18-20. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" There is that aspect of the Day of the Lord which is darkness and not light. It is a day of darkness and there is no light in it. You see no light, discern no sweet rays of cheer. You get caught up in the Day of the Lord and God begins His work in you. He comes to do away with the old that He might establish the new. What strippings! What purgings! What purifyings! What desolations! And the evening and the morning become your day. God is purging and purifying us from the things of man in the Day of the Lord. All flesh, our flesh, is become as grass. He is turning your world upside down and emptying it out and He will completely re-lay the foundations and put a glory in you that will out-shine the sun. What a glorious Day! Have we not experienced something of the night season when all is darkness and gloom? That is the evening, the night time of the Day of the Lord. Then, at the darkest hour, there comes the appearance of the Morning Star - a ray of hope and expectation. And joy comes in the morning!

There is another fascinating facet of this truth that presents itself to us. Though we are caused to pass through the night, the Morning Star announces the end of the night, bringing with it bright expectations of the dawn and the day. It will be helpful for us to locate our position in the night, or in the day. Are we children of the night, or do we pertain to the MORNING STAR COMPANY and the day? The answer lies in the answer to another question - What are we looking for these days? Doom, collapsing of the economy, tribulation, the antichrist, one world beast government, mark of the beast, darkness and gloom? If all you can see is the night, then surely the scripture is fulfilled in you, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Lk. 21:26). But while there are those who dwell upon the negative, God is also anointing His MORNING STAR PEOPLE who have their faces set steadfast for the dawn. Those who speak long and loudly about the distressing conditions of the darkness are manifestly CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT. But those who have received the Morning Star look not for terror, eclipses and earthquakes, convulsions and revolutions, calamities and judgments. What are you looking for? What is your hope? What is your expectation? What are your fears? Are you looking for certain events which are to transpire on earth, such as the revival of the Roman empire, the development of the ten kingdoms; the conspiracy of the Illuminati; the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem; the appearance of antichrist; the appearance of the false Christ of the New Age movement; the battle of Armageddon? Say, beloved friend, are these the things which fill the vision of your soul? Do you meditate upon them day and night? Is it for these you are looking and waiting? If such be the case, you have not been given the Morning Star! Oh! that the reader of these lines may realize habitually the purifying, elevating power of the hope of the arising Sun of Righteousness with healing rays. While so many walk about in fear, it is an unspeakable blessing for those who find themselves in a dark place to have a BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR to cast its light athwart the gloom. THANK GOD FOR THE MORNING STAR! For more on 'signs in the heavens' and the original zodiac read The Heaven’s Declare
Chapter 17
The Coming Of The Sun Of Righteousness

The Word of God turns man's attention repeatedly to the heavens. "The heavens declare the glory of God... day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Ps. 19:1-2). The heavens do not speak English, yet they speak to every Englishman and every American. They speak in every language to every people. The Old Testament closes with God directing man to look to the heavens. God says, in effect, "Look up to the heavens, and don't miss it, because it's important!" "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal.4:2). The Old Testament closes pointing a finger to the East, to the sunrise, proclaiming that all who fear the Lord are to look in that direction because there is the promise of sunrise. It points us to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Sun of Righteousness, arising with healing rays over the horizon of this earth-realm. And, brothers and sisters, that is a fitting figure, because the Lord comes to usher in a NEW DAY.

A person who speaks only the English language can take a book written in French, and, while he may not be able to read it except with much hesitation and mispronunciation, still he can struggle through it after a fashion. Occasionally he will come to a word which closely resembles the English with which he is familiar. But, because he knows nothing of the meaning of French words, no matter how well he can read the text, it means nothing to him until he learns what each individual French word means. Even so Christians who read Bible prophecy, if they do not understand the prophetical language, are confronted with a similar problem. Prophecy is invariably written in prophetical terms, and unless one understands the meaning of each individual term, though he may be able to read the text fluently, yet he has no understanding of what he reads. So, before one can understand prophecy, he first must receive a revelation of the prophetic language. Fortunately the Word furnishes us with the keys to prophetical terms, by which we may through the Spirit become proficient in the prophetic language.

There are many terms used in prophecy, such as stars, moon, sun, sea, rivers, trees, mountains, hills, islands, valleys, heaven, earth, beasts, horns, eyes, etc., etc. In our last study we considered the mystery of the Morning Star. There are stars revealed in the prophetic Word of God which portray the plan and purpose of God. If we go to the last book in the Bible, the book of Revelation, we see three things: the first is that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the Morning Star (Rev. 22:16); secondly, we see that all the stars mentioned in the book are people (Rev. 1:20; 9:1, etc.); thirdly, the Morning Star is involved with the promise of the Lord to the overcomers, and is promised to all who overcome (Rev. 2:29). The giving of the Morning Star involves an impartation of the Christ. The Morning Star is a glory of the Christ within, as HE shines in the darkness of our weakness and inability and frustration GIVING A VISION OF AND HOPE FOR THE
DAWNING OF THE FULL DAY. There is a remnant of God's people over the whole earth today into whose hearts has shined the Morning Star. And, in thus receiving the Morning Star, do they not in turn BECOME THE MORNING STAR? Flooded with HIS LIFE AND LIGHT they become the herald, the harbinger of the near-approaching dawn.

Long centuries ago in Babylon the aged prophet Daniel received this challenging and assuring word from the Lord: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). There are many other stars besides the Morning Star in God's glorious celestial realm, His spiritual heavens. Here the signification of stars is identified with the saints. Each member of God's elect is one star in God's spiritual universe. You are a star in God's economy! You are appointed to have an eternal fixed position in God's heavenly Kingdom as a star, as a shining one, as a luminary. There are different degrees of glory to the stars, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. SO ALSO IS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD" (I Cor. 15:41-42). As one star outshines another in glory so it is in the Kingdom of God. Stars have different dimensions of glory. The greatest of all stars signified to us is the Sun Himself, Jesus Christ our Lord. But there are vast multitudes of stars having different degrees of glory in the Kingdom of God - but they are all called "wise" stars and they all "turn many to righteousness," therefore they burn as bright lights in the Father's Kingdom. Stars are bright lights that give light where there is darkness. Who ARE the wise? The margin reads "teachers" in place of "wise." "They that be TEACHERS shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." That is, of course, those who teach the truth, and lead others to a knowledge of the truth that makes men free.

I am sure every reader of these lines is familiar with the old song, "Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?" There is no scripture to indicate that the saints will wear "starry crowns," but there is scripture which is greater by far! It is the privilege of all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to dwell upon the consolations of this marvelous promise, "And they that be teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever." God's universe embraces all places. This little world of ours, and each star and sun and planet are but tiny grains of sand on the seashore of infinity. Each one is small indeed in relation to all the rest of the systems, and in relation to limitless space. A conception of its magnitude can be gathered only from the stellar worlds themselves. What are those stars, in the likeness of which the teachers of righteousness are to shine forever and ever? How much of brightness, and majesty, and length of days, is involved in this comparison?

The sun of our own solar system is one of these stars. If we compare it with this globe upon which we live (our handiest standard of measurement), we find it an orb of no small magnitude and magnificence. Our earth is nearly eight thousand miles in diameter, but the sun's diameter is eight hundred sixty-four thousand miles. In size it is one million three hundred thousand times as large as our globe. In the matter of its substance, it would balance three hundred thirty-two thousand worlds like ours. What immensity is this! Yet this is far from being the largest or the brightest of the orbs in the heavens. The sun's proximity, only some ninety-three million miles from us, gives him with us a controlling presence and influence. But far away in the depths of space, so far that they appear like mere points of light, blaze other orbs of vaster size and greater glory.
There are stars, as, for instance, Arcturus, which emits light equivalent to one hundred fifty-eight of our suns; Capella, one hundred eighty-five; and so on, until at last we reach the great star Rigel, in the constellation of Orion which floods the celestial spaces with a brilliance fifteen thousand times that of the ponderous orb which lights and controls our solar system! Why, then, does it not appear more luminous to us? Ah, its distance is equivalent to thirty-three million diameters of the earth's orbit; and the latter is one hundred eighty-six million miles! Figures are weak to express such distances. It will be sufficient to say that its glowing light must traverse space as only light travels - one hundred eighty-six thousand miles a second - for a period of more than ten years before it reaches this world of ours. There are many other stars which are hundreds of light-years from our solar system. A few years pass away, and all things earthly gather the mold of age and the odor of decay. But the stars shine on in their glory as in the beginning. Centuries and cycles have gone by, kingdoms have arisen and slowly passed away. Yet the stars' brightness is not dimmed, nor their force abated. The dew of youth still seems fresh upon them. No faltering motion reveals the decrepitude of age. These shine on in undiminished glory through all the ages of time.

Thus shall those wise and blessed sons of God shine who turn the inhabitants of the world to righteousness. Thus shall their ministry and their years roll on from age to age until that wonderful age of all ages, the dispensation of the fullness of times wherein everything in heaven and in earth and in all realms is gathered together into one in Christ and God becomes All-in-all. What glories lie beyond this, we cannot yet know. Of this we may be sure: we who are redeemed have entered a progressive institution, a Kingdom in which stagnation will never enter. We will ever go on "from glory to glory," for "of the increase of His government ... THERE SHALL BE NO END" (Isa. 9:7). We will never come to the place where we can sit down with folded hands and say, "This is the end." We, who have been born into the heavenly realm, have entered a stage of action, we have become active agents in the greatest development program ever conceived. A whole universe awaits our touch and guiding hand. "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou hast put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left N-O-T-H-I-N-G that is not put under him. But we see NOT YET all things put under him (man). But we SEE JESUS..." (Heb. 2:6-9). Surely these words can mean nothing less than UNIVERSAL DOMINION!

Away out there in the blue is a Kingdom of life and light and love for every son of God to explore and develop and perfect. And if ever, in all the countless ages to come, that Kingdom should become too small or overcrowded for its citizens, let us remember that we, being as He is, are therefore, one and all, the very same kind of Beings as He who simply spoke the Word, and lo! the present worlds appeared. Being like Him, we will also be creators, one and all, and not destroyers, as in our human state. "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM."

God says that men enter His heavenly Kingdom by being born into it (Jn. 3:5). Men do not die to go to heaven, they are born there. And then after they are born into that state - after they become heavenly beings - they can lay up, by their obedience to the heavenly Father, heavenly riches which will not only be a place, but royal pomp and splendor and majesty and dominion beyond compare. Sonship does not only entitle one to residence in God's limitless and eternal domain, but to the ownership and rule of that domain, in proportion to qualifying in service now. Oh, that it were possible to lift men up above the shadows, and give them just a glimpse of something higher! Mortal minds are so entirely inadequate; human eyes so dim; human ears so dull!
Heaven is not a mansion over the hilltop, not the gratifying of the needs and desires of this vessel of clay. It is not that which will bring creature comfort. It is not a state of eternal creature enjoyment and rest. The celestial realm is something infinitely higher. It is eminence, power, majesty, glory. It is becoming the same kind of a Being as the One who made the worlds (Jn. 10:34-36; I Jn. 3:2), and will bring, not inactive rest with fluttering wings and strumming harps, which in a few short hours even becomes exceedingly tiresome, but activity and accomplishments far surpassing that of earth's limitation. And it includes kingship and priesthood over God's eternal and infinite domain. It is dominion and power and influence far above that which earth can contemplate or even imagine. And then the place which we receive after entering this heavenly state is not heaven, but that which we receive as a consequence of our entrance into the celestial sphere. The place is the reward which faithful heavenly beings will receive as their very own, a part of their inheritance, heavenly real estate.

The stars are distant lights. They shine in other spheres. There is no doubt that vast numbers of these stars are "suns" like unto our own, the centers of great solar systems, with heavenly bodies that revolve around them, perhaps populated by beings of which we know nothing at this present time. Thus will it be in the Kingdom of the Son, in the spiritual heavens of God's universal and eternal dominion. Each son of God will be a star, a sun, shining forth in living and everlasting luster. Each member of the elect will faithfully radiate his beams of life and light and love, shining in those spheres which the omniscient Father shall allot to them. Thus each shall become the central star of a spiritual solar system composed of myriads of creatures in God's glorious creation which revolve around them, unto whom they shine as the revelation of God's nature, glory and power. And thus shall the scripture be fulfilled, "Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the Kingdom of their FATHER. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat. 13:43). The Kingdom does not become the Kingdom of the "Father" until Christ, having "put all enemies under His feet," including the last enemy death, has "delivered up the Kingdom to God, EVEN THE FATHER" and God becomes "All-in-all" (I Cor. 15:24-28). What glorious and ineffable prospects lie before us!

There is also a negative aspect to the stars - "falling stars." Today we see those who, as falling stars, blaze their way across the heavens. They make a spectacular entrance, and shine brilliantly for a season, and just as suddenly they are gone - their light becoming darkness. Ah, they have done mighty works, they have preached to multitudes, they have cast out devils, they have healed the sick, they have prophesied in His name, they called Him Lord; but they were not subject to His law, His order, His purpose. They were "doing their own thing" and perverting the light into the building of their own kingdoms. He will say to them, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Mat. 7:23).

There are also those stars described as "wandering stars." Jude 12 and 13 tells us, "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame: WANDERING STARS, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." So many who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ today are not stars, there is no radiance of His glory from their lives. Some, however, are stars, but they are wandering stars. Do you know what a wandering star is? In our universe a proper star has a certain position and fixed orbit. It continues in its appointed course steadfastly. But there are some stars with no fixed position or orbit: they are wandering stars. They are stars, but they are not steadfast stars. If you follow them you will be
misled. If you accompany them they will not take you anywhere in God. These possess no clear vision of God's purposes, no stable comprehension of His plan, no submission to His dealings, no learning of His ways, no dedication to His principles, no putting on of His mind, no divine order in their walk. These are tossed to and fro by every "new" teaching, wavering with every changing wind of doctrine, the prey of the cunning and cleverness of unscrupulous men - personality followers. They ever seek some "new thing," and let a new revelation come along, or a new teacher come to town, and they will run after him and flock around him for a season, but there is no fruit of God in their walk; just as quickly they cool off to the excitement of the "new," and wait for the next sensation to appear. They themselves are wandering stars: they have no ground, no foundation, no standing, no goal toward which they are unswervingly moving under the guiding and disciplining hand of the Father. Today they say this, and tomorrow they say that; they are wandering. Be careful! You will never arrive at sonship by following a wandering star. If you are wandering you are wasting your time. If you would go to a certain place, get out your map, get on the right road and in the right lane; and as you drive, you will reach your destination. Above all we would BE His stars, bright shining as the sun. In the entertainment world, the "movie stars" shine from their false and lofty skies. God, at the same time, is exalting His sons, the "moving stars" of the heavenlies, that they may swallow up all lesser lights. In becoming Christ-centered, we become life and light to those worlds which rotate around us. We follow on in our prescribed course, in the order and harmony of God's spiritual universe!

LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE

The Lord Himself is the Bright and Morning Star. Hear what the apostle Peter says about the Morning Star. "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto A LIGHT THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arise in your hearts" (II Pet. 1:19). Every person understands what the Morning Star is. The Morning Star appears at the darkest part of the night. It is seen and greeted only by a few who are watching for it. The rest of the world is asleep. The sun, on the contrary, floods the whole world with light and awakens and gives life to all nature. Before its illuminating rays the darkness and shadows of night are scattered.

The dark place where the Morning Star shines is IN OUR HEARTS. The place where the Day Star arises is likewise IN OUR HEARTS. We should not be obliged to present lengthy arguments to prove that without God the heart of man is hopelessly dark, incurably carnal, and desperately wicked. It is most enlightening to read the words of Jeremiah who said by inspiration of the Holy Spirit that "the heart is deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). To the enlightened mind of this prophet, the depth of iniquity to which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of any man to comprehend. As a friend has said, "We should not find this so amazing a passage of scripture were it not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, 'The heart is deceitful above all things EXCEPT THE DEVIL!' He merely stated that 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!"

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 from without a man,
that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. 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" (Mk. 7:15,21-23). 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 OUT OF THE HEART OF MAN. What an incredibly dark place, the human heart! No wonder the apostle made the heart of man the location of the Morning Star - the star that appears at the blackest part of the night!

Man today wants to hear nothing about the depravity of his heart, the utter corruptness of man's nature. Twentieth century man has endeavored to forget it, to deny it, to ignore it, to turn his back upon it, to get away from it, to escape it, and hope in some way that it will just go away and leave him alone. But it will not! The reality of man's sin has filled to overflowing the prisons and mental hospitals of this nation until they sprawl as endless cities. Wing after wing of these institutions is filled with people who are there primarily because their lives are overwhelmed and crushed by their sin which they've striven to ignore or deny. When will we face reality for the way it is and seek God's remedy for it instead of our own daubing at the surface blemishes of the fatal cancer within? Even Freud, unbeliever that he was, in his psychoanalytic studies probed deep into the soul of men. There, as he plunged down into that subbasement of the human soul which he called the "id," he found lurking in all the crevices and corners of that soul such foulness, such unbelievable hate, such attitudes towards those whom they were supposed to love, such lust and greed and pride, that he himself was shocked at what he discovered. But he was unknowingly putting his imprimatur on the Word of God which says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ... The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ... I the Lord search the heart."

Ah - the Lord searches the heart! And just how does He do this? The wise man replies, "The SPIRIT OF MAN is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly" (Prov. 20:27). The Psalmist adds this inspired insight: "For Thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness" (Ps. 18:28). Can we not see by this that it is when OUR SPIRIT IS LIGHTED BY HIS SPIRIT that the Morning Star appears over the horizon of our inward darkness? Blessed harbinger of the dawn! It means just this - the Spirit of God in our spirit searches into the dispositions and affections of the soul, praises what is good, condemns what is evil, while announcing the imminent arising of the Sun of Righteousness whose healing rays shall scatter the night, transforming the nature until the heart is purified into the image of God. To many of us now His light may seem no more than the flickering of a candle, shining in the darkness of our lives, but once His light shines upon us, such a response is created in our dead and dormant hearts that we find ourselves quickened with hope and expectation. When the light of the Star divine comes shining into the darkened recesses of the soul, that man can never be the same again. Once Jesus, the light of the world, shines upon him, never again will he be satisfied with the outer darkness of this world.

Every man's life is his own castle of many rooms. By His indwelling Spirit, the candle of the Lord has been moving from one room to the next, silently, carrying the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. He has been challenging every activity, deed, act, word, and even every thought and intent of our lives. Now we come to the close, and just as we are ushering our heavenly investigator to the last room of the castle of our lives, as we are walking down the hall, He stops, looks down and says, "What is this?" We had
devoutly hoped that He would not notice that trap door set so securely in the floor. Hardly anyone knew about it at all; and casually we toss it off. "Oh, that's just the basement, Lord. You really wouldn't want to go down there." "Oh," He answers, "but I would. In fact that's why I came - to go down there." So, over all your protestations His will wins out. You lift that creaking door, and as it opens, there is the odor of stinking flesh and hidden corruption and the sound of bats' wings, and a circular, narrow stairway leads down into the inky blackness below. With anxious heart, you follow Christ down those stairs, wondering what evils shall be brought into His light. As the shadows flee before that light which radiates from Him, you reach the floor of the basement with all of its darkened chambers and its unclean imagery. There is no place to hide, for the light that comes from Christ reveals all. Jesus has come, the Morning Star has appeared, the candle of the Lord has come to search the heart and reveal the very depth of the secrets, the suppressed attitudes, secret motives, hidden desires, concealed ambitions, all the darkness of the soul. Thank God! He does not uncover our iniquity to destroy us, but to save us and purify unto Himself a people to show forth His glory in the earth.

Years ago when farmers were clearing land they had great trouble with the stumps of trees. It was easy to cut down the tree but to burn out the stump was a long and torturous process. Finally somebody invented a machine that had a long boom and a huge hook. This hook was planted around the stump between the roots. Then there was a whirring of machinery and a grinding of wheels and levers, and the stump of the tree was ripped from the ground despite the desperate clinging of the roots to their accustomed earth. The Living Word of God is the hook which would go down into the dark soil of our hearts and pull out the stump, root, and all the very last vestiges of carnality, self and wickedness. The wonderful law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus - there is nothing like this law found in all the legislation of ancient or modern history. All the enactments of princes and potentates may cover the deeds, acts and words of their servants. But only God can command the heart. The greatest tyrant who ever lived could do nothing to quell the hatred that raged like a tempest in the hearts of his subjects. He could do nothing to hush the curses that smote him like white lightning. Here, therefore, we see the signature of God, for only God searches the heart, and gives promise of the dawn!

All sin is but the perversion of that which is legitimate in its proper order. Sex, for example, is a wonderful and beautiful thing in the order of God, but misused it is demeaning and creates problems of guilt, distrust, broken homes, venereal disease, etc. Within the marriage union it is holy, the apt figure for the spiritual love and union between Christ and the Church; but out of order expresses itself in fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality and all manner of uncleanness. All the false religiousness of the Babylon system is but the perversion of the holy things of God. Spiritual truth and reality lowered to the carnal plane, and joined to fleshly zeal, results in organized spiritual darkness - RELIGION.

Man's nature is saturated with powerful drives of desire, ambition and creativeness. It has been said that the powerful horses of desire and ambition have to be dealt with in some way. There have been numerous proposals for dealing with these wild horses that gallop in the breast of every one of us. The Buddhist has his suggestion. Gautama, the Prince, recommended very simply that we shoot these wild horses, thus ending all desire, and get rid of all ambition. Thus we would rid ourselves of all misery. The behavioral psychologist today has an opposite view from that of Gautama Buddha. He declares that we should simply let the horses run wild. Whether you are age five, ten or twenty-five, just do the thing that feels good. Let it all hang out. Then what do you have? You have a
society just like ours, where you cannot walk the streets in safety at night. You are afraid to send your children to some schools, lest they not come home at all, with or without an education. But God has something to say about those wild horses. He says that we are not to shoot them and we are not to let them go; but we are to tame them. We are to harness them, ride them and redirect them to God's glory. Some people say, "You have never tried to ride my wild horses. That wild horse of lust - I have tried to tame it and have landed on my back in the dust. That wild horse of ambition for the things of THIS WORLD has thrown me many a time. We will never be able to tame them, and it is folly for us even to try." But when Christ comes in HE CAN TAME THE WILDEST HORSE. This One who tamed the raging waves of the sea of Galilee can tame the raging horses in our hearts. That desire can be redirected. That ambition can be redirected. That zeal can be harnessed. Our drives are not to be annihilated; rather they are to be sublimated. They should be purified and reprogrammed to a higher and greater cause - the cause of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ - the cause of the Kingdom of God. Our passions need to be purified and our desires distilled of all carnal thoughts and self-interest, yielded unto the Spirit of God, as instruments of righteousness. When the Spirit of God takes control of our lives, when the soul is subjugated and joined to the spirit, we can say, "My soul panteth after Thee, O God" (Ps. 42:1). How many people are panting after the transient things of this world! How few can honestly say, "As the hart pants after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God!"

God has made us to reach for something more glorious than the stars, which will live forever, for the eternal Kingdom of God. With such a grand and glorious goal set before us, millions of Christians are simply digging for clams in the mud flats of material blessing and prosperity for the here and now, and a mansion and a harp in that glory world above. What eternal and infinite loss attends such paltry goals!

**THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The Morning Star is the candle of the Lord that shines in the dark place of the heart, searching all the inward parts of the desires, affections and nature. The Sun of Righteousness is the arising of the glory of the Lord shining in His full strength and majesty, dispelling the darkness, bringing in the day of victory, life and glory. In scripture the sun is called the Day Star - it is the star of the day. It is the one star in God's vast universe which gives us the light of day. And just as the natural sun is the center of our physical solar system, so the spiritual sun, or Day Star, is the center of our spiritual solar system. The Day Star typifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He is spoken of in Mal. 4:2 as the Sun of Righteousness who arises with healing in His rays. Peter calls Him the Day Star which arises IN OUR HEARTS. The entire Kingdom of God revolves around this Sun of Righteousness who is the Day Star. The saints of God revolve around the Lord Jesus Christ, the center of our spiritual solar system.

Thus, in the prophetic scriptures the Lord is symbolized by the sun. The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens. And to help us in correctly interpreting the meaning of the spiritual sun, Gen. 1:16 informs us that God made "the greater light (the sun) to RULE the day, and the lesser light (the moon) to RULE the night." Here we first have the idea of both the sun and the moon being RULERS. Then we find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the Word a "Sun." "For the Lord God is a SUN and a shield" (Ps. 84:11). "Thy SUN shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine EVERLASTING LIGHT" (Isa. 60:20).
The comfort and hope of the Morning Star and the dazzling brilliance of the Day Star both originate in the hearts of God's elect. But the scriptures are clear that their influence is destined to extend to the world and beyond to the farthest reaches of creation. "I am the light of THE WORLD," said Jesus, and again, "YE are the light of THE WORLD" (Jn. 8:12; Mat. 5:4). John on Patmos, beholding with astonishment the glistering glory of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, exclaimed with the voice of jubilation, "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 they shall bring the glory and honour of the NATIONS into it" (Rev. 21:24,26). To which the prophet Isaiah adds his testimony, saying, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the GLORY OF THE LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the 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. And the GENTILES (NATIONS) SHALL COME TO THY LIGHT, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1-3).

One of the most beautiful word pictures of the Lord's coming is painted by the prophet Malachi when he likens the manifestation of Christ to the Sun - the "Sun of Righteousness." This "Sun" will rise, declares the prophet, with "healing in His wings." Here the rays of the sun are likened to great wings upon which it rises, and under the shadow of which is found health and life - "healing." It is the rising of this "Sun" that will scatter the mists and gloom of the long night of sin and weeping through which the human race has been stumbling over the broad road leading to destruction. When the sun rises the face of nature is changed. When He who "rules the day" appears in fullness of strength, the whole world answers to the mighty change; evil is judged; the oppressor is broken to pieces and the captive set free. He who "rules in righteousness" chases all before Him which is unsuited to His sway, and brings in the long sighed-for Sabbath for creation.

There has been a dawn for us and, blessed be God! there shall be a dawn for all creation. The peoples of our planet will not remain in the icy clutches of an ever-deepening darkness until all hope is gone, until there is nothing but total darkness and death. No, light will appear - more light than the world has ever seen - at the arising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His rays. The whole face of this old world is yet to be changed by the arising of the Sun of Righteousness within His people!

There will be no unsolved problems anywhere not taken care of by the bright shining of the glory of the Lord through His sons, for nothing short of a universal dispensation of this glorious Sun's healing rays can fulfill Jesus' own promise concerning the manner and object of His coming. Consider the problem of war. Today we find mankind devastated by the ravages of war, revolution and anarchy. But in due time, the LORD will say to the raging nations, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen (nations), I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps. 46:10). It will be then that the nations will "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks," and NATIONS shall learn war no more (Mic. 4:1-4). We hear much these days about poverty. Poverty is indeed one of the major problems in the world. But through the wise rule and gracious administration of the sons of God, a "feast of fat things" will be made "unto all people," and every man will dwell under his vine and fig tree, and there will be none to molest nor make afraid (Isa. 25:6; Mic. 4:4). We read further concerning this problem that God's Christ "shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor... for He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and he that hath no helper (the forgotten man)" (Ps. 72:4,12).
The problems of religion will also be solved. Today earth's millions worship a multiplicity of gods, and even those who attempt to worship the true God are hopelessly divided into factional groups from which there comes a jargon of conflicting claims, dogmas, and doctrines, some even claiming that God is dead. But all this will be changed, for the proclamation of the Lord is that Mystery Babylon shall with violence be thrown down and burned with fire, for strong is the Lord that judgeth her. And the promise of the Lord is sure: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language (understanding of God), that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:9).

Then there is the major problem of sickness and death. Unless this problem can be solved, mankind will still need endlessly to travel through the valley of the shadow of death. In such an event there could be no lasting happiness anywhere, for every happy home would be intermittently blighted by that dread enemy which counts its victims by the billions. But the Spirit of God has testified, "The creation itself ALSO shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). The power of that blessed One who broke up funerals in Judea more than nineteen centuries ago simply by raising the dead to life again will be demonstrated, not on behalf of a limited few, but for the restoration of all the families of the earth. Hallelujah - what a Saviour!

The enlightening rays of the Sun of Righteousness will fill the earth, not only your earth and my earth, but that earth out there - until all the shadows and darkness and night have been chased away. This means that all doctrines of devils, all superstitions, all human creeds and dogmas, all human precepts by which men are taught to fear God rather than to love Him; all political intrigues, all humanistic education and institutions, as well as the thousand and one other evils which plague a dying world, are to be swept away, replaced by the glorious KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD AND HIS TRANSFORMING GRACE. With the glory of God filling the earth, there will come also the destruction of all the myriad citadels of sin and vice and crime. As that glorious Sun of Righteousness forces its healing rays into the various dens of iniquity, the hells of this world, the satanic darkness of these rendezvous of evil will give place to the glorious enlightenment of the NEW DAY. There will not be a nook or corner in the earth where the light from that glorious Sun will not penetrate. The warmth of its healing rays will pervade the slums of our great cities and radiate into the institutions of suffering which we call hospitals. The prospect for the suffering peoples of earth is truly a marvelous one. It has been well said that the hopes of the world are as bright as the promises of God, and these are very bright indeed. And not only bright, but sure. How glad we are to know that the limited scope of God's Kingdom in the earth today is not the end of the matter! And how blessed we are with the knowledge that the Christ does not arise to destroy the earth, but to bless the people with peace, health, provision and life, and that through the powerful agencies of His Kingdom He will fulfill all the grand promises of sages and prophets, that all the families of the earth shall truly be blessed.

The Sun of Righteousness shall arise and arise and arise until there is no more night anywhere in God's vast universe. No man anywhere will be able to escape the glory of God. The apostle John said that GRACE AND TRUTH came by Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:17). Grace literally means, THE INFLUENCE OF GOD upon the heart and its reflection in the life; and the apostle Paul declared that "where SIN ABOUNDED, grace did MUCH MORE ABOUND" (Rom. 5:20). In the light of that plain scripture let the preachers attempt to tell us that God does not plan to enlighten and deliver the WHOLE WORLD! We praise God.
that there is a RISING OF LIGHT and we are already in the dawn of it, yea, WE ARE THE DAWN OF IT, for WE are the firstfruits of God's creatures, and it will shine over ALL THE WORLD even unto the West, that part from which darkness comes, and there will be no more darkness.

APPROACHING THE DAWN

We have experienced Christ as the Morning Star, the Christ within shining forth in the dense darkness of our carnal state of being. Before us looms the arising of the Sun of Righteousness, the Day Star, swallowing up all into THE DAY of God's fullness. When there is a shipwreck at midnight, with what longing the mariners look for the morning! How often the sigh goes up, When will the day break? Even so must the Christian wait upon God, and rest patiently until HIS LIGHT shines upon him. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning" (Ps. 130:6). O my soul, begin each day with the prayer, "Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant ... Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us ... cause Thy face to shine..." (Ps. 31:16; 4:6; 80:3,7,19).

God lights our candle, gives to us the Morning Star, that HIS LIGHT MAY BECOME OUR LIGHT. It is not possible to explain these truths to human satisfaction. The things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man MUST BE REVEALED to us by the Spirit. You see, God is light and when that God-light works its way out into our outer-man we begin to shine as the firmament. The Day Star is the OUTRAYING of the Father, the FORTHSHINING of the Son; it is being "filled with all the fullness of God," it is "Christ formed in you" and it is "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

It is from such a realm of glory and eminence and blessing that Adam fell! Since the transgression in Eden long ago, men's spirits have been fallen. They have no power but to receive light and reflections from without, but in the beginning the spirit of man was designed, not only to RECEIVE light, but to BE light and to GIVE light. This is now a wonderful reality in Christ, for "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now ARE YE LIGHT in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). Ah, WE ARE NOW LIGHT IN THE LORD, but the measure of light we now are is small indeed, in comparison with the light that shall be revealed at the manifestation of the sons of God. For the sight of this glorious unveiling the whole creation stands on tip-toe, and it shall come to pass that all that is looked upon by these glorious sons of God will be FLOODED WITH THE LIGHT OF LIFE, for the creation shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption.

The question is asked concerning God's elect, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun?" (S. of S. 6:10). "Looketh forth" would better be translated "breaketh forth." "Who is she that BREAKETH FORTH AS THE DAWN?" The imagery here bespeaks the Day Star arising within the body of Christ until the morning so breaks forth through them that they themselves BECOME THE DAWN. It is my conviction that even as I pen these words there is a blessed company of saints scattered across the earth in whom the knowledge of the glory of the Lord is breaking forth as the dawn. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: HIS GOING FORTH IS PREPARED AS THE MORNING (DAWN)" (Hos. 6:3). Even the initial glow of His breaking over the horizon is breathtaking and stunning. There is something grand and glorious, sweet and refreshing and inspiring in the morning hour. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward" (Isa. 58:8).
We have passed through a time of great darkness. It has been a long night of travail - yearning, waiting, longing. Darkness has blinded the minds of men, a deep sleep has been upon the Adamic race, the death of the carnal mind has kept earth's inhabitants in the regions of the shadow of death. But let it be shouted from the housetops - THE LIGHT IS COMING! It is time to cast off all works of darkness, now to be clothed with the armor of light. CHILDREN OF LIGHT, STARS AND SUNS, WE ARE TO BECOME. Birthed into the new age, to bring forth the glory and triumph of His Kingdom. Thank God, the first rays of light of the new day are painting the eastern sky! Thank God, a few of His chosen ones have arisen to behold the glories of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn!

Oh, I am so glad the night is passing. It has been such a long night, and the people have been so weary, and they can find no rest, no rest, no rest; for human breasts and human hearts can find no rest until they find it in God. I am glad the night is far spent; the Day is at hand; that the glory-dawn is piercing through the sky. It is morning, NOT MIDNIGHT as the preachers so loudly proclaim. Hark! Brethren, hark! Do you hear the chariot wheels rolling along the sky? Can you not hear? Can you not see that the heavenly hosts are gathering from all the heavens? Do you not understand that the army of the Lord beyond the veil, and His army on earth, is mustering to the battle? Do you not hear? Have you seen - have you seen a cloud, like unto a man's hand? Already the clouds are passing across the sky, and I hear the sound of abundance of rain, and beyond it I see glories that beggar description. To some of us the Sun of Righteousness has already arisen. Our eyes have seen His coming. Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He is coming with power and great glory, in clouds of power, in clouds of power, IN CLOUDS OF POWER! I see the coming power. I realize something of the touches of that coming power, and the great glory.

"Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?" (Job 38:12-13). Ray Prinzing has so aptly commented on this passage: "Job was in a profound communion with the Lord, and was being challenged with facts and mighty works which were far beyond him. 'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' Among the questions proposed to Job came this one: 'Hast thou caused the dayspring (or literally, the dawn) to know his place?' God was doing more than causing Job to recognize His omnipotence and His greatness, but underneath these questions God was also imparting revelation to Job - THAT THERE IS A DAY, THERE IS A DAWN, AND THIS DAY SHALL KNOW HIS PLACE, it shall know its proper timing, it shall know its position, and it shall perform its task and purpose. There is a DAY that shall dawn, and when it does, it will SHAKE THE WICKED, or all wickedness, out of the earth, and righteousness shall be established. IT IS THE DAY OF HIS KINGDOM. Such a day is more than a time element, for this day IS A PEOPLE. And when they have been fully prepared, then shall their going forth, like unto the Son of God, be prepared as the morning, and they shall shine with HIS LIGHT AND GLORY, 'a light to lighten the nations.' "

Praise God, the morning IS PREPARED, the dawn IS BREAKING - a people who embody and personify the hopes of creation, a people who are experiencing deep within the transformations so necessary to bring deliverance to the earth, to change the world. The sun comes up at an early hour of the morning and if you are up at that time you will see it rise, but if you sleep until noon, a great number of important events can transpire
before you arise. So the morning can be over before you know what is going on! There
are those that are asleep in Zion today. They have been lulled to sleep - and if the blind
lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch. They have no understanding of the purposes
of God, no comprehension of what is taking place, therefore, they are leading God's
people astray and THIS DAY will come upon them unaware and take them.

The reason there is darkness today is because of the false doctrines and dark traditions
of the church systems. No wonder God's people are full of unbelief, filled with doubts,
and overwhelmed with fears. No wonder they magnify the works of the devil and declare
him more than they declare God. They know not the DAY in which we are living, because
of the darkness of their minds. They receive death and they feed on darkness all about
them. But God has raised you up, my brother, my sister, as a light this very day, that you
might dispel the darkness and remove these heavens that men have been dwelling under
and establish something completely new in the earth, a new heavens in which the Sun of
Righteousness arises with healing in His rays. Bring forth in your life a new likeness, the
image of God, that you may declare HIM that is supreme throughout all the earth and that
He may reign in every heart. Behold the dawn!

But the popular churches are still lost in dreams. They have not yet awakened. They
know not of the dawn. But we who are of the day, and who are not lovers of the
drunkenness of false doctrine nor sleepers of the night, have a higher heritage. "We are
not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others" (I Thes. 5:5-
6). We who have received the love of the truth are heirs to a higher calling. We have
privileges, and we have duties to perform. We must be about our Father's business.
There must be a parting of the ways. It is time to forsake the shame and error of the
harlot system, and time to look up, time to arise and shine. The day is at hand. The night
is spent. We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow. "Awake, awake; put on
thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for
henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (Isa.
52:1).

Hallelujah for the Sun of Righteousness!
Chapter 18
The Coming Of The Sun
Of Righteousness
(Continued)

The Lord was presented to us, in a previous article, as the Morning Star. He is now before us as the Sun of Righteousness - the day-spring from on High. How beautifully apt both these figures are, we have already seen, and this will become more evident as we proceed. We have seen the relation between these two characters in which the Lord comes. He comes as the Morning Star. He comes as the Sun of Righteousness. The Morning Star is the candle of the Lord that shines in the dark place of the heart, searching all the inward parts of the desires, affections and nature. The Sun of Righteousness is the arising of the glory of the Lord shining in His full strength and majesty, dispelling the darkness, bringing in the day of victory, life and glory. In scripture the sun is called the Day Star - it is the star of the day. It is the one star in God's vast universe which gives us the light of day.

Thus, in the prophetic scriptures the Lord is symbolized by the sun. The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens. And to help us in correctly interpreting the meaning of the spiritual sun, I Jn. 1:5 informs us that "GOD IS LIGHT, and in Him is no darkness at all." The light which God is is the sun of God's spiritual solar system. "For the Lord God is a SUN and a shield" (Ps. 84:11). In the Old Testament as well as in the New, we find that light is given as a symbol or picture of God. Indeed, its very definite language says that light is God and God is light. The 27th Psalm begins with this word, "The Lord is my light." This phrase is found frequently in the Psalms, as for instance in Ps. 36:9, "For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light." Also Ps. 43:3, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles." Ps. 56:13, "For Thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not Thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" Again in Ps. 89:15, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." There are sixteen other references in the Old Testament, besides these, which refer to light as emanating from God. These evidence the fact that in some intangible way the physical creature that is such a mystery to us is associated with the Person of God. We read in Dan. 2:22 that light dwells with God. That is to say, light is part of the very "being" of God. It is part of His own Person, makeup and nature. It is embodied in Him. Light has its origin in, and emanates and radiates from God. From the brightest star in the universe to the tail of the tiniest firefly - all light comes from God.

When God created, He began with light. Yes, when God said, "Let there be light," out of dark nothingness came billions of galaxies with billions upon billions of blazing stars. What is light? This question has been a puzzle for millenniums. People once thought light
was something that traveled from a person's eyes to an object and then back again. If anything blocked the rays from the eyes, the object could not be seen. Since the 1600's, scientists have made many discoveries about light. They have learned that light is a form of ENERGY that can travel freely through space. The energy of light is called RADIANT ENERGY. There are many kinds of radiant energy, including infrared rays, radio waves, ultraviolet rays, and X rays. And yet, light is something more than just waves. As you know, certain kinds of light will pass through objects that would stop waves. We can see only a tiny part of the different kinds of radiant energy. This part is called VISIBLE LIGHT or simply LIGHT.

While we recognize light as a physical creature it nevertheless has what may be called a spiritual nature. One of the many marvelous phenomena of light is the fact that it can be passed through a physical substance as hard as rock with its speed unimpaired, and its nature unchanged. Even though it passes at many thousand times the speed of a bullet through a physical object, light leaves no hole to mark its passage, and the object through which it thus passed is undamaged! Glass, you know, is artificial rock. The same elements that make stone are used by man in his manufacture of glass. Indeed, the glassware of the laboratory is generally called flint glass, and had the American Indians possessed this type of glass they would have chipped it into arrow heads and weapons superior to those of native flint. Man, by his art and device, takes the elements of stone and transforms them into an artificial sheet of rock which he calls glass. Light, flashing through space, passes unimpeded through this physical substance leaving no hole to mark its passage, being unimpaired in the process. When one physical substance can pass through another physical substance leaving both unimpaired and unchanged, it is certainly related to the spiritual!

CHRIST THE LIGHT

"And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ... and God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. 1:2-3). Now what was that light which God spoke into the darkness in that long ago beginning? Was it the sun, or the moon or the stars, as some Bible teachers try to tell us? It couldn't have been, for the sun, moon and stars had not yet been made. They were not made until the fourth day. So this had to be some other light. Now if the Son was the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14), as He claimed to be, then He must have been connected with this first light somehow. And if He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last, then it is clearly evident the He Himself was the light God brought forth at that time. Let us look at the last light, in the next to the last chapter of the Bible, "And 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" (Rev. 21:23). So in the end there is no need for the sun nor the moon, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light. If HE is the light in the end, He must have also been the light in the beginning - for HE IS THE BEGINNING AND THE END!

Now let us consider some significant statements that Jesus made about Himself. He said, "I am the light of the world (Greek: kosmos); he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). If we limit the world, or the kosmos, to mankind, then we will fail to see the glorious place the Son has in God's great plan. The whole kosmos we are told was in darkness, the heavens as well as the earth, and the first and greatest need was light, and God brought that light into the dark universe, AND THAT LIGHT WAS HIS SON. Jesus also declared, "I am come a light into the cosmos, that whosoever believeth on Me should not walk in darkness" (Jn. 12:46). So what He
said was, I am the light that came into the kosmos, to bring light into the darkened creation. He, indeed, was the light; but there was something greater far in Him coming into the darkened universe than to be just a light. There was an infinitely higher purpose than that! John, in the first chapter of his Gospel, gives additional revelation on this great truth, when he speaks of the Word being with the Father in the beginning, and how all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Then he goes on to make this significant statement, "In Him was life, and THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN" (Jn. 1:4). From this verse we see that LIGHT and LIFE are essentially the same thing. "The life was the light." So when He came a light into the kosmos, He was also the life that came into the creation, to give life unto all creatures. John goes on to say, "That was THE TRUE LIGHT, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn. 1:9). All other lights are artificial, imitation. Only the Son was the TRUE LIGHT, and He came a light into the kosmos, not to be just a light to sinful men, but to be a light to the darkened universe, the heavens as well as the earth, the spiritual as well as the physical dimensions. When John made these enlightening statements he spoke of the time of the beginning of the creation, when the Word was with God bringing forth the creation, and not the time of His birth in Bethlehem. In that dim and distant beginning He was the light, and He has been the light ever since, and will be in the ages to come. The Bible tells us of a glorious day where there is no need of the sun nor the moon to give light. "And 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" (Rev. 21:23). "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light" (Isa. 60:19). Christ was the true light in the beginning when the divine fiat was proclaimed: "Let there be light!" But when God subjected the earth to this period we call time, it began with the creation of the sun and the moon. And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years" (Gen. 1:14). These were "lights" indeed, but they were not THE TRUE LIGHT, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world!

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 one substance with it, so the Son is THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS SUBSTANCE (Heb. 1:3) and is Himself called "the Mighty God." It is all important that we know the glory of Jesus. The more the soul is filled with that glory, and worships Him in it, the more it will see with what confidence it can count upon Him to do a divine and supernatural work within us, and lead us to an actual living out of the glory of the Son in our lives. 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, takes 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.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). Now we are confronted with something else - two of the simplest things in the world: light and life. ZOE and PHOS are
the two words in the original language. From ZOE we get zoology, the study of life; and from PHOS we get photo or anything that is built on it, such as photograph - it is light. These two things are so common, we take them for granted. Life - we see it everywhere. There may be a great deal of life right where you are at this moment. You go out in the woods and you see the same thing - life. It greets you on every hand; but can you explain it? You see in the Tabloids headlines from time to time announcing that men have now discovered the source of life. But if you read them, you find that they have not found the source at all, though they think they are close to it. They put the microscope down on a green leaf. One moment that little cell is arranged one way and is dead as a doornail. The next moment the thing is rearranged in another way and it is alive. And then the thing starts growing and doubling, dividing and multiplying itself. Why does it do that? Life!

I often wondered how it could be that God was omnipresent; that He could be everywhere at once, as the Psalmist said, "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 my 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" (Ps. 139:7-10). God can be everywhere, and fill the universe with Himself because the glory of God is the RADIATION of His Light-being into the whole kosmos. God is likened to a SUN, so that bright orb that shines out there in space is a type of God. Let us consider this for a moment.

It is interesting to note that God did not do away with the darkness altogether, rather He separated the light from the darkness, calling the light "day" and the darkness "night" (Gen. 1:4-5). Darkness, in a measure remained, and still does. Isaiah tells us that in the end days darkness shall cover the earth, and great darkness the people. He is speaking here of spiritual darkness, of those people and realms that have not been exposed to the TRUE LIGHT. Though this condition has existed since the beginning, thank God! it shall not continue forever, for He who is the true light shall chase away altogether the darkness, and nothing but the true light will fill God's vast universe. In I Jn. 2:8 we read this assuring statement, "Yet I am writing you a new commandment, which is true in Him and in you, because THE DARKNESS IS PASSING AWAY and the true light is now shining" (R.S.V.). Thank God, the darkness is passing away like the night before the penetrating rays of the dawn. He who separated the light from the darkness in that beginning, because the darkness comprehended not the light, shall obliterate completely the darkness from the new creation. "Behold, I make all things new." There will be no darkness in it at all, for God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. And when the final chapter is written, when the curtain comes down on the closing act of the grand drama of creation and redemption, God will be ALL IN ALL.

Light is life, darkness is death. Whenever we read of light it always speaks to us of life; when we read of darkness it bespeaks of death. Light is that which dispels the darkness. When one brings a light into a dark place the darkness flees, because, you see, darkness is a negative thing, it is really nonexistent; it is just the absence of light. Provide the light and the darkness is gone. I have often wondered why the light in the beginning didn't do away with the darkness; the darkness remained. Why didn't the darkness disappear, when the light came on the scene. If you turn on a light in a dark room the darkness is gone. Where did it go? It didn't go out the door nor through the window. It didn't go anywhere because it is a negative, a no-thing. So why didn't the Light in the beginning dispel the darkness? The answer, of course, lies in the counsels of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. God in His infinite wisdom planned to separate
the light from the darkness, causing light and darkness, day and night to co-exist side by side, that through the progression of the ages He might reveal to the entire creation the awesome ability of the light to conquer the darkness. This is a great lesson, and once every being in all realms has learned it well, none will ever seek the darkness again.

This is a great mystery, but the present creation was created on a level of death, and death was from the very beginning, and still is, the state of being of the physical world. As long as darkness exists death will hold its power. Even before man graced this blue-green orb, death was in the universe; and this is why we see darkness as the first condition of creation in Gen. 1:2. And God didn't do away with all the darkness, He ordained the night to remain. This meant that death remained in the creation. So everything of this gross material realm, when it was brought-forth from the hands of the Creator, had the potential of death in it. Death was a built in factor in all things. But included in God's great and eternal purpose is the abolition of darkness and death; and the Almighty, in working out His plan, is doing just that. When He has finished His marvelous purpose there will be no darkness nor death anywhere in the unbounded heavens. "The last enemy that shall be DESTROYED is death" (I Cor. 15:26). But destroyed it will be; and the Son, who is the Light and the Life, is the One ordained to perform this great task.

When God separated the light from the darkness in the beginning, He called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. We are also told that He made two great lights, one to rule the day and the other to rule the night. Man with his limited carnal understanding has restricted this to our solar day and lunar night, and to the sun and the moon. But our almighty Father had something infinitely higher in mind than this! These are mere types and shadows of reality. There is a greater spiritual meaning to all this. There is a REALM OF LIGHT and a REALM OF DARKNESS in creation which has nothing to do with our solar day and lunar night. They are realms in the spirit, and we can be inhabitants of either. The realm of light is ruled over by the Son of God, the Sun of Righteousness, who is THE LIGHT; and the realm of darkness is ruled over by Satan, the Prince of darkness. Paul, in writing to the saints at Thessalonica, stated, "Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:5). There are many other passages where we read of the children of light, the children of the day; and the children of the night or of darkness. So we can be either children of the Day, or children of the Night. We can either walk in light, or walk in darkness; it all depends on who we are following. Jesus spoke this beautiful truth: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have THE LIGHT OF LIFE" (Jn. 8:12). As we follow the Lord we will have the Light of Life, for He is the LIGHT and the LIFE.

As we consider this world in which we live, we see that all of the physical light we have here springs from the sun in our sky. Take away that orb and darkness would soon cover the earth. All vegetation would droop and die as it turned yellow, then brown and black and crumbled into the earth. Soon after that all animal and human life would have the same fate. The verdant creatures which grace the surface of the earth have been created to live in light. No one who has ever seen the sickly color of some plant that has struggled for life in semi-darkness can fail to miss the contrast between the green thing which grew in the sunshine, and the pale travesty which grew in the shade. In total darkness every man would become blind within three days, and death would follow shortly after.
The life that we know comes from the sun. In the same way, Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness. The reason for the decay and death that we have all around us is due to a lack of righteousness. Sin! Sin is the lack of rightness, or righteousness. When man sinned, death entered his world. It is what the apostle Paul referred to as "the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Because of this inexorable law of sin and death mankind, upon Adam's disobedience, fell into the corruption of the world around them. The scientific term for that is ENTROPY. It is known as the second law of thermodynamics, and it states very simply that all things in the universe are moving toward greater randomness, toward decay and dissolution. Thus, according to the scripture, the entire "creation was made subject to vanity - frailty and futility" (Rom. 8:20). The earth itself began to "wax old, as doth a garment" and ultimately "shall perish" (Heb. 1:10-12). Since all flesh is made of the earth's physical elements, it also is subject to the law of decay and death and as "grass, withereth ... and falleth away" (I Pet. 1:24). It is universal experience that ALL THINGS, living or nonliving, eventually wear out, run down, grow old, disintegrate, and pass into the dust.

This condition is so universal that it was formalized about a hundred years ago into a fundamental scientific law, now called the Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law states that all systems, if left to themselves, tend to become degraded or disordered. Physical systems, whether watches or suns, eventually wear out. Organisms grow old and die. Hereditary changes in species are caused by gene mutations which in many cases have resulted in deterioration or extinction of the species itself. The astounding fact is that there is no reason known to science why things should grow old other than the second law of thermodynamics which simply describes a universal fact that takes place everywhere, from the smallest atom to the greatest sun. Entropy controls all things, and entropy is nothing other than THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH which bespeaks a lack of righteousness which is God's way of saying that in a universe made by God, the all-holy One, unrighteousness cannot be allowed to have permanent existence. Thank God! there is a counterlaw, a transcendental law, THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS. Christ Jesus, the Righteous One, came into this world and was declared to be the Son of God according to THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS" (Rom. 1:4) and was raised from the dead BY THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS. Can we not see by this how HOLINESS is linked to LIFE and UNRIGHTEOUSNESS is connected to DEATH? The law of entropy CAN be broken! The second law of thermodynamics CAN be transcended! The law of sin and death CAN be superseded! "How?" you ask. "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. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:13,2). Therefore, it is the Christ who rises, the Sun of Righteousness. He brings light and, with light and illumination, He brings life; the spirits that were drooping and lives that were dying and bodies that were corrupting because of unrighteousness and sin begin to lift up and revive and LIVE AGAIN.

Though the sun is over ninety-three million miles out there in space, it radiates light, heat, energy and life to everything on the earth. The nature of the sun is that of light, heat and energy, and it radiates itself into all our solar system. Even though it is so distant from us, if it weren't for our atmosphere, the light and heat would burn everything to a crisp in a matter of minutes. How much farther its radiation would go, I have no idea, but it could travel an inestimable distance into space. The sun supplies us with light, heat, energy and life that is needed to support life on this planet. Without it no life could exist on this earth. The sun is the source of all this. God is a SUN, and what the sun is to the earth, God is to the creation. He is the life, the light, the energy that pervades and radiates.
through the universe, on all levels and in every realm, supporting and sustaining all things. Just as our sun radiates itself into our solar system, and supports and sustains natural life on this planet; so God radiates Himself into the entire universe to support and uphold and give life to everything He has created.

In that age of antiquity when the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, the time came for our heavenly Father to bring forth His image in creation. "Let there be light," was the Word of the Lord, and there WAS LIGHT - not the light of the sun, for the sun was not given His command until the fourth day, but the light that shone was that TRUE LIGHT, even the light of God's Christ (Gen. 1:4). If I may add this thought, we must conclude that ALL LIGHT is God's light, even the light that shines from the sun, the moon or the stars. We call it natural light, but can we be wrong in concluding that even natural things are also from the hand of God - spirit lowered in vibration to the material plane?

The pen of a ready writer has written these words of wisdom and understanding: "Our little minds can but dimly grasp the wonderful transformation that took place when the Spirit of God began to move on the face of the deep. The water, of course, was ice because there was neither light nor heat. That was the true ice age, of which men of science often speak. But now the Spirit of God was moving upon the deep, dividing darkness from light, dispelling the bitter cold, melting the endless snows and the timeless ice, to make the dry land appear that both vegetable and animal life could spring forth at God's command to live and thrive. Thus it is written, 'Thou sendeth forth THY SPIRIT; THEY ARE CREATED: and Thou RENEWEST the face of the earth' (Ps. 104:30). What a marvelous transformation was taking place in that natural creation as OLD THINGS began to pass away and all things became new! Gone was the darkness, the death, the snow, the ice, and the dreadful cold, and in its stead bustling life and bubbling song filled the whole earth. The earth, that was without form and void, and the gross and terrible darkness that covered it like a shroud is the Lord's symbolic picture of the condition of unregenerate man. The description given in Gen. 1:2 - the earth was WITHOUT FORM and VOID and darkness was upon the face of the deep - is an apt and accurate description of the spiritual condition of a man outside of Christ, unconverted, unregenerate, and not born again. The word VOID conveys the meaning of emptiness, destitution, unoccupied, of no effect. What more accurate picture could be given of an unregenerate man as he lives without God or hope in the world? The earth was "without form" before the Spirit of God moved upon it, and darkness - gross, outer darkness - was upon the face of the deep. O man of the world, is not this a picture of your life without God? What form or shape can be given to such an emptiness as a life lived without the Lord? Darkness hangs like a pall over the soul that is dead in trespasses and sins, and, should one gain the whole world and lose his soul, it would profit him nothing at all. Moffatt in his translation of Prov. 4:18-19 has so significantly stated, 'The course of bad men lies through darkness dim. They cannot see what makes them stumble; the course of good men, like a ray of dawn, shines on and on to the full light of day'" -The Page.

We are told that when a man gets away from this earth a short distance, he is in total, absolute darkness, and it is frightening to be out where there is nothing from which the sun can be reflected. Our little globe is out in a dark universe, yet that is nothing compared to the spiritual darkness that envelopes it. When the sun disappears, there is physical darkness over the land; but twenty-four hours a day there is spiritual darkness here, awful spiritual darkness. Man does not know God; man is in rebellion against God; man is in sin that blinds him to God. In the Lord Jesus Christ there is life, and the life that
He gives is the LIGHT of men. In fact, His life is the only thing that can kindle light in the heart of an individual. An unregenerate man has no spiritual life within him. This is the reason that when you present to him Jesus Christ, he says, "I don't get it. I don't understand that at all."

The light shines in the darkness of this world at this moment. I have a notion that somebody reading these pages is saying, "Why is that preacher talking about being in Spiritual darkness? I understand everything." No, unless you know Jesus Christ as your life and light, you do not understand, and even then you understand only in that measure and to the degree that you truly KNOW HIM. The Spirit of God has to open your heart and mind and enlighten you before you can ever see Him as the light of life. May I say to you, friend, this world is in spiritual darkness. John stated it this way. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn. 1:5). Understand this, O man, and you will know a great mystery. The word "comprehend" is an unfortunate translation. And a wiseacre did not help it by rendering it, "and the darkness was not able to put it out." That is no translation at all. The word in the Greek is KATELABEN, meaning actually "to take down." It is the picture of a secretary to whom the boss is giving dictation, and she stops and says, "I can't take that down, I am not able to take it down." The light shines in darkness and the darkness is not able to take it in. Barriers have been erected. That is it exactly. Someone said to me, "Boy, was I in darkness before I received Christ! And I don't know why I didn't see." well, that is it - you were in darkness and you did not see. Barriers of sin, ignorance, and unbelief were set up; the darkness just could not take it in.

Nor, may I add, can the religious darkness of carnal-minded Christians "take down" the glorious light of revelation truth that shines so brilliantly into the minds and hearts of those who follow on to KNOW the Lord. The natural man CANNOT understand the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are SPIRITUALLY discerned. In all matters of revelation and spiritual understanding it is impossible to overestimate the absolute necessity of the sovereign and omnipotent moving of the Holy Spirit upon the darkness of our deep, who comes to take the things of God and show them unto us. Two worlds exist all about us - the natural world and the spiritual world. The natural realm is the realm of man, but the spiritual realm is the realm of God. When God's appointed hour comes for a man to be quickened, illumined and given understanding, He sends the Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness of the natural mind that ever hangs as a cloud about us that He may reveal to our wondering eyes the things that are real and true and eternal. It is "when He the Spirit of truth has come" that men are guided into all truth.

Again I share from the words of another, "It is He, the Holy Spirit, who, after revealing TRUTH to our darkened hearts, miraculously transforms the believer into the very truth he sees. The Spirit of God reveals to the believer's heart what the truth of God is and what the mind and will of God is and having done so, He makes him PARTAKER of the truth so that he, by beholding the truth, actually BECOMES the truth he beheld. He reveals salvation to us and we become THE SAVED. He reveals His plan of redemption and we become THE REDEEMED. He reveals His eternal purpose of sonship and we become the SONS OF GOD. These things concern His heavenly calling. As a flower opens to the light of the sun, so eternal purposes unfold in the light of the Holy Spirit and we, seeing and believing them, embrace them and become partakers of them" -end quote.

LIGHT BODIES
"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. 1:3). And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also" (Gen. 1:14,16).

I would draw your reverent attention to the words here used for light. The Hebrew text of Gen. 1:3 says, "Ye hi or: wa ye hi or." The nearest to a literal translation our language will permit is to say, "Light be, and light was;" or even better, "Exist light, then exists light." Our English word, light, appears again in the English translation of the Bible in the plural form in the fourteenth verse, God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night." There is, however, a vast difference between the word for light, the substance, in verse three, and the one translated lights in verse fourteen. In verse three the Hebrew word is OR, while in verse fourteen the word is MA-OR. This latter word is best translated as luminary; light container; or light holder; and these light holders are placed about throughout His universe like street lights in a big city. We have the same distinction in the Greek where PHOS appears as light, the essence, and PHOSTER as the word for a light container. The MA-OR, then, are the great luminaries such as the flaming suns, and even their reflecting satellites called moons, the meteors, and the nebulae; but OR itself is the very substance and being of light.

In the Old Testament symbology the Hebrew word used for light, as standing for the Person of Christ our Lord, is OR, and in the New Testament the Greek word for light, as applied to the Person of Christ, is PHOS. The significance of this is noted when we see that the characteristic word for the body of Christ in the New Testament is PHOSTER, or light holder. Jesus Christ then is the Light and we are the luminaries which contain or shine forth the Light. The most significant appearance of this word in connection with the children of God is Phil. 2:15, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, THE SONS OF GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, AMONG WHOM YE SHINE AS LIGHTS (phoster: light holders; luminaries) IN THE WORLD." This word is comparable to the luminaries of the Old Testament, the MA-OR or the light containers. In Rev. 21:10-11 we find, "And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God: and her light (phoster) was ... clear as crystal."

As we consider this truth we should especially notice in reference to men, that II Sam. 23:3-4 reads, "He that ruleth over men... shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth." And in II Sam. 21:17 we find David the king called, "the light of Israel." This same meaning is found in II Kings 8:19, "Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David His servant's sake, as He promised him to give him always a light, and to his children." In Mat. 13:43 we find concerning saints who are to be kings and priests and rule with Christ, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

LIGHT-BEARERS! Friends, Christ is the light, the light is within, it must break through, it must ARISE, it must have pre-eminence in our hearts. The glory of God is the emanation or radiation of His nature, and this glory surrounds Him. As we become partakers of the divine nature, we will also radiate the glory of His nature. This is the real purpose of our calling. The Christ within, not another man's revelation, nor another man's faith, but your own INDWELLING LIGHT enables you to manifest as one of God's light bearers. Other people can follow the wandering stars and the falling stars, vainly chasing after the illusive light within them, but, praise God, there is a people in whom the God of light is being birthed and formed, partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, a new life found within - a new star in God's spiritual universe BECOMING. Each and every son
of God must ultimately come to that place where all his need is fully met by the INNER SUFFICIENCY of the indwelling spirit of life, not from that which stands without.

We cannot deny, while for the child of God the light is growing brighter and brighter day by day, yet for the world in general it is becoming darker with every passing hour. But God is not going to leave the world swallowed in darkness, He is preparing HIS MESSENGERS OF LIGHT, HIS CELESTIAL LUMINARIES will be established in His heaven, and they announce by their shining a new age to come, when light shall be upon every man. The SIGN COMPANY (Gen. 1:14) which heralds the new creation of God shall be made manifest. Yet what an humbling, purging, purifying process must be accomplished in this company ere God will exalt them in "due" time! Ah, He must thoroughly teach us complete submission to HIS WILL so that we know it is by DIVINE GRACE ALONE, and never anything in ourselves that will give us this position. If you try to shine in God's heaven without first having been filled with Him who IS THE LIGHT OF LIFE, you will fail. Those religious ones, those great ones, those "big names" who streak across the sky in a vain effort to arouse the attention of the world, end in darkness and defeat. They are but meteorites, burning out as they fall through the atmosphere of earth. But in His time GOD PLACES in proper position HIS LUMINARIES that shall shine with the glory of God for the ages.

LIGHT-BEARERS! These are known collectively as ZION, for "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined" (Ps. 50:2). God hath shined - literally, caused to shine. It means much more than just the fact that out of Zion GOD IS SHINING. He is Light, He is always shining. But more specifically, He will cause the light to shine out through His Zion company. Divine radiance will find its expression through this people. Those who shall stand with the Lamb on the mount of Light (Rev. 14:1) shall be vessels, light-holders, luminaries, light-bearers, through whom God shines.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the 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). There is a people UPON WHOM OUR GOD IS ARISING. He isn't going to arise in the skies of the physical heavens, as the church-world ignorantly expects, but UPON HIS PEOPLE. "For the Lord shall arise upon THEE, and His glory shall be seen upon THEE." His glory will not be seen streaking across the physical heavens, BUT UPON HIS PEOPLE. Darkness does cover the earth and great darkness the people, but in spite of the abounding desolations, we live in the most glorious hour of all time for the people of God; for we have been selected by God to be priests with Christ in the grand task of bringing reconciliation, restitution, and restoration to the whole fallen world order. Nothing that man has done has so desolated the world that it is beyond hope. On the contrary, when we see sin and darkness all about us, let us be encouraged by the divine principle, "But where sin abounded, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND" (Rom. 5:20).

In the very midst of all this darkness upon the land and gross darkness upon the people, God is arising upon His chosen ones. How joyful we are that God, who is the Light, gets right down where the darkness is. He does not come from afar to dispel the night, but "God ... commanded the light to shine OUT OF DARKNESS" (II Cor. 4:6). First, God has met us right where we are, the dawning of God's day has blazoned our sky and made us a body of light to usher in a new day for all creation. The brightness of our rising brings the dawning of the new day. As we shed His glory abroad, we are lights in humanity's sky.
- so let no shadow of self keep your light from shining, but be one of God's scintillating stars.

I cannot do better than quote the true and eloquent words of Ray Prinzing: "In James 1:17 we read of 'The Father of LIGHTS.' As to His Fatherhood, Light can only beget light. And since HE IS The Light, then He begets lights. Wuest's Expanded Translation brings out that He is the Father of 'heavenly luminaries.' And it is of 'His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures' (James 1:18). The firstfruits of His creatures are AS HE IS, namely, they are to be LIGHTS.

"In giving further description to our 'Father of lights,' the Amplified records, in verse seventeen, 'in Whom there can be no variation (rising or setting) or shadow cast by His turning (as in an eclipse)." It seems that far too much of our past experience portrayed us as just being little 'moons,' only reflecting some of His light to earth, to men. And there have been so very many eclipses! There are two important kinds of eclipses with which we are familiar. There is the SOLAR eclipse, when the moon comes between the sun and the earth, then the only light is that which shines out around, and in spite of the moon. Any time a ministry, or vessel so being used, comes between THE SON and the earth, then we surely have an eclipse, and the only light mankind receives at such a time is that which shines out around that ministry or vessel, literally in spite of that one. Oh, may God help us not to become guilty of eclipsing the light which needs to be shining upon men today. When our ministry, our doctrine, our traditions, which we think are reflecting the light of God to men, come in the way, and stand between God and man, then the true light is eclipsed.

"The other most familiar kind of eclipse is referred to as a LUNAR eclipse, when we have a situation wherein the earth comes between the moon and the sun. When our own earth (flesh) gets in the way, then HIS OUTSHINING again is eclipsed, and the light is veiled from view. We have received a blessing from the Lord, and we would pass it along to others, but when our flesh gets in the way, the real light of the blessing does not reach those with whom we would share. But we are not interested in just being 'moons' to serve as some kind of 'reflector' of our Lord. This makes a good illustration for the point of eclipses, but we truly desire to BECOME ONE IN THE SUN, to possess His nature of light, and to have that inherent quality of light within. Praise His name, He shall bring a people into that state of being where there is FULL LIGHT. A very important part of the process is to bring us into ONENESS until we no more walk in duality, partaking of both good and evil, for 'when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light' (Lk. 11:34)." -end quote.

We are appointed to shine as the sun. We have now come to mount Zion, to the city of the living God as a shining scene of great splendor and brightness and dazzling beauty. It is not our desire to merely see the light, or tell of it, or paint it, or live in it as fine as all that is. We must BECOME THE LIGHT. "YE ARE the light of the world." "YE ARE light in the Lord." How unworthy and unprepared for such a calling we feel betimes! But, precious friend of mine, you may be poor, despised, unlettered; but if, through grace, there is a link connecting you to the Sun of Righteousness, "the light of the world," then you are, in very deed, a son of the day, and destined, ere long, to shine in that celestial sphere, that region of glory, of which "the Lamb" will be the central sun forevermore. This is not your own doing. It is the result of the counsel and operation of God Himself, who has given you the light of life, joy and peace, triumph and glory, in Jesus Christ. But if you are a total stranger to the hallowed action and influence of divine light, if your eyes have not
been opened to behold any beauty in the Son of God, and no attraction to that place by His side, then, though you had all the learning of an Einstein, though you were enriched with all the treasures of human philosophy, though you had drunk in with avidity all the streams of human science, though your name were adorned with all the learned titles which the schools and universities of this world could bestow, though you were piously devoted to the grandest creeds, traditions, rituals, ceremonies and service of the revered religious systems of earth, yet you are A SON OF THE NIGHT, A SON OF DARKNESS; and are just as dark, just as void, just as formless and empty, just as dead as was the desolate earth, from which you came, before that memorable day in which God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

**HIS IMAGE IMPRESSED**

This study would not be complete without suggesting that there is another word for light in the Greek text of the New Testament which appears in text only twice. This word is PHOTISMOS, and we read it in II Cor. 4:4-6, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the LIGHT (photismos) of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT (photismos) of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This word is the basis of our modern term PHOTOGRAPH, and this is the literal implication of the text.

Photography is a way of recording a scene by the creation of an image by light. Light travels in a straight line at the speed of 186,000 miles a second. When light hits something it bounces back - or is absorbed. If it bounces back to your eye, the object looks bright. If it is absorbed, the object looks dark. When you snap the shutter of your camera, this permits the light that bounces back from a scene to pass through the lens of the camera to the film at the back of the camera. The film at the back of your camera is a sensitive silver screen. Units of light strike it and leave an invisible record, a "latent image." Each unit, sent to its proper spot by the lens, adds a little to the pattern of light - thus reproducing the scene the lens sees, impressing the picture image on the film. Light has literally taken the image of the thing being photographed and transferred that light-image onto the film. Later on, chemical development makes the "latent image" visible. According to II Cor. 4:6 the face of Jesus Christ is literally PHOTOGRAPHED UPON OUR COUNTENANCE to become our light and glory, and the face we show to the world should be the ILLUMINED COUNTENANCE made so by the light of God impressing the image of Jesus Christ upon us!

The light that creates this image upon us is THE LIGHT OF LIFE, that same incorruptible LIFE which erupted as LIGHT before the astonished eyes of those chosen disciples who climbed with Christ to the invigorating heights of the mount of Transfiguration. We are told in Mat. 17:2 that "He was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as light." In the ninth chapter of Mark, we are told that "His garments became glistening," which, in the Greek means "to lighten forth, flash forth like lightning." Within that form that was marred more than the sons of men, dwelt glory ineffable. As He prayed upon the mount of Transfiguration, He opened a little way the robe of humanity with which He had covered Himself when He came down to earth, and His majesty and glory burst forth!
The glory of the transfiguration was the momentary unveiling of the glorious heavenly light that is brighter than ten thousand suns. It was in truth the manifestation of the light of life promised by our Lord to those who follow Him (Jn. 8:12). It shone from His face. It glistered from His garments. It surrounded Him like a halo. It radiated out from Him with blazing brilliance brighter than any noonday - the light that swallows up all darkness and death of the carnal realm. This was resurrection life, kingdom life, incorruptible life. And, beloved, this beautiful picture tells us what OUR INCORRUPTIBLE BODIES WILL BE, the radiant light of life that Christ Himself actually is. When Jesus burst out of the tomb in resurrection He came forth in the full brilliance of divine light of life. In this glory Paul saw Him in his Damascus vision, a light brighter than the noonday sun (Acts 26:13-14), and in this way John beheld Him in the wonder of the Patmos vision (Rev. 1:16). And this, beloved, is the glory the saints will possess when the fullness of His light of life has been experienced in spirit, soul and body. And in those blessed SONS OF LIGHT will be fulfilled this marvelous promise, "Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat. 13:43). Amen!
Chapter 19
The Coming Of The Sun
Of Righteousness
(continued)

"Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). "For as the lightning (bright shining; sun) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mat. 24:27).

In order that we may get a correct understanding of this verse and its momentous spiritual vision, we must give consideration to the word translated "lightning," since this translation has given rise to a most erroneous concept of the coming of Jesus. It has led Christian people, almost without exception, to look forward to that blessed event as an instantaneous affair, which shall flash suddenly across the heavens and startle the world with its vividness. But nothing could be farther from the truth and nothing could have befogged our vision more. The Greek word translated "lightning" in this passage is ASTRAPE. The meaning, as given in Strong's Concordance, is "lightning; by analogy, glare; bright shining." So we see at once that scholarship recognizes this word as meaning a "bright shining" of light which might arise from a source other than a flash of lightning. It is so used, in fact, in Lk. 11:36 where we read, "If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the BRIGHT SHINING (ASTRAPE) of a CANDLE doth give thee light." Therefore, any BRIGHT SHINING light could fulfill the meaning of ASTRAPE.

Let us now pose a question. Does "lightning," as we understand the English word, always "come out of the east and shine unto the west?" Does it not flash from north, south, east or west according to the location of the clouds which are charged with either positive or negative electricity? And yet, the "bright shining" here spoken about is expanded to shining "from the east even unto the west." Again, if the coming of the Lord is portrayed by "lightning," it would be only in limited areas and over only portions of the earth from time to time. Lightnings' brief flash penetrates the darkness only for a moment. Such a coming of the Lord could portray merely a very limited appearing or manifestation of His presence. Let us no longer be children in understanding!

But, I ask, what light does ALWAYS come out of the east and shine even unto the west? Does not the light of coming day arise always in the east, gradually brightening the horizon until the sun becomes visible and its rays illumine the eastern sky and "spread as a carpet" over the countryside, city and hill, bathing all in its warmth and beauty as it shines even unto the west? Has not our Lord Jesus been likened unto the "Sun of righteousness" to "arise with healing in His wings?" And the Psalmist hath declared, "The Lord God is a SUN... the Lord will give grace and glory" (Ps. 84:11). Praise God, the Sun
of righteousness has arisen in our heart and He giveth grace and glory for if we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (Jn. 1:14). The light of that Sun has shined brightly into our darkened soul and is bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel. Dear reader, you may have Him flashing for a brief moment across your cloudy, dark, stormy earthly sky if you so choose, but we are glad to see Him with SPIRITUAL EYES and behold His grace and glory as it spreads over the whole world of mankind from east to west until it shall embrace the whole human race, bringing warmth and beauty and life where all was, and still is largely, spiritual darkness and death. Yes, dear friends, His coming, His presence is not to be an instantaneous, brilliantly blinding light flashing across the natural heavens from any local quarter as the word "lightning" might and does incorrectly portray; but His coming, His presence, has been, is now and shall be like the DAWN OF A NEW DAY that constantly increases from the first faint rays of spiritual light until the soul and body of the individual are flooded with the noonday brightness of the blessed Sun of righteousness. And so it shall be universally until that light has brought every created being into subjection to our Lord and He shall reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet, for "the entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). Shine on, 0 King eternal!

FROM EAST TO WEST

The first rays of dawn are seen in the eastern sky, and then the light steadily progresses toward the west. So also is the presence of the indwelling Christ, as He illumines us in a beautiful, progressive manner - so that "the path of the uncompromisingly just and righteous is like the light of the dawn, that shines more and more - brighter and clearer - until it reaches its full strength and glory in the perfect (to-be-prepared) day" (Prov. 4:18, Amplified).

In Gen. 3:24 God gives us the first symbolic portrayal of the "east." "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." When Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden of Eden, God placed a flaming sword to guard the entrance of the garden and the way in to the tree of life, and it turned every way so that no one could enter in from any direction without encountering that sword, and you will observe that He set it at the EASTERN GATE of the garden. Why is this so important? Because there is a vital message in this inspired record. If the gate to Eden was located at the east, obviously entrance into the garden carried one in a westerly direction. Man’s banishment from the garden of Eden, his exile from the life and glory of God was a journey eastward. The message is clear - should Adam seek a re-entry into the garden, he could either return through the sword, as he moved with the processings of God in a westerly direction, or, he could continue in his state of selfhood, independence and rebellion and continue the eastward migration which would carry him farther and farther away from the tree of life. When God drove man from the portals of that heaven-blest Eden, eastward, He was moving him away from the glory of God in the tree of life. So it is our desire, therefore, to turn westward BACK TO THE TREE OF LIFE.

CAIN'S JOURNEY EASTWARD

Although Adam was corrupted by sin, he was still living in the presence of God. Not only did man know God's presence in the garden, he also experienced God's presence outside the garden, for it was there that Abel and Cain both made their offerings, and God even spoke to Cain about his slaying his brother. So, although man was corrupted
by sin, he had not left the presence of God to walk out the ultimate of his disobedience - total INDEPENDENCE from God, absolute SEPARATION from God. But with Cain's banishment we read, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the EAST of Eden... and he builded a city" (Gen. 4:16-17). This is most interesting! Cain traveled eastward, thus departing from the presence of the Lord. Cain left the place where God had placed His presence, and went his own way into further selfhood, to dwell in the land of Nod. Nod is the Hebrew word for exile, vagrancy, wandering. Exiled from a consciousness of the presence of the Lord to walk independently of God, outside of God, separated from the life, righteousness, joy, peace, faith, wisdom and will of God. This is the symbolic position of the land to the east, in contrast to that which is in the west.

Let us UNDERSTAND! What transcendent spiritual realities lie hidden within a story bearing the musty odor of ancient mundane history! Cain, had it not been for sin, would have been living in the garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, the realm of the Spirit, the sphere of God's divine life, glory and power. In spite of sin, he was still able to know the presence of God, typifying the ANOINTING. Not the inner abiding anointing which is represented by the figure of the tree of life, but that anointing we see in the Old Testament in which the Spirit of God came upon men, working on and through them in special ways and times, but always working from above and without, working inwards. To Cain was given the opportunity to stand justified in the presence of God, under the anointing of God, justified by the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. But now he is found rejecting the provision of the Lord and moving in the opposite direction from the course of the anointing, turning backwards in his walk, in that reverse condition ever moving further and further from the anointing of God's presence.

Cain's final end was that of an exile, a vagrant, living on a territory never intended for him, not in his true inheritance or possession. There, separated from the anointing, the scripture says Cain "dwelt." He "settled" there. Any man who understands the progressive dealings of God knows one thing if he knows nothing else: the anointing of God is ever from glory to glory, and as long as we are short of the FULLNESS OF GOD we must NEVER SETTLE anywhere! Jesus Christ is pictured by the Psalmist as a bridegroom typified by the sun who comes out of his chamber to run a race through the skies (Ps. 19: 4-6). Malachi speaks of Christ as "the SUN of righteousness, arising." Everyone knows, of course, that the "race" of the sun is from east to west. In the scriptures this is the route of SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION - from east to west.

The Sun of righteousness has arisen in this world to run a race, but Cain went in the wrong direction and DWELT THERE! The very condition of settling indicates the loss of the anointing - lost from the on-going purposes of God - for the Son does not settle until He stands on the pinnacle of Mount Zion in the heavenly sphere of life and glory and dominion. But men always "settle" when, following some spontaneous moving and revelation of God, they begin to organize and systematize it, build walls of formulated creeds and dogmas about it, endeavoring to "preserve" it, as though the Spirit who produced the outpouring in the first place had never said, "Let us GO ON TO PERFECTION!" (Heb. 6:1).

After departing from the presence of the Lord Cain "built a city" - founded a rebellious civilization, of which Paul spake when he wrote of this fallen race that they walk "according to the course of THIS WORLD" (Eph. 2:2). The "course of this world" is that which is built by and upon the "wisdom of this world." Of this wisdom James says, "This
wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15). The Bible speaks of "the way of Cain." The way of Cain! With his back to the light, walking away from the tree of LIFE, Cain sought to find satisfaction and fulfillment in SELF. As one has written, "There is an obvious principle in this record - to leave the presence of God, one will build for self. But one cannot build for self as long as they remain in the presence of the Lord, for there they will be immersed in His glory, and fall low before Him to worship at His feet. One cannot worship God and build for self at the same time. Indeed, the Hebrew word for worship literally means: SELF ABASEMENT. 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God' (Ps. 95:6-7)" -end quote. Obviously, then, those preachers who build their fleshly religious empires have already "gone the way of Cain" before ever they commence to "build a city." The eastward journey is ever the figure of man's selfhood. How significant, then, the cry of EASTERN PHILOSOPHY: Know Thy SELF!

**ABRAHAM GOES WEST**

Reading on in Genesis, we come to the time following the Flood. It is interesting to note that during the time when "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech," the people JOURNEYED EASTWARD (not "from the east" as the King James gives it). They settled in "the land of Shinar," which is Babylon and is to the EAST OF PALESTINE.

Having journeyed EASTWARD, the people then began to build a tower, which was named Babel, meaning confusion (Gen. 11:1-4). The error of Cain is repeated once more.

God further reveals His plan as it relates to east and west when He called Abraham and selected him to be the father of His purposes in the earth. Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldees, in the area of old Babylon - the EAST. The religions which constituted what today we call Paganism originated in the east. Those religions were for the most part forms of sun-worship, and worship of the moon and the constellations of the heavens. The Chaldeans, like the Persians and most of the ancient nations, were worshippers of the heavens. Sun-worship was their religion, and astrology was, if one might so put it, their theology. The eastern pagan concepts of astrology, divination, psychic phenomena, transcendental meditation, reincarnation, astral projection, etc., etc. today ride upon a crest of popularity unequalled in history. Eastern philosophies are taking the world by storm. Mankind, in his fateful journey eastward, has launched himself into a mystical orbit, where hopefully some answers to life's enigmas can be found. But that which is born of the flesh will always travel eastward, away from the presence, or consciousness of the Lord, into an emphasis upon S-E-L-F REALIZATION, while that which is of the Spirit will guide us from east to west, into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of JESUS CHRIST, progressing until we come into our final appointed resting place IN HIM.

God commanded Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 12:1) to go to a land that He would show him - the land of Canaan. Ur means light - the light of Babylon. But what is the light of Babylon? Is it the light of God? NO! It is the false light of the carnal mind, as the apostle says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself IS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their work" (II Cor. 11:13-15). Abraham was directed to leave the light of
Babylon in order to enter into the Kingdom of God. Leaving Babylon and coming to Canaan is a picture of leaving the darkness of man-made religious systems and coming into the Kingdom of Light where shines the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. When Abraham and Sarah journeyed from Babylon to Canaan they left from the east and went to the west. Isn't that remarkable! When Adam and Eve were banished from the glory of the Lord they were driven eastward. When Cain went out from the presence of the Lord he traveled even farther eastward. But when God inaugurated a RESTORATION, Abraham was required to leave the east and go west. Herein is revealed God's great pattern for RESTORATION!

Abraham had to learn God's ways step by step. In Gen. 12:7-8 we find, "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there built he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he called upon the name of the Lord." Notice, beloved, the direction of the pitching of the camp. Abraham pitched his tent to the east, with Hai to the east and Bethel on the west. Bethel means," the house of God." Hai means "a heap of ruins." When Abraham pitched his tent he was facing Bethel, heading westward, revealing his desire to go towards God's house. The way of ruin, desolation, chaos, destruction and loss the way of the east - lay behind him!

LOT CHOOSES THE EAST

There came a day when the herds of Abraham and his nephew, Lot, had grown to such an extent that there was not grass enough in one place for both of them to feed their flocks. It became evident that they would have to separate from each other as they reached out for new pasture. Abraham was most gracious and gave Lot first choice. And Lot looked over the land from the mountain where they were standing and saw down in the valley the river Jordan flowing between green fields, where the soil was rich. He saw the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah upon the plain, near the head of the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan flows. "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed EAST: and they separated themselves one from the other" (Gen. 13:11). Going east is going your way. Going west is going God's way. Lot was enticed by all those things which appeal to the flesh - the well-watered plains, the life of ease for the flesh, the fleshly excitement, activity and entertainment of the cities - and so he JOURNEYED EASTWARD. It was a calamitous journey ending in fiasco. He departed from his uncle, the man of God, and pursued that which gratified the flesh, moving closer and closer to the city of Sodom, until after a time he was dwelling in the very heart of that cesspool of wickedness, until the day that God pronounced judgment on the whole realm and rained down fire and brimstone from heaven. A great cataclysm took place and when it was over the great cities of the plain lay deep beneath the waters of the Dead Sea!

THE RIVER THAT FLOWS EASTWARD

It is significant, however, that after Lot had separated from Abraham, God said unto Abraham, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever" (Gen. 13:14-15). So tremendous is the promise of God to Abraham, because he would have an eye single to God, that in due time God would give him an inheritance in ALL DIRECTIONS, even to possess the gates of his enemies, and to restore all of that which was eastward, for "in thee and in thy seed shall ALL THE
FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED" (Gen. 28:14). Then "ye shall be a peculiar
treasure unto Me above all people... and ye shall be unto Me a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS" (Ex. 19:5-6). "And hast made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL" (I Cor. 15:25,26,28).

It is a beautiful truth - when the people of God have come into the fullness of all that which awaits them WESTWARD, they will be empowered to bless and restore all of the realm of the EASTWARD, into the light and life and glory of God. It is the healing, life-giving stream that we read about in Ezekiel: "Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house EASTWARD... these waters issue out TOWARD THE EAST COUNTRY, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, THE WATERS SHALL BE HEALED. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, SHALL LIVE: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish" (Eze. 47:1, 8-9).

The beloved Seer of Patmos beheld in rapturous wonder the same blessed scene and described it thus: "And he showed me a pure river of the 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 heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:1,17). In 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 (north, south, east, west). 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 is that it flows OUTWARD.

Jesus identified this great river of God when in the last day, that great day of the Feast, He stood and cried, saying, "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). Thank God that this river now flows! The life of Jesus Christ is flowing as a river out from the throne of God. There is coming an outflow of blessing and life and glory from the body of Jesus Christ, where God is enthroned, that shall utterly eclipse anything we have ever read about in the Bible or in Church history! From the glorious city of God the river shall flow, out of the innermost being of a people filled with all the fullness of God. The body of Christ IS THE TEMPLE of the living God; our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the door; and from under the threshold flow the living waters of the Spirit, ever increasing, both in the individual believer and in that corporate temple of living stones which is built up a spiritual house, an habitation of God through the Spirit. In the symbolism of Ezekiel 47 the waters FLOW EASTWARD, i.e., towards the Kedron, and thence towards the Jordan, and so along the Ghor into the Dead Sea. The main point in the picture (see Eze. 47:3-5) is the rapid augmentation from a petty stream into a mighty river, not by the influx of side streams, but by its own self-supply from the sacred miraculous source IN THE TEMPLE.

Note the progress and increase of these waters: They WENT FORTH EASTWARD (vs. 3), towards the EAST COUNTRY (vs. 8). The prophet and his guide followed the stream
as it ran down from the holy mountains, and when they had followed it about a thousand cubits they went across, to try the depth, and it was to the ankles (vs. 3). Then they walked along on the bank of the river on the other side, a thousand cubits more, and then, to try the depth, they waded through it the second time, and it was up to their knees (vs. 4). They walked along it by a thousand cubits more, and then forded it the third time, and then it was up to their middle - the waters were to the loins. They then walked a thousand cubits further, and attempted to cross it the fourth time, but found it impossible: the waters had risen, so that they were waters to swim in, A MIGHTY RIVER THAT COULD NOT BE PASSED OVER (vs. 5). Ah, these are increasing waters, this river runs constantly, AND THE FURTHER IT GOES THE FULLER IT GROWS! As it is written, "Of the INCREASE of His government and peace THERE SHALL BE NO END" (Isa. 9:7).

This river of life has been flowing ever since Pentecost; we realize that; but soon it shall empty into the mighty oceans of humanity, bringing life and blessing to a dry and parched wilderness. "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Isa. 43:19). We thank God for the taste we have had from the Fountain of living water. But Jesus has promised, "The water that I shall give him shall BE IN HIM A WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). Sad to say, we have been like the fountain in the Song of Solomon, "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (S. of S. 4:12). A fountain! But shut up, sealed, frozen over. Abraham dug many good wells in his day; but after his death we are told that the Philistines had filled them in. Isaac found that he had to dig them again before he could take advantage of the refreshing waters that lay buried under the rocks and dirt and filth which the enemy had tossed into the wells. So it is with the body of Christ, and the fountain which Christ has created in the hearts of His people. All the potentialities of this new life are right in our heart, locked up like the germ-life in the seed.

"RIVERS of living water" is Christ's promise to His people. If men are content with waters up to the ankles, this is not for them. If they are satisfied with waters up to the knees, this is not for them. If waters up to the waist are sufficient, this is not for them. If men are satisfied with a new birth experience, a baptism in the Holy Spirit experience, with gifts of the Spirit and blessings and a comfortable New Testament Church order - such contentment only proves that the Rivers of Living Water have ceased to flow from their souls; for this fountain that Christ places within, if not cluttered up with the mire of the Philistines, is an ever-increasing and inexhaustible supply of divine life and power and glory. Thank God for every measure of truth and life that we have experienced hitherto; but let it flow and grow, child of God - let it surge forward until it becomes a mighty Amazon in this desert-world of sin, sickness, sorrow and death. 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 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 His salvation may be manifested unto all the ends of the earth.

This great river flows into the desert and into the sea - the symbol used is the Dead Sea - the very sea, significantly, whose saline waters COVER THE GUILTY CITIES OF THE PLAIN, whither Lot went when he journey eastward - Sodom and Gomorrah! In its bituminous waters no vegetable or animal life is said to be found. But now death is to give place to life in this great sea of humanity - and the healing properties of these waters are such that the sulphurous, death-pervading lake of Sodom SHALL BE HEALED! Praise God, from His WESTERN GARDEN, His RIVER OF LIFE COMPANY shall flow forth EASTWARD, into all the EAST COUNTRY, the life-giving streams! "And there shall be a
very great multitude of fish." "Follow Me," said Jesus, "and I will make you fishers of men" (Mat. 4:19).

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 in the life-giving powers of the River of Life. These are the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and certainly they have not even entered into the heart of those who fill the pews of the Churches Sunday after Sunday. 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 eternal purposes of God in the realm of the Spirit. These are the things that shall be brought to pass in the age and in the ages to come as the River of Life flows out through the ministry of the sons of God.

THE TABERNACLE

To further illustrate the distinction between the way of the flesh and the way of the Spirit, we read that when Abraham sent away the sons of his concubines, he sent them away from Isaac, "EASTWARD, UNTO THE EAST COUNTRY" (Gen. 25:5-6). And when Balak waited someone to curse Israel, he sent for Balaam who was dwelling "IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THE EAST" (Num. 23:7). The children of Israel, God's covenant people, were continually oppressed by "THE CHILDREN OF THE EAST" (Jud. 6:3,33; 7:12; 8:8-10). Indeed, the scriptures abound with these illustrations of the truth that men of flesh face EASTWARD, or dwell in THE EAST COUNTRY, while the Lord's Spirit-led people are always facing WESTWARD, symbolically and spiritually, towards His fullness and glory. Indeed, "eastern religions" are well named, for they are religions devised by man as he stands at his farthest distance from God. Only as we face WEST spiritually can we properly describe God and His ways.

It is also interesting to note that Israel's Tabernacle in the wilderness was always pitched to face the east (Ex. 27:13-16). The great Temple in Jerusalem was likewise positioned so that the entrance was on the east. Thus, there was always an entrance prepared for those who came from the east seeking after the Lord. That "east to west" speaks of the route of spiritual progression is seen in this beautiful symbolic arrangement with the entrance on the east you automatically turned your back to the east and entered in a westward direction, first into the Outer Court with its brazen altar of sacrifice and brazen laver, and then westward into the Holy Place with its ministry, and finally into the most westward location of all - the Most Holy Place. Even so in our spiritual experience do we walk WESTWARD, coming out of the land of the east, with all its selfhood, its building for the flesh, and its separation from God, beginning at the Outer Court of the Tabernacle to partake of HIS sacrifice, being justified freely by His grace; then into the Holy Place with its ministry, His anointing, His manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, and dimensions of worship wherein HE is exalted; and finally through the veil, until at last we appear before God in the Holiest of all, and there at the mercy seat, with the dazzling light of glory radiating forth, we become like Him, partaking of that divine fullness and those sacred realities for which our heart has long sought after. Moving then from a beginning
experience in God into HIS FULLNESS is, in symbolism, a progression FROM EAST TO WEST.

THE WESTWARD STAR. The wise men at the time of the birth of the Christ-child were living in the east, for, said they, "We have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him" (Mat. 2:1-2). It is evident from a careful study of these words that the wise men were in the east, not the star, and having seen that star from their location in the east, they traveled westward to where the star led them. From Persia, Babylon, and all the countries of the east they came! Leaving the place of man's wisdom, they journeyed westward to behold HIM "Who of God is made unto us WISDOM, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). Leaving all the realms of man's carnal reasoning, all the errors of astrology, all the deceptions of the psychic realm, all the delusions of Eastern philosophy, all the mysteries of the occult, they went westward to seek out HIM WHO IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE (Jn. 14:6).

There is in this hour an insidious intrusion into the ranks of those who have received the call to sonship. I speak of the subtle injection into "sonship teaching" of facets of eastern philosophy which arise from the realm of the SOUL - the carnal, mental realm - and are not of the Holy Spirit. The doctrines of "eastern religion" stand in stark contrast, yes, and in opposition to the truth of the gospel of Christ from the west. These have absolutely nothing to offer the man who has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, transformed in mind and heart by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, quickened and made alive in Him and raised up to share His glory and sit with Him in the heavenly places, far above every principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named in this age and in the ages to come.

None can dispute the fact that those nations of earth which for long centuries have been devoted to eastern religion are today, as ever they have been, lands of INCREDIBLE SPIRITUAL DARKNESS, blinded by ignorance, captives to silly superstitions, devastated by poverty, spread over with squalor, and ravaged by sin, sickness, sorrow and death. Only in those lands where the magnificent display of the grace of God in the saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ has conquered the hearts of men have entire civilizations been blessed, lifted and transformed economically, physically, politically, educationally and spiritually. The Conquering Spirit of Jesus Christ has transformed the hearts of men and the face of nations.

The subtle force of this Conqueror is seen penetrating all the spheres of modern life. His aggressive warfare on the old heathen homes transformed the home, until the Christian home, where woman is queen, rather than the chattel and slave of the man, and where the children are cradled and cultured in love, rises in beauty and glory. He has transformed governments, until today, instead of people being the servants of the kings and presidents, they are the servants of the people. He has transformed the educational institutions, until today the poorest and obscurest child has the opportunity of the highest and most finished education. He has transformed commerce, until the principles of equity and honesty and fairness are those only which the leaders in the commercial world can adapt if they wish to hold their supremacy. The gospel of Jesus brought tenderness and love into the world until today the mentally ill, impoverished, unfortunates, the sick and the maimed, have grand institutions reared for their benefit, to which they can go, and there find warmth and care and protection. Such things as charitable institutions would have been laughed to scorn by the world before Christ came. All of these dramatic
changes, and many others as well, have been wrought by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In stark contrast to the spiritual and material blessings and prosperity of those nations whose God is the Lord, we see the distressed state of those who have served the false gods of the east. The "ascended masters of the east," I am told, have resided in the Himalayas for more than 25,000 years, ostensibly to bless, lift, heal and guide the people into the ways of life and light and blessing. In my opinion, if the nations of India, Tibet, Burma and Afghanistan are the classic examples of the fruit of this long and illustrious ministry - I can get along quite well without them, thank you! Amazing, isn't it, that out of gross pagan darkness come the doctrines of the masters of the far east, transcendental meditation, yoga, ESP, cosmic Christ consciousness, alpha waves, astral projection, telepathy, clairvoyance, reincarnation, karma, etc., and then some would seek to join these unfruitful works of darkness with the glorious LIGHT of the gospel of Christ! Ah, my friend, far too long we have allowed our soul, our mind, to play the harlot with these alluring spirits of the east, which defile our spirits with their sorceries. Harken! ye sons of God. Ere we stand on Zion's holy hill the soul needs to be brought back from the land of its wanderings in the east, to be cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb. You who would be sons of God, you who would rule and reign with Christ, you who would lead the nations unto living fountains of water - I tell you this day that the voice of the Father calls you back from the polluted waters of the east, 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). May the almighty Father cause you to hear His trumpet pealing in your ears, sounding down through all the chambers of your soul's castle. May you see the saber of truth flashing its dazzling light and hear the clatter of the hoofs of the white horse of CHRIST'S TRIUMPH WITHIN as He bounds through your land, delivering from the realms of the world, the flesh and the devil, and bringing us to that place in God where no more do we lean upon anything which the flesh has to offer, no longer trusting in the psychic realms with all their divinations, but we follow on to know HIM who IS our Way, Truth, and LIFE. "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy" (Ps. 43:3-4).

What a beautiful arrangement for spiritual progression. "We have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him." The star seen by the wise men of the east, with all their wisdom, led to the discovery of THE CHRIST, THE WISDOM OF GOD, in what was to them the farther west. Persia was a long way from Palestine; Palestine is a long way from us; but the star that shone from heaven in that far-off day is still guiding the pilgrim feet of the watching few to the lowly place where lies the new-born hope of the world, God's Christ, Head and body. The Christ-child, conceived in the physical womb of a physical woman and then separated from her by a perfectly normal birth, was God's immutable hope of reconciling the world, even as it is written that God was in Christ, RECONCILING THE WORLD unto Himself. Can you not see, precious friend of mine, the rising crescendo of God's almighty purpose? For it is NOW written that Christ IN YOU is the hope of glory, and if I understand God's Christ aright, and God's glory aright, within you, dear child of God, dwells something imperishable, something eternal, something transcendental, something conceived of the Holy Ghost, something God-like, a spark from the Divine Glory that no power shall ever quench. The Christ-child has been born anew in our hearts. The Sun of righteousness has arisen within His people. Hasten where HE leads. Kneel to the Christ who waits expression through your life; bestow your
gifts rich and rare - all you have, keeping nothing back. All creation groans with unutterable longing for Christ to be formed in you, in me.

THE WESTWARD JOURNEY

Throughout the ages past, God has revealed His purpose to bring His people from the realms of carnality and the ways of man unto the fullness of the presence and glory of the Lord. This was to be A PROGRESSIVE WESTERN MOVEMENT. The coming of the Son of man is likened to the rising sun which shines FROM THE EAST EVEN UNTO THE WEST. It is interesting to note in this connection that history corroborates this progressive WESTERN advance of God's dealings with humanity throughout the unfolding ages.

When God created Adam, He put the man in the garden which was located EASTWARD IN EDEN (Gen. 2:8) so that his progress must be WESTWARD. Then the place of God's blessing and glory moved west into Palestine when God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees in the east and planted his seed in the land of Canaan to the west. The first center from whence the glorious light of the gospel of Christ shone forth to the world was Jerusalem. Following the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the center of spiritual activity moved westward into Greece, entered Asia Minor, penetrated Rome. Into the royal palace, with more than royal grace, strode the Conquering Christ. The revelry which aforetime rang through those imperial chambers hushed itself into reverential silence; and the emperor in lowly manner bowed before the flashings of His authoritative demeanor, and solemnly swore to evermore support His throne, and decreed that the religion of Jesus Christ should thenceforth be the religion of this great realm. The centuries rolled by. Slowly descended the gloom of the dark ages. But by and by the glory of God broke forth afresh, unweakened by the deadly embrace of a hollow and lifeless ceremonialism. Luther's voice rang out its clarion notes, and the whole continent of Europe was convulsed by those tremendous and rapid movements which broke down the elaborate formalism and deadly corruption of those dark ages, and set men forth into the clear light of heaven, where they could breathe its own free airs. The Glory Cloud had again moved westward and Germany and Switzerland became the center from which the great power of God shook the world and changed the course of history. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the center continued its western movement to Britain, as the Spirit of God moved in mighty power across the length and breadth of that land in massive tidal waves of revival, converting and transforming untold millions of lives and birthing the Bible Societies and the modern foreign missionary movements. England sent forth missionaries to her colonies which circled the globe and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth. And here we have it still moving west, or coming from the way of the east to America.

America was no accident. As God called the children of Israel to leave their bondage in Egypt, led them across the Red Sea, and into the promised land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, so, three millenniums later, God called our Christian forefathers to leave the tyranny of Europe, led them across the great Atlantic Ocean, to live in free America, truly a land flowing with milk and honey, corn and oil, fruit and grain, and gold, coal and iron and wealth untold.

When Columbus first landed in America, he, with his men, kneeled down on the beach, and consecrated the new country to Jesus Christ. When the French Huguenots, driven from France on account of their devotion to Jesus Christ, landed in the Carolinas, they there on the ocean's beach kneeled, and consecrated the new land to Jesus Christ.
When the Dutch Holland refugees landed on Manhattan Island, they were animated by the same spirit, and bowed down on the sand, and consecrated the land to Jesus Christ. When the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts, they there knelt, and consecrated the land to Jesus Christ. This continent belongs to no other person than Jesus Christ! His Spirit, working in the minds of His followers, discovered it. And He, through them, took possession of it, from the stern and rock-bound coasts of New England, to the sun-kissed slopes of California. Here to these shores flocked legions who acknowledged no submission except to the rule of Jesus Christ.

Here in this new land, born in prayer and faith in God, our heavenly Father has surrounded His chosen people with friendly neighbors to the north and south, and protected them from invasion by wide oceans on the east and west. And from here, God has sent missionaries and raised up preachers, that His Word might be proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the earth, until almost every creature has had the opportunity of hearing the blessed good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God. "Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (Ps. 33:12).

What was God's purpose in leading our forefathers across the ocean to found here the world's greatest nation? Was it that we alone might enjoy the richest land, the highest standard of living, the choicest freedoms, the greatest wealth, the most marvelous inventions that the world has ever seen? NO! When God called His people, the children of Israel, from their cruel bondage in Egypt and settled them in the rich land of Canaan, He had a very definite purpose in mind for them. There, they were to worship and serve Him, only. They were to exalt His great name before the heathen nations that surrounded them. They were to eventually become a blessing to all mankind. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3). God has called the United States of America into existence and given us the riches of this great continent, for the very same and definite purpose. Here, we were to build a nation whose very coin and currency would proclaim to a scoffing, heathen, and humanistic world that "In God We Trust." Here, the Bible was to be read and revered and obeyed. Here, God's ministers and God's people were to be free and unhampered in their allegiance to the Almighty. Here, were to be raised up Churches from which missionaries would go to the uttermost parts of the earth with the message that Jesus Christ came to set men free. Yes, America was appointed to be "God's Country," and we were meant to be God's people. How long until the Glory Cloud moves westward again? I don't know. But today the western progression of God's glorious purposes has brought us to the beautiful land of America.

Above and far beyond these physical realities lies the spiritual truth that we presently see ourselves SPIRITUALLY MOVING WESTWARD toward the Most Holy Place, the place of the fullness and glory of God. May these unspeakably solemn truths find a place of lodging, growth and ever-expanding expression in the lives of all who read these pages. Before concluding this message I would share a quotation from the writings of Paul and Emily Mueller. "In 1851 John Soule coined the phrase: 'GO WEST YOUNG MAN, and grow up with the country.' Horace Greeley picked up that statement and used it extensively in giving advice to young men, and thus the phrase, 'GO WEST YOUNG MAN' became popular. Today a manchild has been born, and from the time of his birth he has heard a still, small voice behind him saying, 'GO WEST YOUNG MAN.' The pleadings of his heavenly Father have been persistent and determined as the young man
was urged to press his way WESTWARD into the Holy of holies. The young man, the
manchild company, is indeed pressing his way WESTWARD and will continue to do so
until he has been perfected and matured and until his Father tells him to turn around and
go EASTWARD to the nations. The deliverance of all creation depends on the sons of
God and the direction they take (Rom. 8:21-22). As we continue to go WESTWARD, we
will ultimately partake of all God's glory and fullness and become a part of the flowing of
God's torrential river of Life" -end quote.

THE LIGHT OF UNDERSTANDING

As we have noted, Jesus explained that His coming would be like a BRIGHT SHINING
which shines FROM THE EAST EVEN UNTO THE WEST. Here, unmistakably, is the
idea of enlightenment. Never has the presence of an earthly king or potentate been so
glorious and all-powerful as properly to be likened to a brightness sufficient to enlighten
the whole world - from the east unto the west. This, however, is true of earth's great and
eternal King, our Lord Jesus Christ. The meaning of these words is evident: Jesus' presence
will enlighten the world. And as light is used in the scriptures to symbolize
knowledge - the knowledge of God - what the Master really told the disciples in symbolic
language was that HE WOULD ARISE AS ENLIGHTENMENT unto all the ends of the
earth until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters
cover the sea (Isa. 11:9).

The sweet singer of Israel penned these significant words: "The entrance of Thy words
GIVETH LIGHT; it giveth UNDERSTANDING to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). The prophet
Hosea, speaking of God, said, "Thy judgments are as the LIGHT that goeth forth" (Hos.
6:5). "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a LIGHT unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). Also in
II Cor. 4:6, Paul declares "For God, who commanded the LIGHT to shine out of darkness,
hath shined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT of the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of God in
the face of Jesus Christ." Can we not understand by this that TRUTH is LIGHT,
UNDERSTANDING is LIGHT, KNOWLEDGE is LIGHT and LIFE is LIGHT. We often
hear someone say, "I got some light on that." They are declaring the reception of
understanding. In like manner, DARKNESS is IGNORANCE. "But if our gospel be hid, it
is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MINDS of
them which believe not, lest the LIGHT of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto
them" (II Cor. 4:3-4).

From the above scripture we know there are TWO KINGDOMS: the Kingdom of God and
the kingdom of darkness, or the Kingdom of LIGHT and the kingdom of darkness. Praise
God, He "hath delivered us from the POWER OF DARKNESS, and hath translated us
into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13). In this world darkness and light, day and
night co-exist. Here in Crystal River it is a bright, sunlit day. On the other side of the world
people slumber upon their beds in the darkness of night. Therefore I learn in the natural a
principle that teaches me a spiritual truth: it is day and night at the same time! These
lines are being read by many thousands of people around the world. Some of you walk in
light and some of you walk in darkness. Some of you walk in spiritual light in different
dimensions, while some of you walk in spiritual darkness in different dimensions. It's a
matter of your UNDERSTANDING. It's not a matter of whether you speak in tongues,
how you were baptized, or rules and regulations of any kind. It is a thing of the SPIRIT, a
condition, a state of being, a spiritual mentality, a KNOWING OF THE LORD IN TRUTH
AND UNDERSTANDING.
Darkness is but the absence of light, or the lack of understanding. Christ Himself IS THE LIGHT OF LIFE. Life comes from light, therefore, if we want to know the condition of life in a man, we must see the state of enlightenment within him. We often think that if a man becomes a little more zealous, his life has grown; or if he is a little more pious, his life has increased. Such concepts are totally incorrect. Life is not in the zeal of man; neither is it in the piety of man. There is only one realm and one source of life, and that is LIGHT. Life rests with light; life comes from light. To determine whether a person has grown in life, we must observe the condition of his INNER ENLIGHTENMENT. Thus, if we want to help others grow in life, we must help them to be enlightened. If they can receive enlightenment from us they can obtain life and grow in life. May God help you to experientially become this day part of His SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS COMPANY. Arise, and shine!
Chapter 20

Coming As The Rain

Every great spiritual reality is presented to us in scripture over and over again, from various standpoints, under various emblems, and like the multi-faceted hues of the diamond, in order to exhibit the truth in its setting with accompanying truths, to make it as real as possible to us, and also in order to reach every individual on his plane of spiritual development and according to his need. Thus the coming of the Lord is set forth in scripture by prophecy, parable, and analogy, to reveal to our longing hearts all the facets, manners, and modes of His appearing and manifestation unto us. Among the various types of our Lord's return is His coming unto us AS THE RAIN.

The world cannot receive the Christ today because it SEETH Him not, neither KNOWETH Him. But to all whose hearts hunger and thirst for the fullness of His presence, power and glory the promise is sure: "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 apostle James, speaking of the coming of the Lord, penned these significant words: "Be patient therefore, brethren, UNTO THE COMING OF THE LORD. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive THE EARLY AND LATTER RAIN. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH" (James 5:7-8). Furthermore, the prophet Zechariah gives us this inspiring admonition of hope: "Ask ye of the Lord RAIN IN THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field" (Zech. 10:1). In that beautiful messianic Psalm, Psalm 72, the sweet singer of Israel intoned these marvelously instructive words about the coming of the King of Glory: "HE SHALL COME DOWN LIKE RAIN upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth" (Ps. 72:6). Little wonder that the scriptures reiterate again and again that the Lord comes WITH CLOUDS; for there can be no rain without clouds, and we are exhorted to ask for rain, via the avenue of clouds (Zech. 10:1).

There has been a general misunderstanding of the Word of God throughout Christendom concerning the truth of the coming of the Lord; for it is clear as we consider all the scriptures on the subject that the Lord's coming is first and foremost a spiritual visitation in the midst of His people. James therefore associates the bestowal of the latter rain with the "coming" of the Lord: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Notice in this passage how the truth concerning the latter rain is sandwiched in between these two statements concerning the "coming of the Lord," for in a very real sense the coming of the former and latter rain IS THE COMING OF THE LORD into the midst of His people. The rain is really the LORD HIMSELF coming upon us.
It is our deep conviction that Christ has appeared to His people as both the "early rain" and the "latter rain," and scattered "showers of refreshing" betwixt and between, throughout this age. Multitudinous and glorious beyond description have been the appearances of Christ as the rain. When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he clearly established the fact that the outpouring of the Spirit at that time was the early rain (Acts 2:16; Joel 2:21-32). During the mighty outpouring of the Spirit in those glory filled years following 1948, the Lord often spoke in prophecy, telling the saints that that visitation of the Spirit was CHRIST COMING TO HIS PEOPLE as the latter rain. All major denominations, including the Pentecostal denominations who were closest to that visitation of the Spirit, rejected that wonderful move of God. And when they rejected that deluge from heaven THEY ALSO REJECTED CHRIST, for it was none other than HE who came to His thirsting people at that time as latter rain.

I have often heard it said by unthinking people and preachers that God has promised a mighty "latter rain" outpouring of the Holy Spirit JUST PRIOR TO THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS. I do not hesitate to tell you that God has promised no such thing. You will not find that concept anywhere in the pages of the Bible. The preachers and teachers of our day are so totally confused and blinded by the carnal traditions and delusive dogmas of the church system, that not only do they fail to behold the glory of Christ when He is revealed, but they cannot even quote scripture correctly. There is no passage of scripture which promises a great world-wide revival BEFORE the coming of Christ. The Word of God is strangely silent about a latter rain which will fall BEFORE the coming of the Lord. Nothing could be clearer from the scriptures than the fact that the rain former and latter, I-S the coming of Christ! Just as the former rain was given moderately by the coming of the Spirit of Christ on the day of Pentecost, so the latter rain is given abundantly in the end of the age to bring forth in the earth HIS IN-CHRISTED SAINTS. Just as the glory filled the typical tabernacle in the long ago when all was complete, so will the glory fill the completed tabernacle of the body of the Christ by His coming as latter rain. How the people of God thirst today for these living streams from heaven!

There are many wonderful truths to embrace, endless revelations to inspire and thrill the heart of man, but you will never be gripped in your spirit by any more inspiring and encouraging than that penned long centuries ago by the prophet Isaiah. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:8-11).

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord." This scripture has been misquoted so many times and has been taken out of context in so many instances, that most of the Lord's people have completely missed its real meaning. Here we see God's way of thinking and walking contrasted with the way humanity is thinking and walking. Here God sets before us the way of the Spirit and the way of the flesh. God walks in the way of Spirit. Humanity walks in the way of flesh. Because mankind walked the way of flesh, God sent His Son, the Living Word, that He might walk this LOW ROAD of flesh with the children, so that, through Him, the children might be given the ability to overcome. As God walks in Christ Jesus, He keeps to the HIGH ROAD and He walks as Spirit.
There are two ways disclosed to us. The ways of God are not our ways. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Now if we stop there it is a hopeless situation. It is hopeless because God says to us that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so is the way of God higher than our way. That is how much higher the way of the Spirit is than the way of the flesh. We cannot attain unto it. If we lift this verse out of context our soul will be cast down, disconsolate and without remedy; our fleshly condition is hopeless, there is no way to attain unto GOD'S WAY. Though we might pass lightly over the verse that follows this, I would urge it upon my reader for your prayerful and reverent consideration. After establishing that God's ways are high as the heavens, the Lord continues: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow FROM HEAVEN, AND RETURNETH NOT THITHER, BUT WATERETH THE EARTH..." (vs. 10). God is teaching a deep spiritual truth with a natural illustration. The rain and the snow come down, and they do not return to the heavens. They do not strike the ground and then leave that ground. We know, of course, that eventually they do go back up in vapor, but there is a work for them to do before that. There is a purpose in the rain and the snow coming down. They come down to "water the earth."

The rain and the snow come down from the heavens to the earth. Just so, the place in which God is, His state of being, is so much higher than we are. In Hosea 6:3 we find that the Lord shall come unto us as the rain, even the latter and the former rain unto the earth. This is the LORD coming to His people as the rain comes to water the earth. This is the One who is higher than us coming down upon us to give us of Himself. It is not God getting in control of our thoughts and our ways, but God coming down in His thoughts and His ways into our earthiness, so that what He is in His high heaven He now BECOMES IN OUR EARTH. The rain and the snow come down from the heaven and do not return to the heaven, but WATER THE EARTH. The rain and the snow water the earth and cause it to bring forth the bud, so that the sower may have seed, and the eater may have bread.

This is why we have the rain and the snow. So that the one who sows the seed may have more seed to sow, and so there is enough left over for those who eat to have their food. The rain and the snow bless and refresh the earth, giving life, and cause it to bud and bring forth and give increase. Now God says, "So, (in just this way) shall MY WORD be that goeth forth out of My mouth. It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Now, to what is God comparing His Word? To the rain and the snow that fall upon the earth to water it, to give life and increase. God is saying that is just exactly what HIS WORD is sent to do and shall do.

God's Word! God's Word coming down from heaven! "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 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. 1:1,14). God's Word will come down from HIS HIGH ROAD, falling upon this lower road of the flesh realm. God's Word, or the Lord Jesus Christ, the Logos, the Living Word of God, will come as the former and latter rain unto His earth, or His people. He shall come upon those who are walking this lower road of the flesh. He will come upon our earth, and He will cause to spring up in our earth the seed of life that He has planted there. We are in the way or road of flesh, but down from that realm of Spirit, from God's way, God's state of being, He is pouring forth HIS VERY SELF upon humanity. God declared that His Word should not return unto Him void. Just as the rain
and snow accomplish their purpose in the earth, so shall God's Word, His anointing, His Christ not return unto Him void, but it SHALL ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSE.

How thankful we are for this! How we praise Him for what He is doing! How marvelous are all His ways! We have talked loudly and long about the rain, but knew so little about it. This rain, this LORD was and is something that is to saturate our very beings and not run off from us. It is to bring forth the purpose of God in our lives. It is to bring forth the life of God within us. It is to produce the nature of God in us. It is to cultivate the wonderful mind of Christ in us. It is to bring God's own heavenly condition and state of being to fruition within our lives. It is heaven coming down to earth and filling it. It is the ascendency of the Spirit within us by first falling upon our earthiness as rain from heaven, then accomplishing within God's great and eternal purpose. Oh, the mystery of it! The wonder of it!

I remember many years ago traveling down a valley in California. Barren, bare, waterless, useless, seemed a great deal of the land to me. Suddenly, however, I came to a belt of great fertility. I said, "Why is this?" "Water," they said. "Where did you get it?" I asked. "There is no water here on this plain to speak of - where did you get it?" They pointed to the beautiful Sierra Nevada, that great range of mountains which skirts that valley and is a continuation of a great range far up. They pointed to the snowy peaks, and they said, "There we get the water." They showed me how they had turned much waterless country into a vast vineyard and orchard. Some of that land sold for many thousands of dollars an acre because it was full of vines and fruit trees and brought in a splendid income. It was water, water brought down from these mountains, that wrought the transformation. I saw fine, strong cattle and lovely plains with green grass, and saw that it was alfalfa. I saw how they channeled the water and made it flow gently over the land, and how they kept it there, until the seed started to grow. They could get several crops a year of that beautiful alfalfa and other grasses. I saw at once, what I had seen in lesser degrees in other lands, the tremendous power of water as a fructifying power. That water came into these dry, barren, waterless plains from the snow-clad mountains which yielded their treasure when the summer sun shone upon them and melted the imprisoned waters, which were then guided and distributed until they gently flowed over all the wilderness wastes, and turned them into fertile fields, lovely gardens, and rich orchards and vineyards.

So it is with the coming of the Lord. All my springs are in Thee, O God! "The river of God is full of water." That river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, is the Spirit of the living Christ of God coming down as rain, and flowing through the river-bed of our earth. In that blessed stream the tree of life is growing. Christ is that tree of life, and the leaves of the tree are the words of God, and they are for the healing of the nations. Blessed be God! The power and immensity of the illustration completely staggers the imagination and floods the soul with indescribable wonder. I was interested in reading an article which contained a quote by a scientist who tells us that sixteen million tons of water fall on this earth every second. It is hard to grasp this statement, isn't it? Sixteen million tons of water fall on this earth every second. How much is that? One billion, three hundred eighty-two million, four hundred thousand tons of it every day. That is just the power and magnitude of THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS THE RAIN UNTO US!

A sister in Christ shares the following vision which is so very expressive and illustrative. "I was before the Lord on the evening of the 8th of July, seeking His face and pouring out
my heart before Him, when suddenly I was There. IN THE SPIRIT I found myself surrounded by a sweet, powerful force of love. It not only surrounded me but invaded me to the inmost part of my being. At the same time it brought with it such a deep sense of peace, of security and of well-being. Jesus was with me. His glory shined all around and upon all. He was just like I had last seen Him and He was just loving me. It was just like being inside a dense, transparent, invisible but tangible cloud of pure LOVE. As I was completely covered in this bright cloud of love it began to rain. It rained and rained and rained. But what a strange rain it was. It was not like rain on this earth because it was not wet at all. It was a heavenly rain. The large drops were like drops of pure crystal lights, or like small diamonds that had life and light inside of them. They fell from above so softly and smoothly like little stars. Although each one gave me such a sense of joy and pleasure, my hands did not get wet. Although of substance, they were still so light and airy and I carried them about in my hand. Jesus showed me that this was His rain of blessing. Later I was so amazed for in the service that night there was a prophetic word concerning the beautiful showers of rain that He was even now sending upon His people. I had been given to see and feel that very rain" -end quote.

TIMES OF REFRESHING

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die ... a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up..." (Eccles. 3:1-3).

The scriptures amply testify that there are seasons in life. We can know the seasons because each one has individual indications of when it is coming. When spring comes, the grass starts turning green and the little roots start putting out their shoots. When summer comes, the flowers bloom. When fall arrives, everything turns orange and brown. Winter brings the cold and snow. You can see the evidence and know what season it is.

Grand and glorious truths lie tucked away in the passage quoted above. "To everything there is a season" certainly applies to the "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). Then there are seasons of apostasy, when men settle down in their own carnal visions, and propagate them. Then in God's own time He breaks forth in brighter light to dispel the shrouding gloom of the static traditions of religion, and raise the people above them, up into HIMSELF. There is a time for these "seasons of refreshing" to be birthed; then when their purpose has been accomplished it is their time to die, and the rain clouds blow away. Now if we can discern the signs of the times we will not try to keep alive something that has come to its death time in the providence of God. "O ye hypocrites," said Jesus to the Pharisees and Saducees, "ye can discern the face of the sky (whether it appears to be bringing fair or foul weather); but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Mat. 16:3). They could discern natural things but had no insight into spiritual movings. They were not one whit different from vast multitudes of religious people today who look only to natural things for signs of the appearing of the Lord: earthquakes, economic conditions, wars, communism, European Common Market, crime, science and technology, computer systems, marks on the forehead or hand, world leaders, the Jews, moral breakdown, etc. Those who with carnal minds continually examine outward world events FOR SIGNS OF THE LORD'S COMING know absolutely nothing about the mind of God nor do they have spiritual understanding of His omniscient purposes. Oh, that God would open the eyes of His people who have believed on His name that they might leave their hopeless paths of tradition and their human ways of
looking at things and begin to fall into step with the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God!

I have long been intrigued by the words spoken by Peter while preaching to the people outside the temple, after he had healed the lame man, when he said to the crowd, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21). The Greek-English Interlinear gives a more literal translation of the original Greek text in this passage. "Reform, therefore, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out; so that seasons of refreshment may come from the presence of the Lord." In this verse we find the plan of salvation presented in simple terms. When we repented of our sins and turned to the Lord, we found that "seasons of refreshing" did come from the presence of the Lord. This is the Spirit of the heavens falling into our earth. Can we not now understand the true meaning of Peter's words? "...when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall (by this means, in this manner) SEND JESUS CHRIST ... whom the heaven must retain until the TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS. . ." Ah - as soon as He falls into our earth the times of restitution begin! The restitution of all things is not just a future glory. There are "times" of restitution. When Jesus Christ is sent into our lives in seasons of refreshing, the "times" of this glorious restitution have begun within as we are restored into the image of God.

All through this present age, the Lord has sent showers of blessing or "seasons of refreshment" upon His people. "Times of refreshing" - how meaningful are these words! They imply life and light. "From the presence of the Lord." The expression as here used, "the presence of the Lord," literally means "out from the face of the Lord." The thought is a common one in Oriental figurative language, in which turning one’s face toward another denotes friendship, or favor; while to turn the back is a symbol of enmity or disfavor. Moses, the ancient lawgiver of Israel said, "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace." We have all experienced these seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord and we know how glorious and wonderful those seasons have been.

It seems to me that Acts 3:19-20 is the very core and heart of the whole purpose of God in sending Jesus Christ unto us as the rain. What are these "times of refreshing" from the presence of the Lord? Verse twenty explains, it is the coming of Jesus Christ TO US. "And that He may send to you the Christ, the Messiah, who before was designated and appointed for you, Jesus" (Amplified). These times of refreshing are Jesus Christ coming in manifest presence TO His people. Now let me explain what I mean by MANIFEST PRESENCE. We all know the term - "God is omnipresent." What does that mean? It signifies that God is present everywhere. The Psalmist put 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 my 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" (Ps. 139:7-10). Obviously you cannot escape God's omnipresence. He is equally present in all places at all times throughout the unbounded heavens.
What is the difference between that and His MANIFEST PRESENCE? The Lord made a promise to His disciples, "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will MANIFEST Myself to him" (Jn. 14:21). The word "manifest" means that He will allow you to see, to feel, to hear, to smell, to touch Him. He will manifest Himself in such a way that it will come to pass that you will KNOW HIM by His manifestation. "I will MANIFEST MYSELF unto those that love Me." The message is clear - He will come in presence, not in His omnipresence, but in His manifest presence, revealing Himself in a dimension where He can be seen, heard, felt, smelt and touched - not physically, necessarily, but in a dimension of truth and reality. I am sure that many who read these lines have been in meetings and in experiences with God where was disclosed the MANIFEST PRESENCE of the Lord. In Acts 3:19 this is what the apostle Peter is dealing with, the coming of the Lord to us in times of refreshing.

Let us define this expression: "Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." For years I thought of it in terms of God up in heaven someplace, and from His presence up in heaven refreshing came down to earth. There is a truth there, as we have previously explained, but it is not the point of this passage. That is not what it means! It indicates times of refreshing that come BECAUSE HE IS PRESENT AMONG US - from the presence of the Lord among us. Not the presence of the Lord in some far-off heaven somewhere raining down refreshment on us, but times of refreshing that are the result of His manifest presence among us after the rain has fallen into our earth. Times of refreshing from or because of - the presence of the Lord!

There is an illustrative story in II Samuel chapter six. When in the days of king David the land of Israel was free from its enemy, the Philistines, David thought the time had come to bring the holy ark of the Lord out from its hiding place, where it had remained all through the rule of Samuel and the reign of Saul. They stood the ark on a wagon, to be drawn by oxen. At one place the road was rough, and the oxen stumbled, and the ark almost fell from the wagon. Uzzah, one of the men driving the oxen, took hold of the ark to steady it. God's law forbade anyone except a priest from touching the ark, and God was displeased with Uzzah for his carelessness; and Uzzah fell dead by the ark of the Lord. This death alarmed David and all the people. David was afraid to have the ark of God come into his city. He stopped the procession and placed the ark in the house near by of a man named Obed-edom. There it stayed three months. They were afraid that it might bring harm to Obed-edom and his family; but instead it brought a blessing upon them all. When David heard of the manifold blessings that had come to Obed-edom with the ark, he resolved to bring it into his own city on Mount Zion. When the ark of the covenant came to Obed-edom's house, what happened? All kinds of blessing – refreshing - everything good started happening to him! Why? What was there? THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD. The MANIFEST PRESENCE of the God of Israel. The Lord had said, "Thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And THERE I WILL MEET WITH THEE, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from BETWEEN THE TWO CHERUBIMS which are upon the ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25:21-22). "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that DWELLEST BETWEEN THE CHERUBIMS, Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth" (Isa. 37:16).

"His coming forth is as sure as the sunrise; He shall come UNTO US AS THE RAIN, as the former and the latter rain unto the earth" (Hos. 6:3, Free Translation). He comes TO US as the rain. Rain brings the presence of the Lord. The presence of the Lord gives
times of refreshing. Rain brings times that cause the water to soak the ground to mature the crops for the harvest. But notice! There is an "if" in there. We will know His coming as the rain IF we "follow ON to KNOW the Lord." His coming is as sure as the sunrise; we will know it IF we follow on to know Him; and He will come unto us as the rain. These are days of the coming of the Lord! He is coming to us in times and seasons of refreshing.

Seasons - if we are going to fulfill the purposes of God in our lives in our day we must walk in God's "seasons". All farmers know the importance of observing seasons. You don't expect to harvest apples in May or watermelons in December. Why? Because it's the wrong season. You always cooperate with the seasons and if you do you bring in a bountiful harvest. Now if I went out and started plowing and planting corn in September I would be in trouble. Why? Because I am not cooperating with the seasons! As that seed germinates and begins to grow, it's going to come up at the wrong time and, ere long, the cold will kill it. I must plant my corn in the spring and expect a harvest in the fall; thus I am flowing with the seasons. A good farmer will also understand that rain coming at the wrong time will only spoil his crop, for the rain will beat down the grain, making it impossible to harvest. Can we not see by this how infinitely important it is to observe God's SPIRITUAL SEASONS - God's times.

Paul wrote to the brethren at Thessalonica and said, "Ye have no need that I write unto you about the times and the seasons" (I Thes. 5:1). These saints understood something of God's seasons and worked with them. Today, when it becomes time for God to pour out His Spirit the renowned Doctors of Divinity say, "That's not for us today, that was just for the early Church." They refuse to cooperate with God's seasons. And then it becomes time to MOVE ON into the Most Holy Place, into the Order of Melchizedek, into the Kingdom of God and the Spirit-baptized ones say, "Whoa - that's not for today, that's for the millennium." The carnal minded religiousist always puts everything in either the past or the future. So, what do they have right now? "oh," they say, "we have faith!" The Lord called it UNBELIEF. Thus - with all the glory of God in the past or the future, and unbelief in the present, the religiousist ends up with NOTHING for today.

Most folk want to know what we WERE or what we WILL BE. They lust after past or future blessings because they are not victorious in the NOW. The plain truth is just this: the adversary doesn't care what you believe or what you experience, as long as it is in the past or the future! Multiplied thousands of the Lord's people have lived for years on a diet of TESTIMONIES. People will throng to hear the story of a man who was a warlock, a member of the Mafia, a drug addict, or a Baptist Pastor before he met the Lord. I don't want to know what you were prior to your conversion. There is no life in it! Yet people gather regularly to hear these words of death. I guess they want some soulish goose-bumps to tingle their spine. They remind me of spiritual "peeping toms" who want to peer into the darkness of what you and I were before we knew the Lord. What makes a man great in the Kingdom of God has nothing to do with what made him great in the kingdom of darkness! Faith comes by hearing the Living Word of God, not by listening to the activities of death. Thank God that many are waking up. They are tired of feeding on husks. They are tired of trying to digest the empty shell with no corn in it or any germ of life in it. It is none of your business what I was prior to conversion and it is none of my business what you were! It is over - thank God! Can't we just praise HIM that HE has forgiven, cleansed and transformed us and FORGOTTEN what we were? Hallelujah!

God has something better, greater, higher than that for us, beloved; He has SEASONS OF REFRESHING from the presence of the Lord. If we know these seasons and flow
with them, there will be great fruit in our lives. I want to stir you to say, "Lord, I want Your best for my life! I want to change NOW. There are some things in my life that need to be saved NOW. I need transformation NOW." So my interest lies not with your past, for this new order of life has no pedigree (Hob. 7:3). I want to know what God is doing in your life and in my life NOW ... TODAY! Be encouraged from the past. Have hope for the future. But yield yourself unto God to be an overcomer in the present! Get in tune with God's season for you today. Discern His dealings, His processings, His will for today. Then cooperate with His seasons!

There is a further application of this truth, shared by another: "All of God's times are related to certain spiritual states, and we have to be in the right state and condition to be in its corresponding time. There is a right spiritual state wherein that which was either past or future becomes NOW. Others may have experienced it long ago, but I wasn't ready for it then. Some will not be ready for it for a long time to come. But our prayer is that HE WILL WORK IN US, DOING A QUICK WORK, CUTTING IT SHORT IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, that we might come into the 'now' of its fulfillment. Thus we pass from vision into reality, from profession into possession, being changed from glory to glory" - Gospel Echoes.

BETWEEN THE SEASONS

God in the beginning ordained in the earth the orderly progression of the seasons. Most areas of the world experience what is spoken of as a rainy or wet season and a dry season. In the land of Israel, between the early and latter rains, there was a period of great dryness and dearth. The pools dried up and the brooks ceased to flow. But there was a wise design in the dryness, even as there was a beneficent purpose in the rain. It was the time when under the intense heat of the sun the grain was able to develop in a particular stage.

We know from Church history that the Lord Jesus visits the earth with a special outpouring of Himself from time to time, in order to accomplish the work of the Kingdom. There are seasons of refreshing which come from the presence of the Lord. The Reformation, the great Methodist revivals, the move of God in Scotland, the Great Awakening in America, the revival in Wales, the Pentecostal outpouring, the Latter Rain visitation, and present movings of the Spirit in various regions of the earth - the Lord's presence and power and glory comes among His people in a mighty way, but afterwards lifts for a season so that other purposes can be accomplished. Such flowings and ebbings of divine life are according to the law and design of God. Some necessary changes are wrought in our lives through means of blessing and glory, and others take place when we go through dry seasons or through the fires of testing and refining. So there are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and there are times when it seems He has pulled the veil over His face. There are times when there is a forward thrust - new dimensions are opened up, great revelations stream forth, mighty power is displayed, there is blessing, quickening, growth all around, and a spiritual advance is made. Then the glory lifts, the blessings diminish, the siftings and shakings commence, and that which was received with great joy is put to the test. It is during these times of "nothingness" that the elect, the remnant of the Lord are severely tried. Will the vision and deposit received during the rain now take deeper root to become a firm, stable and permanent INNER NATURE, the planting of the Lord; or will the adverse circumstances and pressures from without cause the tender shoot to wither and die?
This crucial time BETWEEN the "seasons of refreshing" will either make or break the follower of the Lord. Each refreshing begins with the Spirit of God sovereignly moving over the heads of men. God has never asked for either the approval or cooperation of any chief priest, scribe, rabbi, bishop, pope, or preacher when He is ready to visit His people in power. Suddenly, without warning, He thrusts forth upon the scene the thundering voice of a John the Baptist or a Luther; brings to the stage of action a Knox, a Wesley, a Whitefield; or showers from some bright cloud refreshing rain-drops of His life and gifts, unfolding the beautiful blossoms and exquisite flowers of glowing faces, transformed lives, burning, spontaneous testimonies, weeping, repenting sinners, mighty blessings and powerful baptisms of grace and glory. The leaders, superintendents and bishops of the time-honored religious systems beat on their desks, rant and rave, denounce it as heresy, attribute it to the devil, label it wild-fire, and declare that it will not last. And, of course, it doesn’t last! In due time the fiery cloud of glory passes, the invigorating showers dissipate, the revival meetings deteriorate into monotonous form and empty tradition, men carry on, programs are instituted to fill up the void, the people get involved in round after round of religious works, and soon the self-seeking ministers are busily engaged in sprinkling rose water over decadent congregations of sleepy souls. The glories of yesteryear are but dim memories faded into insignificance. The former glory and power once so freely manifest has vanished. YET IT HAS PLEASED THE LORD TO TAKE IT AWAY.

Every time God brings a fresh revelation and new experience to His people many of them are prone to say, "This is IT! This is the ultimate truth and crowning glory of God! This is what it is going to be!" At the beginning of this century when God brought the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, many of those people believed that such was the last great move of God. They had come out of Holiness and Evangelical churches and the Lord led them into a new experience. Very quickly they settled down in it. For fifty years they organized and systematized it and Pentecost became one of the more respected denominations among the church systems.

In 1948 God moved again with power and great glory. It was called "Latter Rain." Rain, whether it be the former or latter, or showers between, is the Lord coming to His people. When this move began, again we found many people believing that was it, this was God’s greatest and final move, and thousands have settled for the blessings and manifestations which characterized that move of the Spirit as being permanent and already the clammy arms of the denominational octopus have crushed its vitality and sucked the life blood from it.

So God moves on. God brought Luther out from the Roman Catholic denomination, but God did not desire to stop there. The Holy Spirit drew the Wesleys out of the Church of England, but again He did not stop there. The Lord surely moved in the beginning of the Pentecostal movement, but He did not stop there. Latter Rain was unquestionably a shower of great refreshing and quickening power, but God did not stop there, and He is not stopping with any of the present day movings, manifestations or dealings of His Spirit. His pathway is ever onward and upward, FROM glory TO glory. What anticipation this stirs in our hearts! The fact is - there will never be any stopping with God for He ever moves ahead, and "Of the increase of His government and peace THERE SHALL BE NO END" (Isa. 9:7).

The present emphasis of the Holy Spirit is upon the imminent manifestation of the sons of God. We are privileged to be living in blessed days of preparation for this grandest of all
events, days fraught with holy and solemn responsibility for God's elect. But I would be remiss if I did not acquaint the saints with the fact that even the placing of the sons of God is not the last revelation nor the final act in God's great drama of the ages. It is easy for the apprehended ones to settle down in the beautiful hope of sonship to God. But God will move on, beloved, making sonship, too, but a stepping-stone to realms higher and grander, for, as sonship is not the ultimate reality or position in the natural life, neither is it in the spiritual life. We praise God for the call to sonship, and we cannot by-pass the present processings nor the glory yet to be revealed, for it remains to be accomplished in the age and ages to come. I have nothing in common with those who presume that they have already graduated from sonship into the Fatherhood realm or some other highly exalted sphere, when the simple truth is that the nature, power and glory of MANIFESTED SONSHIP have never yet been fulfilled in their lives. Yet, deep within my ransomed being lies the sacred knowledge that even this marvelous reality of sonship, glorious and far-reaching as it is, IS NOT THE ULTIMATE IN GOD.

At this point I wish to share a beautiful admonition from the pen of George Warnock of Canada. "As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven..." It is not just another rain, another revival, history repeating itself. Every time it rains there is a new measure of fullness wrought in the earth. It rains, and the seed that has been planted begins to sprout and break forth under the soil. It might not even be visible. Silently does the Spirit of God come into the life and such a one is 'born again' by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. But it is really just the sprouting of the seed. It is a rebirth in the inner man. It is God becoming involved in the life of the individual, that before the entrance of the Word was nothing more than earth... dark, barren, fruitless. Again it rains. Now there is a springing forth of leaves, of twigs, of branches. There is a continual unfolding. One says, 'Strange, I never saw that in the Word before.' It was there, and you read it perhaps hundreds of times, but you never saw it. Why? Because you were but a sprouting seed hidden away in darkness...or a blade ... just beginning to come forth into the light. You have been growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now you are able to see what was inherent in the seed, but was never revealed. It was in the Word, but hidden away in the letter, in the shell. It rains, and rains again. The process continues to go on. 'All the rivers run into the sea, yet is the sea not full...' Because through the process of nature the sea yields its moisture back to the air, and the winds carry it across the land. The rivers are replenished, the clouds pour the water back to the earth again. The day of harvest approaches. Things begin to change once more. No sooner do we get accustomed to new revelation and settle back in satisfaction and delight of our new found joy, than God comes forth again... and there is dismay. It seemed that we were on the verge of having arrived at our true destiny. Our plant begins to take on a new measure of beauty and glory. There is liberty in the Spirit. The flowers of grace appear. There is a beauty and a glory in the life of the individual or in the assembly, such as our hearts had longed for. But it rains again, and those beautiful flowers disintegrate and fade from the vine. Soon they are trampled in the mud beneath. The once beautiful orchard becomes a picture of desolation. We had looked for much. There is nothing more beautiful than a blossoming orchard in the days of spring. But strangely enough the fruit-grower is not concerned about the fading of the flowers. In fact, he is happy! He must have the rain in due season; but in the time of harvest it is no longer necessary; because he is looking, not for rain, but for the FRUIT of the earth" -end quote.

Now, if our heavenly Father withholds the rain from our land, and leads us into a period of dryness and dearth - the wilderness experience - what is His purpose? Certainly the Holy Spirit never intended that His people should return to Egypt again. Does He want us to
build a memorial on the well-watered spot where He rained glory upon us, or try to call back the same manifestation of His presence again? No! A thousand times no! We must walk in the constant assurance that never, NEVER, N-E-V-E-R does the Holy Spirit bring back the same cloud or shower, nor does He perpetuate or immortalize a prior state of development in Him. He intends to lead us on to where rivers of living water flow from out of our hearts. Many thousands of weary folk in old Samaria had slaked their thirst at Jacob's well before the day that Jesus came and asked drink of a woman who had nothing more than questions and arguments to offer Him, but to her the Saviour said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall THIRST AGAIN: (yes, and we may add again and yet again) but whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him... it shall be IN HIM a well of water SPRINGING UP into EVERLASTING LIFE" (Jn. 4:13-14).

The living water Jesus would have us discover lies beyond the FALLING RAIN, it is that water which has soaked so far down into our earth that it becomes IN US AN ARTESIAN WELl OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE. The truth is that as long as we live only by the rain from without, we shall finally die. Our roots must go down deep - the deposit of life within must become a deep INNER WELL of abundant and unceasing supply and whoso continually drinketh of this continual inner supply of His life SHALL NEVER DIE.

The Lord is speaking to our hearts about a life that will demonstrate itself in the cluster upon the vine. We can be a garden filled with all the fullness of God. We can be a vineyard filled with the life of Christ. God is changing a desert into a garden. The desert is to bloom as the prophet proclaimed, "And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing" (Isa. 35:1-2). If the expression of the Holy Spirit through the body of Christ, the manifestation of His glory and the going forth of His Word and of His mighty deliverance will result in the desert being filled with singing and rejoicing, with praise and with gladness, then our hearts, the hearts of God's children, must first be filled with joy and gladness, our mouths must speak forth and sing forth the praises of the Lord, our spirits must be filled with rejoicing. The rivers of living water that must flow out of the sons of God must first fall as rain into us and bring times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

As heaven's deluge becomes channeled in the river-bed of our earth and these rivers of living water flow out, "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad." Even as Aaron's rod budded and blossomed and brought forth almonds, so there should be a blossoming and a bringing forth of an abundance of the fruit of the Spirit. The Word tells us that the tree of life brings forth its fruit in its season every month, twelve manner of fruit. There should be a drawing on the river of the water of life, because the leaves of the tree must not wither: they are for the healing of the nations!

"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" (Isa. 35:2). We must first see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shining in our hearts and then it will be radiating forth, so that all those about will see emanating from the inner life of God's people the radiance and the joy, the triumph and the victory of the Lord. "THEY SHALL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD." The glory of the Lord as it was on the countenance of Moses, as it radiated forth from the whole being of Jesus Christ, as it shone in the face of Stephen. And the glory of the latter house must be greater than the former! There must be a sense that the glory of the Lord is filling His temple. The glory of the Lord so filling the temple that the priests will not be able to stand and minister. That men will fall down
in prostration before the very presence of the glory of God, because it is from underneath the threshold of the house that the living waters flow out, from the deepest dimensions of our lives. Out from that low place and out of the temple and the tabernacle of our God there will be that expression and that shining forth of the brightness of the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. The beautiful expression of His life, the marvelous operation of His work, the authority and glory of His power, THE EXCELLENCY OF OUR GOD!

Sixty years ago God brought the revelation that He would come unto us as the rain and we preached rain, rain, rain in the time of latter rain. We preached latter rain, former rain, and both rains at the same time. We found it in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Isaiah, Joel, Zechariah, Matthew, James and Revelation, to mention a few. The Spirit rain was falling, and we were getting some of those deluges from heaven. Today, God is saying, "It is time to go a little farther." The rain has come and the ground is wet. The rain refreshed as it fell but it did not make a flower grow so long as it was just falling on the leaves and on the ground. It had to go into the ground and be picked up by the roots and be transformed into an expression of life. SO TODAY THE RAIN HAS TURNED TO LIFE. We preached rain until the rain came. And it still comes to many. And it will surely come to us again on a higher plane. But now we must experience life and proclaim life. I am telling you that there is a place in God where you do not have to look to heaven for the rain, for in this season you must draw the life from deep within. Therefore THE RAIN MESSAGE IS CHANGED TO THE LIFE MESSAGE. We praise God for the rain, but we rejoice even more in that inner fountain of the water of life which is the result of the rain!

May we not in these moments before the manifestation of God's sons come unto Him and drink, that from the innermost being of him who drinks may flow "rivers of living water?" This, beloved, is what God is establishing in the end of this age, which is today. When the rain stops falling we will do one of two things. Either we will return to Egypt, or we will discover that within the Rock in the very midst of us THERE IS A FULL AND ABUNDANT SUPPLY!
Chapter 21

Coming As The Rain
(continued)

Among the various types of our Lord's return is His coming unto us AS THE RAIN. The world cannot receive the Christ today because it SEETH Him not, neither KNOWETH Him. But to all whose hearts hunger and thirst for the fullness of His presence, power and glory the promise is sure: "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 apostle James, speaking of the coming of the Lord, penned these significant words: "Be patient therefore, brethren, UNTO THE COMING OF THE LORD. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive THE EARLY AND LATTER RAIN. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH" (James 5:7-8). Furthermore, the prophet Zechariah gives us this inspiring admonition of hope: "Ask ye of the Lord RAIN IN THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN; so shall the Lord make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field" (Zech. 10:1). In that beautiful messianic Psalm, Psalm 72, the sweet singer of Israel intoned these marvelously instructive words about the coming of the King of Glory: "HE SHALL COME DOWN LIKE RAIN upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth" (Ps. 72:6). Little wonder that the scriptures reiterate again and again that the Lord comes WITH CLOUDS; for there can be no rain without clouds, and we are exhorted to ask for rain, via the avenue of clouds (Zech. 10:1).

Thus the prophets foretold a coming time of the manifestation of the Lord as rain upon the earth, the former rain, and the latter rain. They spoke of a time when there would be an outpouring of the Spirit of Christ in the earth that would be known as the early or former rain; they also prophesied of a time when there would be an outpouring of the Spirit of Christ in the earth that would be known as the latter rain. The early or former rain was the outpouring or visitation of the Lord that you can read about in your Bible in the book of Acts. The latter rain began about the turn of this present century. Historically you will find sovereign outpourings of the Holy Spirit in all kinds of places from about 1885 onward; places like Armenia and Russia, places you wouldn't dream of. God was beginning to restore something! At the turn of this century the baptism in the Holy Spirit was restored to God's people. Talk about a bomb going off! The latter rain had begun.

In America in 1899 a Methodist minister, Charles Parham, had a little Bible School in Topeka, Kansas. These people had been through the traditional Holiness teachings of salvation, justification through the blood, divine healing, sanctification etc., and in their studies they came to a subject called the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Brother Parham said to his student body, "Boys, I've got to go away for two or three days; I want you to search the scriptures about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and tell me what you find." He returned on schedule and unanimously they had discovered from the scriptures that the evidence
for having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit was speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. With the realization that they obviously had not received this enduement of power, they commenced to search their hearts and seek the Lord for the outpouring of Himself.

At the end of that year, at a watch night service, the hour of midnight struck as the small company of students and faculty continued in prayer, waiting upon the Lord, scarcely knowing what to expect, yet following undauntedly the faith which had been kindled deep within their spirits as the whisper of the Spirit had grown to a mighty thunder within their consciousness: "HE shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost!" Suddenly, over the assembled company there came the passing of the Divine breath! A woman began to quiver slightly... the rhythmic quivering of a leaf rippled by the wind... and beautifully, forcefully, distinctly there flowed from her lips ecstatic utterances which soon became a language... unintelligible to the kneeling company, but without doubt a language. Rising to investigate the phenomenon further, they beheld a blue flame-like fire playing about her head, as she gladly and joyfully yielded herself to the Holy Spirit of God. Although many groups of intercessors over the country were not present to witness that small and humble beginning, God had ordained that as the next few years quickly passed, the whole world was to hear of what He had done on that New Year's morning at the turn of the century. And by the time the century had run its course, multiplied scores of millions of believers would have shared the blessing of the experience.

**THE PURPOSE OF THE RAIN**

There were seasonal rains in Palestine, the former rain and the latter rain. The former or early rain was the rains that came at the time when the seed was planted in the ground, and speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the early or former part of this age. The latter rain was the rain which came about six months later to bring the harvest to maturity and speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit in the latter part of the age. When a farmer plants the seed for a new crop, he desires the early rain to water the fields and to promote the immediate growth of that seed. In like manner, when the seed of the Kingdom was first planted in the early Church, the Lord then came as THE EARLY RAIN so that the seed would germinate and produce the desired life. Again, when the farmer sees that his crop is growing unto maturity, he then desires THE LATTER RAIN so that the grain will mature in the head of the plant and his harvest will be abundant. The harvest was the result of the rain. During Jesus' earthly ministry, He preached in the cities and villages of Judea, healing their sick and preaching the Kingdom of God. He looked at the multitudes and saw them as scattered sheep, having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, that He will send forth laborers into HIS HARVEST" (Mt. 9:35-38). Thus it is established that the harvest of the earth is "HIS HARVEST," for Christ is the Lord of the harvest, and He will see that the grain is matured and the harvest is reaped. He is, furthermore, the rain that falls upon the harvest!

We must also understand that not only dispensationally is there the manifestation of the former and latter rain, but individually, too, on the plane of our personal development in Christ. As one has written, "The Husbandman plants His seed, and He shall receive His harvest. However it requires long patience, for there are some tremendous processings required to bring it to that RIPENED harvestable state. There will be the early rains to make the seed sprout and grow. There will be the latter rains to close out the growing season and give fullness to the corn in the ear. There will be the hot drying days as it
matures and ripens - and patiently the Husbandman waits. Yet suddenly He announces THE TIME IS NOW - conditions are just right, let us reap. 'We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus...' (Eph. 2:10). We are the PRODUCT of His hand. HE COMES TO US, He becomes in us the Seed, then He visits us periodically - 'the times of refreshing which come from the presence of the Lord' (Acts 3:19). HE is our early rain which causes our life in Him, His life in us, to sprout and grow. Visitation after visitation, change after change, going from strength to strength - IF WE RECEIVE HIM IN EACH VISITATION. All of God's times are related to certain spiritual states, and we have to be in the right state and condition to be in its corresponding time. There is a right spiritual state wherein that which was either past or future becomes NOW. Others may have experienced it long ago, but I wasn't ready for it then. Some will not be ready for it for a long time to come. But our prayer is that HE WILL WORK IN US, DOING A QUICK WORK, CUTTING IT SHORT IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, that we might come into the 'now' of its fulfillment. Thus we pass from vision into reality, from profession into possession" - Gospel Echoes.

THE GLORY OF THE FORMER RAIN

On the day of Pentecost, God, the husbandman, poured out the first rain of His Spirit on His newly planted crop of believers to commence the growing season that would one day yield a harvest of spiritual fruit the husbandman Himself could eat and enjoy. These branches from the rod of the stem of Jesse (Isa. 11:1), as a result of cultivating, pruning, watering, fertilizing and finally drenching, with the latter rain of His Spirit, would yield the precious full ripe fruit of love, joy peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance (Gal. 5:22-23). This is nothing less than man in the express image of God! That initial outpouring was like the great volume of fuel that blasts our rockets out of earth's gravitational pull. So it is, the Spirit blasted those early believers out of the gravitational pull of the things of this world, into the second heavens of Pentecost or the Holy Place.

A graphic and eloquent description of the glory of the former rain has been given by George Hawtin in his booklet BEHOLDING THE MORE EXCELLENT GLORY. He writes, "So great was that outpouring that by the end of the century one-twentieth of the entire Roman Empire had been converted to Christ, and by the year 300 A.D. Christianity far exceeded paganism. Following Peter's sermon at Pentecost, three thousand souls were saved and the day following another five thousand were saved. In the days following multitudes both of men and women turned to the Lord. Mighty signs and wonders were done by all of the apostles. By Paul's hand God wrought special miracles. The sick were brought and laid in the street that the shadow of Peter failing upon them might bring healing to their bodies. The glory of that former rain beggars description. Truly they had been baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost and the heavenly 'wind' was blowing whithersoever it listed. This was a mighty manifestation of THE GLORY OF GOD. This was GOD'S GLORY falling as rain among the people and filling their hearts with joy and gladness, transforming their lives and making them sons of God.

"Something happened to those saints at Pentecost that needs much more investigation than we have ability to give in this brief article, but let it be known that these people had been BAPTIZED WITH FIRE. Tongues of fire had rested upon them, burning up every trace of sin and carnal nature. I may be wrong, but I am persuaded that the Lord did for them at Pentecost in a moment of time that which other men must take a life time to attain. Their words were burning, flaming words of truth. Their miracles were on a par
with the miracles of Jesus Christ. Their lives were radiant, shining suns, manifesting forth the glory of the Lord everywhere they went. Evil men killed them, but they could not resist the power and glory with which they spoke. THE GLORY that filled the typical temple of Solomon’s day was the SAME GLORY that filled the living temple at Pentecost. Pentecost was the early rain given moderately, but it was glorious beyond description. In centuries past the Lord had filled temples made by human hands, but at Pentecost He was putting His Spirit in the hearts of men to form a temple not made with hands, a temple from which He will govern the world in the ages of glory yet to come" -end quote.

THE GLORY OF THE LATTER RAIN

Glorious beyond description was that mighty outpouring of God's glory at Pentecost! But as highly as we might esteem the wonders of that heavenly visitation, it was only the former rain moderately. Turning now to Hos. 6:3 we read, "HIS going forth is prepared as the morning; for HE shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Then from Young's Literal translation, "As the dawn prepared is His going forth, and He cometh in as a shower to us, as the gathered rain - sprinkling earth." There are two qualifying words to which I would draw your reverent attention. "LATTER" rain, with this word "latter" from the Hebrew MALQOSH, meaning GATHERED or HEAVY rain. While the "FORMER" rain comes from the Hebrew word YARAH, meaning SPRINKLING or FIRST rain. Thus, the former rain moderately is showers of sprinkling rain, whereas the latter rain is cloud bursts of heavy torrential downpours - copious effusions of the Spirit!

The latter rain showers commenced before the turn of this century. But in 1948 there occurred an unprecedented cloudburst of glory. A number of important events transpired in the year 1948, unmistakably marking that year as a significant milestone in the shaping of world events which would signal the final drama in this end of the Church age and the emergence of the new order of the Kingdom of God. In 1948 Israel (Judah) became a nation. In that same year the United Nations Organization was created. Also, the National Council of Churches was formed. And 1948, without a precedent in sacred or secular history, was the scene and action of a MOVE OF GOD'S SPIRIT which constitutes one of the epochs of all the ages. Streams of events which began their flow before the foundation of the world, and which will flow on through the vast ages of time into the oceans of eternity, met and converged at this point.

I now quote from a report written by one of the ministries who was a student and who was present at the time the revival broke. "For many years great numbers of consecrated Christians had been fasting and praying for long seasons that God would restore the gifts of the Spirit to the Church. In 1947 in the month of September several of the brethren were led of the Lord to open Sharon Bible College in North Battleford, Canada. The opening of the school brought a great burden for fasting and prayer upon all of the students and the staff. This settled down until it seemed that not a day passed by for months unless some were in fasting and prayer. Some fasted for three days; some for seven; some fasted for ten days; some for two weeks; some for three weeks; some for thirty days; and one man fasted for forty days. After many weeks of serious fasting and prayer, came the eleventh day of February, 1948. I shall never forget those days as long as I live. How the Spirit of the Lord came down was indescribable!

"I remember a prophecy being given by one of the young women in the Bible School, saying that we were on the verge of a great Move of God, and that all we had to do was
enter the door - but I said, 'Father, we do not know where the door is, neither do we know how to enter it.' It was on the twelfth day of February that God showed us by the Spirit how to enter in through this door. On that morning one of the teachers rose to prophesy. All of the students were kneeling. He prophesied by the Spirit of God for about half an hour. During the prophecy, He called the whole school to great reverence and said that we must walk in the fear of God. Then there was a warning that we should not mention to anyone what was transpiring at the school. As the prophecy went on, these earth-shaking words were given by the Spirit of God: 'REMOVE THE SHOES FROM OFF THY FEET FOR THE GROUND UPON WHICH THOU STANDEST IS HOLY GROUND ... AT THIS TIME I WILL RESTOREunto MY CHURCH ALL NINE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, AND THEY SHALL BE GIVEN BY PROPHECY, WITH THE LAYING ON OF THE HANDS OF THE PRESBYTERY.' This we knew was according to the Word of God, but we had not been able to understand it until the moment when it was revealed by the Spirit of God. The prophecy went on to say, 'I will indicate from time to time by My Spirit they that should be called to be prayed over to receive their gifts of the Spirit.'

"The next day, February 13, we searched the Word of God practically all day to see if these things that had been prophesied were according to God's Word. We found that Paul had said to Timothy, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery...' (Tim. 4:14). And, 'Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the laying on of my hands' (II Tim. 1:6). We found how that king Saul had received the gift of prophecy by having this gift prophesied to him by Samuel. We saw how Joshua had received the Word of Wisdom when Moses laid his hands upon him. We read how Paul wrote to the Romans, 'For I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift...' (Rom. 1:11).

"On the fourteenth day of February - I can never begin to properly describe the things that happened on that day. It seemed that all Heaven broke loose upon our souls and Heaven came down to greet us. The power and glory of God was indescribable. Men and women were prophesied over and received the various gifts of the Spirit. To some it was prophesied that they would receive the gift of healing and immediately they began to heal the sick. Discernment of spirits was given and the influence of evil spirits was discerned, and these evil spirits were cast out. Some received the gift of faith, and faith began to operate mightily in our midst. Men and women prophesied like a mighty river. Heaven had truly come down to meet us. We sang new songs in the Spirit, songs that had never been sung before. Soon the multitudes were coming to North Battleford from the north, the south, east, and west. A new day arrived for the people of God. This was only the beginning!

"Soon the Lord restored unto us the ministries of apostles and prophets. All traditions and man-made divisions (denominations) were left behind. The elect remnant of God from the four winds were beginning to come together, destined to go on to perfection, ultimately to be filled with all the fullness of God and finally to stand in the last day as manifested sons of God, prepared to rule and reign in His glorious Kingdom. From now on we would be known only as 'Christians.' The last day 'Move of God,' the restoration spoken of by all the holy apostles, had begun. Its power and influence would grow until one day it would fill the whole earth. God would require of us a level of consecration and dedication never before dreamed of. We ceased to build our own little man-made kingdoms and began together to build the Kingdom of God. That was how it all began. There was much more that we would yet learn over the years" -end quote.
The effect of the move of God that began in Canada in 1948 soon spread around the whole world, and there are few places that have not felt its power in one way or another. It swept across North America, and over the continent of Europe; and also through Latin America, far away India, New Zealand, Australia, Korea and portions of Africa. God has done a great and mighty thing, but this is only the beginning. A mighty army of saints is in preparation as overcomers to take the Kingdom and rule and reign with Christ over the nations. Events of immense magnitude and universal significance loom bright upon the horizon!

Every revival, or time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord began with a visitation from God expressed in a firstfruit people who tapped a high vibration of praise and worship. In 1949 in Tulsa, Oklahoma a minister had purchased a large tabernacle down town and preached every night for months to two or three women. One night before service, he sat in his office with his head in his hands, discouraged, not knowing what to do. Someone came running in shouting, "You won't believe this!" He arose and walked to the auditorium and saw the place was packed. A little woman far in the back began to prophesy through song, "This is the latter rain the Lord has promised unto thee." From that a worship broke forth in the people and for eight months, night and day, God appeared in one of the greatest visitations since the day of Pentecost. The newspaper reported that one night a neighbor sitting on his front porch looked over and saw fire on top of the building. He called the fire wagons, but there was no natural fire to be found. Something sat on that building as cloven tongues of fire and that is how the latter rain began in that city.

In those glory days at the beginning of the latter rain cloudburst, as the saints were gathered together by the Spirit and in the power of God, the entire gathering, whether ten or ten thousand in number, would all break forth into spiritual songs and psalms and hymns, and would all sing the same song BY THAT SAME SPIRIT. One brother related the example of a large congregation singing Handel's Messiah, from beginning to end, singing every word and every note in divine harmony, under the anointing of the Spirit, although no one in the congregation knew Handel's Messiah. The Lord also revealed that as He was able to teach a gathering of believers to sing the Messiah, repeating every word and note in correct harmony, SO IS HE ABLE TO TEACH HIS PEOPLE TRUTH AND A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM. And when the Holy Spirit imparts truth to His people, that truth becomes LIFE which can never be taken away from them. Glory!

The Word of God is very clear in its teaching, and both Old Testament and New Testament history confirm the fact that all the great revivals and movings and manifestations of the Lord through past centuries were the result of prevailing prayer and intercession with fasting. Elijah was a man of prayer and intercession and wrought wonderful things thereby. Daniel, on one occasion, prayed unceasingly for three weeks, during which time he seems to have abstained from pleasant bread and wine and all other gastronomic delights. After twenty-one days of fasting, confession, and consecration he was visited by the angel Gabriel, who enlightened him with an understanding of the ages as was never before revealed to man. The longest recorded fast in the Bible was the fast of Moses, the man of God, who, after fasting in the mount of the Lord for forty days, fell down at the sight of Israel's idolatry and continued fasting for a second forty days, apparently without touching food at all (Deut. 9:9-18). Paul said that he was often in fasting (II Cor. 11:27), and clearly stated that he approved himself as a minister of God by labors and watching's and fasting's (II Cor. 6:5). The Lord Jesus Christ
commenced His ministry with what we call a "prophet's fast," a fast of forty days duration. The entire forty days were spent completely without food, and during those days of severe temptation He gained complete victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil and angels came to minister to Him. Jesus returned from that encounter in the POWER OF THE SPIRIT; and so will all men return who lay aside natural things that they may freely partake of spiritual things.

When the rain of the Spirit is withheld from the Lord's people, the church systems of man attempt to stir up some spurious revivals, conjuring up their own blessings, all the while demonstrating the pathetic emptiness and spiritual bankruptcy of their fleshly activities. These remind us of the Indian medicine men putting on their rain dances. They are not unlike the ancient prophets of Baal in the days of Elijah, they leap on the altar and call on their god to send down the fire. They imagine there is strength in numbers and power in much excitement and animated ceremonies, but while all their vain prophesying and frenzied activity is going on, God has His man waiting in the wings in solitude and holy communion before His face. It was after Elijah was called out of the wilderness and after he had slain the prophets of Baal that he sent a message to Ahab, saying, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for THERE IS A SOUND OF ABUNDANCE OF RAIN ... and it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a GREAT RAIN."

The rain does not come from heaven by performances of conniving men. There is a tendency, inbred in the soulish nature, when it seems the Lord is not moving as He should, to try and "stir it up." Preach more passionately; prophesy longer; praise louder; sing more choruses, clap, dance; command and MOVE THE SPIRIT! The corrupting influence of this false religious sensationalism is ever with us, but all who will be still and quiet long enough on the towering heights of God's holy mount will learn and know of a certainty that the rain of the Holy Spirit can come only from the presence of the Lord. When we come to the realization that we are passing through a season of drought, then and only then can we enter into our closet and shut the door and repent and seek the Lord for a true and genuine rain of His Spirit. And although we repent and pray and ask for rain, the Lord has a set time when He will open the heavens upon His elect. Let God bring it forth, my beloved. We can't! "ASK ye of the Lord RAIN IN THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN," is the simple but profound command of the Spirit of God. Ask! DON'T HOLD A RAIN DANCE! No need to try to "work it up" or "bring it down." No need to shout or dance or clap or cut yourself with knives or put on some religious demonstration to force the hand of God. In due time it will come to us if we will believe and wait, trusting in the Lord and His word of truth.

"For He maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof" (Job 36:27). Ray Prinzing wisely commented on this passage: "Herein is the secret of a mighty outpouring, it requires the ascending of much vapour, if there is to be a great return in refreshing showers. Every move of the Spirit across the world, and in every little group, has behind it the ascending of vapour. God lays hold on a remnant, they seek His face, prayers go up, praise goes up, and they draw nigh unto God, and then HE converts the vapour into rain, and pours down abundantly. We sang in Sunday School, 'The blessings will come down, as the prayers go up...'. According to that which ascended, so also that which descended to bless another" -end quote.

THE PRODUCE OF THE RAIN
The result of the rain - former and latter - was the harvest. When the Lord gave the promise to Israel of a land of abundance and one that flows with milk and honey, He promised that if they would obey His word, He would give them "the rain in your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, THAT THOU MAYEST GATHER IN thy CORN, and thy WINE, and thine OIL." In the epistle of James believers are exhorted to patience in view of the Lord's coming as rain and the resultant produce thereof. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. 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. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord (as rain) draweth nigh."

Here, from the example of the husbandman, believers are encouraged to patience. How perfectly this figure suits the Lord Himself! HE has spent much labor and has sown much precious seed. He has tilled and cared for His heritage. All preparation completed, there remains but to wait. So even as the farmer waits not only till the early rain makes the seed to sprout, but also till the latter rain fills the ears before they ripen, for both are needful before harvest can be gathered, the Lord on high lingers and has long patience. Thus are we too to wait that coming of His which will bring the fulfillment of our hope of full sonship to God.

At this point the question may be asked, But what is the harvest, and how does it apply to our lives? In the New Testament sense, or in the spiritual sense, it is apparent that the harvest represents saints of the Lord coming forth in the image and likeness of Christ and with the fullness of His life - sons indeed. It is also obvious that God has a purpose to accomplish in each age of mankind upon the earth. For example, it was in God's plan and purpose that Jesus Christ should come forth in glory and perfection as a result of the age of the law and the prophets. He was the END PRODUCT of that glorious age. Christ Himself was the harvest of that age; therefore, we can expect a like but even more glorious harvest as this present age comes to a close.

Now we come to the real meat of this message. In our generation we have seen a dramatic change in the course of the spiritual life of the body of Christ. But few recognize that it began with an outpouring of the Spirit at the turn of the century, with the real purposes of God brought into sharp focus fifty years later. Almost a whole generation has passed since the "Latter Rain" outpouring in 1948-49, and most of the pioneers of that move have gone on to be with the Lord. But there remains a few here and there who remember the powerful prophetic anointing in those days. The word of the Lord flowed like a mighty river, thundering down upon critical situations like a powerful Niagara. And from that prophetic realm came a great explosion of the miraculous. Signs and wonders became commonplace before the eyes of the whole world. But what happened then was but a drop in the bucket to what God has planned for the days ahead! The deluge of signs and wonders and miracles, the rain of worship and glory and of the prophetic word was a prelude to the reality of a company of sons conformed to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. How precious is the rain of His presence and power and glory! But how much MORE PRECIOUS the fruit of the earth produced thereby! Ah, God's ultimate objective is not rain. Rain is but an instrumentality - a means to an end. "That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater." Now that's what we want! We want to become the bread of life to the multitudes famishing about us, and wine from the cluster to the thirsty soul.
Finally the cycle is completed, the day comes when the rains cease, and the earth is warmed by the bright rays of the sun from a cloudless sky. The beautiful blossoms wither and fade from the vine. Soon they are trampled in the dust beneath. But strangely enough the fruit-grower is not concerned about the fading of the flowers. In fact, he is elated! He must have the rain in due season; but in the time of harvest it is no longer necessary; because he is looking, not for rain, but for the FRUIT of the earth. In reality God is looking for something deeper, something better, something more enduring than the rain. He longs for that which will show forth His own life, His own nature, His own character, His very own wisdom and power and glory. Christ must be formed within before the husbandman can reach forth His hand and take that which will delight and satisfy His own heart, and which will satisfy the hunger and thirst of impoverished mankind. Lord! make us that bread of life and that wine of refreshing and restoration to the starving masses of humanity.

The rain that falls into the earth must finally produce the grain and oil and become concentrated in the cluster upon the vine. The presence and life of God must ultimately become something more than an available power outside of ourselves. It is not water from the sky for which the husbandman waits with enduring patience; it is the wine in the cluster! I am wearied a little because so often I hear God's precious people singing songs like "Oh Lord, Send the Power Just Now," or "Jesus is Passing This Way." There is a truth there, and I rejoice that there are indeed those special "times of refreshing" which come from the presence of the Lord, but I can assure you, beloved, that the elect saints of God will never know the glorious reality of sonship to God so long as they abide in that consciousness and mentality of the Lord "sending the power" or "passing by." The consuming desire within my heart in this important hour is that God's chosen people might with me become aware of CHRIST FORMED IN US. The message of life and triumph that in this dark and evil hour reverberates through the yielded spirit of every saint separated unto God by His Holy Spirit is just this: IT IS POSSIBLE FOR CHRIST TO BECOME I-N Y-O-U ALL THAT HE ETERNALLY AND UNIVERSALLY IS.

"He that is joined unto the Lord is ONE SPIRIT" (I Cor. 6:17). "...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). It is this fact of CHRIST BEING FORMED IN US which now becomes first priority for the called out of God. Christ, the First of the firstfruits, the Head of the body, ascended on high, and HIS SPIRIT has been freely poured out as rain upon our earth, that we might receive of Him and have Him become all within our lives. NOW, as HE BECOMES FORMED AS BREAD AND WINE WITHIN US, then are we not to be that next "outpouring" which shall be given to bring life to the next order, that there might be a further harvest, as "in Christ" ALL are made alive, but every man in his own order? HIS Spirit became our life, our being, and we have received of Him that we might GROW in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, coming to spiritual maturity, then to be reaped, in the process BECOMING the bread and wine of Himself unto creation. Men speak of being God's harvest, of growing up into maturity, of putting on the mind and nature of Christ, conformed to His image, like ones unto Himself. But to what end? Just so we can wear halos and float about over the Elysium hills of that glory world above, strumming harps? NO! Praise God for the vision that ALL MANKIND SHALL BE HARVESTED unto the Lord. The outreach of this victory then becomes altogether-wonderful, praise His name!

**IN THE FIRST**
We have received the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost has come upon us, we have been filled with the Holy Spirit to the degree God has been able to fill us, depending on the degree to which we have been emptied of self. There is a day at hand when we will witness another great outpouring of the Spirit, transcending by far either the early rain of Pentecost or the latter rain of these last days. Let us refer to Joel's prophecy concerning the former and the latter rain, the seed rain and the harvest rain. "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain IN THE FIRST MONTH. And the floors shall be FULL OF WHEAT, and the vats shall overflow with WINE and OIL" (Joel 2:23-24). God has promised that His people should receive the early and the latter rains in due season. "Ask ye of the Lord rain IN THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN; so the Lord shall make bright clouds (ministries), and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field" (Zech. 10:1). This is really the LORD HIMSELF coming upon us. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He shall bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. 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 THE FORMER RAIN UNTO THE EARTH" (Hos. 6:1-3). We have already established the principle that the fall rains were called the former or seed rains, then the rainy season ended with the latter rains of the spring, or the harvest rains - that which caused the grain to form in the head, preparing for harvest.

BUT HERE IS SOMETHING VERY UNUSUAL! God has promised to do something strange, indeed; for He would give, not only the former rain in its season; not only the latter rain in its due time; but He would give the FORMER RAIN AND THE LATTER RAIN COMBINED! "And He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain IN THE FIRST MONTH" (Joel 2:23). Can we not see by this what God has promised His people in this great hour? Not only the fullness of a great and glorious beginning, as in Pentecost. And not only the wonderful harvest of Tabernacles, the Feast of Ingathering. But all the glory of the early Church COMBINED with all the glory and power of the triumphant Church of the last days! All her FORMER glory combined with all her LATTER glory! Truly we cannot begin to imagine the great and tremendous things which God has prepared for His people and for this earth!

Hear it! "And He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, AND the latter rain IN THE FIRST MONTH." The former rain has fallen moderately, and the latter rain has fallen profusely in these last days; but the former and latter rain combined has yet to fall, and it will one of these days, as our hearts are prepared to participate in it. The Authorized Version says that this mighty deluge will come "in the first month." But I would draw your attention to the fact that the word "month" is in italics, signifying that it does not appear in the original Hebrew text. Thus, deleting this supplied word the passage reads, "And He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain IN THE FIRST." The question follows - What is this FIRST? Is it the FIRST MONTH as the translators of the King James Version say, or does it bear another meaning? It is my deep conviction that the prophet is not talking about the former and latter rain both being brought in a month. He is speaking of it being brought in A FIRST - or a FIRSTFRUIT COMPANY - a PEOPLE the likes of which has never been before! You see, the purpose of the former and latter rains is to bring forth a harvest. Both rains then find their final and full expression IN THE HARVEST BROUGHT FORTH. The rain settles and is contained and formed IN THE GRAIN, IN THE OIL, and IN THE CLUSTER UPON THE VINE!
When one drinks of the exquisite wine of the harvest he drinks of both the former and latter rain. The rain has been transmuted into wine!

Let me share with you the law of the firstfruits. Yahweh required of the nation of Israel that the firstfruits be offered to Him, whether it be of man (the firstborn), animal or the fruitage of the ground (Ex. 22:29,30; 23:19; Prov. 3:9). The faithful offering of the firstfruits brought pleasure to the Lord and a blessing to all parties involved (Eze. 44:30). A failure to bring them would be counted by God as robbing Him of His due and would bring His displeasure (Mal. 3:8). I was raised as a boy in south Alabama where, in the days of my youth, many of our neighbors were cotton farmers. You could have a hundred acre field, and come the latter part of August you could look out and see a big, fluffy, flossy boll of cotton. Another hundred feet or so there would be another boll. That's the FIRSTFRUITS! There is always a portion of the crop that has a faster growth than the rest. When you go out and examine the stalk that has the cotton on it, you will find it has forty bolls on it! Another stalk is larger, it has a hundred bolls on it, but only one is ripe - open. The rest are green. If you went over that cotton field you might get ten pounds of cotton, but if you come back in six weeks you could pick one hundred bales off it!

When the Bible speaks of firstfruits it refers to the produce of Canaan - wheat or barley, oil and grapes. When the wheat field was almost ready, the priests went out every day and examined it. They were looking for the firstfruits. Why? Because the firstfruits BELONGED TO THE LORD! They were HIS. When they found the firstfruits they would blow the trumpets proclaiming, "C-O-M-E U-P T-O T-H-E F-I-R-S-T- F-R-U-I-T-S" So here they would come - the priests lined up abreast, going out to the field to pick the firstfruits. They would show it to Israel, then wave it before the Lord. It was His. It is for this very reason that the scripture says of the saints, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that WE SHOULD BE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS CREATURES" (James 1:18). And of that illustrious company of the sons of God who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth it is written, "These were redeemed from among men, BEING THE FIRSTFRUITS UNTO GOD and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4).

The more I meditate upon the law of the firstfruits the more I am convinced by the Spirit of God that when the prophet declares that both the former and latter rain will be poured out IN THE FIRST - it is the FIRSTFRUITS OF THE HARVEST to which he refers, and not the FIRST MONTH. The FIRST is a PEOPLE! The first is a people who have received of the former and latter rain and have thereby been brought to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. I want you to see this principle -where God's mind is, where His heart is. It's to bring a FIRSTFRUITS to maturity, the precious FRUIT of the earth, a people filled with all the fullness of HIM who has come unto them as the rain and been formed in them. These are the FIRST OF A KIND, A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS. And in THIS FIRST you are going to have the full embodiment and expression of both the former and latter rain - both together! All that the rain of God was meant to accomplish shall be fulfilled and manifested in and through this FIRST. Isn't that marvelous? Hallelujah!

The wonder of it is just this. This people will have a DUAL MESSAGE AND MINISTRY the message and ministry of the former rain together with the message and ministry of the latter rain. They will both sow and reap. They will birth men into the Kingdom of God and grow men up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. These will minister salvation, healing, deliverance, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and all the elementary things of the Christ to earth's vast billions; but they will also bring the
multitudes of believers who have remained in the baby stage of growth into higher and higher dimensions of life and truth and development until they, too, become mature ones in Christ. Progressively they shall bring every man into the fullness of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE in spirit, soul and body. Truly there has never been a people or a ministry on the earth like this! This is a FIRST! This is THE FIRST in which God manifests and from which He pours out all the power and life and glory and victory of both the former and latter rain!

There is going to be a ministration of the Holy Spirit in a way and measure that has never been before, when the Christ has been glorified in His body, His FIRST. We are to receive the Spirit in His fullness, be RAISED UP in the realm of the Spirit to be seated with the Lord in heavenly realms; above all the limitations of this fleshly realm; into a dimension in the Spirit that none as yet (except Jesus) has ever attained; to be poured out as former and latter rain into the earth. This will be the manifestation of the sons of God that the whole creation is waiting expectantly for. There will be an outpouring of the Holy Ghost such as never was. The glory of the former rain at Pentecost was marvelous beyond words to tell, and the glory of the latter rain has been glorious beyond human description, but the manifestation of God's glory when both former and latter rain, transformed into grain, oil and wine, are shed forth through God's firstfruit company will pale the light of the noonday sun and make to seem insignificant the greatest and most glorious things of the past. "The threshing floors will be full of grain (mature ministry), the vats (God's sons) will overflow with wine (life) and oil (anointing of power)" (Joel 2:24). Maturity, life and power! No wonder creation groans for this hour! What a ministry!

God's FIRSTFRUIT FORMER AND LATTER RAIN SONSHIP COMPANY is the great harvest for which the Husbandman has been waiting ever since the foundation of the Church. Gifts of the Spirit are really no evidence of spiritual attainment; God bestoweth His gifts freely by His grace upon whomsoever He will. But with FRUIT it is entirely different. Fruit must grow; and God has never intended that the body of Christ should ever bring forth fruit except by a continual and progressive DIVINE GROWTH in the Spirit of God. God will not come to us looking for gifts, but for fruit of the Spirit. He gave us His gifts freely by His grace, and all we had to do was to receive them and use them. That is the law of the Rain - He causes HIS RAIN to fall on the just and the unjust alike (Mat. 5:45). Does that not explain why we have had so many scoundrels running across the country operating in the gifts of the Spirit? What God demands now is FRUIT, because that is something which He can RECEIVE from you. Until now the Husbandman has come into His garden, pruning, cultivating, watering - without expecting anything in return. But now the harvest time is approaching, and soon He shall visit His garden for one purpose and for one purpose only: seeking for fruit, and trusting that His tender care over the vine has produced genuine FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

Think of the indescribable glory of a ministry of the FRUIT of the Spirit! "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23). Think of the impact and power of the ministry of DIVINE LOVE! "For God so loved the world..." From childhood most of us have heard these blessed words, yet they are so freighted with heaven's riches that one instinctively shrinks from talking about them. Who presumes to be able to measure the magnitude of God's love? "God SO loved the world." Charles Spurgeon once struck off a bold figure when he exclaimed, "Come, ye surveyors, bring your chains, and try to make a survey of this word 'so.' Nay, that is not enough. Come hither, ye that make our national surveys and lay down charts for all nations. Come ye, who map the sea and land and make a
chart of this word 'so.' Nay, I must go further. Come hither, ye astronomers, that with your optic glasses spy out spaces before which your imagination staggers, come hither and calculate imaginations worthy of all your powers. When you have measured between the horns of space, here is a task that will defy you - 'God SO loved the world!' Although we may completely despair of calculating the power and scope of the love of God, there are nevertheless in these classic words of Jesus some very clear statements that help us compute, to some extent, the greatness of the heart of God. This little word SO finds its definition, I think, in the object of the gift of God's love.

God so loved "THE WORLD" - the world that then was and now is, the world rebellious against God, morally depraved and lost in degradation and shame. "Herein is love, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, but that HE LOVED US, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (I Jn. 4:9-10). You see, it was while we were dead in trespasses and sin, while we made no response to God, while friendship with Him was cut off and the urge of faithfulness and goodness lay smoldering in the grave of our depravity - it was THEN that the love of God's great heart embraced US. God so loved the world - that means His love sweeps around the whole earth and flows out to men of every race and tongue and nation; but it means more. It means He loves the men and women of the world who by their own evil have wrenched themselves away from Him. It means that He loves the blaspheming atheist, the scornful skeptic, the lecherous outcast, the criminal behind the bars, the grafter who swaggers about as a good citizen and the unscrupulous leeches who drain the very lifeblood of widows and orphans. God so loved THE WORLD. ALL of it! And He loves it still. He loves the men living now upon the earth, and He loves those who have lived and died in dim and distant ages past. He loves them on earth and He loves them in hell. God SO loved! Herein is manifested the love of God: He loves the unlovely, the unloving, and the humanly unlovable! Let holy and powerful angels from the extended galleries of heaven sing it! Let the redeemed in rapturous wonder take up the song and let sinners fall prostrate in penitence before the almighty Creator and Redeemer! "God IS LOVE!" Do you believe it? Oh, that all men might learn God's one and only everlasting Gospel, the Gospel of love - and then preach it! But God would have a people who will BE IT! For two thousand years the great Husbandman has been nurturing the fruit of His Spirit in the garden of His sons. The love of God must be lifted up IN US. The peace of God must be revealed IN US. The kindness God must be demonstrated THROUGH US. The gentleness and goodness of God must become EMBODIED IN A PEOPLE. Oh, how we love to manifest His gifts! But God desires that we manifest HIS FRUIT! Yea, that we BE His fruit. The sons of God are the sons of love, for GOD IS LOVE. The sons of God are the offspring of God's peace and joy and faith, and they grow up as the full expression of all His wonderful nature.

The ministry of the former and latter rain combined is the ministry of the harvest, the produce from the rain. The ministry of the fruit of the Spirit is the ministry by the omnipotent power of God of all that HE IS - the ministry unto creation of the infinite and omnipotent love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance of God Himself. What transformation shall be wrought in the earth by a ministry such as this! This alone can draw A-L-L MEN to Calvary's crimson fountain. O what a grand and glorious day awaits this sin-cursed earth in the outpouring of both the former and latter rain IN THE FIRST! The Day of the outpouring of the FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT in power and glory! Because we do not have the fruit of the Spirit in any degree of fullness, we cannot appreciate its glory. Before the gifts of the Spirit were restored to the
Church we had a faint conception of what they would be like, but what a revelation it was as we saw them unfolding before our eyes! SO WITH THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

We know what they are: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." But we shall never appreciate any measure of their real glory until the fruit of the Spirit becomes matured and visibly MANIFEST IN AND Poured OUT THROUGH THE SONS OF GOD!
Jesus used graphic language when He spoke of His return. To the disciples who asked what His coming would be like He said, "They shall see the Son of man coming IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN with power and great glory" (Mat. 24:30). The picture language of the Bible employs essentially all the created things of God with which we here on earth are acquainted. There are various reasons why God has used so much symbolic language in His Word. We think that one of these is its unchangeableness. The meaning of words change somewhat through use and misuse. Whatever man creates is also subject to change, but this is not true of the created things of God. The created things do change, but their change is so slow and gradual that it is not perceived from generation to generation. In the sign language of the Bible, God has employed the sun, the moon, the stars, and clouds; and on the earth, oceans, rivers, mountains, valleys, sheep, goats, horses, wheat, tares, fig trees, and so forth. The characteristics of these have not changed throughout the centuries, and when used in the Bible to illustrate the exalted thoughts of God they should have the same meaning to us as they did to the ancients. As signs, they have a spiritual meaning and application.

One of the rabbinical names for the Messiah, based on Daniel 7:13-14, was "The Cloud Man." Daniel writes: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto the Son of man CAME WITH THE CLOUDS of heaven..." Christ, of course, is plainly identified as the "One who comes with the clouds" in the Salutation of Rev. 1:7: "Behold, He COMETH WITH CLOUDS; and every eye shall see Him..." Furthermore, when our Lord was adjured by the High Priest to tell whether He was the Messiah or not, Jesus answered with the old equivalent of "Yes!" Then He said, "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN" (Mk. 14:62).

This identification was more than His enemies could bear. And so we read, "Then the High Priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witness? Ye have heard the blasphemy: What think ye? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death" (Mk. 14:63-64). Why should the High Priest and those assembled, think it such BLASPHEMY for Jesus to say not only that they would see Him sitting on the right hand of Power, but also that they would see Him COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN? The truth is, they knew that our Lord was claiming to be the "Son of the Blessed (God)," the one who would come in the CLOUD OF GLORY which had once filled the temple at Jerusalem! Furthermore, they clearly understood that the "clouds" upon which Messiah would come were not the fleecy white clouds which scud across a summer sky, but in all reality they would be the blazing Shekinah Cloud which from times of old had veiled the Divine Presence. How well the learned rabbis of Israel understood the true implication of Jesus' words!

THE GLORY OF GOD
Exactly what is the glory of God and how has God displayed His glory? What relationship do you and I have to the glory of God? The primary word translated "glory" in the Bible literally means "heavy," "weight," or "substance." The glory of a person is actually what is heavy or weighty about that person. Now don't misunderstand! That doesn't mean that it's just the fat lady at the carnival who has any glory! No, that's not the idea. What is the interrelationship between the idea of heaviness with glory? How many times have you said of an individual, "He carries a lot of weight." What do you mean by that? What you mean is that there is something very impressive about that person which enables him to have great influence with other people. There is the concept of heaviness with glory. Glory is that which is impressive or influential about a person.

Let me illustrate. In the first book of the Bible Jacob's wealth is called the "glory" of Jacob (Gen. 31:1). What that means is that Jacob was such an excessively wealthy man that that is what really impressed other people with Jacob, that is what gave him influence with those about him, that is what caused them to sit up and take note of who he was. And then again in the book of Genesis Joseph's very high position as the Prime Minister of Egypt is called the "glory" of Joseph (Gen. 45:13). Again, that simply means that it was the special position of Joseph in the government that impressed other people and gave him influence in the lives of his contemporaries. It was his powerful office that caused other people to have great respect for Joseph. In Isa. 8:7 the Assyrian's great military power is called their "glory." In light of this can we not see that the glory of God is anything concerning God that impresses His creatures with who and what He is and that gives God influence in the lives of those creatures. The glory of God is that which is impressive or influential concerning God!

This brings us to the second significant thing that we learn from the scriptures about the glory of God - the ways in which God has manifested or displayed His glory. The Bible teaches that God has displayed His glory throughout history through nature or through His creation. The sweet psalmist of Israel intoned these awe-inspiring words concerning this form of the display of God's glory in Ps. 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork." That is David's way of saying that the heavens display what is impressive about God. Have you ever been deeply impressed with the greatness of God when you have walked out of doors on a clear night and gazed up into those magnificent star-studded heavens?

A second major way that God has displayed His glory through the course of world history has been through His Israel people. In the prophecy of Isaiah God calls Israel by this title: "Israel, MY GLORY" (Isa. 46:13). And again in Isaiah God says, "I made Israel for MY GLORY" (Isa. 43:7). Yet again in Isaiah God says, "In and through Israel I display MY GLORY" (Isa. 66:10-20). How has God displayed His glory, His impressiveness, His influence through the Israel nations through the course of history? He has done it by the ways in which He has dealt with that people historically.

THE GLORY CLOUD

A third major way in which God has displayed His glory has been in the form of a CLOUD. This glory cloud of God has taken different shapes and different sizes on various occasions. When it was time for the children of Israel to begin their exodus out of Egypt, the glory of God took the form of a pillar of fire enshrouded within a cloud. "And the Lord went before them by day IN A PILLAR OF FIRE, to lead them in the way; and by night IN A PILLAR OF FIRE, to give them light, to go by day and night: He took
not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Ex. 13:21-22).

There are several things to observe about this passage. There was but one pillar of both cloud and fire, for when shining in the darkness it is still called the pillar of cloud (Ex. 14:19) or the cloud (Num. 9:21), so that it was A CLOUD CONTAINING THE FIRE. By day it appeared as a cloud in contrast to the scorching desert sun, hovering over the multitude as a blessed shadow, protecting them from the suffocating heat of the wilderness. By night the same cloud was a fiery splendor (Num. 9:15-16) giving the people light and heat to break the desert chill. They would see the blazing fire at night and they would see the bright cloud by day. It lighted Israel's path by its splendor and led them as a guide in their journeys. "In the daytime also He led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire" (Ps. 78:14). It also threatened destruction to those who murmured against God (Num. 17:10), sending out fire against the rebels and consuming them (Lev. 10:2; Num. 16:35).

When Israel was encamped about the base of mount Sinai, and God came down on top of that mount to meet with Moses to give Israel the law, the glory cloud of God in a blazing flame rested on top of that mountain. "And Moses went up into the mount, and a CLOUD covered the mount. And the GLORY OF THE LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the CLOUD covered it six days: and the seventh day He called unto Moses OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE CLOUD. And the SIGHT OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD was like DEVOURING FIRE on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the CLOUD, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights" (Ex. 24: 15-18). It was there amid the radiant cloud and flaming fire of God's glory that Moses received specific instruction for the building of the wilderness tabernacle, that wonderful typical HABITATION OF GOD from which the kingdom of Israel was to be directed and governed by the glory of God's presence.

Moses came down from the mount of God and began the construction of the tabernacle. At last, after many months of building and devoutly following the intricate instructions given by Yahweh, when every furnishing was finished and every feature complete in its minutest detail, we have these significant and wonder filled words: "Then a CLOUD covered the tent of the congregation, and the GLORY OF THE LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the CLOUD abode thereon, and the GLORY OF THE LORD filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 40:34-35). Thus, when the children of Israel dedicated the wilderness tabernacle they saw the glory cloud of God come and go right down inside the Most Holy Place of that tabernacle. Centuries later, when Solomon built the glorious temple in Jerusalem, on the day of dedication once again the glory cloud of God came and the people of Israel stood transfixed in awed wonder as they watched the glory cloud go right down inside the Holy of Holies of that temple.

What did the glory cloud of God signify every time it appeared? The glory cloud of God signified the unique presence of God. It always told the people of Israel, when it appeared, that Yahweh was uniquely present at this place, at this time, for a special purpose. When the Shekinah glory of God as a cloud led the children of Israel out of Egypt it signified to the people that God was with them in a very real and sovereign way. "And the LORD went before them IN a pillar of a cloud" (Ex. 13:21). God was IN the cloud! The Almighty God Himself dwelt in that cloud by day and in the fiery pillar by night.
That strange pillar of cloud and fire was the visible manifestation of His glory and presence. While Israel walked in the light of His fiery presence, no calamity could harm them, no enemy could attack them, no evil could befall them nor plague come nigh their dwelling. God was with them in sovereign power in all their marches. "And the Lord said unto Moses, I come unto thee in a THICK CLOUD, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe for ever" (Ex. 19:9). And again, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the Holy Place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: FOR I WILL APPEAR IN THE CLOUD upon the mercy seat" (Lev. 16:2).

When the cloud came down out of heaven and rested on top of mount Sinai, it signified that God in a unique sense had come out of the realm of spirit to meet with the nation of Israel in His manifestation on the earth plane. When they saw the cloud enter into the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle and later in the temple, it signified again that God in a special sense was taking up residence within that worship structure within the nation of Israel. The light that shone in the Holiest of All behind the temple curtains of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, laced with threads of gold and figures of cherubim, was not the light of a candle nor the beams of the sevenfold candlestick, nor even the radiance of the sun. It was the Shekinah, the glory light of God's majesty and presence. Every time the glory cloud of God appeared it signified the presence of Deity. Through time the Israelites called that glory cloud of God the SHEKINAH glory of God. The word Shekinah means "to dwell." And since the glory cloud always signified that God was present at the place where the cloud appeared, to dwell in a unique sense, they called it the Shekinah or DWELLING GLORY of God.

JESUS AND THE CLOUD

The disciples of Jesus had become accustomed to seeing Jesus the man, Jesus the healer, Jesus the man of sorrows. They had heard Him tell of the majesty and glory of His Father in heaven, but had never grasped the significance or the glory or the majesty and power of the Christ who walked the road with them. On that momentous occasion when the Lord Jesus took Peter, James and John up into the mount and was transfigured before them, suddenly there appeared a BRIGHT CLOUD - a cloud with a light in it. And out of that bright cloud the voice of the Father spake concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "This is My beloved Son: hear Him!" It is more than coincidence that, as Peter spoke, a CLOUD overshadowed them and a Voice came out of the cloud. One of the significant facts in connection with the glory cloud of God's presence is that God always SPOKE from the cloud. This began first on mount Sinai. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may HEAR WHEN I SPEAK with thee... and the Lord came down upon mount Sinai... and the Lord CALLED MOSES..." (Ex. 19:9,20). At a later time God spoke from the same cloud after that it had descended upon the tabernacle. "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and THE LORD TALKED WITH MOSES" (Ex. 33:9).

What was that BRIGHT CLOUD with the light in it from which the voice of God spake? It was none other than the pillar of cloud housing the glory fire, the Shekinah glory of God that had led the children of Israel in their exodus out of Egypt and guided them for forty years! As Jesus prayed on the mount, He was transfigured before His chosen disciples. At that moment of transfiguration the glory cloud enveloped Him and God spoke from the midst of the radiance of glory.
Please observe the marked similarity which exists between the transfiguration experience and that of Moses going into the blazing cloud on Sinai. "And after six days Jesus taketh with Him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and He was transfigured before them. And His raiment became SHINING, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses (the law and the prophets): and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles (like the tabernacle in the wilderness!); one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And there was a CLOUD THAT OVERSHADOWED THEM: and a VOICE came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son: hear Him!"

The matter of utmost importance for us at this time is to grasp the full import of these words of the Father: HEAR YE HIM! It was always the Mighty God who spoke out of the glory cloud. And now that Voice comes out of the excellent glory and commands that from this time forth the ONLY VOICE we are to hear is THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD. The great revelation here is not that the Father now ceases to speak and from henceforth leaves it unto the Son to speak. The simple truth here unfolded is that THE VOICE OF THE SON I-S THE VOICE OF G-O-D! Ah, it was Jesus, the Yahweh of the Old Testament, who was speaking from the cloud all the time ... away back on mount Sinai, in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and from between the cherubim over the mercy seat in the Holiest of All! The apostle John, by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, caught the reality of this and declared, "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD W-A-S G-O-D" (Jn. 1:1). He then speaks of the WORD as LIGHT: "In Him was life; and the life was the LIGHT of men. And the LIGHT shineth in darkness. . . " (in. 1: 4-5). This is strikingly reminiscent of the wilderness experience. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud ... and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them LIGHT: to go by day and night" (Ex. 13:21). The scriptures also assure us that "God IS LIGHT" (I Jn. 1:5), and that He is the "LIGHT of Israel" (Isa. 10:17), and Jesus most assuredly identified Himself as that CLOUD OF LIGHT which led God's people of old, for He said, "I AM THE LIGHT of the world: He that FOLLOWETH ME (a moving light, as the fiery cloud) shall not walk in darkness" (Jn. 8:12). John, after referring to Jesus as the WORD which was the LIGHT continues: "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" (Jn. 1:14).

In the wilderness this GLORY, this CLOUD, and the VOICE OUT OF THE CLOUD are all brought together: "And Moses went up into the mount, and a CLOUD covered the mount. And the GLORY of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the CLOUD covered it six days: and the seventh day He CALLED UNTO MOSES OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE CLOUD. And the sight of the GLORY of the Lord was like devouring FIRE" (Ex. 24:15-17). On the mount of transfiguration the SON is enveloped in the CLOUD and we are commanded to HEAR HIM. The writer to the Hebrews then identified this VOICE and this GLORY in these remarkable words: "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us BY HIS SON, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who BEING THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GLORY, and the express image of His person..." (Heb. 1:1-3). Jesus is the brightness of God's glory! He is indeed, the presence in the cloud and the very cloud and fire of the presence!

In this connection it is interesting to note that in the wilderness the cloud of his presence COVERED and OVERSHADOWED the tabernacle of God. Fifteen centuries later, when Jesus was to come into the world as the beginning of the greater and true tabernacle
which the Lord pitched, and not man, we read: "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall OVERSHADOW thee: THEREFORE also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk. 1:34-35). Let us UNDERSTAND! I do not hesitate to tell you that it was the same SHEKINAH GLORY CLOUD in which the God of Israel dwelt, and which overshadowed the place of His tabernacling among Israel; the same glory cloud which descended upon and overshadowed the majestic heights of Sinai, birthing the law of the Lord to Israel; yes, it was the very same cloud of His presence that OVERSHADOWED MARY so that the Mighty God of Israel could indwell her, and come forth as a flesh being, to be "God manifest in the flesh." The angel that announced these wonder filled tidings to the virgin girl of Nazareth did not plant the seed of Christ in her womb; it was the overshadowing of the POWER OF THE HIGHEST. Christ was CONCEIVED in the glory cloud!

The One of old in the cloud of glory was just JESUS. The WORD. The VOICE out of the CLOUD. The LIGHT that guided Israel. And that One was made flesh and dwelt among us. And to aid us in our perception of who He is, He stood in the glory cloud on the holy mount of God. From the midst of that cloud issued the command to HEAR HIM. And when all other manifestations were passed away the astonished disciples saw JESUS ONLY. "The Cloud Man" long awaited by the earnest rabbis of Israel had made His appearance. The One who is the brightness of God's glory was here on planet earth in the form of a man. The One who IS THE SHEKINAH, the glory cloud of God's presence, stood among men. "And they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US" (Mat. 1:23).

Let every reader of these lines be assured beyond any possible shadow of doubt that it was this same Shekinah, this very same glory cloud which the eleven disciples beheld in spell-bound astonishment on the crest of the mount of Olives that blessed day when the Lord ascended into mid-air and suddenly a bright cloud, like a chariot of God, bore Him speedily away, concealing Him from mortal gaze. "When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and A CLOUD received Him out of their sight," the record states (Acts 1:9). An accident? An illusion? A marvelous coincidence? Not on your life! This is the equivalent of saying that the cloud which hovered over Israel in the wilderness; the cloud which rested upon the glorious tabernacle of old; the cloud which dwelt between the gleaming cherubim in the Most Holy; the cloud which filled Solomon’s temple until the ministers could not minister by reason of the surpassing glory; the cloud which overshadowed the virgin girl Mary when she came to be with child; the same cloud which enveloped the Son of God and revealed His glory on the mount of transfiguration; that cloud IS THE VERY SAME CLOUD that received the Lord Jesus into its midst and out of the sight of mortal eyes! The cloud that received Jesus out of the sight of those startled disciples certainly was no ordinary rain cloud which happened to be floating across a torturous sky. It was the blazing Shekinah cloud which had always veiled the divine majesty of God from time Immemorial!

THE GLORY FIRE

Now, lest in our investigation of truth we should seem to miss the reality itself, we shall state clearly again that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, IS THE GLORY OF GOD and the glory of the Father and the Shekinah cloud. All the wonderful manifestations of the glory of God, portrayed throughout the Old Testament and the New, find their eternal
satisfaction in Jesus Christ our Lord. All the heavenly voices, the mighty thunderings, the
blinding lightnings, the glowing pillars of fire and the luminous clouds of glory find their
fulfillment in Him. The Voice that walked in the garden of Eden was nothing less than
Christ, the Word of God. The thunderings, the lightnings, the flame and smoke and cloud
of mount Sinai were the same voice that said, "Be thou made whole," and "If any man
thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." The fire of the pillar was THE LIGHT OF THE
WORLD, the glory light that emanated from His presence. It was the radiant aura that is
identical with the nature of that from which it emanates.

The truth that I earnestly pray will penetrate deeply into the heart of every saint of God
who meditates upon these holy things is the fact of the relationship that we have to the
Shekinah glory of God, the glory cloud and fire of His presence. Ten days after that little
group of ardent disciples stood gazing up into the heavens in bewilderment, wondering at
the phenomenon of their beloved Master rising bodily from their midst and disappearing
into the cloud, they were startled by another manifestation of the miraculous. On the day
Jesus ascended into heaven He said to His followers, "You stay here in Jerusalem until
the Father sends the gift that He has promised to you." The disciples obeyed the Lord,
they stayed there in Jerusalem, and ten days after Jesus had ascended, on the day of
Pentecost, while that little company of believers was banded together some strange
things began to happen. Suddenly there was the sound of a mighty rushing wind
swooping down from out of celestial realms on that little band of believers, but that wasn't
all that came down out of heaven, there were also TONGUES OF FIRE that came down
out of the glory world above, as many tongues of fire as there were believers present that
day. Those tongues of fire came down out of heaven right to the heads of the believers,
and while the biblical text doesn't actually say this, the inference is that those tongues of
fire disappeared right into their bodies.

What were those tongues of fire that appeared on the day of Pentecost? They were none
other than the SHEKINAH GLORY OF GOD! This was the same pillar of fire in the cloud
that went before Israel and dwelt in the Most Holy Place; however, this time instead of
being clustered together in a single blazing mass as a singular pillar of fire, it was
subdivided into as many segments as there were believers present that day. What did the
Shekinah glory of God coming in the form of tongues of fire into the bodies of those
servants of the Lord signify? They signified then exactly the same thing they had signified
every time the Shekinah had appeared before - the unique presence of God. But on this
occasion they signified that the mighty God was coming to take up permanent residence
within the bodies and lives of the sons and daughters of the Most High. Ah, my brother,
my sister, born from above by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God that liveth and
abideth forever, do you realize what this means to you? This means that God has seen fit
to place His Shekinah glory cloud INSIDE YOUR PHYSICAL BODY! That truth should
make us holy. YOU are now God's GLORY CLOUD! The glory of the cloud that once
overshadowed the tabernacle is the glory that overshadows you. The glory that filled the
typical temple in Solomon's day is the same glory that filled the living temple at Pentecost
and that now fills the living temple which you are.

From the pen of another ready writer let me quote the following words of inspiration and
instruction. "From the beautiful phrases of Weymouth's translation, we have these
illuminating words of glory and beauty: 'You are a building which has been reared on the
foundation of the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Jesus Christ Himself, in
union with whom the whole fabric, truly bonded together, IS RISING SO AS TO FORM A
HOLY SANCTUARY in the Lord; in whom you also are being built up together TO
BECOME A FIXED ABODE FOR GOD through the Spirit.' It was this living tabernacle, this dwelling place of God, this spiritual habitation, the body of Christ, which was so magnificently portrayed in every minute detail of the typical tabernacle in the wilderness. Over that tabernacle abode the cloud and fire of God's glory and within the holy of holies was the Shekinah, which was the glory of God's presence. In these blessed days so long ago God walked among His people. The glory of God hovered continually over a figurative tabernacle. When Jesus came, He walked WITH THEM. As John once said, 'We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' But the time came when that heavenly glory, which is Jesus Christ Himself, came to dwell, not merely with them, but in them, for thus has the Spirit spoken, saying, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people' (II Cor. 16:16).

"I know and am sure that this wilderness tabernacle, of which the Bible speaks in such intricate detail, is a typical representation of the MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST, of which we are a living part. Nothing else in all scripture so adequately and marvelously displays the ministries, the gifts, the graces, the fruits, the door, the sacrifices, the communion and the GLORY of the body of Christ as does the tabernacle. Every detail the apostles taught concerning the body of Christ is clearly displayed in the tabernacle in the wilderness.

"The Shekinah that once filled the Holy of Holies in the long ago, is the light of Christ that now fills the holy of holies which you are. I know we can neither see nor understand as we often feel we should, but there is a great truth which we must all learn and the sooner we grasp it the sooner we will cease from our fleshly strivings and enter into the rest of our Lord. We must learn that God no longer dwells in a wilderness tabernacle or in temples made with hands. Glorious as were those types and shadows, they were merely frail reflections of a more glorious 'house not made with hands' which was to come. Our Father no longer dwells in a temple in Jerusalem made by the art and wisdom of Solomon or the cunning workmanship of skilled artisans. His temple henceforth is the living temple of His body, which temple we are. The burning truth the Holy Spirit would now reveal is that 'ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' To the elect saints of the church age Paul dared to say, 'Now ye are THE BODY OF CHRIST and members in particular.' The saints are the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. They are the FATHER'S HOUSE OF MANY MANSIONS. The body of Christ is made of LIVING STONES, which stones YE ARE. This is the true temple. This is 'My Father's house.' From the radiant glory of its many mansions He will govern the worlds in ages to come, restoring and reconciling all things unto Himself.

"What do the words of Jesus mean to you, saint of God, which He spoke concerning His glory, saying, "When the Son of man shall COME IN HIS GLORY, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN shall He sit upon THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY" (Mat. 25:31). Was not the tabernacle, filled with His glory, the seat of His government in Israel? Dare we not believe that the THRONE OF HIS GLORY will be this GLORY FILLED TEMPLE of His body, the house of living stones not made with hands? Listen to Jesus as He describes this coming to His temple. 'Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a CLOUD with POWER AND GREAT GLORY' (Lk. 21:27). 'And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, (Mat. 24:31). These elect are they of whom Peter spoke, saying, 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ' (I Pet. 1:2). These
are the elect of all ages, members in particular of the 'house not made with hands.' God's glory shall fill that living temple which they are" -The Page.

COMING WITH CLOUDS

I would draw your attention to the book of Revelation, the unveiling of Jesus Christ. This marvelous book contains deep and rich teaching for the elect saints concerning the coming of Christ; symbolic, mysterious, wonderful, but always to be approached reverently, humbly, with head bowed low and shoes removed from off our feet, as people standing on holy ground. Nineteen hundred years ago the beloved disciple on the lonely isle of Patmos saw unfolding before him the enthralling drama of the coming of his Lord. As the awesome sight began to unfold he cried out in astonished wonder and surprised joy, "Behold! He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). The coming of the Lord as revealed in the book of Revelation is complex and progressive, extending through a variety of diverse scenes, stages, events, and manifestations, until He has come in such measure of fullness that we know Him finally in that dimension where HE IS the glorious fulfillment of all that our heart has yearned for, and desired so earnestly. All the lacks swallowed up into completeness, all the voids filled with His fullness, and we know the bliss of HIMSELF as our All-in-all.

BEHOLD! This is the word with which John begins his description of what he saw. Someone has said that the word "behold" in the scriptures is the "Stop, Look, and Listen" sign of the Bible. It always calls for special attention and directs our focus to a truth of unusual importance. The word comes from the Greek IDOU a demonstrative participle. There are four things we should understand about this word. First, it bids the reader or hearer to give attention to what is being said, as if we were to say, "Now listen!" Second, it is used when an event is specified which seems impossible, yet occurs. Third, it is an exclamation of one pointing out something and calling attention to it. Fourth, it means to observe what is about to be said and consider it thoroughly.

Now let us look at the two words that follow: HE COMETH. "Behold! He cometh." This phrase is from the Greek ERCHOMAI. It is the third person singular, present indicative. Any reader who knows the conjunction of verbs knows what that means. First, it means HE COMES as a present tense reality. The verb is present indicative. He comes. He is in the act of coming. Behold! He is (now) coming! In other words, He has been coming, He is still in the act of coming, and He continues to come. This is extremely important. More than once the coming of the Lord is spoken of in this tense throughout the book of Revelation. It's not a future thing, not something that shall happen somewhere down the course of history, but it is something that IS. Oh! that God with flames of His holy fire would burn this truth indelibly upon the hearts of all who read these lines.

The Church world is either looking back to an historical Christ, or forward to a futuristic coming of Christ, and they miss this word ERCHOMAI altogether, their spiritual understanding never being quickened to this grand truth that HE COMES, He is coming, He continues to come, He will continue to come. It is something that can happen right now. It can happen in your life right now. It means that He comes from one place to another. He comes out of the realm of spirit to be manifested in flesh, expressed and revealed in a visible, tangible way to the physical creation. ERCHOMAI means to come, to make one's appearance come before the public. It means that He comes and appears before the view of the people round about. And this coming has already happened, it is happening now, and shall continue to happen. This is the revelation that so captivated
the apostle John that he could only exclaim with amazement, "Behold! He comes!" And the Spirit has borne witness for many years now among God's Spirit-led people that soon Christ shall come in the manifestation of Himself on a plane and in a measure never before seen or experienced by men upon this planet. He shall come to be glorified in His saints, manifested in His sons to set creation free from its bondage to corruption - sin and sorrow and death. Yes, He HAS come, and He is STILL TO COME!

There are two more words: WITH CLOUDS. "Behold! He cometh with clouds." "With" is from the Creek preposition META. It means with, but it also means together with, in the midst of, among, between, in common with, with the help of, and by means of. Behold! He comes WITH clouds, denoting an association. Behold! He comes TOGETHER WITH clouds, denoting a communion. Behold! He comes IN THE MIDST OF clouds, denoting an indwelling. Behold! He comes AMONG clouds, denoting a fellowship. Behold! He comes BETWEEN clouds, denoting a union. Behold! He comes IN COMMON WITH clouds, denoting a participation. Behold! He comes WITH THE HELP OF clouds, denoting an interdependence. Behold! He comes BY MEANS OF clouds, denoting an instrumentality. CLOUDS are the vehicle He uses in this coming.

Here is where I wish to point out a most significant fact of scripture which has entirely been overlooked by the average Bible student and almost all preachers and teachers in the church systems. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel to the ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always only ONE SINGLE CLOUD. One cloud over mount Sinai. One cloud resting upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. One cloud shining in the Most Holy Place. One cloud filling Solomon's temple. One cloud overshadowing the virgin, implanting the seed of the Christ. One cloud shimmering over the summit of the mount of transfiguration. And finally, we read, "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and A CLOUD (only one!) received Him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). Christ ascended in ONE SINGLE CLOUD of God's Shekinah glory - the very SAME cloud in which He had manifested His presence throughout the long ages of time.

It is when we come to the return of our Lord that we notice a distinct difference in the circumstances surrounding that coming. For suddenly, the one single cloud disappears and we are introduced to a great plurality of C-L-O-U-D-S. Let us SEE! Christ departed this earth in ONE CLOUD. He comes again in MANY CLOUDS! "Behold, He cometh with CLOUDS: and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). Daniel in vision beheld Him thus: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like a Son of man CAME WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN ... and there was given unto Him dominion" (Dan. 7:13-14). Jesus Himself said, "And they shall see the Son of man COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN with power and great glory" (Mat. 24: 30). And again, "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and COMING IN THE CLOUDS of heaven" (Mat. 26:64). Finally, the apostle Paul relates this dramatic experience: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them IN THE CLOUDS, to meet the Lord..." (I Thes. 4:17). In the C-L-O-U-D-S! More than one cloud. Many clouds. A great company of clouds!

The question follows: Why are there MANY CLOUDS attending Christ's coming again, and what are these clouds? To aid our understanding of this truth, let us not for one moment forget that we are dealing with THE CLOUD of GOD'S GLORY AND PRESENCE. The Shekinah. When Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, was in the world
John said of Him, "And we beheld HIS GLORY" (Jn. 1:14). WHEN did they behold His glory? You may reply that they beheld His glory when He went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, performing miracles and teaching the glorious truths of the Kingdom of God. I do not deny that in all those things they beheld His glory, but the apostle Peter pinpoints for us what is really meant about them beholding the glory of the Son. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were EYEWITNESSES OF HIS MAJESTY (GLORY). For He received from God the Father honour and GLORY, WHEN THERE CAME SUCH A VOICE TO HIM FROM THE EXCELLENT GLORY (THE GLORY CLOUD), saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, WHEN WE WERE WITH HIM IN THE HOLY MOUNT" (II Pet. 1:16-18).

How very significant that at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may BE ONE IN US ... and the GLORY WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN THEM... I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one ... Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, BE WITH ME WHERE I AM; that they may behold MY GLORY which Thou hast given Me" (Jn. 17:20-24). And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation's light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, God manifested to His creation in a singular way HIS OWN GLORY. He, the one eternal God exhibited His presence in the form of ONE GLORY CLOUD. But as Jesus approached the cross and the glorious events to unfold shortly thereafter, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to SHARE HIS GLORY WITH HIS VAST FAMILY OF SONS ... that glorious body which is the fullness of Him who filleth all in all!

Let us see then what great encouragement God has given us concerning His glory. "And ye know how we exhorted you, as a father does his children, that ye should walk worthy of God, who hath called you TO HIS KINGDOM AND GLORY" (I Thes. 2:11-12). Peter asserts, "I ... also am A PARTAKER OF THE GLORY that shall be revealed" (I Pet. 5:1). "Whereunto He called you to the obtaining of THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST" (II Thes. 2:2). "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with THE GLORY THAT SHALL BE REVEALED IN US" (Rom. 8:18). The writer to the Hebrews adds this significant testimony: "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing MANY SONS TO GLORY, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). That there is to be a mighty and universal revelation of the glory of God, that very same glory which was revealed in the cloud of old, is evident.

When Jesus ascended nineteen hundred years ago, He ascended glorified in that singular glory cloud in which He had dwelt from eternity. He was the One God manifested in all fullness in one Man, the Son. But, blessed be God! when He comes again, "He shall come to be GLORIFIED I-N H-I-S S-A-I-N-T-S, and to be admired IN THEM that believe" (II Thes. 1:10). Centuries ago the apostle Paul wrote these words to the saints in Rome: "And if (we are) 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 should not be difficult for any believer to understand that since the majesty and glory of God is now to be shared by and imparted to a vast company of sons of God, each of these sons to whom is given that same glory that Jesus had from eternity shall stand ultimately in his OWN REALM OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD. The glory is shared, so the CLOUD
which represents that glory IS SHARED. Each elect son becomes a manifestation of the glory - of the CLOUD - of the Shekinah! Each son becomes the expression and revelation of the Person of Deity. There is still only one Person of God, but He shall eternally indwell a many-membered body of like ones unto Himself, the extension and projection of His own Being. In the light of truths so sublime let us then search our hearts and sanctify ourselves in the knowledge that WE ARE THAT BODY. The cloud of old rested upon the tabernacle and filled the temple with the glory of the Lord. WE ARE NOW HIS TABERNACLE AND HIS TEMPLE! WE ARE NOW HIS ARK AND HIS MOST HOLY PLACE AND HIS HOLY MOUNT! The glory now given to us rests upon us, increasingly fills us, and shall radiate out through this holy habitation of God forevermore. Under the Old Testament economy God dwelt in the one singular cloud. But now He says, "I will dwell IN THEM, and walk IN THEM... and ye shall be My sons and daughters.." (II Cor. 6:16-18).

What, then, are those clouds with which, and in which, the Christ comes again? Why, bless your heart, WE ARE! The apostles Peter and Jude both tell us that FALSE MINISTRIES are "CLOUDS without water ... carried about of winds." A TRUE ministry then, is a CLOUD with water. A true ministry has life to give, and is willing to empty himself out in order to be a blessing to dry and thirsty souls. Jesus was a bright cloud laden with water, for "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life..." (Mat. 20:28).

The one glory has become the multiple glory. The one God has reproduced His life into a many-membered body. The ONE CLOUD of His presence has become MANY CLOUDS of His presence IN HIS PEOPLE. Isaiah foretold of this day: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the GLORY OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON T-H-E-E. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and HIS GLORY SHALL BE S-E-E-N U-P-O-N T-H-E-E" (Isa. 60:1-2). The "sign" of the coming or presence of Yahweh has always been the Shekinah glory cloud. It was His sign to Moses, and when our Lord comes again in fullness in a many-membered body of saints, it will be IN THE CLOUDS OF HIS PRESENCE.

Because the Shekinah glory of God lives inside the bodies of God's elect saints, we have the solemn responsibility of glorifying God in our bodies. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? Therefore GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:19-20). Since the glory of God is that which is impressive or influential concerning God, it behooves us to yield our members day by day as instruments unto God in this world that creation about us may be tremendously impressed with our great heavenly Father who now lives inside us. We are responsible to use our bodies in such a way that God will have influence in the world in these dark days at the end of the age. I cannot help but believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, in anticipation of the hour when the glory cloud would fully indwell and cover the elect of God, said in that long ago, "YE are the light of the world!"

This treasure we have in EARTHEN VESSELS (II Cor. 4:7). Ah, there is a glory even now as we glorify God in these mortal bodies. Christ had and disclosed such a glory in that dim and distant past when He walked the shores of blue Galilee. But, blessed be His name, in His resurrection He came forth in new garments, clad in a sin-free and death-free body of incorruption and immortality! Now His wonderful life is swallowing up the sin and death in us, bringing to His chosen ones also a change of raiment, and the hour is
wonderfully near at hand when even this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality.

Though His glory has generally been hidden throughout the ages, at certain times and on special occasions that hidden glory has flashed forth into prominence before the eyes of the few who by the predestined counsel of God were permitted to experience unspeakable things unlawful for a man to utter. We are coming ever nearer when God shall unveil His power and glory before the face of all nations and peoples in a manner far beyond any measure experienced by men of any age. The whole world shall soon see the glory that is to be revealed in God’s matured and perfected body. BEHOLD! HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS, IN GREAT POWER AND GLORY!
Chapter 23
Coming With Clouds
(continued)

One of the major ways in which God has displayed His glory has been in the form of a CLOUD. This glory cloud of God has taken different shapes and different sizes on various occasions. When it was time for the children of Israel to begin their exodus out of Egypt, the glory of God took the form of a pillar of fire enshrouded within a cloud. "And the Lord went before them by day IN A PILLAR OF A CLOUD, to lead them in the way; and by night IN A PILLAR OF FIRE, to give them light, to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Ex. 13:21-22).

What did the glory cloud of God signify every time it appeared? The glory cloud of God signified the unique presence of God. It always told the people of Israel, when it appeared, that Yahweh was uniquely present at this place, at this time, for a special purpose. When the Shekinah glory of God as a cloud led the children of Israel out of Egypt it signified to the people that God was with them in a very real and sovereign way. "And the LORD went before them IN a pillar of a cloud." God was IN the cloud!

In the previous article on this subject we pointed out a most significant fact of scripture which has been entirely overlooked by the average Bible student and almost all preachers and teachers in the church systems. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel to the ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always just the ONE SINGLE CLOUD. One cloud over mount Sinai. One cloud resting upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. One cloud shining in the Most Holy Place. One cloud filling Solomon's temple. One cloud overshadowing the virgin, implanting the seed of the Christ. One cloud shimmering over the summit of the mount of Transfiguration. And finally, we read, "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and A CLOUD (only one!) received Him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). Christ ascended in ONE SINGLE CLOUD of God's Shekinah glory - the very SAME cloud in which He had manifested His presence throughout the long ages of time.

The question follows: Why are there MANY CLOUDS attending Christ's coming again, and what are these clouds? To aid our understanding of this truth, let us not for one moment forget that we are dealing with THE CLOUD OF GOD'S GLORY AND PRESENCE. The Shekinah. When Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, was in the world John said of Him, "And we beheld HIS GLORY" (Jn. 1:14). How very significant that at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be ONE; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may BE ONE IN US ... and the G-L-O-R-Y THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN THEM...I in them, and Thou in Me. Father, I will that
they also, whom Thou hast given Me, BE WITH ME WHERE I AM; that they may behold MY GLORY which Thou hast given Me" (Jn. 17:20-24). And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation's light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, God manifested to His creation in a singular way HIS OWN GLORY. He, the one eternal God exhibited His presence in the form of ONE GLORY CLOUD. But as Jesus approached the cross and the glorious events to unfold following His resurrection, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to SHARE HIS GLORY WITH HIS VAST FAMILY OF SONS ... that glorious body which is the fullness of Him who filleth all in all!

It should not be difficult for any believer to understand that since the majesty and glory of God is now to be shared by and imparted to a vast company of sons of God, each of these sons to whom is given that same glory that Jesus had from eternity shall stand ultimately in his OWN REALM OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD. The glory is shared, so the CLOUD which represents that glory IS SHARED. Each elect son becomes a manifestation of the glory - of the CLOUD - of the Shekinah! The one glory has become the multiple glory. The one God has reproduced His life into a many-membered body. The ONE CLOUD of His presence has become MANY CLOUDS of His presence IN HIS PEOPLE. Isaiah foretold of this day: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the GLORY OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON T-H-E-E. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and HIS GLORY SHALL BE S-E-E-N U-P-O-N T-H-E-E" (Isa. 60:1-2). The "sign" of the coming or presence of Yahweh has always been the Shekinah glory cloud. It was His sign to Moses, and when our Lord comes again in fullness in His many-membered body of saints, it will be IN THE CLOUDS OF HIS PRESENCE AND GLORY.

COMING WITH CLOUDS

In all matters of revelation and spiritual understanding it is impossible to overestimate the absolute necessity of the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, who comes to take the things of God and show them unto US. The natural man CANNOT understand the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are SPIRITUALLY discerned. The truth of the matter is that the Bible could be read a thousand times, yea, ten thousand times without shedding a ray of light on the carnal mind of a natural man. In fact, natural minded people, even Christian people, have searched the scriptures day and night throughout endless years, yet, because they read with carnal understanding, destitute of the help of the Holy Spirit while depending entirely upon their natural intellect, the Lord withholds His light and understanding from them.

Some people get bent all out of shape when we tell them that Jesus is not returning riding upon a rain cloud. Let me assure you - the prophecies of the Bible are to be believed! But let us be careful that we do not make them mean something which God did not intend. The mistake that many make is to say that all those prophecies are to be fulfilled in a very physical and natural sense, when the New Testament interpretations indicate that the prophecies do indeed have a literal fulfillment but with a spiritual interpretation. We need to understand that much of the language of the Bible is couched in symbolism, metaphors and allegories. The beauty of things is sometimes enhanced by the descriptive language that God uses, such as when He describes the church, the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:21-33), as a "great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:1-2,9-10). God's use of earthly language to describe His holy Zion in these two chapters of Revelation 21 and 22 is absolutely fantastic and marvelous. I doubt that John could have ever thought up this picture by himself!
Likewise, think of many places in the Bible where God uses symbolical language. In Isa. 7:20 it says, "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired." The shaving would include His head, His beard and His feet, it says. Physical or symbolical? In Ex. 14:21 we are told that the Lord "caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided," but in singing about this later, Moses said, "...with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together" (Ex. 15:8). Beautiful language indeed, that God could blow His nose and cause the Red Sea to part for the children of Israel to cross on dry ground; but we certainly understand this is symbolical language as to the method used in describing the real thing that happened.

I am reminded of the little girl who picked up a book on the vegetable kingdom. She read in the book that cabbages have heads. She asked her father, "Do cabbages have heads like we have?" He told her, "No." Then she said, "Well, the man that wrote the book wrote a lie!" "No," her father replied, "the man didn't lie." "But if he did not write a lie," she persisted, "then cabbages must have heads like ours!" Patiently her father explained, "No, honey. He is talking about another form of life, and that life form has a head, but it is a different kind of head from ours. Therefore he wrote the truth, but you put the wrong interpretation on it. The man who wrote that knew what he was talking about, but you, not understanding the things he spoke of, suppose that a cabbage has a head like a man's. But that does not make it so. The man was and is right, but your interpretation of what he wrote is wrong." Now, that is how the carnal mind reads the Bible. It understands spiritual realities in terms of fleshly or worldly things. All who interpret the scriptures with the natural mind are just as mistaken in their conclusions as was the little girl who looked for a cabbage possessing a human head complete with eyes, ears, nose and mouth and adorned with hair! The natural mind looks for Jesus to come on a fleecy-white rain cloud, but the spiritual mind sees that He comes in the Shekinah clouds of glory radiating from the glorious living temple of His body.

Another proof that the "clouds" with which Christ comes are in reality the sons of God IN THEIR GLORY is couched in the terminology of the scriptures on this subject. Note that in most places the passages in question speak of Christ coming "WITH CLOUDS." There is only one other group or plurality of objects of which it is stated that Christ comes "with" them, and that is - the SAINTS! The Bible never says that Jesus returns "to" the clouds or "out of" the clouds. It is very careful to tell us that lie comes "with" clouds. And it also tells us that He comes "with" His saints. "To the end He may establish your hearts ... at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ W-I-T-H ALL HIS SAINTS" (I Thes. 3:13). Jude says, "And Enoch also ... prophesied ... saying, Behold, the Lord cometh W-I-T-H-H TEN THOUSANDS OF SAINTS" (Jude 14). The Amplified is helpful, when it reads, "Behold, the Lord comes W-I-T-H MYRIADS OF HOLY ONES - ten thousands of His saints." But the Interlinear reading from the Diaglott translation gives the clearest of all renderings from the Greek text, so we note, "Lo, comes Lord I-N HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF." "Myriads of HIMSELF." All of them partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, filled with His life. Myriads of Himself, of His own kind, born of His seed, a many brethren company of SONS - all His sons. And again we read the testimony: "And the Lord my God shall come, and ALL THE SAINTS W-T-T-H T-H-E-E" (Zech. 14:5). The beloved John sees this same scene in wonder-filled vision and speaking in prophetical language writes: "Behold, He cometh W-I-T-H CLOUDS; and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7).

Rom. 8:17 contains a marvelous truth. "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.” To be GLORIFIED TOGETHER is the hope that springs perennial within the breast of all who have by the spirit beheld HIS GLORY. This wonderful experience of being GLORIFIED TOGETHER is a reference of our union with Christ as members of His body, and speaks of a time to come when this entire company of the sons of God, IN UNION WITH CHRIST THE HEAD, shall be GLORIFIED TOGETHER - IMMERSED INTO THE LIFE OF CHRIST, sharing with Him in the fullness of His glory. This entire company shall be joined to Christ to share with Him in the blessed glorification experience when we shall partake of HIS GLORY, being fully transformed into the body of His likeness. Verse eighteen of Romans eight refers to that glory as "The glory which shall be revealed IN US." Therefore, it is a glory which is yet to be revealed IN US, that is, in these bodies we shall experience that great glory of Christ when we shall be clothed upon with our heavenly house so that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

We are plainly taught that when Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear WITH HIM in glory (Col. 3:4). He can do nothing without us. We are His body. Oh, marvelous thought! Christ has bound us to Himself with ties so strong (no man would speak of his own hand as being near or far, his hand is part of himself; no man would undertake anything without a full participation on the part of every member of his body in that event), Christ has bound us, I repeat, so eternally and utterly to Himself that we MUST figure in His movements. Of course we shall appear with Him! It could not be otherwise - we are His body. Each elect member of His body has been so grafted into the trunk of the eternal Godhead, so incorporated in His life that He and His body are one. Oh, the unutterable glory of this union with Christ! To what an ineffable destiny it commits us. We no longer concern ourselves about whether or not we shall "go to heaven." The truth of the matter is, we would rather not go, if Christ were not there. Ah, He IS heaven! The faintest glimmer of light from His holy countenance beside which the sun is but a shadow, suffices the heart. Paul could not have done otherwise than sing there in prison when at midnight with Silas, he rejoiced. His back was bleeding with the stripes; it was midnight; he was in prison. But he sings as a participant of Christ; heaven's ineffable light bursts in about him, the glory of the Lord is upon him, and the Lord manifests Himself in this cloud!

We are to participate in Christ's coming. We are moving toward the most stupendous transactions in the history of the human race. Nothing can befall Him that does not befall us. We are yet to participate in a fuller measure in the fruits of redemption. We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. With Him we shall reign. The stream of life, which proceedeth from the throne, and from the Lamb and which breaks in upon us, so that even NOW "rivers of living water" flow from our innermost being, is going to just overflow all its banks in this day, so that death will be literally SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY. Oh, that God may give us a heart to make due preparation for the participation in the yet unfulfilled history of Christ. For as we have been made to partake of the death of the Federal Head of the new race, and in Him were resurrected and made to sit in the heavenlies, so, in that sublime event toward which the church moves, the coming of Christ with clouds, we too, shall participate. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!

CLOUDS OF STRENGTH AND MIGHT

Often clouds are used in scripture to symbolize something that has been lifted up or exalted. David declares that God's mercy and truth reaches unto the clouds, that His strength is found in the clouds and that He "maketh the clouds His chariots" (Ps. 36:22; 57:10; 68:34; 104:3). We know that these verses are not referring to the bright, fluffy
cumulus clouds that we can see with our physical eyes, because Christ has ascended far above all such clouds, sitting at the right hand of the glory of God. He has passed through all heavens and He alone has all power and might, and mercy and truth. All those that are risen with Him and ascended to this place of authority are forming a great BODY through which God is revealing Himself today.

The clouds are meant to set forth the MIGHT, as well as the majesty of His coming. "Ascribe ye strength unto God: His excellency is over Israel, and HIS STRENGTH IS IN THE CLOUDS" (Ps. 68:34). This was the royal token given by Daniel the prophet in his seventh chapter, at the thirteenth verse, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like a Son of man came with the clouds of heaven." Not less than divine is the glory of the Son of God, who once had not where to lay His head. "Behold, He cometh!" not with the bands of swaddling clothes of His infancy, the weariness of His manhood, the shame of His death, but with the all-glorious tapestry of heaven's high chambers. He comes with tens of thousands of like ones unto Himself who have been transformed by His life. He comes in a people with power and glory such as we have never witnessed before. The force of His coming will be such that all people and all nations will be compelled to acknowledge: THINE is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen!

I pray that the Spirit of God will grant me help to expound the thing that is in my vision and that He, being doubly gracious, will take these things of God and reveal them unto every believing heart. The Lord was "transfigured," we are told and Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory" with Him (Lk. 9:31). The glory was Christ's glory, and He it was that was transfigured, but these two men APPEARED in His glory. And that, in fact, is a picture of what is going to happen when Christ is manifested in the saints; the saints are to appear WITH HIM IN GLORY! "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). It is participation in the Transfiguration glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, just as Moses and Elijah appeared in His Transfiguration glory. The scriptures teach that this Transfiguration is for us. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed (Greek: transfigured) by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed (Greek: transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18).

The open face is the "unveiled" face. The reference is to the veil which Moses wore over his face to hide the fading glory from the eyes of the Israelites, when he came down from the mountain. But when he went in to speak to the Lord, he took the veil off. Paul, therefore, exhorts the Corinthians to take the veil off. This is the day and hour of God's great Unveiling - even the Unveiling of the sons of God! And as our eyes and hearts and minds become UNVEILED before God, we are going to be TRANSFIGURED into the SAME IMAGE! These words are unmistakable in clearness. The SAME IMAGE! And this IMAGE is developed and manifested as we partake of His Transfiguration, with minds and hearts and eyes unveiled before the Spirit of God. What Peter beheld, therefore, on the mount of Transfiguration was a true picture of the POWER AND COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ into the midst of His people in this great hour of His power and Kingdom. But it was just a picture; and when the real meaning of the scene is fully revealed to us by way of experience, it will far outshine any attempt to describe it.

"His strength is in the clouds" (Ps. 68:34). With that staggering, challenging thought in mind I ask myself, How much strength does He have according to ME? Reader, how much strength does He have according to YOU? The world today is full of that weak,
watered down, insipid, lukewarm laodiceanism. Everywhere we look we see it. It flashes out at us from the television screen, and packs great auditoriums with vast crowds of thousands of people. False teachers, false prophets, and religious racketeers abound. Hollywood singers and entertainers make themselves rich by crooning and recording our precious hymns, which once were written in holy brokenness at the feet of Jesus. Preachers are making themselves millionaires by their flamboyant deception, using the desperate needs of suffering humanity as a pretext to rob the widow, the simple and the well-meaning. I do not hesitate to tell you that they brazenly fake the sacred gifts of the Holy Spirit, in order by this blasphemous pretense to appear before the people as great and powerful men of God. My spirit loathes it all, and I cast it far from me. Such conniving and deception is not of the truth. It is no nearer to light than darkness and no nearer to Christ than Belial. It is the horrible delusion of Mystery Babylon from which every follower of the Lamb is warned to flee as he would from an adder.

The next thing in order is the reign of Christ with all His sanctified sons gathered out of the ages. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ... and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN WITH POWER AND GREAT GLORY" (Mat. 24:30). Not these clouds floating by in earth’s atmosphere, but HEAVENLY CLOUDS. A heavenly cloud of people, or a heavenly people in the form of clouds. This people comes with power and great authority! How can you tell when Christ comes as a cloud within a saint of God? There develops within that one a ROYAL KINGSHIP, a kingly authority, the expression of the power of God in the inner life. Ah, we have seen His coming. He is coming with power and great glory, in clouds of power, IN CLOUDS OF POWER, I-N C-L-O-U-D-S O-F P-O-W-E-R! I see the coming Power. I realize something of the touches of that coming Power, and the great Glory and I am solemnized thereby.

CLOUDS WITH WATER

Why does God identify Himself with clouds? There is a most remarkable incident which took place in relation to the glory cloud when the children of Israel came out of Egypt. This incident is little known by God's people, but it happened to testify to us of the great PURPOSE for which God has enveloped His presence in a cloud. It pointed forward to the great work of the Holy Spirit during this and subsequent ages. Paul refers to this event in I Cor. 10:1-2: "Moreover brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were UNDER THE CLOUD, and all passed through the sea; and were all BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES IN THE CLOUD and in the sea." Note that Paul says that the Israelites were "all BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES IN THE CLOUD and in the SEA." And then in Exodus chapter fourteen it is repeated no less than four times, that they passed "on dry land" through the midst of the sea. Now, how can you pass through on dry ground and at the same time be BAPTIZED IN THE CLOUD AND IN THE SEA? The fact is, God baptized those Israelites on DRY GROUND. The sea was indeed rolled back by a great wind and the ground became dry, but let us notice in Ps. 77:15-17 and 20 what else happened at that time: "When Thou with Thine arm redeemed Thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. The WATERS saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The CLOUDS POURED OUT WATER: the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad. Thou LEDDEST Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." THE CLOUDS P-O-U-R-E-D O-U-T W-A-T-E-R when the children of Israel had crossed the Red Sea by the hand of Moses! How many of my readers ever heard of that rain storm? Israel was thus "baptized" IN THE CLOUD and in the SEA.
Drawing upon the imagery of this first recorded "baptism," God all through the scriptures has enshrouded Himself in a cloud to declare that He shall RAIN all He is UPON US! Through Isaiah He declares: "For I will POUR WATER upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will POUR MY SPIRIT upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thy offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses" (Isa. 44:3-4). David prophesied in spirit of the coming of Messiah and described His coming in these words: "HE shall come down like RAIN upon Messiah. In His days shall the righteous flourish" (Ps. 72:6-7). Joel prophesied: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will POUR OUT MY SPIRIT upon all flesh ... and also upon the servants and upon the handmaidens in those days will I pour out My Spirit" (Joel 2:28-29). That our Lord is coming in a great spiritual outpouring of Himself is made plain in Hos. 6:3: "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 former and latter rain unto the earth." Hallelujah!

A cloud is made up of millions of tiny droplets of water in a big group. The clouds you see in the sky were formed when a mass of warm, moist air rose from the earth and reached a section of colder air. The moisture in the air condensed and made a cloud, just as your breath condenses on a cold day. When a cloud becomes so heavy with droplets that it can no longer hold them, it spills over, and we have rain. "O Lord my God, Thou art very great ... who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: who maketh the CLOUD HIS CHARIOT: He WATERETH the hills FROM HIS CHAMBERS" (Ps. 104:3,13). The clouds are the chambers of God containing the water of life. A cloud is full of water and water speaks to us of life. Water typifies the Word of God and the Spirit of God (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 7: 37-39). A cloud speaks to us of a vessel which contains water or contains life. Even so, God by His Spirit gives LIVING WATER to refresh and impart life unto His creation. It is the nature of a cloud to empty itself. "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth" (Eccl. 11:3). When the cloud gets filled up, it rains. That is the nature of the clouds - rain pours out. All that God is was emptied into Jesus Christ. All that God is was poured into Him, He became a receptacle, a vehicle for all the fullness of God (Col. 1:19; 2:9). He was filled up with the life-giving properties of God. Now, all that Jesus Christ is, is being emptied into His body until we are filled with all the fullness of God - having all the life-giving properties of God. HE IS FILLING THE CLOUDS! The nature of each son will be to pour out that life just as God poured it into Jesus and Jesus poured it into us. Every eye shall see His glory. They shall SEE HIM IN THE CLOUDS.

If the saints be full of God they will pour Him out upon the earthy-natured, unconverted and unspiritual ones. A true ministry has life to give, and is willing to empty himself in order to be a blessing to a dry and thirsty people. Pour out his life for others - that's what Jesus did! We must empty out that same life on a groaning creation and break the bondage. The whole creation is awaiting this son company of people who will be the clouds of glory. Their life-giving rain will be emptied upon a dry and cursed earth and creation itself will be released into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The sleeping church, of course, wherever they see a "coming" mentioned, can think of little else but a physical ride into the rain clouds of our lower atmosphere, being whisked away into an ethereal state and experience of their own invention, where they intend to float around dressed in white night gowns or some such attire, eating - eating - eating what?

Rain comes out of clouds! Have you ever seen a drenching, soaking rain when there wasn't a cloud in the sky? No way! Rain comes out of clouds. There are clouds that don't bring any rain. There are many clouds floating across the religious heavens today that
are not full of rain. These empty clouds Peter, Jude and Solomon all tell us about. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: CLOUDS THEY ARE WITHOUT WATER, CARRIED ABOUT OF WINDS; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots ... these are wells without water, CLOUDS THAT ARE CARRIED WITH A TEMPEST; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved to the age" (Jude 11,12; II Pet. 2-.17).

False ministries are "clouds without water." Like the fig tree with leaves but no fruit, they give the appearance of the real thing, but there is no life-giving property in them. I remember as a child, when the land would be needing rain so badly, the people would watch the clouds in hope; but sometimes when dark, swirling clouds driven violently by the wind were approaching I would hear someone say, "I believe that is just a wind cloud; I don't believe we are going to get any rain from it." And so it was. It was noisy, with flashing lightning and crashing thunder, but gave no benefit to the dry earth, which needed a good soaking rain. There are many messenger clouds in Christianity today that are being "carried with a tempest" of religious fanfare but leave a place just as dry spiritually as it was before they blew in. Prov. 25:14 says, "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." What a picture of some present day ministries! WINDS of doctrine (Eph. 4:14), and CLOUDS without water! Wanting only to float through the heavens to be seen of men. But no willingness to be a POUR TED OUT LIFE to bless God's thirsty creation!

**THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES**

The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Christians of a blessed event wherein "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them IN THE CLOUDS, to MEET THE LORD in the air" (I Thes. 4:16-17). Christians have generally supposed that "clouds" signifies the clouds of the atmosphere, but there is no definite article in the Greek text before the word "clouds" to make it THE CLOUDS, so that the sentence literally reads "caught up IN CLOUDS." Where the identifying article is missing, it speaks of quality, or being used as a descriptive term. The Greek word for "cloud" is often used in the Greek Classics of a large body of individuals, and it is so used in this symbolic way in Heb. 12:1-2 speaking of that great cloud of witnesses" which surrounds us.

After elaborating upon the exploits of the great heroes of faith in the Old Testament dispensations, the apostle says, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 11:39-40; 12:1-2).

"Cloud of witnesses" means STADIUM OF SPECTATORS in Greek. In some of the more spacious amphitheatres of olden times, the spectators rose in tier above tier to the number of forty or fifty thousand; and to the thought of the combatant as he looked around on this vast multitude of human faces, set in varied and gorgeous coloring, these vast congregations of his race must have appeared like clouds, composed of infinitesimal
units, but all making up one mighty aggregate, and bathed in such hues as are cast on
the clouds at sunrise or sunset by the level of the sun.

We are surrounded by a stadium of spectators and we're all playing a game on the field. And this great "cloud" of witnesses of which the apostle speaks is simply the OVERCOMERS gathered out of all the ages ... those who were either literally or figuratively sawn asunder, beaten, slain by the sword, being destitute, tormented, they were stoned, mocked, scourged, imprisoned, "that they might obtain a BETTER RESURRECTION" (Heb. 11:35). This old world is soon to be RULED by a great "CLOUD" of witnesses, of overcomers; by those who will exalt the Lord of glory, and not try to exalt themselves above the glory of the Lord. And though in their day they received not the promise, yet God prepared some better thing for us that they, apart from us, might not be made perfect. And they are most certainly the ones who now, with us, are going to be perfected (Heb. 11:40): who are going to receive all the glorious fullness of the Lord for this new day. They are going to manifest His glory and power and majesty, not their own. In other words, HE, the LORD OF GLORY, is coming to be glorified "IN His saints:" coming to be exalted and magnified and lifted up before the world, in and through those who suffered and overcame in order that they might reign.

The word is: "Seeing we also are compassed about by so great a stadium of spectators, LET U-S RUN THE RACE..." Ah, in the beautiful allegory of Elijah's experience, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (I Kings 18:44). Out of the sea of humanity there arises a little cloud, a firstfruit company, the remnant of this last hour of the age which is being joined to that great cloud of witnesses which has already been assembled from past ages. The significant fact is the little cloud is arising, THEY ARE ARISING, they are ascending up to the place of glory which God has founded for them, and for which they are being formed and prepared. When the full revelation of the CLOUDS OF GLORY comes it will be a wonderful moment, and a deeply impressive scene. All His messengers and saints and sons form His retinue, and there has never been such an assemblage since the world began. Hark! Brethren, hark! Do you hear the chariot wheels rolling along the sky? Can you not hear? Can you not see the heavenly hosts are gathering from all the heavens? Do you not hear? Have you seen - have you seen a cloud, small as this man's hand? Already the clouds are passing across the sky, and I hear the sound of abundance of rain, and beyond it, I see the glories of the fullness of the Kingdom of God!

These precious truths are vividly portrayed by a dear sister to whom the Lord has revealed Himself in multiplied visions of the spiritual world. She writes, "The Lord was there also in His great fiery Cloud of much glory. He bade me look and as I looked to the farther end of that vast temple there in still another room I saw a tremendous, cloud of glory huge in size and terribly unquiet. In constant movement it ever enveloped and enfolded itself. This cloud LIVED with its own tremendous LIFE. But even more strange I knew - without knowing how I knew that this great cloud was identified with the glorious Christ who was at my side. THEY WERE UNITED. THEY WERE ONE. Fully identified they were as if fully connected one with the other.

"Oh, I cannot ever find any way to describe Him in His great Cloud! So terribly immense and His glory is so great! The highest angels pale beside Him. Such immensities of power and rushings and thunderings! Even in His state of most relative calm the wonderful and beautiful glory and dread of Him is totally indescribable.
"Before the Cloud of gold I saw a limited number - too many to count, yet not a great multitude of flaming fires also of this same golden material but also like clouds. They seemed to be exactly like He was, the only difference being that they were smaller in size. Though very large, they were still not as large as He. Otherwise they were exactly like Him in the cloud in all other respects. Along the sides and round about the living fires I saw golden, flaming, living-stones made of the same material as the Cloud but unlike the other living-stones in that they were much larger and more aflame. Slightly smaller than the living fires, the living-stones were so aflame that they seemed to be ever consuming themselves yet never being consumed.

"Then He spoke saying that these - indicating the fires and the flaming stones - were just like He was and were A PART OF HIMSELF. These fiery clouds and the flaming stones were specially loved and chosen by Him. No one else, no other living-stone, could ever enter into this place. The flaming stones would go out and minister unto the other stones, but the cloud-fires would stay within with Him forever, ever reigning with Him. He further said that these beings, chosen by Him and specially loved, were those who had been made fully into His image, and that even now they were a very part of Himself. These great beings were so far above all other beings, even far above all the angels. In truth, they were just like Him. I wondered greatly and could not understand and was greatly distressed in spirit because of what I had seen. He spoke to me, quieting my spirit, 'These things are true and shall shortly come to pass.'

"Then there came out from Him in a huge wave something that appeared to be His very own self in mighty glory and in the Cloud, yet He did not leave His high place in the heavens either, yet He did. He was in so much activity and moved about over the heavens that opened below Him. This great wave of Himself in the Cloud also descended with tens of thousands of mighty angels down towards the earth. It did not descend slowly nor softly, but in great haste and speedy activity. When it was as yet some distance from the earth it hovered there for a while suspended over the heads of the people, but they did not see it nor did they know it was there. And there it rested. Then He spoke, saying, 'This which you see will not take My loving sons by surprise, because they are waiting for it to take place. They are already knowing and have been advised and are waiting for Me to come to them in love, for they will love My appearing.' He also said that His hour had been fulfilled and that it was now the time that these things must shortly take place.

"I looked far below Him down upon the earth and He told me that everything and every being that I saw above with Him WAS ALSO DOWN BELOW UPON THE EARTH. I could see it as in a reflection, yet I could not see it directly. He in His Cloud was no longer poised above the earth, but now had come down directly upon the earth. It completely covered the whole earth as He spoke to me with a great voice, saying, 'I am there to gather together My own, for they shall be filled with My glory and this glory shall be seen by all. Now is the time when My own shall be raised up to be with Me in My glory. My Cloud shall no more be raised up from the earth, but shall remain there so that we shall be together forever" - end quote.

Many who read these lines have heard or read the vision given to Evangelist Tommy Hicks a number of years ago. I am led to share here a portion of this remarkable vision as he recorded it, requesting the reader to note especially the reference to CLOUDS. "On the morning of July 25, 1961, at 2:30, I received a vision from the Lord that has entirely
revolutionized my whole life and ministry. It seemed as though I had hardly gone to sleep when this vision came before me...three times, and then again on July 27, two days later.

"Suddenly, in the vision, I was standing with the full view of the whole world before me. From out of the heavens came great thunderings and lightning. Accompanied with this phenomena came a voice ... a GREAT voice... for it was the Voice of God. My face was turned toward the north. With a great flash of lightning covering the whole earth, I looked down and beheld a massive form that appeared like a huge giant. I was amazed as I saw this giant cover the earth. Its feet seemed to reach to the North Pole and its head extend to the South Pole. The arms were dramatically spread from sea to sea. Again, with another great flash, I saw that this giant was alive... and yet, strange to say... struggling for life. I said, 'Oh, Lord, what does this mean?'

"This massive being was covered with debris and seemed to be fettered. As I viewed this being, it began to quiver, then almost go into convulsive gestures. As this took place, I saw thousands of strange creatures. Every time the giant would quiver, they would withdraw. However, when it ceased to MOVE they would return again. I was definitely made to know what these creatures were. They were instruments that had bound the body of Christ through the ages. Suddenly, the right hand of the giant came up, and with that, came a loud voice like a roar of thunder from heaven itself. Then his left hand was raised ... and as I looked, I saw its hands extend into the very heavens. Then, very slowly, the giant began to rise. With giant hands, it began to cleanse the debris from off its body. I saw it rise to its feet, with hands outstretched to heaven. It was so great that its hands were in the heavens, while one foot was in the sea, the other was on the earth. I trembled immensely, for never before had I seen such a sight.

"Presently, the sky was filled with CLOUDS...heavy clouds...but lo, they turned to silver...until from the very silver clouds themselves came liquid drops of light and power falling upon the form of the giant. Then I saw the giant MELT to the earth itself ... as though it were being Poured Out from heaven itself. The form had seemed to dissolve and now in its place I saw millions of people. I cried out to the Lord: 'What is the meaning of this?' A voice so clear and vibrant said, 'I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army, which I sent among you' (see Joel 2:23,25).

"As I listened to the Voice and watched the multitude of people, - from the CLOUDS came great drops, like liquid light ... this majestic heavenly substance made everyone it touched lose his identity...and their identification was JESUS. I saw no barriers, no denominations, nor sects - but the transcendent glory of heaven that rested upon these people compelled them to lift their hands in praise and adoration. I watched to see who this company was worshipping. At that point, I saw a great white figure COME OUT OF THE CLOUDS...pointing His finger to one, then another. It seemed that He was giving directions, for as He would point they would go... some to the east, some to the west, and in each direction I could see them marching through cities, towns and villages ... some through deserts, forests and jungles.

"God is going to have a perfect Church. He is going to have a people that are so endued with power that it will not be an exposition of SELF, but it will be Christ in them, the hope of glory. I saw these people pass through the fire, unburned ... cross rivers as though there was no water there ... they crossed oceans with ease, escaped persecution as though a hand transported them from their surroundings. In spite of the roaring of wild
beasts, attacks by men with swords and weapons of war, nothing seemed to hinder them. They moved over mountains, and down through valleys ... they moved like the hart skipping upon the hills. Their faces shone with the countenance of VICTORS! They were CONQUERORS!

"I hesitate to tell this part of the vision because it was with great trembling I received this revelation. I saw the man, clothed in white, point with a sceptered hand. Again, there was pouring forth from His hand this that I call 'liquid power'. As soon as it would touch the person, that person would have his hands bathed and dripping in the same heavenly substance. Upon receiving this anointing they would walk into hospitals ... through the streets ... into the institutions, and on and on, marching throughout the length and breadth of the land. I could hear them saying, 'ACCORDING TO MY WORD, BE THOU MADE WHOLE.' As the liquid power flowed from their hands, each one they touched was instantly healed and made whole!

"I saw people transported in the Spirit from nation to nation. I saw them going to Siberia, to Africa, to Canada - to the ends of the earth! I saw them literally lifted up and placed by the Spirit in the respective countries. Then I heard a Voice ... not a thundering Voice this time, but a Voice that was low and beautiful as the murmuring of the waters. This tender Voice said, 'My little children, I have given unto thee My treasures. You are Mine - you belong to Me. I love thee with an everlasting love. Now My power shall be IN YOU. The gifts that I have given unto thee shall be made manifest to a lost and dying world. I am going to restore to thee ALL.'

"I realized that this whole panoramic picture was the demonstration of the Kingdom of God through those who follow HIM. I continued to see a stream of people marching healing - blind eyes opened - deaf ears unstopped - literally millions of people receiving of the power of this great manifestation. It seemed so 'fluid' in its operation. There was no exaltation of a man. Simple words were constantly repeated - simple but profound: 'ACCORDING TO MY WORD, BE THOU MADE WHOLE.'

"Folks, the Kingdom is here. The very power and Spirit of the Kingdom of God so possessed me, I knew it was the revelation of the King in all His Kingly authority. I could see that the Lord was showing me that the Kingdom of God was coming into view. This was the revelation of the Kingdom of God coming to man. The very Spirit and power of the Kingdom so gripped me, I felt like one caught away to the third heaven. Daniel saw the everlasting Kingdom... no power in the world will be able to destroy this Kingdom. Once again, I saw this giant Body being lifted into the heavens..." -end quote.

From earth's teeming millions of all ages there is a people arising in the image of Christ. We who watch the spiritual heavens shall soon see a cloud as we have never seen before. We have seen inky black clouds, and clouds of snowy whiteness; clouds brightly tinted and many silver lined; clouds made brilliantly gorgeous by the afterglow of the setting sun. But we never yet have seen a cloud made magnificently glorious by the blazing splendor of the Son of God. We have seen clouds charged with thunder and lighted up by flashes of lightning. Not yet have we seen a cloud charged with the power of omnipotence and flashing with the incorruptible radiance of the Son of God. Afar off we have seen the morning clouds as they have enwrapped the distant mountain peaks and splendidly capped the hilltops. We have yet to see the cloud which shall enfold the awful form of the Mighty One. We have seen clouds driven as chariots to carry rain to the dry and thirsty fields. A CLOUD IS FORMING IN THE HEAVENS THAT WILL BE SEEN,
THAT WILL BE THE CHARIOT OF HEAVEN'S KING OF GLORY WHEN HE COMES TO REFRESH AND RESTORE AND QUICKEN ALL THINGS.

What a sight it will be! How it enraptures the faithful ones who "love His appearing," and who have hoped to the end "for the grace that is to be brought unto" them "at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Of a sudden the blazing light of day will take on a new brightness, above all the glory of the sun, and grow still more light, more bright, and more dazzling, until there is revealed to us the advancing glory of the King of kings. And with the glory clouds of myriads of like ones unto Himself the all-conquering Christ will appear again on earth! These brilliant bands will fill the glory-flashing skies from end to end and flood the world with life and light and love. How magnificent will be the advancing pageantry of the skies! How sublime beyond all mortal comprehension will be the blessed Lord Jesus when He "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day!"

**Behold, He comes with CLOUDS!**
About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit — and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him — in family or church associations — embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God’s elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God’s Word is always free to all. God’s way is, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Mat. 10:8).