KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

THE HEAVENS DECLARE

Book Two

By J. Preston Eby

Kingdom Bible Study books are not for sale for profit. They are printed in this format so that they can be given away to those without internet access. This book can be purchased in paperback by going to www.createspace.com/5021096 In Kindle format go to www.amazon.com To buy other books by J. Preston Eby go to www.firestarterpublications.com
THE HEAVENS DECLARE  Book Two
by J. Preston Eby

This publication has been dedicated to the public domain
Printed in the United States of America

ISBN-10: 1502524821

Scripture Quotations taken from

Concordant Literal New Testament Copyright ©, 15570 Knochaven Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91387, U.S.A. 661-252-2112
King James Version®, Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved."
Rotherham's Emphasized Bible, by Joseph Bryant. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1994)
The New Testament in Modern Speech by Weymouth: Public Domain
Young’s Literal Translation: Public Domain

Any authors or artists mentioned in this book does not constitute their agreement or support of the content of this book. It is the expressed desire of the author to allow this book to be reproduced in any form as long as it is given away and kept in context. Any comments may be sent to www.Firestarterpublications.com

Kingdom Bible Study website is http://www.kingdombiblestudies.org
**Table of Contents**

Capricornus - The Goat ......................................................................................................................4
Capricornus-The Goat (continued) ..................................................................................................20
Capricornus-The Goat (continued) ..................................................................................................37
Capricornus-The Goat (continued) ..................................................................................................54
Aquarius-The Water Pourer .............................................................................................................68
Aquarius-The Water Pourer (continued) ..........................................................................................85
Pisces- The Fishes ..........................................................................................................................102
Aries- The Lamb ............................................................................................................................118
Aries- The Lamb (continued) ..........................................................................................................135
Aries- The Lamb (continued) ..........................................................................................................151
Taurus- The Wild Bull ...................................................................................................................167
Taurus- The Wild Bull (continued) ................................................................................................183
Taurus- The Wild Bull (continued) ................................................................................................198
Gemini- The Twins ........................................................................................................................213
Gemini -The Twins (continued) ....................................................................................................229
Gemini- The Twins (continued) ....................................................................................................243
Cancer-The Crab ............................................................................................................................258
Leo-The Lion ....................................................................................................................................289
Leo-The Lion (continued) ...............................................................................................................304
About The Author ..........................................................................................................................319
Chapter 28
Capricornus - The Goat

In our study of the "Real Meaning of the Zodiac" it has been amazing to many to see that all the major themes of scripture concerning God's great plan of creation and redemption are clearly figured in the Signs of the heavens. Truly God has written the gospel in the stars! Many of the Lord's people have shied away from any teaching concerning the Zodiac out of fear of venturing into the swamplands of astrology - a valid concern. But we must not be prevented from treading the courts of God's glorious revelation simply because it has been perverted and counterfeited by the carnal mind. In Job 38:31-32 we read, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" Mazzaroth is a Hebrew word which means "the constellations of the Zodiac." And then, hidden in plain sight in Job chapters 38 and 39, are given the twelve Signs: Battles of heaven - Job 38:37; Lions - Job 38:39; Ravens - Job 39:41; Wild goats - Job 39:1; Hinds - Job 39:1; Wild ass - Job 39:5; Unicorn 39:9; Peacocks -Job 39.13; Ostrich - Job 39:13; Horse - Job 39:19; Hawk - Job 39:26; Eagle - Job 39:27. An accident? Hardly! But what is the purpose of all this! Does it merely concern some mysterious physical influences of the sun, moon and stars over the earth and men's lives - or is it something far grander and greater?

In the book of Revelation the Holy Spirit gives us the symbols of the lion, the calf, the man, and the eagle and also of the twelve tribes in the heavens. Are these not the true powers in the heavens that project their dominion upon the earth! Are these not the very ensigns and standards which the enemy fears because he knows that the heavens do rule! These are powerful concepts. The grand truth of it is portrayed for us in Moses' and Aaron's mighty acts before Pharaoh in the land of Egypt. Did not Moses and Aaron and the magicians of Egypt employ the very same signs and perform the same feats? Aaron threw down his rod and it was turned into a serpent. But then the magicians of Egypt were called in and they all threw down their rods, and their rods became serpents also. But Aaron's rod, in the form of a serpent, ran after them and swallowed them all; and then it became a rod again in Aaron's hand. So - how do we overcome the serpent-enemy? Did not the Lord Jesus say, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw ALL MEN UNTO ME" (Jn 3:14; 12:32). Can we not see by this that satan is a serpent and the Christ became a serpent. But, praise God! Christ swallows up all the serpents of the adversary! How do we overcome the devil who goes forth as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour? We send forth the Lord's powerful lion of the tribe of Judah to destroy it! How do we overcome the bellowing bulls of Bashan? We send the Lords’s wild ox (unicorn) against them! How do we overcome the weakness of Adam's flesh in us? Is it not by the very indwelling power of Him who God sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, who overcame sin in the flesh, and sent the spirit of His victory into us that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It was by flesh that flesh was conquered! The flesh of Jesus proved greater and more powerful and of more value than Adam’s flesh, so much so that Jesus could say, "Except ye eat My flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you!" We must ever keep
in mind, my beloved, that whatever the enemy has perverted or counterfeited, the Lord has something greater and more powerful that we may dispatch to swallow it up. Little wonder, then that the adversary tries to frighten the Lord’s people away from the sacred secrets of the Mazzaroth by setting up the "boogey-man" of astrology! Thus, it becomes obvious that the enemy uses fear to keep saints from discovering that within the Signs of the Zodiac lie the mysteries, the sacred knowledge, understanding, victory, immorality and eternal life! The Signs of the Zodiac in their original purity are a glorious presentation of the wonderful plan of God in creation and redemption, incorporating all the inter-play between good and evil, with the ultimate triumph of truth over error, of light over darkness, of life over death. These marvelous Signs, at the time of the Tower of Babel, were corrupted into a carnal, fleshly system of pagan religion, or mythology, which is seen today in horoscopes and other forms of astrology. But we are looking beyond that smokescreen at the original revelation God wrote in the sky and which has truly gone out into all the earth. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Ps. 19:1). "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Truly we see in these twelve Signs of the Zodiac the way or path to full salvation, triumph and the glory of God.

CAPRICORNUS -THE GOAT

In our study, we now come to Capricornus - the name is Latin for goat. The Hebrew names associated with the Sign are GEDI and SAIR. Both terms are used in the Old Testament for kids of the goats of sacrifice. There is no prototype of this strange creature, the front half of which is pictured on the old star charts as a goat and the rear half as a fish! But that is precisely what Capricornus is! It is a goat with a fishes' tail; it is half-goat and half-fish. What does it mean? This Sign has a very strange appearance on the old star charts because it shows a wounded goat, with its head bowed and its knee bent under, fallen down in the posture of dying. On the other hand, the tail of the fish is wiggling, vigorous and living! Unless there is some significance to this strange combination, we might imagine that its inventor was having an hallucination. But when the true meaning is understood we can see the wisdom of God in the prophetic revelation portrayed by this wonderful Sign in God's Bible in the Sky.

First of all, we have the figure of a goat. This is a sacrificial animal. The picture and the meaning become even more clear as we consider some of the stars in this constellation. Some of the brightest stars are AL GEDI, which means "the Kid"; DENEB AL GEDI meaning "the Sacrifice cometh"; and MA'ASAD, "the Slaying." God commanded the children of Israel, saying, "Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering" (Lev. 9:31). So Aaron "took the goat, which was the sin-offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin" (Lev. 9:15). And of the goat of the sin-offering Moses said, "It is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord" (Lev. 10:16-17). We see here a picture of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, for truly He became our sin-offering, being "wounded for our transgressions," and "bruised for our iniquities." He was "cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken."

LIFE OUT OF DEATH

Note that from the dying goat comes a living fish - the living fish thus takes its being out of the dying goat and derives all its life and vigor from thence. The living fish emerging
from the dying goat therefore has an important meaning. In addition to the falling and
dying of the goat, Capricornus is the Sign of a mystical procreation and bringing forth. It
speaks of life that springs forth from the death of the sacrifice. That which is brought forth
is a fish, the familiar and well understood symbol of the spiritual body brought out of the
dying of the Lord Jesus. When Jesus called and appointed His first apostles, He said, "I
will make you fishers of men" (Mat. 4:19). When God promised that He would bring again
the children of Israel into their own land, His word was, "I will send for many fishers, and
they shall fish them" (Jer.16:15-16). So in Ezekiel's vision of the living waters the word
was, "And there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither" (Eze. 47:1-9). Christ speaks of the members of His body as "born of water" (Jn.
3:5). In the Kingdom parable of the drag-net and in the miraculous draughts of fishes
God's people are symbolized as fishes. Fish thus denote the men who are brought to life
out of the dying of the Lord Jesus. The early Christians were accustomed to call believers
ECHTHUES and PISCES — that is, fishes. Very early in the history of the Church both
the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and the great truths of the Kingdom of God were set forth
by means of pictures and symbols. Jesus used this method in all His teaching parables of
the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Revelation given to the Churches by the apostle John
was also communicated by means of signs and symbols. Divine truth is more than just an
understanding of the plain statements of the Bible. In fact, though some will be offended
when they read it, a literal translation of the Bible is virtually worthless. The truth of the
matter is that every word of scripture contains a sublime coded mystery which when
deciphered by the spirit of revelation, reveals a wealth of spiritual meaning. The
narratives and histories and teachings of the Bible are but outer garments in which the
real meaning or life is clothed. And woe unto the man who mistakes the outer garment of
the scripture for the truth and reality of God! This was precisely the idea to which the
sweet singer of Israel addressed himself when he cried out, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I
might behold wondrous things out of Thy law!" (Ps. 119:18). Concealed within the
statements, stories, laws and events of the Bible are the higher spiritual realities of the
Kingdom of God, the very essence of the Living Word.

Do my readers know what an acrostic is? It is a poem, of which, if the first letter of each
line be taken in order, these, when put together, will spell a word or a sentence. Now the
Greek word for fish is ιχθύς; and this in its five letters, acrostically represents the five
Greek words which mean in English, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." The Greek
words themselves are: Ιησοῦς, Χριστός, Θεοῦ γιος, Σωτήρα. The early
Christians chose 'ΙΧΘγΣ, that is, "The Fish," as a convenient secret sign of the truth
about Jesus which they believed. The "Sign of the Fish" is found on the walls of the
Roman Catacombs, those underground galleries and halls in which the ancient Church of
Rome often hid and congregated. Fishes made of bronze, and others made of glass,
have also been found in the catacombs. The heathen Romans who persecuted the
believers did not understand what the emblem meant; but to the members of the Church
at Rome the Fish represented Christ the son of God as Saviour; by extension it meant
the members of His body; also, as many kinds of fish are for eating, the symbol came to
carry with it the thought of the Lord's people feeding upon Christ, the heavenly, spiritual
food. It is very important that we see the great truth of the life that comes out of death. As
J. A. Seiss wrote, "As men naturally are but reproductions and perpetuations of Adam,
and live his life, so Christ's people are the reproduction and perpetuation of Christ, living
His life. They are in Him as the branch is in the vine. They are repeatedly called His body,
one with Him, 'members of His body and of His flesh and of His bones.' And so close and
real is their life-connection and incorporation with Him that they are called 'Christ.' What
then could better symbolize this than the Sign before us? The goat and fish are one - one being, the life of the dying reproduced and continued in a spiritual product which is part of one and the same body. The goat of sacrifice is projected into a new creation, which is yet an organic part of itself."

This principle of life out of death is one of the most powerful laws of the Kingdom of God. It is the very law of creation and redemption. It is my earnest prayer that the Spirit of God will give each one who reads these lines the spirit of revelation and understanding. If your spirit is able to grasp the truth I now purpose to set forth in the following pages many dark spots will be removed from your spiritual vision and you will see great truths in a light which has been hidden from you hitherto. We must ever keep in mind that light dispels darkness and brings into clear perspective all things that were hidden in the gloomy mists of night. Light is understanding, whereas darkness is error and ignorance. Therefore, when the light shines we see all things as they are and not as they have always seemed, or as we were told they were, or as we imagined. Light shining on any portion of truth quickly dispels the darkness that long hung over that truth making things that seemed confusing or beyond explanation to become simple, reasonable, and easily understandable.

Life out of death is the same as light out of darkness, for in the world of spiritual realities light and life are synonyms and darkness and death are likewise synonyms. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). Life and light and darkness and death are first set forth in the opening scenes of the book of Genesis, the book of Beginnings. The life and light are associated with God, whereas darkness and death are associated with creation. Let me point out the significant fact that darkness was the first recorded condition or state of creation, and all that was light and life and beauty and glory came into that darkness, or was spoken into existence out of the darkness. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good... " (Gen. 1:1-4). Here you will notice that in relation to the creation DARKNESS PRECEDED LIGHT. The spiritual application of this principle is given by the apostle John, "In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it or put it out" (Jn. 1:4-5). And again, "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" (II Cor. 4:6).

There is a great and wondrous reason why the darkness precedes the light in the divine order of creation. Let us begin with God. It has pleased the Lord to leave great truths obscure and well hidden from the prying eyes of the curious and the unbelieving. He shrouds His precious truths in mystery so that none but the earnest seekers who partake of the spirit of revelation are ever permitted to see beyond the outer shell of the letter, and behold the unfolding glories which lie concealed within the inner kernel. Perhaps the simplest yet most profound statement about the nature of God is found in the beautiful writings of the beloved apostle John. He says, "He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (I Jn. 4:8,16). Would that my tongue were eloquent enough to explain it, or that my mind were great enough to comprehend it. But neither is sufficient. When we speak of God's attributes we may say that God is a spirit — infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power,
holiness, justice, goodness and truth. This is a very beautiful definition; but it largely defines only God's attributes, whereas the text, "God is love," tells us WHAT HE HIMSELF IS. This text reveals His nature, His state of being. For instance, in speaking of justice, we know that God has justice as one of His attributes, but He is not justice; God IS love. This fact gives us a revelation of GOD'S VERY NATURE. Our poor, lisping, faltering tongues cannot proclaim the gospel as we would like; but we have God's Word that is true for the present time and for all the times of all the ages. God IS LOVE! IS — unchangeably! IS — eternally! God is love in heaven, in earth, in hell! IS — everywhere! And the great practical consequence is for you and me to respond to that God and to that love, to become filled with that love, one with that love, the embodiment and manifestation of that love to all men in all realms. The best and most wonderful word in the universe is Love. For God is Love. And the best and most wonderful word in the inner chamber of our heart must be — Love. For the God who meets us there is Love. What is Love? THE DEEP DESIRE TO GIVE ITSELF FOR THE BELOVED. Love finds its joy in imparting all that it has, and all that it is, to make the loved one happy and fulfilled. And the heavenly Father, who offers to meet us in the inner chamber — let there be no doubt about this in our minds — has no other object than to flood our hearts with His love.

Love has been described as AN ETERNAL WILL TO ALL GOODNESS. This is THE ONE ETERNAL, IMMUTABLE GOD that, from eternity to eternity, changeth not, that can be neither more nor less, but an ETERNAL WILL TO ALL GOODNESS that is in Himself and come from Him, so that as certainly as He is Creator, so certainly is He the blesser of every created thing, and can give nothing but blessings, goodness, fulfillment, and holiness from Himself, because He has in Himself nothing else to give. The judgments of God can never be rightly understood apart from His nature of love. If God's judgments spring not from His love then they come not from God at all, for He IS LOVE. He possesses the attributes of both justice and wrath - but He IS LOVE! What ought this to teach us about His judgments! The pen of inspiration wrote, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth . . . for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:5-10). God doesn't go around purposelessly punishing or vindictively torturing any of His creatures. But He does go about precise paths of bringing forth correction UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the prophet says, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Isa. 26:9).

The words of the following poem strike poignantly at the deep meaning and sublime purpose of God in creation and redemption.

Why did God make the universe, the earth and the sky above?
Scripture gives the answer when it says that "God is love."
Before God made the universe He worked a master plan,
He knew how everything would end before it all began.
He made mankind so He could have an object of His love,
But, man was blind and did not see - it came from above.
So God created evil as He had created night,
So man could see the good in Him - in darkness we see light.
He made the "blackboard" very black, with evil, sin, and woe.
He made an adversary to be His cunning foe.
He made the earth to be a "stage" to show the hosts above,
By all of our experiences, His wisdom and His love.
He locks up all in stubbornness to make His mercy clear;
Lets satan lure all men away, so He can draw all near.
He gives His only firstborn Son to die and save us all;
Yet each in his own class we read; we're blind until our call.
You ask me why God made the earth, the glittering stars above!
The scriptures give the answer when they say that GOD IS LOVE!
— Author Unknown

It is very important that we grasp the deep message in the words of this inspired poem, because, once we understand it, we comprehend as never before the eternal mystery of creation and redemption. It will be a wonderful day for you, dear one, when first your soul becomes enthralled with the revelation that God, before ever the world began or ever the ages were formed, looked forth from His temple of wisdom and omnipotence to chart with resolute care the course and purpose of every age. Your heart will throb as you read the opening proclamation of scripture, "In the beginning — GOD!" In the beginning of what? Not in the beginning of God, certainly, but in the beginning of His creation of all things, in the beginning of time as we know it, in the beginning of the orderly procession of the divinely destined ages. In the beginning stands God, omnipotent and omniscient, creating, sustaining and guiding all things and all people and all the ages of time according to the purpose of His own will. No purpose ordained by God from the beginning can possibly go astray or be hindered by the efforts of devil or man. Oh, for the hour when all creation will grasp the beautiful message, "From Him everything comes, by Him everything exists, and in Him everything ends!" (Rom. 11:36).

If God be the Creator of ALL THINGS, then it must of necessity follow that GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL THINGS. We read the passage quoted above from the Emphatic Diaglott, "because out of Him, and through Him, and for Him are ALL THINGS, to Him be the glory for the ages, Amen." All things are out of God, all thing are through Him, all things are for Him, and all things are unto Him, ending in Him. The clearest possible rendering is given by Goodspeed, "For from Him everything comes; through Him everything exists; and in Him everything ends! Glory to Him forever! Amen." The Bible opens with the simplest and yet most profound statement ever recorded by human hand. "In the beginning - GOD" The sweet singer of Israel declared of Him, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, THOU ART GOD" (Ps. 90:2). Our God was the great active force, the cause of all that began to happen "in the beginning." How awesome the thought that there was a "time" when there was nothing — absolutely nothing — but God! There was no blue-green orb called earth, no silver-shimmering moon, no diamond-studded heaven of stars and planets, no angels, no devils, no man — nothing but GOD HIMSELF. There were not even the 100 elements out of which everything in the universe is constructed — there was only God. Paul caught something of the sublimity of this eternal and Self-existent One and wrote, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS, and by Him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17).

Let me emphasize this wonderful and important truth: "He is before all things." This can mean nothing else but that God is not one of the "things." He is BEFORE all things. He is before A-L-L THINGS! And just as majestic is the truth that "by Him ALL THINGS CONSIST." Now let us soar down through the corridors of time to the consummation of all things. "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy
that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL" (I Cor. 15:25-28). GOD ALL IN ALL — this will be the grand conclusion of the whole vast universe and of Christ's redemption. There will come a day — the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we cannot realize it — when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that God gave Him in His rulership over ALL THINGS — that God may be all-in- all. ALL IN ALL — such is the grand goal of our God! But I must point out that before that long-ago beginning God was NOT all-in-all. He was simply A-L-L. There was nothing else. No "thing" beside Him. There was not even space— for God was ALL. Oh, the mystery of it! This raises an interesting and important question. If God was "before all things," then OUT OF WHAT did He CREATE all things? If there was only God, and absolutely no thing other than God who was all, what kind of material did God have at His disposal from which to construct the all things? If you were standing completely alone, with nothing outside your own being existent, what material would be available for making something other than yourself? The answer is, of course, NOTHING! YOU WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THE "THINGS" OUT OF YOURSELF! And friend, this is precisely what God did. Now we can understand the full import of those words inspired by the blessed Spirit of Truth through the apostle Paul: "Because BY HIM were the all things created. ..and Himself is before all, and the all things I-N H-I-M HAVE CONSISTED" (Col. 1:16-17).

Now let us return to the nature of this God who was ALL. We must clearly see that God is all-inclusive, and that He lacks nothing whatsoever. And God is love - all goodness. Having said that God is complete and therefore good, we can now go on to describe the attribute through which we are aware of His existence — His desire to share. This is the consequence, the effect of His goodness. Some have said, and I have said it too, that God created man because He was alone and yearned for fellowship — for creatures of like kind with which He could commune. But this falls short of the absolute nature of God which is the nature of love. Love does not give because of the desire to receive; rather, love gives purely out of the desire to bless. The desire for fellowship is the desire to receive — not give! Now God possesses that attribute also, as we shall presently see, but God is first of all love - the pure and unmixed desire to impart. Here we have the first principle of creation — God's infinite desire to impart led to the creation of a vessel to receive His blessings. The creation of this vessel (the cosmos) was the beginning and the end of creation. He therefore created the universe with all the hosts thereof, and this world with its inhabitants. Thus the Creator could now bestow upon the creation His infinite love and inexhaustible abundance. God is the Lover, creation the beloved! "For God so loved the world.

We have shown that the Creator's nature is sharing or imparting; however, there can be no sharing unless there is some agent that can receive. So God's infinite desire to impart implies a desire to fulfill every possible dimension and quality of desires to receive. Can we not see by this that God's infinite desire to give demands AN AGENT WITH THE DESIRE TO RECEIVE! The very nature of God requires CREATION! To impart or share with others, on any level, can only by considered noble or kind when the recipient desires and enjoys that which is offered to him. When the recipient rejects the gift yet the donor continues to insist on its acceptance and finally forces him to accept, one can hardly consider this an act of giving — much less of love. All who read these lines know by experience that the mere mechanical act of giving is, in itself, unsatisfactory and unfulfilling. We do not give advice to the mountains, nor do we offer money to animals. Clearly there must be a desire to receive on the part of the recipient, a knowledge of what...
the gift entails and signifies, before we can say we are truly giving. It follows that God
could never give anything to anyone without an active desire to receive on their part. So
the first step in creation was to bring forth the manifestation of the DESIRE TO RECEIVE!
This desire is inherent in creation, although some are so blinded by sin and benumbed by
death that they seek for the answer to their craving in all the wrong places, even rebelling
against the glorious Giver. But God has a plan for all these, to bring them to repentance
(a change of mind and desire), so that they can desire properly and discover the true
source of life and blessing. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men
count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but
that ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE." (II Pet. 3:9).

Armed with the knowledge that there was only God — and no "thing" apart from Him,
God was ALL — it readily follows that because of His nature to give God must create an
instrument with both the capacity and desire to receive. The only way to accomplish this
was for God to withdraw Himself, to remove Himself, that there would be a place or
condition where HE WAS NOT. God is light, the scripture declares, and in Him there is no
darkness at all. Therefore, let it be clearly known that darkness is naught but the
ABSENCE OF GOD! "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon
the face of the deep" (Gen. 1:2). You will understand a great mystery when you see how
it is that the creation was brought forth in the domain of darkness, the realm from which,
though created by God, God had withdrawn Himself! "For the creation was made subject
to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope.
Because the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the
glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:20-21). Not only was darkness (the
absence of God) the first state of creation, it remains the condition of the Adamic creation
unto this day. The command, "Let there be light," is not merely an historical event, but a
prophecy of the glorious reality that would be birthed out of the darkness of the first
creation. The work begins with darkness. God said, "Let there be light," and at once light
shone where all before was dark. It is only when the Word of God pierces the dense
darkness of our alienated, carnal mind with the divine fiat, "Let there be light!" that our
darkness displeases us and we are turned to the light. In that blessed moment the shroud
of ignorance and death is removed from our heart and the light of life shines in to
illuminate, quicken and transform that world which we are. "The people which sat in
darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light
is sprung up" (Mat. 4:16). "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). "Giving thanks unto the Father
which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who
hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of
His dear Son" (Col. 1:12-13).

God's method in His going-forth cannot be better understood than by the use of a
somewhat uncommon word — parsimony. We may say that God's method of realizing
Himself in creation is by parsimony. To use an illustration — if we desire to understand
the composition of the great white rays of light, we break them up into their constituents
and see them as crimson and purple and gold. To break up the composition of the white
light we hold a portion of it back. This is what takes place when we pass it through a
prism or through stained glass. Part of it is held back and we see the remainder. This is
parsimony. To change the figure, those who love little children often act upon the same
principle. We have to shed a portion of our experience, dispense with a part of our
resources, yield up a measure of what we are, and become children ourselves if we are
to understand and relate to children. We isolate some of our persona, as it were. Your
little boy or girl knows you as father, but perhaps your fellow citizens know you as professor, banker, lawyer, doctor or proprietor. You have a larger life than the little child knows anything about, and yet to live your fatherhood properly you have to shed the other persona in the presence of your child and live as a child. What is this but parsimony! Part of your nature is dismissed, or withdrawn, or held back, that the other part lived in the home may become to you a richer experience. Many know me as a man of God, a preacher and teacher of the Kingdom of God, and there is a certain esteem of the ministry the Lord has favored us with; but my little five year old grandson knows me as someone to play cars with! This principle of parsimony helps us to live our life truly. When we get home we shut the world out; when we are at business we live in that as though there were nothing else to live for. To understand character we go forth and prove it, and going forth we insulate or restrict portions of our being.

It is not difficult to see how to apply this to God's great principle of creation. God withdrew Himself creating darkness and void - this is the self-limitation of Deity; or to state it in other words, God retained, or held back, His full resources in order that there could be formed outside of Himself and beyond Himself and yet within Himself the desire to receive. This is righteous, purposeful, divine parsimony. The desire to receive is the basic mechanism by which the world operates, the dynamic process at the base of all manifestation. The desire to receive affects all creation because it is the basis of all creation. As we view the animate creation we find a remarkable physical dependence upon the external world for survival culminating in man, who has the greatest desire to receive of all creation - not only for physical things, but also for psychological things like peace, happiness and satisfaction, and above all, the deep inner craving for spiritual life, the insatiable hunger after reality. When God created man male and female in His image He revealed that He is Himself male and female in His nature and attributes. God would never have known the action of giving and receiving had He not known them as characteristics inherent within Himself. The masculine nature is the nature of the Giver. Aggressiveness, boldness, strength, valor, authority, power and dominion are among the traits of the masculine sex. And it is the man who supplies the sperm for the creation of a new life. Thus, man is the Giver. Modesty, gentleness, tenderness, sensitivity and dependence are attributes of the feminine sex. And it is the woman who receives the sperm in the act of procreation. Woman is therefore the Receiver. The realm of her reception is in darkness — the new life, the new creation, the product of her union is formed in the seclusion and darkness of the womb — space. In its beginning the new life is without human form and darkness is upon the face of the deep. What marvelous things are wrought in darkness! Said the Psalmist: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:14-16).

I find myself too confined to set forth this truth as I should do, but let us request of God's Spirit the ability to see that it is in darkness that the embryo is created, and in that long ago beginning it was in a great darkness that creation was formed. God the Giver withdrew Himself from Himself creating space, and within that space He brought forth creation - the Receiver. In darkness the Receiver existed in a state of lack, made to lack a little from Elohim. It was a region of rayless darkness. Deepest night rested over it. It was without from, utterly shapeless in all its parts. It was void, that is, unfilled up. It knew nothing of God who was to become its fullness. In none of its parts was there any
reception or filling up. Then the Spirit of God began to move upon the face of this deep. This activity of the Holy Spirit is called that of "moving" over the face of the waters. The word "move" is from the Hebrew RACHAPH and occurs only three times in the Old Testament, the other two being translated "shake" (Jer. 23:9) and "fluttereth" (Deut. 32:11), respectively. Some commentators relate the word particularly to the hovering of a mother hen over her chicks. In any case, the idea seems to be mainly that of a rapid back and forth motion. In modern scientific terminology, the best translation would probably be "vibrated." If the universe is to be energized, there must be an Energizer. If it is to be given life, there must be a Life-giver. The vibrating of God over the creation in darkness is not unlike the movement of the male at that precise moment when he inseminates the female with the seed of life. It is most appropriate that the first impartation of energy into the universe is described as the "vibrating" movement of the Spirit of God Himself — the injection of His life as divine seed into creation! This movement is immediately followed by the divine fiat: "Let there be light!" and into the darkness the light shone. In that blessed moment God and creation began their long journey into union, oneness. The Giver began to give and the Receiver began to receive. The heart of the Father was pleased. Now there was an object to Receive out of His infinite desire to Give! The law of creation was begun.

Think it not strange, my beloved, when your pathway leads you down, down, down into the experience of darkness and despair. It is in the darkness that the desire to receive is first kindled within you. We flounder a bit in our understanding of these things, but as time passes by and the Holy Spirit takes the things of God and reveals them unto us, we begin to understand that in all the universe a thing is a thing ONLY BECAUSE IT HAS ITS OPPOSITE. Good without the knowledge of evil can scarcely be called good at all. Who could possibly speak of the day if night had never been known? There was no first light except there was darkness before it. What could we know of life if there were no death? What would we know of health if there were no sickness? What would we know of wealth if poverty had not spread its spectre upon the earth? No man can be trusted until he has been EXPOSED TO THE OPPOSITES, until he has been moved to desire something beyond his darkness, frustration, limitation and lack. Myriad have been the men who have inquired why God cast the noble and divine spirit of man into the earthly, sublunar plane, into bodies built of clay, where they endure sorrow, temptation, pain, sickness, and the constant trials and ruthlessness which this body of death imposes upon the soul. He might, preferably, have maintained them in His heavenly sphere where all spirits rejoice in His presence, where once the morning stars sang and all the sons of God shouted for joy, where they could merit the ineffable goodness of the divine splendor which is bestowed upon them. Ah! but first, He must create in us the desire to receive; second, He must involve us in the grand purpose of the receiving — to mature us into His image until we have thoroughly learned the great law of His Being, of His Kingdom — it is MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE! God created this world peopling it with earthly bodies through which the soul must labor and struggle. By experience and travail, through faith and patience we attain His objective of purification, wisdom, understanding and holiness; without the struggle this necessitates, we would be nothing more than idle recipients of God's blessing. It has been demonstrated time and again that that which costs a man nothing is generally unappreciated. The natural consequence of eating unearned bread, of receiving something for nothing — that is not earned by labor and travail — is folly and shame. Ah, beloved, there is purpose in affliction. There is purpose in trial. There is purpose in temptation. There is purpose in suffering. There is purpose in sorrow. There is purpose in pain. There is purpose in sickness and infirmity. There is purpose in light and darkness. There is purpose in limitation and abundance. There is
divine purpose in all the inter-play between good and evil in our lives. One who grows up in a sheltered environment, who is pampered all his life, grows up a weak, spineless individual. ADVERSITY builds strength of character. If we were never exposed to trials and tribulation, we would grow up weak indeed! The more we are exposed to ADVERSE circumstances, the more we have to wrestle with our environment, the more we are challenged by the world around us, the stronger we become. Saints, if we would be the sons of the Most High (the ultimate Givers) we must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might! Our Father wants us to be strong, so He has wisely given us strong currents of opposition so we will become strong. There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God, and a great work our Father has for us to do in the age and the ages to come, and He is preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us. Can we not see that all the opposing forces we now encounter are working together for our good — to develop the strength, character, wisdom, faith and power we must acquire? Have you noticed how strangely Matthew and Mark speak of Christ's temptation? "And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." (Mk. 1:12; Mat. 4:1). What a strange statement! The Holy Spirit of God drives the sinless Son of God into the wilderness to be tempted by satan, the arch enemy of all righteousness, a murderer from the beginning, the father of lies! Ah, but it was necessary for this Son to be PROVEN, to be made STRONG, to OVERCOME in these realms before proceeding on into His glorious sonship ministry and the death of the cross. Truly God creates darkness and void and uses it, too, for His glory!

You see, God only makes us Receivers in order that we may become Givers. The woman receives the seed of life from the man, but in bringing that child into the world she is miraculously transformed into a Giver! "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman (Eve) of the man. Nevertheless. . .as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman" (I Cor. 11:8-12). The Word of God bears immutable testimony to this wonderful truth. Father Abraham heard the call of God and got him out of his own country, from his father's house and his father's kindred, and sojourned to a land that God showed him. God gave to him the promise of a seed and that in this seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. After many years of experience in Canaan, this man of faith, yet without the promised seed, and seemingly without hope, was visited by the Lord and we read in Gen. 17:1-2: "When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the ALMIGHTY GOD; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." Now this name, GOD ALMIGHTY, is both interesting and touching. In the Hebrew it is EL SHADDAI. God (EL) means "might" or "power" and signifies the Strong One. SHADDAI is different, though it also describes power; but it is the power not of force, but of all-bountifulness, SHADDAI primarily means "breasted," being formed directly from the Hebrew word SHAD, that is, "the breast," or more exactly, a woman's breast, and is so used in various places in the scriptures. Thus SHADDAI means "the Pourer or Shedder forth" of life as a woman bears her child and then feeds and sustains it with the milk from her breast. God is the Giver out of His own life and He bears out of His own substance his offspring and then feeds and sustains and strengthens it with the "milk" of His Word. Can we not see that all natural things have spiritual counterparts? By her breast the mother has almost infinite power over the child. And how! Because of the child's one basic characteristic - the DESIRE TO RECEIVE! Some of my readers perhaps have heard the old Greek story of the babe laid down near some cliff by its mother, while she was busy with her herd of goats. The babe, unperceieved, crawled to the edge. The mother, afraid to take a step, lest the child should move further and fall over the precipice, only uncovered her breast, and so drew back the infant to her. It is this figure
which God Himself has chosen in this name EL SHADDAI, by which to express to us the feminine nature of His Almightiness! Male and female is the image of God, and in it is revealed the law of Giving and Receiving, the law of God's own nature. But beyond this is shown the fundamental law of God and creation — the Giver demands a Receiver, but the Receiver receives only to become a Giver! God's Almightiness is of the breast, that is, of bountiful, life-giving supply! Therefore He can quiet the restless, as the breast quiets the child; therefore He can nourish and strengthen, as the breast nourishes; therefore He can attract as the breast attracts, when we are in peril of falling away from Him. Ah, this is the ALMIGHTY who appeared to Abraham and assured him that he would be blessed according to the promise. And there is a blessed and significant aspect to God's dealing with Abraham that perhaps we have overlooked. When the Lord revealed Himself to Abraham as EL SHADDAI He said, "I am EL SHADDAI; walk before Me...and I will make My covenant between Me and thee." The covenant was contingent upon Abraham walking before EL SHADDAI, that is, in exposing his walk, his total being and experience, to EL SHADDAI, until he would learn the nature, ways and law of EL SHADDAI, the law of Receiving to Give. Abraham was the Receiver in the covenant, God promised to multiply him exceedingly and make him great; but then the great purpose of the blessing of the covenant was disclosed: "In thee, and in thy seed, shall ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED" In close relationship and union with EL SHADDAI Abraham would learn the one great law of creation — one Receives so that he may Give! How wonderful are these things!

The feminine Receiver in turn acquires the masculine character of Giver. This principle is seen again in the order of the life-cycle — children are Receivers, everything provided for them out of the bounty of the parents. In due process, however, the child grows up and becomes an adult — a Giver. In maturity, out of his nature to Give, the process of creation is extended. The parent creates, just as God did! a receiver, a new life, to the end that his desire to Give may find fulfillment in pouring lavishly upon the child of his love. So in all of nature the law of creation is in wonder beheld — one Receives to become a Giver; he then himself creates a Receiver in order to Give — and the process goes on from generation to generation, from age to age. Certainly this sublime truth is alluded to in the inspired words of the apostle wherein he says, "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20).

It might be thought that Giving, the first aspect through which Creator God is known to us, implies diminishing or loss. At times our experience in this world is that, after we have shared or given something, we are left with less than we had before. Although we have perceived it thus, if we are quickened by the Holy Spirit to have eyes to see and hearts to understand the nature of all things, we will soon discern that this is not truly the case, since giving is the prerequisite for receiving. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk. 6:38). This is the law of the Kingdom! When we give we create the correct spiritual atmosphere for the drawing down of forces from above. Can we then say that God became diminished by His sharing with creation? Not at all! In creation God receives the increase of Himself into Himself again so that instead of diminishing there is eternal expansion. So God is a Bestower, a Father. He imparts without being in any way diminished by imparting. The miracle of the widow woman's unfailing cruise of oil, and the feeding of the five thousand from five little loaves and two fishes, with twelve basketsful of fragments left over, are parabolic illustrations of this great principle. God does not give
to receive again — there can be nothing of that in the nature of God or in the law of
creation. It is simply the law of creation that what one sows produces a harvest. Men sow
to reap a harvest but God sows out of His pure and unmixed desire to give. In this He is
the measure of the perfect Donor. We could compare this to a rich man deciding to get
rid of all his money so that he can provide other people with the opportunity to make
money. While he is in possession of his money, he has all that he wants, and
consequently no desire to receive. It is only after he has made himself poor that he has
enabled others to share of their profits with him, thus making him even richer than he was
before. Out of his great love of sharing — a boundless love — comes the essence of the
Creator who ceaselessly bestows His blessing by withdrawing Himself, bringing forth a
creation in darkness with its lack and desire to receive, and then pouring into the creation
of His Life and Light and Love, bringing eternal increase out of Himself and into Himself.
Oh, the wonder of it!

Brethren, I deplore the vain prattle that is being preached today concerning so-called
"seed faith." From coast to coast preachers are saying the very opposite of what I am
saying here. They unashamedly tell people that the way to get out of debt and unleash an
abundance of financial blessing is to plant "seed money," to give in order to get! They
persuade tens of thousands of Christians that if only they will send in their "seed faith"
offering to God's servant God will bless and prosper them, they will soon have all their
bills paid, they will have the finest and best of all the good things the world has to offer,
and an abundance of the amenities of life. My beloved, I do not hesitate to tell you that
the only ones being financially blessed and prospering and getting rich out of this carnal
teaching are the slick preachers who are hoodwinking God's precious people into
sending them their hard-earned money. It is wondrously true — give and it shall be given
unto you! But it is a monstrous farce to teach people to give IN ORDER TO GET. Giving
to get is contrary to the nature of God, contradictory to the law of creation, and runs
counter to the principles of the Kingdom of God. It springs not from love, but from lust. It
is not of the Father, but of the world. It is not spiritual, rather it is fleshly, earthly. Still the
law is there — give and it shall be given unto you! But nowhere in God's blessed Book
are we exhorted to give so that it will be given. The premise is wrong. God so loved that
He gave. There is the difference. His is the law of love, the pure and holy desire to bless,
requiring nothing in return. You may give to receive — and God will honor it — but verily
you HAVE YOUR REWARD. Your reward is the things you receive in return. It has
nothing whatever to do with love, with obedience, with the desire to bless. It has nothing
to do with the nature of God, no correspondence with the Kingdom of God, and there is
no eternal benefit, no heavenly treasure laid up thereby. Oh, that God's elect may learn
this one sublime truth — it is more blessed to give than to receive! When the Holy Spirit
prompts you to give, then give out of a heart of love and obedience, but do not deceive
yourself by thinking you are doing God a service when your motive is to get, when your
heart and expectation is set on the increase of money and goods you will receive from
your giving.

The spirit of love is not in you till it is the spirit of your life, till you live freely, willingly,
universally according to it. It knows no difference of time, place, or person; but whether it
gives or forgives, bears or forbears, it is equally doing its own delightful work. The spirit of
love does not want to be rewarded or honored; its only desire is to become the blessing
and happiness of everything that needs it. The wrath of an enemy, the treachery of a
friend, only gives the spirit of love an opportunity to be more triumphant. The rebellion of
Adam but opened up avenues for mankind to experience and know the incredible depths
of the love of God! God IS LOVE! And His sons are of His own nature. The SONS OF
LOVE! What a blessed title! Little wonder, then, that the whole vast creation, sold under slavery and bondage to sin, sorrow, and death groans and travails for the manifestation of the SONS OF LOVE! To know this is a wonderful help to faith. It teaches us that to love God, or the brethren, or our enemies, or the whole wretched race of men, is not a thing self-effort can attain. We can do it only because the divine love is dwelling in us; only as far as we yield ourselves to the divine love as a living power within, as a life that has been born into us, and that the Holy Spirit strengthens into action. Our part is first of all to rest, to cease from effort, to meditate deeply upon the depths of His love to us, to know that He is in us, and to give way to the love that dwells and works in us a power that is from above. The love of God reigns. The Spirit of God still waits to take possession of the heart where He has hitherto had no room. Love is timeless, eternal, unbounded. God so loved. He loves still. Though one hundred and sixty billions of men have lived and died and gone to Christless graves, HE LOVES THEM STILL. He will deal and deal in mercy and judgment until the desire to receive in them responds to Him as the one and only infinite supply. Oh, my dear friend, can you believe that? His mercy endureth forever, throughout all ages, and love will conquer, praise His name! Don't you believe for one moment the hideous lie that there are vessels created with the desire to receive that somehow will escape God's love and slip away into eternal death or everlasting torment. Such an idea is repugnant to all who know the truth and flies in the face of both the nature and wisdom of God the Creator-Giver.

Hence it is that God, wanting to show us what love is, sent One who from the beginning was sinless; who was conceived without the aid of lust (the desire to receive), who was conceived of the Holy Spirit of Infinite Love, and into whose being there entered no evil passion, since the virgin was sanctified in her spirit, her soul, and her body; so that the Holy thing that was born of her was the incarnation of Love (the pure and unmixed desire to give) in every part of His spirit, in every drop of His blood, and in every organ of His body. People have great difficulty relating to an abstraction or an invisible force. It must be personalized and that is why God has come in the person of Jesus Christ, so that we might see Him and see what God is like. God has been personalized. Love has been personified. God so loved Him that when He died the very heavens were darkened, and the earth trembled under the noonday sun veiling all nature, while silence in earth and heaven lasted until Love had finished His sacrifice upon the cross. Just as the first creation was born when God withdrew Himself, creating darkness, and a vessel in the darkness with the desire to receive, so the new creation came forth in the darkness when God withdrew Himself from Himself on Calvary (My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!) and in that Son who hung in darkness was created a race of men with the desire to receive of HIS FULLNESS, EVEN THE SONS OF GOD. That was Love so divine, so wonderful, so awful, that it could only have been possible for God in Christ to have revealed it at all. This Love is the Love which God imparts to us. This same Love that was in HIm must be in us. The sons of God must be the sons of love. Go and learn what that means and the hope of sonship will gleam brightly in your soul.

What a high, holy, heavenly calling! And how reminiscent of Paul's statement in Eph. 2:4-7: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, 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: that in the ages to come He might SHOW the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ." So vast, so marvelous are the wonders of His grace, it will require the ages to come to continue to unfold these wonders, and He has purposed that there should be a people through whom He would give this demonstration that in the ages to
come He might show..." "Show" is from a Greek word meaning "to exhibit, to put on display like a work of art, to demonstrate." The Amplified Bible reads, "He did this that He might CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE through the ages to come the immeasurable (limitless, surpassing) riches of His free grace in Kindness and goodness of heart toward us in Christ Jesus." Kenneth Wuest translates, "In order that He might EXHIBIT. . . in the ages that pile themselves upon one another in continuous succession the surpassing wealth of His grace in kindness to us in Christ Jesus." Show. . .demonstrate. . . exhibit the riches of His grace — unto whom? Not to those who already know it — that would be useless nonsense. But to those who do not know it! To the whole vast creation of men and worlds who dwell in darkness with the insatiable desire to receive, but to whom has never been revealed the true and eternal and unbounded source of life and reality.

Ah, God is preparing a divine show for all the earth, indeed for the entire universe. The mighty Barnum, in describing his circus, said it was THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH. True, Mr. Barnum was a great showman and, for its kind, he had a great show, but God is the Master Showman and is preparing to give the world THE GREATEST SHOW IT HAS EVER SEEN. It is a theatrical of MERCY and GRACE and LOVE in a world of wrath and violence. This will be God's master stroke as the curtain rises on the world's greatest drama — God's Great Show — THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD! Praise His name, once the finishing touch is put on the last stone of His living temple of Kings and Priests, the firstfruits of His redemption, in ages yet to come He shall put His grace and kindness inwrought in us ON DISPLAY so that the entire creation may walk across the stage of His cosmic theatre and behold and see and finally come to understand and appreciate WHAT GOD HAS PROVIDED FOR ALL MEN IN CHRIST. All who have ears to hear must hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches. Across the land and around the world the Spirit is saying today that He is preparing a people, He is preparing a body, He is preparing sons who shall be conformed to the image of His Son, who shall be partakers of the divine nature, who shall have the mind of Christ, who shall be brought to glory and who then shall become the very express image of the Father, the brightness of the Father's glory and the outraying of the Father's person. These shall receive of His fullness until they have within themselves conquered all sin, sickness and death. God is now preparing sons, God is now preparing a body for that first Son, we are the body of the first Son, the body of the Christ, the body of the King of glory, the body of the great High Priest in the heavens after the order of Melchizedek. We are the body of the Giver and in and through these sons, when all have been brought to His fullness, having received of all His glorious and eternal reality, His salvation shall be manifested, exhibited, and demonstrated unto the ends of the earth and unto worlds yet unknown. The Lord is saying to His people in this day: "For this cause have I raised thee up and sent thee to be a light unto the nations and thou shalt BE MY SALVATION to the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6; Acts. 13:47).

When those who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship speak the words the Spirit is speaking to the Churches in this hour, people demand, "Who do you think you are?" When we declare that we are called to be the manifested sons of God, to grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, to partake of a greater ministry than that of the Church-age, to set all creation free and reconcile all things in heaven and in earth back into God, people ask, "Just who do you think you are?" It really makes no difference who WE think we are, but it makes a great deal of difference that we know WHO AND WHAT WE ARE APPREHENDED TO BE IN HIM. Our ears have heard the sound of the trumpet, we cannot — dare not — settle for anything less, we must follow on to know Him in all His wonderful fullness, to desire to receive of all that He is and has so
that we can in turn become His Givers unto all. HE THAT HATH AN EAR LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH. Let us not sell creation short in these days. The whole creation is groaning and travelling together in pain to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Mankind is sick and tired of sin and fear and hatred and sorrow and pain and empty religious platitudes, rituals, ceremonies and doctrines. The whole race is gripped by the most intense DESIRE TO RECEIVE — there is everywhere an unprecedented hunger for deliverance, life and reality. Let us not deny the Lord who purchased us to be a Kingdom of Priests. While we seek no glory of our own, there is, nevertheless, great wealth and heavenly glory for all who fulfill all the will of God. You never lose with God. You are never diminished by giving, you are never impoverished by pouring out all that you are and have. There is an interesting fact in connection with the life of the great missionary, Hudson Taylor. Hudson Taylor's brother desired above all things to be famous and so he scorned the Christian life and scoffed at his brother's zeal to pour out his life as a missionary among the impoverished and ignorant heathen. He went into business and politics to become famous. Over a century has now passed and throughout the whole world the name of Hudson Taylor is well known, and in writings, when it does appear, his brother is referred to as "Hudson Taylor's brother" — Mr. Anonymous — who gave up all to become famous! The compelling passion of my life is to be filled with all the fullness of God and come into the image of Jesus Christ. The deep cry of my heart is for the satisfaction of knowing that my life counts for God. As God knows my heart, it is not a selfish desire. The reason I want to be like Jesus is because I love Him so, but also because it is the only way I can ever be used in the restoration of fallen creation. I see the needs of the world around me, and realize that I am practically powerless to do anything about it. Oh Yes, I can pray, and give a little, and believe God, and see occasional conversions, deliverances, and blessings. But anyone who says that they have reached the place where their ministry is meeting the needs of the world is either blind to the needs of humanity, a proud hypocrite, or a compulsive liar. "Lord Jesus! Breathe Thy Spirit into all who read these lines until we are like Thee in all of Thy ways that Thou mayest be glorified and all creation blessed. Make us a center of omnipotent God. May the great river of Thy love and grace and power flow and flow and flow until the outflow of Thyself from our center knows no circumference, enveloping all creation in Thy life and light and love. Amen!" God will make the reality ours.

In the several pages of this writing our theme has been LIFE OUT OF DEATH, or LIGHT OUT OF DARKNESS. This is the divine, sublime message of the remarkable Sign of Capricornus — the dying Goat from whom springs the living fish! It is the pouring out of light into darkness, of life into death that quickened creation may be raised up to the glory of the Creator and redound unto His glory. May God make it real to your heart!
Chapter 29
Capricornus-The Goat
(continued)

We continue in our study of the Sign of CAPRICORNUS — THE GOAT. The goat in the scriptures is a sacrificial animal. And while the Sign is known as the goat, it is a very strange creature indeed. On the old star charts the front half is pictured as a goat and the rear half as a fish. It is a goat with a fishes' tail; it is half-goat and half-fish. This Sign has a strange appearance on the old star charts because it shows a wounded goat, with its head bowed and its knee bent under, fallen down in the posture of dying. On the other hand, the tail of the fish is wiggling, vigorous and living! Note that from the dying goat comes a living fish — the living fish thus takes its being out of the dying goat and derives all its life and vigor from thence. The living fish emerging from the dying goat therefore has an important meaning. In addition to the falling and dying of the goat, Capricornus is the Sign of a mystical procreation and bringing forth. It speaks of life that springs forth from the death of the sacrifice. That which dies is a goat; that which is brought forth is a fish, the familiar and well understood symbol of the spiritual body brought out of the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ. What could better symbolize this than the Sign before us? The goat and fish are one — one being, the life of the dying reproduced and continued in a spiritual product which is part of the one and the same body. The goat of sacrifice is projected into a new creation, which is yet an organic part of itself.

LIFE OUT OF DEATH

Some of the brightest stars in the constellation of Capricornus are AL GEDI, which means "the Kid"; DENEB AL GEDI meaning "the Sacrifice cometh"; and MA'ASAD, "the Slaying." God commanded the children of Israel, saying, "Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering" (Lev. 9:31). So Aaron "took the goat, which was the sin-offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin" (Lev. 9:15). And of the goat of the sin-offering Moses said, "It is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord" (Lev. 10:16-17). We see here a picture of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, for truly He became our sin-offering, being "wounded for our transgressions:" and "bruised for our iniquities," He was "cut out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken." Each and every son of Adam is born in sin and shapen in iniquity and, because we have sinful natures and dwell in a world where every filthy sin and foul evil abounds on every hand, we accept our environment of corruption as normal and tolerable, never remembering anything better. A man who is born amid poverty, squalor, disease and crime often pays little heed to his condition since he knows nothing better, but a man born to wealth, fame and power, reduced to poverty and misery, is cast into an agonizing hell. No man on earth can properly understand the terror, the horror, the abject dismay of the death Christ suffered when He took upon Himself the form of a man and became obedient unto death, because no man remembers the excellence and glory and exaltation of that world of life he enjoyed with the Father before the ages began. Paul tried to express the extent of the
Christ's impoverishment and the depth of His humiliation with these word of inspiration: "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (II Cor 8-9). And again, with the use of words that, though inspired, are yet feeble, he exhorted us to let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus: "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8).

We will never grasp the enormity of Christ's sacrifice until the Holy Spirit somehow gives us the ability to see the death of Christ in all its lifetime scope and experience — not as six hours on a cross but as thirty-three and a half years, fully participating in the death realm in all its aspects, man as we are man, flesh as we are flesh, weak as we are weak, limited as we are limited, tempted in all points as we are, suffering in all ways as we do, grappling with all the forces within and without that we struggle with, that through His suffering He might become the very first man to overcome it all, the first perfect man, the first man to break out of the dungeon of sin and the prison house of death — righteous, victorious and living! The Word of God, through His incarnation, became the son of man that we who were born sons of men might through Him become sons of God, yea, perfect sons of men and incorruptible sons of God. What a sacrifice that was and what a death He died! A brother shared the following experience which graphically portrays to our understanding the magnitude of Christ's sacrifice. "Years ago, when I was still at home on the farm, we had a manure pile in the field, the former owners had been cleaning out the barn and piling the manure there for years. There was a colony of snakes living in this manure pile, and on a sunny day one could see several of them lying on the sunny south side, sunning themselves. One day I was emptying a load of manure on the north side, and I sneaked up over the pile to get a look at the snakes. There were several lying there; and as I stood looking at them, the Lord seemed to say to me, How would you like to become one of those creatures and live among them in this manure pile! I shuddered at the thought of it. I just couldn't comprehend how terrible it would be. To lower myself to that extent was unthinkable. Then the Lord said to me, For my Son to leave His home in the glory above, to become a man in the likeness of sinful flesh, for your sake and your salvation, was much worse than that. I have never forgotten that experience. It made me appreciate much more the sacrifice He made for me."

George Hawtin ably wrote of this death-realm: "Now it naturally follows that, if our blessed Lord spent all the days of His earthly existence in death, we also are doing the same, and I shall advance many infallible proofs to show that the very thing men have called life is not life at all, but death. Indeed we may claim that three score and ten years are the years of our life and, of course, we all understand what is meant by that statement, but the real truth is that the three score and ten years during which we dwell in this corruptible body are not the years of our life, but the years of our death. When we mortals put a man in a coffin and bury him in the dark, cold earth, we say the man is dead, and indeed he is; but have you heard what Jesus answered when one or His disciples said to Him, 'Suffer me first to go and bury my father?' The strange reply He gave was this, 'Follow Me: and let the dead bury their dead' (Mat. 8:21-22). How strange that statement sounds to us who do not understand what death is, but the Lord was really telling them that the able bodied men who were carrying the coffin to the cemetery were just as dead as the man who was lying breathless within it. In other words, the very thing we insist is life God says is death. The sooner we learn that lesson the sooner we will
release as useless all things that pertain to this realm of death that we might be enabled to firmly lay hold on life, even the life which Jesus gives, aionian life, or the life of the ages. When the truth of this dawned upon my soul, I found many earthly things slipping away from me in a manner I had nor known hitherto. Who among us could ever desire to lay fast hold upon that which he discovers to be naught but death? The things that are dead we bury out of our sight, and I think I am right in saying that the lusts and temptations that belong to this death lose their grip upon us when we know that they are naught but death and that the flesh life to which these temptations cling is but a vapor that the wind driveth away. I cannot see myself slaving to lay up great wealth in store for that which I know is dead. What an abominable lie has gripped our hearts, deceiving us into endless labor and travail until on every side men and women are dying of heart attacks in their worry to provide worthless goods for this body of death. — end quote.

In order that the Christ could become a ransom (release) for our sins, He had to shed His blood and die on the cross; and in order to die He had to become mortal — subjected to this whole dreadful realm of sin and death. He had to surrender Himself to the condition, circumstances, powers and state of being of the death-realm. He became a man, a mortal like the rest of us. When He was still a babe in His mother’s arms, when King Herod discovered that the Magi, instead of coming to tell him where the baby could be found, had tricked him and returned to their country by another route, the wicked Herod was exceedingly wroth. He had found out that this babe was to be the king of the Jews, and this endangered his position as king. So he wanted the baby destroyed, and sent soldiers to kill every male child under two years old in that vicinity. Joseph was warned by God in a dream about this plot to destroy the child and instructed to flee into Egypt. Why did He flee? Here was a miracle child, the Son of God! Could anything happen to Him? Yes, if Herod’s men had gotten their hands on Him He could have been killed like all the others; for you see He was just like them. He was mortal and could have been killed. He was born to die, but not yet; it was too soon, He had a work to do first, and when that was accomplished, then He was ready to die. "But we see Jesus, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.” This was part of God’s purpose, so He humbled Himself and became obedient even unto death, the death of the cross. The writer of Hebrews tells us just how human He was, “It was right and proper that in bringing many sons to glory, God should make the leader of their salvation a perfect leader through the fact that He suffered. For the One who makes men holy and the men who are made holy share a COMMON HUMANITY. So He is not ashamed to call them brethren, for He says, I will declare thy name unto my brothers; in the midst of the congregation will I sing Thy praise. And again, speaking as a man, He says, I will put my trust in Him. And one more instance, in these words, Behold I and the children God has given me. Since then, ‘the children’ have a common physical nature as human beings, He also became a human being, so that by going through death AS A MAN, He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil” (Heb. 2:10-14, Phillips Translation).

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

I would draw your reverent attention to these significant words of inspiration which we quoted earlier, but now I will share them as they are beautifully translated in the Amplified Bible. "Let this same attitude and purpose and mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus — Who, although being... one with God and in the form of God, possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God God, did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained; but stripped Himself of all privileges and rightful dignity so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born a human being. And after He had appeared in human form He abased and humbled Himself still further and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore God has highly exalted Him..." In this wonderful passage we have the summary of all the most precious truths that cluster about the person of the Son of God. There is first His wonderful divinity: "in the form of God," "equal with God." Then comes the mystery of Him laying aside that glory in that phrase of deep and inexhaustible meaning: "He stripped Himself," "He emptied Himself." The humiliation follows: "The form of a servant," "Made in the likeness of men," "found in fashion as a man." Then comes the crushing and mortification of suffering and death: "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." And all is crowned by His glorious exaltation: "God hath highly exalted Him!" Christ as God. Christ becoming man, Christ as man in humiliation revealing the glory of the Father in a body of flesh, and Christ in glory as Lord of all: such are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge this passage contains.

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

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

He who alone is life, having never touched death, humbled Himself for our sakes and became obedient unto death. He stooped to die and lived thirty-three and one half years in it. Then at the end He went to the cross. Earth's voices must fall silent here, for they will never be able to tell the story of how it is that life comes out of death. I would have said that such a thing would be impossible had He not said of His life, "I have power to
lay it down, and I have power to take it up again” (Jn 10:118). When He expired on the cross, He passed into the totality of death, and on the resurrection side of the tomb He proved that there is NO FINALITY TO DEATH, that even in death He was wondrously alive, for, said He, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." It was not simply that He had faith that GOD would raise Him from the dead. NO! The power He possessed was the power to take His own life up again and this power is a power He both had and executed WHILE HE WAS DEAD! There can be no other explanation. A child of five should be able to understand that one cannot lay his life down and take it up again unless he has life even in death. In the power of that life which the Christ still possessed, being dead, He passed back from the realm of death to the realm of life, and on the resurrection side of the tomb He cried in triumph, "Behold, I am alive forever more" (Rev. 1:18). And now He is alive in the flesh, praise God, triumphantly holding in His incorruptible hands the keys of both death and hell, and is abundantly able to offer life eternal to dead men who believe in Him. "The hour is coming, and now is," He has proclaimed, "when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn. 5:25). Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, by partaking of death during the days of His flesh and ending all death by the power of His resurrection, has brought to light both life and immortality. Notice, precious friend of mine, it is not said that He has created life and immortality — He has brought it to light, turned His searchlight upon it, disclosed it, revealed it, opened it up, proclaimed it and made it known. Christ is life. In Him alone is life. And the man or woman who has been quickened by Christ HAS LIFE, is passed from death unto life, and shall never die. "I AM (not I will be) the resurrection and the life," says Jesus, “he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believeth thou this?” (Jn. 11:25-26). Sad to say, even some who profess to be teachers of God's elect and sons of God do not believe that simple truth which Martha embraced that day when the Christ brought life and immortality to light in her awakened consciousness. Our Lord Jesus plainly told us, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give into them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hands." (Jn. 10:27-29). The moment any man hears the voice of the Son of God and becomes a sheep following Him, at that moment, the gift of God, which is eternal life, is given to that believing man and the life of God begins to live and dwell and abide in that man as a well of water springing up unto eternal life. Christ is the Tree of Life, and all who partake of Him receive life, not in some future age, not in some distant resurrection, but here and now, for He gives them eternal life. Apart from Him there is naught but darkness and death. "Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again," were the words He spoke to the troubled woman at the well of Samaria, "But whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give Him shall become a fountain within him, springing up unto eternal life" (Jn. 4:14) Christ is the fountain of life. He alone is the fountain of eternal youth, of eternal consciousness, of eternal being. This is the wonderful message of the NEW COVENANT, the covenant of life.

Again I would quote briefly from the inspired writings of George Hawtin. "Sweet mystery of life, at last we've found Thee! And we have found that Thou, O Christ, art life — not that life which flourishes as grass in the field today and tomorrow the wind passes over it and it is gone, nor life like ours, which is as a mist which the wind driveth away, but life aionian, life everlasting, life eternal, life evermore, the life of the ages. Well spoke our beloved Lord when He said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into
condemnation, but IS PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE;’ or as Rotherham has trans
lated it, ‘hath passed over out of death into life’ (Jn. 5:24). It is a wonderful hour in the expe
rience of any man when he passes from death ‘across to life,’ and that is exactly what happens when we believe on Christ. As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, and to all who believe on Him life is given, even that eternal life which God Himself is and which abounds like rivers of living water within us when Jesus Christ comes in to abide. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is every man that trusteth in Him! With this wonderful realization firmly abiding in our hearts; we are better prepared to grasp the truth Christ clearly gave us when He said, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live’ (Jn 5:25). Think on that statement, child of God. Was not Jesus telling us that we are dead as dead can be? And did He not make two remarkable statements — first, the hour is coming, and, second, the hour now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live? Have not we who have believed proven the truth of this in our very spirit and in our experience? The greatest proof in the universe that Jesus Christ is alive forvermore is the fact that, when we believed, He came to dwell within us. He came to live His life in us. He came to deliver us from our sin and our habits and make us to know that death would never more hold our spirits in its vice-like grip. Do we not know that He who lives and was dead, and, behold, He is alive forvermore, has come to us that we might live also and has raised us up together with Himself to share with Him the life of the ages” — end quote.

Yet some tell us that the dead are dead — that there is no life or consciousness or being for the child of God apart from or beyond or above physical existence — should you lay this tabernacle aside there is nothing — you cease to exist — you are gone! I do not hesitate to tell you that it is a wicked lie, a monstrous deceit, and a dreadful denial of the life we have now been given in Christ Jesus. Let's get right down to brass tacks here. Do you want to hear the truth beyond all the superstitions you've heard, beyond all the emptiness and hopelessness of Old Testament economy? Eternal life is first and foremost spiritual, not physical. To hear some preachers teach it one would think that a man cannot possess eternal life except it be manifest on the physical level — in an immortal body. I think that no man understands the first thing about life out of death who misses the clear and unmistakable understanding given by Paul in his words to the Romans: “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness” (Rom. 8:10). The body is dead, just as God told Adam it would be. So for the man who has received Christ his body is still dead because of sin but his spirit is alive because of righteousness — Christ’s righteousness, of course, for there is none other, the righteousness that comes with Him when we believe into Him and He gives us Himself and with and by Himself His life. This life which even now is reality within us is that life and immortality which has been BROUGHT TO LIGHT through the gospel. Hear and believe the wonderful news, precious friend of mine, YOUR SPIRIT I-S A-L-I-V-E BECAUSE OF THE INDWELLING CHRIST! Those who minister the finality of death — when your body dies you’re dead and gone, non-existent — minister under the blindness of the OLD COVENANT, the ministration of death. They know not that the Christ has come and given us life, they understand not that Christ IS NOW the resurrection and the life, they comprehend not the glad truth that eternal life is even now a glorious and eternal reality in “the inner man” which is “renewed day by day,” they, like the patriarchs and the prophets under the Old Testament, and like the Jews to this very day, are still awaiting the Saviour and looking to some future day for the resurrection, totally oblivious to the wonderful fact that “If ye then BE RISEN with Christ, seek those
things which are above (in the higher realm of the spirit; where your eternal life is), where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1). I am here to tell you that CHRIST IS COME! I proclaim to you today the glad tidings of the NEW TESTAMENT, the ministration of life. God has anointed me to declare the RESURRECTION WHICH I-S, not one that shall be! Those who minister the finality of death minister the Old Covenant and know nothing as they ought to know and have seen nothing — the heavens have never been opened to them. Their ministry is not one of faith and hope and present reality, but of fear of death and a sense of foreboding and depression. They know not the life that transcends the body, the life that is first of all realized spiritually rather than soulishly or physically. Death is emphasized, dramatized, its power glorified by men who minister, not out of the power of life, but out of the fear of death. It is the fear of death that drives many in this hour to seek the immortality of the body. And make no mistake! “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead SHALL ALSO QUICKEN (MAKE ALIVE) YOUR M-O-R-T-A-L B-O-D-I-E-S by His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. 8:11). That is the hope yet to be fulfilled in and through the manifested sons of God. But I say to all who have not the consciousness of that eternal life which is already yours, that resurrection in which you are already raised, that eternal consciousness, existence and being you already are, I say to those who are striving for physical immortality because of the fear of the finality of death — Christ has already come and Himself partook of flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy death, and might DELIVER THEM WHO THROUGH FEAR OF DEATH ARE ALL THEIR LIFETIME SUBJECT TO BONDAGE. Under the Old Testament life and immortality had not yet been fully brought to light. No wonder the old saints often lived and spoke as those subject to bondage. No wonder they emphasized the power of death, the hopelessness of death, the finality of death! But how sad that the redeemed of Jesus Christ, His brethren, so often prove that they know so little of the deliverance and life He has given and the song of joy: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through Christ our Lord!” My brother! art thou living in the full experience of this blessed truth? He delivers from the fear of death and the bondage it brings, changing it into the joy of knowing that "we have passed from death unto life!" Since then, we have been made alive because of our spirit being quickened by His Spirit, Paul leads us on to another marvelous truth which I fear multitudes of earnest believers are failing to see, including some elect saints of God. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who HATH ABOLISHED DEATH, and HATH BROUGHT life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:9-10). The Word of God is true. It is not a silly fairy tale or a superstitious myth. It is not a lie. Men are liars. God is true. And when God says, “Christ who hath abolished death,” we poor puny worms of the dust had better believe it, and cease calling God a liar by telling Him He is wrong. For "he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar" (I Jn. 5:10). Oh, read it and re-read it and rejoice in it with joy unspeakable and full of glory! Through His thirty-three years of death Christ hath abolished death and through the power of His glorious resurrection He has brought that resurrection life into us so that it is wonderfully true that "when we were dead . . . He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:5-6). Christ on Calvary bore every sin of every sinner. He was made a sin-offering (Capricornus—the goat) for us, He who knew no sin. And since He became our sin-offering, therefore when He died, our sin died. Calvary atoned. And then and there the
total and unending death that had fallen on Adam and his race fell on another. “The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD” (Jn. 6:51). Oh, the victory of Calvary means so much more than any of us ever realized in the past. It was such a pathetically ineffectual work, according to the way it was once taught us. It was weak and so limited in scope, so incomplete! Christ came to save the world (Jn, 12:47); God sent His Son “that THE WORLD through Him might be saved” (Jn. 3:17). But it was all in vain. He wasn’t able to do what He came for. That’s what the preachers say. Thank God, that long night of darkness is passing! Thank God, a fuller, deeper message now goes forth, which does not limit the God of Israel, which does not belittle and besmear the atonement, the all-inclusive work of our Saviour Jesus Christ! He did not die in vain! He was not a failure! Calvary was not a defeat, but an exultant victory. And there He, the spotless sinless Lamb of God actually gave His life for the life “OF THE WORLD.” Let us never again forget that fact.

The world was lost. All had sinned. And the wages of sin is death. Oh, let us grasp this one great spiritual truth! Babylon has lied to us. Let us forsake her shame and deceptions and evil imaginings! She has led us to believe that the wages of sin is anything and everything else but what God says it is. What a fraud! What a fiend she has made of the God of love and mercy and grace! And it made her the richest earthly institution which ever did exist or ever will. But no: the wages of sin is actually death. And Jesus died. Therefore the world goes free. It doesn’t take a Doctorate in mathematics or physics to figure that out. The equation is very simple. Yes, friend, Christ actually gave His life “for the life OF THE WORLD:” not for one half of it, not for just a few Christians who are “not of this world.” He actually paid the full penalty for the sins “OF THE WORLD”—A-L-L OF IT. Jesus actually paid it all! All men, because of sin, had come under the curse and were dead. They were lost, bound for eternal night. But Jesus, the only Man who was born to die, the last Man who ever did actually die, became the sin-offering for every sinner, and bore those sins to dark Calvary. Listen to this! I did not write it. It is the Word of the eternal God which all of us in the past have loudly proclaimed to be inspired; yet not one of us believed a word of it, except the little scraps here and there which suited our fancy, tickled our vanity, or appeared to support our superstitions. Here is what God says: “Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came UPON A-L-L MEN to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came UPON A-L-L MEN unto justification of life” (Rom. 5:18). Oh, if we could but get all the poor victims of pope and popery to read and believe that one verse of scripture, then all their bowing and scraping and paying would stop immediately. And if we could get all the Christians in the churches to somehow believe it, what a transformation it would bring. And if all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship could somehow believe it, how it would hasten the day of manifestation! Jesus gave His life for the life of the world. That ends the matter for all time and eternity. So Paul could write, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

Because of this John the beloved could write, “He is the propitiation (mercy-seat, sin-offering) for our sins: and NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE SINS OF THE W-H-O-L-E W-O-R-L-D” (1 Jn. 2:2). And because of this Paul could affirm, “Christ.... HATH ABOLISHED DEATH.” He could also write, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death... that He by the grace of God SHOULD TASTE DEATH F-O-R E-V-E-R-Y M-A-N” (Heb. 2:9). Certainly "every man" includes Adolf Hitler, Nero, Cain, and every other son of Adam from the dawn of history to the end of the last age that will ever come. And because of this we, like the woman at the well, "KNOW that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour OF THE W-O-R-L-D." That is the free gift to every son of Adam who was ever born or ever will be. Let God be true,
and every man a liar! For death is actually abolished, there is no longer any such thing. When Jesus died, sin died. When He arose, death died. The abolishment of death became an actuality in very fact on the resurrection morn, when the triumphant proclamation went forth, "He is not here: for He is risen" (Mat. 28:6). It was effective even from the day that God closed Eden’s gates, though not manifested.

But now someone is going to question the foregoing statements and ask us why it is that, if death is abolished, men continue to die. The answer is, of course, men do not continue to die. Oh, we know their bodies go to the grave. And we call this death. It is not death. God does not call it death. Those who equate death with a body in a coffin know absolutely nothing about death. Ye who were dead hath He quickened! I was lying neither in a coffin at the funeral parlor nor in a dark hole in the ground when I was quickened and made alive in Christ. Death was not my body in a coffin, and the life I have received is not an immortal flesh-body. Don’t you see? What men call death is not death, and what men call life is not life. Only when the Holy Spirit enables us to see the true nature of all things can we understand a mystery so deep. One man came and by the grace of God tasted death "FOR E-V-E-R Y M-A-N." Mark carefully, He only tasted it. He remained in death for thirty-three and one half years culminating in the death of the cross. He merely sampled it. But He sampled it in the place of every son of Adam. He actually tasted death "FOR E-V-E-R Y M-A-N." Do you believe it? Dare you believe it? The mystery is just this. Jesus died for the whole race of men. When He arose He injected life into the stream of humanity, so that there is a spiritual quality in man that transcends the body realm. It is a dimension of being that even the grave cannot hold. It is that "light" which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and that light is Christ (Jn. 1:4,9-10). No life beyond the grave? Then Christ did not die and rise again, He did not taste death for every man, He did not give His life for the life of the world, He did not abolish death and bring life and immortality to light! That light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world is the spiritual sense of being, that in man which is eternal and deathless, which God will pursue until it is brought to the image and likeness of God that He may become "All-in-all." This free gift came (has already come) upon ALL MEN unto justification of life (Rom. 5:18). Can anything be plainer! Any other doctrine is OLD TESTAMENT doctrine, not the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who hath abolished death.

Hearken to the Word! One day a poor man, a heartbroken father, came to the Master. His little daughter had passed on. He said, "My daughter is dead" (Mat. 9:18). He thought she was dead. Little did he comprehend that the One who stood before him is the resurrection and the life. But what did the Master say? A strange word for Old Testament saints, for sure. "And when Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleeppeth. And they laughed Him to scorn." What did He say on another occasion! "Our friend Lazarus sleeppeth; but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep" (Jn. 11:11). Oh yes, a little farther on, because the disciples misunderstood Him, He also said that Lazarus was dead. This which we call physical death is the nearest thing to death that we know. But the New Testament everywhere draws a clear and sharp distinction between death and sleep. What is the difference? you ask. There is a great difference, indeed! A dead man has no life, consciousness or being. But a sleeping man IS STILL ALIVE THOUGH UNCONSCIOUS TO THE WORLD AROUND HIM. And he is STILL CONSCIOUS ON ANOTHER PLANE. Thus, the martyr Stephen "fell asleep" while beholding the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God, and crying with a loud voice into that bright world beyond the mortal, "Lord Jesus,
receive my spirit!” (Acts 6:54-60). As to the earth realm he was asleep; as to Christ in His glory at the right hand of the Father he was wondrously alive in the spirit. As Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (I Thes. 4:13-14). This passage contains a two-dimensional truth. From the earthly aspect those who have gone by way of the grave sleep; from the heavenly aspect they come with Jesus when He comes, out of the heavenly and spiritual dimension of consciousness and being. Since Jesus came and brought life to men this thing we call physical death is merely a sleep, merely a divine provision on the way to the fullness of life whereby we lay aside this sin-cursed house of clay, to live in the spirit unto God. Paul understood this mystery and wrote of his own destiny: "For me, to live is Christ—His life in me; and to die is gain. If, however, it is to be life in the flesh and I am to live on here, that means fruitful service for me; so I can say nothing as to my personal preference—I cannot choose, but I am hard pressed between the two. My yearning desire is to depart — be free of this world, to set forth — and be with Christ, for that is far, far better; but to remain in my body is more needful and essential for your sake" (Phil 1:21-24, Amplified). Peter, too, knew that he had apprehended a life that transcends this physical, for he wrote: "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance" (II Pet. 1:13-15). No morbid tale here of the finality of death, of unconscious non-existence, of darkness and nothingness! Ah, Peter knew that the body was merely a tabernacle, a tent, a house, a covering for the incorruptible life of God in his inner man, the new creation born of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Hallelujah!

While it is gloriously true that Christ has given His life to all men, to the whole world, yet it is evident that there must be a progression in the development of that life in the experience of every man until every vestige of the death realm has been swallowed up, spirit, soul and body. To those who walk with Christ there is an ever-increasing consciousness, growth, increase, unfoldment, maturation and triumph of that life. The mighty working of His power within is followed by this very precious and understandable result: "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ shall also quicken (make alive) your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom 8:11). I believe I now see more clearly than I have ever done why it was that Paul, who, as you and I do, still dwelt in the hellish bondage of a mortal body cried out, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:53-57). We are, indeed, terribly and horribly in bondage to the body of this death, and with us the whole creation is groaning, waiting for the day when the sons of God will deliver them from the bondage of corruption. I do not need to argue with any man to prove our present mortality in the flesh. If you must sleep to live, you are mortal. If you must eat to live, you are obviously mortal. If you must breathe to live, you are unquestionably mortal. We are all aware of our constant and unremitting decay as the aging process etches its marks upon us. Our present mortality is naught but death, although we live in the spirit. Think of it! Meditate
deeply upon it and cling to this realm of death no more. Reach up, my beloved, with the blessed arm of faith and embrace that bright realm above where that which is true in our spirit reaches down and takes hold upon our outer man, where this mortal puts on immortality, where death in all its aspects is swallowed up of life, where in that final victory of His life within the sons of God will upon this earth shout in triumph over both death and the grave.

Truly we yearn for this change, for our desire is not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon that mortality may be swallowed up of life (II Cor. 5:1-5). Yea, we groan inwardly for this transformation to take place. I continually meet up with brethren who confess that they have already put on physical immortality and incorruption, that they have already passed over the grave and cannot and will not die. I must be very honest and frank with you, my beloved brothers I have not one whit of a desire to live forever IN THIS BODY OF HUMILIATION. There is no more frightening thought, no more repugnant possibility, than the idea that I might live forever in this body of humiliation! Thank God, there is to be a change! "Who will transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform and to be like the body of His glory and majesty, by exerting that power which enables Him even to subject everything to Himself" (Phil. 3:21, Amplified). The thought of merely adding immortality to this body of humiliation, with no other change, the suggestion of such limitation, that I might have to bathe, anoint my body with deodorant, brush my teeth, and use Scope throughout eternity, the hint that I might retain this base form, that I might remain as I am unendingly, falls as far short of what I conceive of a body transformed and fashioned like unto the body of His glory and majesty as hell falls short of heaven! The body of incorruption shall resemble this vile body no more than does the oak tree resemble the chemical elements of the earth which were raised up into the substance of the tree by the mighty working of the subtle and mysterious life force sown in the earth as a seed.

Sons of God! If we would be fashioned like unto Him, co-sharers of His glory and power and wisdom as the God-man, we must not simply rest content with the faith that trusts in the cross and its pardon; we must follow on to know the fullness of the New Life, the life of glory and power in human nature, injected into man through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, of which the spirit of the glorified Jesus is the witness and the source. Now, practically everything in relationship to our sonship depends upon the clearness with which this great truth that I have stated is recognized. The Holy Spirit of God inspired the message of these words in Rom 5:9-11, "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being now justified by His blood, we SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE... and... we joy.... in our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." The double provision of Christ is here clearly set forth: reconciled by His death; saved by His life. Christ’s death is the atonement, reconciling men to God, granting a full and free admittance back into Eden’s lovely garden from which our disobedient foreparents were once banished. But Christ’s life is the Tree of Life in the garden, the source of the life which shall work in us the complete transformation into the divine nature. Sin, sickness, sorrow, fear and death are all part of a power in our life; let us fully understand that it can only be met by another higher power. The power of sin and death works all through our life. The death of Christ, which is the atonement, reconciles us to God, but only the life of Christ can come against the power of sin and death and deliver our life from destruction. Reconciliation places us, in God’s eyes, back in Eden’s garden; but the Tree of Life is the power that delivers my life from the dominion of sin and death. He redeemeth my life, by His life, from death!
Christ's life, not His death, living in our life, absorbing it, impregnating it, transforming it causes us to live. This is the meaning of that profound sentence in which Paul records the first great work of salvation and pointedly distinguishes it from the second great work of salvation, saying, "if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." The first is the dying goat; the second is the living fish!

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

When an Israelite was bitten by flaming serpents in the wilderness, he never thought of applying manna to the wound. The manna was for his life. But he did think of applying the brazen serpent. The manna would never have cured his snake bite; nor would the brazen serpent have kept him from starving! Suppose he had said, now I am healed by this serpent, I feel cured, and I need not eat this manna anymore. The serpent has done it all, and I am well." The result would have been, of course, that he would have died. The man, to be sure, was cured, delivered from the judgment of his rebellion against God, but he has to LIVE, and if he eats no manna his life must languish, go to destruction, die. Without going to any trouble about it, simply by the inevitable process of nature, he would have died. The manna was God's provision to redeem his life from destruction, after the serpent has redeemed it from judgment. And if he did nothing to stop the natural progress of corruption, in the natural course of things, he must die. Now there is no contradiction between these two things—the manna is from God and the serpent is from God. But they are different gifts for different things. The serpent removed the judgment, but could not sustain life; the manna gave life, but could not deal with the sentence. To apply this to the case in hand. The death of Christ, on the one hand, is the brazen serpent. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (on the cross)" (Jn 3:14). Christ's life on the other hand, is the manna—the bread of life. "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn 6:50-51). In the light of these remarkable words we can reach only one of two conclusions. Either all who have believed on Christ since that blessed day when these wonderful words poured from His divine lips have partaken of Him, eaten of His living flesh and have not died but have begun to live forever, or, else, NO ONE HAS EVER EATEN OF HIM FROM THAT DAY TO THIS, for all have continued to go by way of the grave. Either Jesus has given eternal life to all who eat of Him, and there is a life, consciousness and being that transcends the grave, or He lied and did not give His flesh for the life of the world, so that none has ever sat at
His table and received the life of which He spake. Do you really believe that God is that wicked that He would send forth redemption and then withhold it for another two thousand years? Let me ask you a question, my friend. If you had the power of immortality in your hand right now, would you wait another two thousand years to use it while billions of mankind continued to go out into endless nothingness? Wake up! my beloved. Let us get beyond the fantasy of a merely carnal and earthly and physical understanding of truth! “He that hath the Son HATH LIFE,” saith the Lord. “And we know that we HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE,” add all who know and love the truth.

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

Beyond the fact of the revelation of the wonderful law of life out of death as wrought out in Jesus Christ, there is also the mighty operation of this principle in our own life and experience as sons of God. A dear friend of many years penned some precious and enlightening insights to the outworking of life from death in us which I am moved to share with my readers at this point. She wrote: "The carnal mind would have us to believe that the way Up is Up. Thus we have pressed our way into ministry, pressed our way into the things we have desired, 'stood on the promises,' demanded of God our 'rights,' sought to have our own way in both spiritual and physical things—forgetting that which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets saying, "My ways are NOT your ways neither are My thoughts your thoughts." It is true, children of God, that God wants to take us UP — high into the realms of God — UP to Jerusalem — but God would have us to know that the way UP is always DOWN! If we would go up; we must first go down, for God is operating by the principle of death and resurrection. He has plainly stated that nothing is quickened
(made alive) except it first die. In this walk, you do not gain by keeping — for you are able only to keep that which you are first willing to lose. In this walk you do not live by living — you live by dying. The laws of the Kingdom of God are in reverse to the laws of this natural realm. The way to life is death, the way to victory is defeat, the way to glory is shame, and the way up is down!

"We have all been soulish — viewing the things of God through the intellect of soul, through the emotionalism of soul, through the beclouding of the appetites of the flesh — and our concepts of heaven, of the Kingdom of God, of salvation, and of the purposes of God have long been contaminated with self's desire for comfort and blessing. God is changing all that, praise His name, and we are beginning to learn to give up some of our childish things that we might grow to the maturity of the Christ, the most outstanding characteristic of whom is utter SELFLESSNESS. We have hitherto been possessed of that old 'do-good-to-me' concept of the Kingdom of God. We were expecting great liberty — something that would, no doubt, gratify our senses and promote our ego — something, perhaps that would, no doubt, gratify our senses and promote us in the sight of men. And if you will be honest, saint, you will have to admit that such has been your concept of sonship, or Kingdom, or eternal life, or heaven, or whatever doctrine has been uppermost in your mind in recent years. The old concepts of heaven — with its streets of gold and pearly gales — surely we are able to see that there is nothing in that that would appeal to the spirit of a man. It is the flesh that is interested in gold, and pearls, and precious stones. God chose these things which are so highly esteemed among men to depict the far greater riches of a realm we cannot see with the natural eye. We interpreted them literally because we were so flesh-minded that we could not see beyond the symbol to the reality it represented. The riches typified by these precious things are far greater in value to the spirit of a man than the literal could ever be. As one said not long ago, 'Those things are too cheap.' What does the spirit care about such things? Does it really matter to the spirit what kind of a street it walks on? If we have not come to an understanding of this before, let us now ask God to elevate our thoughts and see with the spiritual eye the glory that is portrayed in these cheap earthly materials. Streets of gold? Jesus said, 'I am the way (the street).' Gates of pearl? We are that pearl of great price for which Jesus sold all that He had. Precious stones? 'They (God's people) shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I come to make up My jewels!'

Some will, no doubt, say, 'I passed those ideas by a long time ago. I have come to a knowledge of sonship!' Ah! But how soulish we have been in our understanding of sonship. Sons of God! Glorious thought! And in it we have seen great glorious ministry, miracle working power, people falling at our feet in awe of the presence of God manifested in our lives. Can you not see that that, too, is a desire of the flesh — EGO panting for recognition — SELF waiting to come into its own! If we have been thinking along those lines, we have never yet heard the Word of God — for he who hears knows that one does not come to glory through glory: one comes to glory through shame. Joseph became a mighty prince of Egypt — but do consider the pathway that brought him there: DOWN into the pit, DOWN into slavery, DOWN into the dungeon. He was on his way up, but the way up was down! Oh, that the saints of God in this hour might come to the recognition and understanding of the ways of God! 'That I might know Him,' Paul cried, 'in the fellowship of His sufferings, BEING MADE CONFORMABLE TO HIS DEATH, that I may (also) know Him in the power of His resurrection.'

"There was a time when the apostle Peter was faced with this dilemma, even as we are. It all began with a simple question: ‘Peter, lovest thou Me?’ Peter's reply was, 'Yes,
Lord.' Then, 'Feed My lambs.' Again the question came, 'Peter? Do you love Me?' Peter was cautious as he answered, 'Yes, Lord. I love you.' Another command: 'Feed My sheep.' One last time, 'Peter? Do you love Me?' It was a frustrated Peter who replied this time, 'Lord, you know I love you!' And a patient Jesus who answered, 'Feed My sheep!' It was not insignificant that the Lord addressed Peter three times. There is something beneath the surface here. In the first realm, the realm of the flesh, the realm of the outer court ministry or the first heaven, the Lord asks, 'Do you love Me?' And the Christian answers, 'Yes, Lord.' Because the Lord knows the immaturity of one at that level, He gives only the instruction to feed the young ones, the lambs, the babies. That is all that is required of the first level of Christian experience. It was, however, a higher level to which the Lord referred in the second question, and with the question, He was bringing Peter's thoughts higher: 'Peter, do you love Me in the second heaven, in the holy place, in the Spirit filled level?' What else could Peter do but say, 'Yes, Lord. I love you here, too.' The lambs are beginning to mature in that realm, and the Lord, therefore, says to Peter, 'Feed My sheep.' There is yet a higher realm, and we dare not stop before we reach it. This is the realm of the holiest of all, the third heaven of which Paul spoke, and now the Lord is asking Peter, 'Do you love Me here, Peter? Do you love Me in the HOLIEST OF ALL?' Can we not feel Peter's emotions when he answers, 'Oh, yes, Lord I love you here, too!' Do we not also sense the cry of the Saviour's heart in saying, 'Then, feed My sheep.' He didn't stop there, however, for the Lord went on to say, 'When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself and walketh whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.' These were the Lord's instructions to Peter as to HOW he would feed the sheep in the third realm, for the word continues in saying, 'This spake He signifying by what death he should die!'

"Because these words were spoken not only to Peter but unto us as well, there are some things that we must not fail to grasp. First, this event transpired on the THIRD occasion of Jesus' appearing to His disciples after His resurrection (Jn. 21:14), offering the clue that Jesus was giving insight into the condition of the THIRD REALM experience, the entry into, the Holiest of all, or Kingdom life manifestation. It must be remembered that that realm is seen in the tabernacle of Moses as containing only one piece of furniture: the ark of the covenant. The Hebrew tells us that the ark was a COFFIN — a wooden coffin overlaid with gold. To enter into that realm, then, is to enter into such a state of bondage that it is a condition of death. It was to this death that Jesus was referring when He said, 'When you were young (immature), you went where you wanted to go — you did what you wanted to do — you, in effect, did your own thing. But when you are old (mature) you will stretch forth your hands and another shall gird thee and carry you where you would not want to go.' This was the description of Peter's death — not a physical death that would plant his human body six feet under the ground — but a death to his own will, to his own way, to his own opinions and thoughts; and this, saint of God! is the only way that we shall ever, obey His command to FEED HIS SHEEP who are seeking pasture in that third realm experience. Those who have come to the door of that holy place will not hear a word that is contaminated with the will of men or the ways of the flesh. The sheep of that third realm pasture desire the ESSENCE, the FRAGRANCE of His knowledge, and will settle for no less than the SWEETNESS of the perfume of HIS NATURE and HIS LIVING PRESENCE upon us!

"It was pure LOVE who was hanging on the cross two thousand years ago — and it was as His own belly was ripped open by a Roman spear that the New Wine of the Kingdom of God began to flow. He was bound — not by nails — but in the spirit to a wooden
cross, pouring out His life's blood that you and I might live through Him. In the words, then, that Jesus spoke to Peter was an invitation: an invitation to share His cross, partake of His sufferings, to come out of the liberty of self and into the bondage of love — that bread might be taken from the inner man and dealt out, broken and bruised, to the multitudes! Jesus says, also, to us as to those who walked with Him so many centuries ago: 'Give ye them to eat' (Lk. 9:13).

“Broken bread—a love dealt out
   To Adam's hungry soul
   Torn from the riven sides of those
   Whom Jesus Christ makes whole.

A nature—binding deep within
   A man to other men
   That pours out life to share with them
   Its liberty from sin.

Wounded hands—that serve e'en those
   Who drive in them the nails
   Living out the spirit's truth
   Of love that never fails.

A bondage—binding sons of God
   To the Tree of Life, you see,
   The living out of God's great love
   Thus setting mankind free."

—Connie Asbill
Capricornus, like all the Signs of the Zodiac, has three decans, or minor constellations, which surround it. The Decans belong to the Sign and their message is part of the Sign's message. The three Decans of Capricornus are Sagitta, Aquila, and Delphinus. Sagitta means "The Arrow," but this is not the arrow of Sagittarius, for that is an arrow intended for the enemies of God, to conquer and subdue them unto Him. Here the arrow is pictured in mid-heaven as having been shot by an invisible hand. It is seen in its flight through the heavens. There is a majesty and a mystery about it which startles and awes. The wonderful work which the arrow accomplishes is seen in the dying goat and in the falling eagle. It is a part of the great revelation of the life that comes out of death, or the death that issues forth into life. It is the arrow of God which wounds in order to release life. The Psalmist spoke of this in relation to the entrance of Jesus into this world of sin and death, "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore" (Ps. 38:2). Isaiah revealed the deep meaning in this when he prophesied of Christ, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted... it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His Hand (Isa. 53:4). Job the patriarch spoke of a similar thing when he lamented, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me" (Job 6:4). There is a spiritual piercing and slaying in the case of those who come to new life in Christ, akin to the piercing and slaying of the Christ Himself. Isaiah received a revelation of this arrow in the Lord's quiver, a wounding arrow which enters men's souls and brings them down into death of the self-life, that Christ may be revealed in His glory. The very arrow which poured out the life of Jesus our Saviour passes through Him to pierce also those who are joined in union with Him, also killing them to all that is contrary to God's purpose, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in them.

THE PIERCED EAGLE

One of the most prominent of the late summer constellations is Aquila. Aquila is an eagle, but always pictured in the old Zodiacs as a wounded and falling eagle. The eagle in this constellation is consistent with what we have noted in the whole Sign of Capricornus. The slain goat of the sin-offering is followed by the arrow of God's judgment and the pierced and falling eagle. Under the Sign of Sagittarius the Harp was seen held by an eagle, or a Harp placed over the eagle. The meaning was clear — praise shall ascend up as an eagle toward heaven. And this praise is associated with the splendor of the Christ who is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person, who also sings praises unto God in the midst of the church. Praise is heaven bound. It has a power and a force that will bear you heavenward and carry you to the Throne. In the midst of praise one finds himself lifted out of himself and beyond himself and above himself into the heavenlies, into celestial places, into new dimensions of the
spirit, into new heights of reality and life. In this place of ascension the praiser so becomes one with his praise that he BECOMES THE PRAISE of God in the earth.

The eagle is the highest form of bird, the only creature able to look as it were directly into the sun's dazzling radiance. Aspiring to heights far beyond the physical or grossly material, this great bird symbolizes the upward flight of our journey into God. The Lord Himself is referred to a number of times in the scripture as an eagle. “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle’s wings and brought you to Myself” (Ex. 19:4), and again, “As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him” (Deut. 32:11). Christ is that royal eagle, flying high, the One who is at the right hand of God; who thought it not robbery to be equal with God; that glorious One, the Son of God from on high. Yet, that One humbled Himself and was pierced by the arrow of God's judgment, and is seen here plummeting to the ground, the One who was so high becoming so low that we might be raised up into His heights, praise His wonderful name!

THE SOARING EAGLE

In this message we shall meditate upon both the heights and depths of Christ the eagle—Head and body. It is one of the loftiest of scriptural emblems. The eagle’s courage and farsightedness is stated in Job 39:28-30. Its swiftness is alluded to in Deut. 28:49. The remarkable phenomenon of the renewal of its youth is mentioned by David in Ps. 103:5. The likeness of one of the living creatures about the Throne was the likeness of an eagle (Rev. 4:7). The eagle was the standard of the camp of Dan, which included Asher, Dan and Naphtali. From the dawn of human history the challenge of flight has captured the imagination of man. The conquest of the air in the past century has embued men and women with a sense of awe and romance unequaled in the annals of history. Somehow the ability to fly has epitomized the longing of man to rise above the confines of the earthly and the mortal and soar into the realm of the spiritual and the supernatural. God has made wonderful provision in His Kingdom for man to have this spiritual need met, and yet few believers ever discover the laws by which this escape is possible, few ever achieve the perspective of the eagle, an ability to rise high enough to see things that those on the ground can never see. How can a man break into the high realm of the spiritual and the eternal—to soar in the heavenlies with Christ? In response let us look at a beautiful illustration used by the prophet Isaiah. “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint” (Isa. 40:31).

Come with me now to a scene set in the West. Black, ominous thunderheads move swiftly across a summer sky. Jagged streaks of lightening pierce the darkness, followed by long peals of thunder. Below, in the barnlot on the edge of the high sierra, two members of the feathered kingdom react in different ways. Appearing similar in some aspects, the birds are actually as different as day and night. The chicken, with her head down, scratches frantically in the barnyard soil, her beak picking up an assortment of grub worms, insects and scraps. Her movements become more excited as the storm moves closer. She knows that she must hastily finish her meal because soon she will have to take refuge from the storm. Strange indeed and very different are the actions of the other bird. The eagle sits on the naked limb of a dead tree, his head turning this way and that searching the scene, his sharp eyes piercing the clouds, scanning the heavens. Suddenly he spreads his great wings and waits—testing the winds. A gust of wind blows across his perch and he lifts into the air with a royal scream. He soars into the sky,
circling higher and higher above the storm. On the barnlot below the storm breaks in all its fury. The chicken fearfully scurries about hunting for shelter. She darts, with all the other chickens, into the safety of the barn were they huddle together in their misery, fearing every lightning streak and thunder bolt. As the storm rages below the eagle rides calm and majestic in the bright world above.

True as this picture is in the natural realm, it is even more true in the spiritual realm. Eagles are symbolic of a certain class of Christians. The wise man said in the book of Proverbs that among those mysteries in the universe that were too hard to understand, one was the “mystery of the eagle in the air” (Prov. 30:18-19). The symbolism of this passage points to the inexplicable potential of each and every son of God, which is like the eagle’s, which can fly higher than any other bird without once flapping a wing. Did you notice that Isaiah said that eagles and eagle saints “mount up” and not “flap up”? Eagles were not made to go flapping about in soulish exercises, unprofitable self-efforts, or wasted fleshly energy—they were created to soar high and free. Eagles learn to fly without struggling because they instinctively understand the air currents. When the right wind is blowing he lifts effortlessly into the air with a shrill scream of triumph and freedom. “But they that wait upon the Lord. . . shall mount up with wings as eagles.” Herein is one of the eagle’s secrets in being able to mount up—waiting. Those who wait upon the Lord, it is written, who trust in His moving, who respond to His promptings, who rest in His timing, who move in His purpose, will be the ones to mount up. The “mounting up” process in important and necessary to each son of God who would take his place in the heavenlies, filled with the precious mind of Christ, conformed to His wonderful image, and caught up to the Throne of God to rule and reign with Christ over all things. But it only comes to those who will wait in His presence until the glory that shines from His face changes them from the image of the earthly into the image of the heavenly. Should the eagle fail to wait for the current that lifts, he would never get off the ground. And the saint of God who does not wait for the moving of the Holy Spirit in the purposes of God will never get air borne or soar into the heavenlies. Not everyone who receives Christ as Saviour and enjoys the blessings of His grace will forsake the idols of the earth’s lowlands that stand in the temple of the heart, to pay the price to follow on to know the Lord in the heavenly places. But God has predestined those whom He hath foreknown, and has placed this instinctive and constant call within to rise to greater heights in the celestial realms above.

But not so with the chicken. If you were to search the Bible through and through you would discover that nowhere in the Word of God does the Holy Spirit applaud or honor the chicken. Sometime ago I read the following story. The writer said, “Five years ago when I was negotiating to buy our home in Mapleton, Utah, the owner gave me a tour of the property. Near the house was a pen with a four-foot fence. Inside the pen were some chickens. There was nothing on top of the pen to keep the chickens from flying out. I asked the owner if they ever flew out. ‘No,’ he answered. ‘Did you clip their wings?’ ‘No. Their wings are perfectly good.’ While I watched, one of the chickens fluttered a few feet straight up in the air, then settled back into the pen. ‘Why don’t they fly out?’ ‘Because they don’t think they can. I once had a top on the pen, but after trying a few times to fly out, they quit trying.’ ‘Do they ever get out?’ ‘Yes, one of our kids left the gate open and they walked out. But we caught them easily. They didn’t know they could fly”—end quote. Many people don’t believe they can fly beyond the invisible fences they build around themselves. They snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Jesus said, “Consider the birds of the air.” Don’t look at the birds that just eat on the ground. The chicken doesn’t fly. The eagle soars. They can rise. So can you! Ah, precious
friend of mine, I do not hesitate to tell you that YOU CAN MAKE IT INTO SONSHIP, INTO THE HEIGHTS OF GOD. YOU CAN MAKE IT! I say. God is the God of eagle wings, and you are the sons and daughters of the Most High.

Some of you know what I'm talking about. You are stuck in a rut. Your life, naturally and spiritually, just isn't going any place. Some of you are trapped and stuck, mired down on your job, in your home, in your marital relationship, in family situations, in circumstances, problems, pressures, and limitations. These have all become a restrictive fence around you, which like the chickens, you think you can't surmount. The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of life grow rampant in the lives of men and women today, choking the spiritual life of the Kingdom. The cares of this world have turned many peoples lives into a pressure cooker. The strain of everyday living is steadily growing worse because of financial problems, higher taxes, inflation, government policies, the disturbing world situation, added responsibilities, sickness, hospital bills, rebellion in the home, unemployment, etc. The pressures and problems of "this life" are too numerous to mention, we are all faced with them every day. There are those seemingly needful involvements of daily living which we cannot shirk, but when they so OVERWHELM us that we find ourselves so fragmented and frustrated that we are not able to gather ourselves together to walk in the peace, joy and victory of the Kingdom—then we need to be loosed from these things, escape from them, soar high above them. Many of God’s precious saints are so encumbered with the CARES OF THIS LIFE that prayer and waiting upon the Lord have been shoved back into some remote corner of their lives. They are utterly distracted by the responsibilities, pressures and problems of living until they are unable to serve the Lord with all their heart, mind and strength. Praise God! We find in Him a realm of freedom from all “these things”, so that whatever state we are in we can rejoice and not be bound by them or to them. There is an escaping from the cares of this life—if we remember that we are eagles, not chickens!

There is another area of limitation that is a restrictive fence around the spiritual chickens also—and that is the religious realm which can cause one to be so caught up in its programs and works that it literally is a bondage. Well do I remember former years of pastorizing churches when every weekend was crowded with a whirlwind of feverish activity, meetings, visitations, etc., that come Monday morning I was completely exhausted mentally and physically, needing another sabbath to rest and recuperate from the one I had just been through! I suppose I will make some enemies, but I must tell you the truth nonetheless. How much eager-beaver religious work is done out of a carnal desire to make good or appear successful! How many hours of prayer are wasted beseeching God to bless and prosper projects that are geared to the glorification of men! How much hard-earned money is poured out upon men who, in spite of their tear-in-the-voice appeals, nevertheless seek only to make a fair show in the flesh, building bigger and bigger castles in the sand! I have no hesitation in saying that a charismatic personality and a shrewd knowledge of human nature is ALL that any man needs to be a success in the religious circles today, including the “spirit-filled” ones. The church systems, for the most part, have accepted the monstrous heresy that noise, size, activity and bluster signify that something significant is being accomplished for God. The simplicity which is in Christ is rarely found. In its stead are programs, methods, organizations, committees, board meetings, basketball tournaments, religious splash parties followed by devotions, Sunday School picnics, puppet shows, building fund drives, business men’s banquets, revival meetings and a world more of feverish activities which occupy time, energy, and attention, but can never satisfy the deepest longings of the heart. The shallowness of the average Christian’s inner experience, the hollowness
of his worship, the immaturity of his walk, his incredible ignorance of God’s great plan and purpose, the emptiness of his word, and the servile imitation of the world which marks the religious system’s promotional methods all testify that the whole program, instead of being the divine out-raying of the Christ life, is naught but part and parcel of “the cares of this world.”

So now man WORKS... and WORKS... and WORKS... diligently pursuing multiplied religious observances, external forms, activities of all sorts, and for all his effort he is able only to produce a pitifully small harvest of reality, eeking out but a meager spiritual existence! How incredibly busy he is scratching and picking up the grub worms, insects and scraps out of the dirt of his little chicken yard! Oh! to escape religiosity that we might learn to walk with God in the Spirit. And we rejoice to see how God is causing His elect to flee this realm. And let me assure you, my brother, my sister, I have no intention of assuming the burden of paying for men’s programs, building men’s kingdoms, or joining in their efforts to save the world, when God already has a plan for the salvation of all nations which will work, while men’s efforts have failed. To hear some preachers tell it you would think that they had almost completed the job of world evangelization, and with only a few more millions of dollars, another TV network, an expanded relief program and a few more crusades the Kingdom will be here. The sad truth is, however, that the tidal wave of sin, sorrow, sickness, pain, ignorance, and death is greater in the earth in this hour than at any time since Noah entered the ark. But to remain continually bombarded by the appeal of all this activity and not become caught in its snare, is an escape that only God can work in us and maintain for us. And only “the way of the eagle” can reveal it! Consider the birds of the air. You can be like them—you can soar like an eagle! Nothing is impossible to those who mount up with wings as the eagle. Whatever it is that is weighing you down, whatever it is keeping you from soaring, it is possible to break away. The ability to soar lies within—you don’t have to go anywhere. You don’t have to tear down the chicken fence or kill the chickens, or sit on the fence and frantically flap away. What I am saying is, YOU DON’T HAVE TO CHANGE ANY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES ABOUT YOU. You can rise above them. The eagle is in you. You are the eagle. You can soar high above it all! There is a life within that transcends all the lowlands of the flesh—it will carry you high if you give yourself to it. It is the life of sonship, the power and glory and mind of the Christ within.

Many years ago Bill Britton wrote, “Chickens are symbolic of people. The only time chickens are referred to in the Bible, Jesus used them as a type of those people in Jerusalem who could not bear His message nor heed His call. They traveled in crowds, in broods, and they were earthbound. They kept their eyes upon the things of this world, scratching out a bare existence, and never lifted their heads to see Him who is from above. They ate the handouts that were cast to them, and searched greedily in the crowded barnlot for more to fill their bellies, much of it unclean, unspeakable filth. They are bound to their experience on the right and on the left by fences, and are satisfied. But not the eagle. For he has inherited a nature that cannot and will not survive in the confining capacity of the barnyard fowl. To be happy and to fulfill his purpose in life, he must be free to soar in the wide open spaces among the clouds of heaven. It seems lonely up there, for there are not many who will dare to rise to such heights, but the eagle does not care, for it is not in his nature to mingle with the multitudes or the majority. God is delivering many today from their earthbound existence, lifting them by the Holy Ghost into heavenly places in Christ. Things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. They do not fear the storm. The same persecution and tribulation that brings great travail upon a dead, backslidden church filled with earthly efforts, causes the eagle
saints to soar to heights never before attained by man since the Pattern Son set the example. ‘Fear not the storm, My little ones, for thou art not children of the storm. Look up. Lift up thy heads and rejoice, for thou art children of redemption, and thou hast inherited that heavenly nature. I have loosed the prison doors. Be thou free from thy captivity! Be not ensnared with the evil ways of this world’s systems, but learn thou the ways of thy God, and follow Him alone. Thus shalt thou rise above that which cometh upon the earth, to try them which dwell therein. And thou shalt not fear, for I am with thee, saith the Lord’”—end quote.

“The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is he earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (I Cor. 15:47-49). “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed (transformed, transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Cor. 3:17-18). “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). “Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph. 1:20). “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). “To the extent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:10-11). “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling. . . “ (Heb. 3:1) “But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly (spiritual): wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God” (Heb. 11:16). “But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22).

From these pictures we can readily see that our calling is a HEAVENLY CALLING. Let others tend the things of the earth. Let the dead bury the dead. Let the few who are called to this High Calling be about their Father’s business. WHEREFORE! “WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” As partakers in this heavenly calling let us consider Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. As our APOSTLE Jesus Christ proclaims and opens up the way before us that we may walk in the calling ordained for us. And what is that calling? TO BE PARTAKERS WITH HIM IN HIS OWN H-E-A-V-E-N-L-Y CALLING! Here are indeed great words! “Calling” here, as always in the epistles, has reference not to an invitation to go to some far-off heaven somewhere, but to a present heavenly state of being. For New Creation men, according to Col. 1:12, have already been made “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,” and our “citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20), and God hath “raised us up together, made us sit together IN THE HEAVENLIES in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). “Having therefore brethren, BOLDNESS TO ENTER INTO THE HOLIEST by the blood of Jesus. . . “ We, the Royal Priesthood, DO HAVE BOLDNESS TO ENTER IN. We need not wait, and we do not have to go to some heaven far beyond the Milky Way. This thing is taking place within us right at this time, blessed be His wonderful name! For us it is a glorious privilege to enter into this heavenly realm, into this holiest place, because Jesus Christ, our High Priest and Forerunner, has opened the way and bids us enter. Multitudes know Jesus as their Savior, Baptizer, Healer, Sanctifier and Blesser, but do you know Jesus as your Forerunner? Do you know Him as the Forerunner of the MELCHIZEDEKIAN PRIESTHOOD, the eternal and heavenly Priesthood? Now we hear the word to us and it
is that we are to come in with boldness. Come right in to the Holy of Holies. Come right in to that heavenly place where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Come right in to the presence of God. Come right in to the glory of God. Come right in to the authority and dominion of God. Come right in to that high and holy realm where only HIGH PRIESTS enter! We need not be afraid, for we have a High Priest who is now appearing in the presence of God for us, not in our place, but for us, ON OUR BEHALF, for that is the true sense of the words “for us.” This Apostle and High Priest of our profession abides in this high and exalted realm and we are to come right in.

You may stand without. You may wait for Jesus to return. You may wait for the “rapture.” You may wait for your mansion over the hill-top or your cabin in the corner of gloryland. Some dwell in the Outer Court while others tarry in the Holy Place. The Outer Court is crowded with Evangelicals and Fundamentalists. The Holy place is flooded with Pentecostals and Charismatics. But the Apostle and High Priest of our heavenly calling abides in the Most Holy Place and continues to invite us to come in. We have been standing outside and we have said to one another, “Isn’t that wonderful and glorious and mighty — that place within the veil!” Multitudes do not dare because of fear to even look into the place. They don’t know that the veil was rent, that Jesus our Forerunner has entered in for us. And the word is to come right in, even into the Holy of Holies which is in heaven itself. Sit down in the presence of the living God. Sit down with the Christ as a Priest upon His throne. For the great High Priest is there ministering, and we are to minister with Him, the Royal Priesthood, those who are made PARTAKERS OF THE HEAVENLY CALLING. If we can ever see this, if we somehow by God’s grace and the quickenings of the Holy Ghost can get ahold of it, we will not hesitate to yield ourselves unto the call of God to mount up with wings as the eagle and soar high into the heavens until we reign with Christ on high! Not in some future day, or age, or world—but here and now.

Eagles prefer the heights when they soar, and when they rest. His is a soaring spirit. The eagle is the jet plane of the bird family. It soars the highest, goes the fastest, and is superior to all other birds in this respect. You do not have to prompt the eagle to fly, once he has learned how. No need to sing a chorus twenty-five times, clap the hands, stomp the feet, in order to work up the spirit of soaring. If he cannot fly, he is in misery—he was made for altitude. He is born for the heights. And flying is just as natural as breathing. EAGLE SAINTS have their citizenship in heaven. They live in the world, but their feelings, affections, desires, aspirations, conversation and actions are above it. Their greatest impulses are upward, ever upward. They build their nests in the heights of the Mountains of God, and prefer and long to be where they are no more annoyed with the noises, mundaneness and dangers of this world order. Actually, we do not move in and out of heavenly realms at our whim. Our citizenship is in heaven, we exist constantly in the heavenlies. This is a spiritual state of constant existence, but because we are still in this flesh realm, we are not always conscious of the greater privileges of our heavenly existence. In the Kingdom of God the heavenly man is the only man—the man is Christ. “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believed not how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things. And no man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which IS IN HEAVEN’ (Jn. 3:12-14). Jesus Christ while on earth was still in the heavenlies. That is not a strange statement to an eagle saint! “He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” He had eagle’s wings—the spirit of the heavenlies. His body was on earth and His spirit joined to the heavenly Father far above all. Those that have been swallowed up by Christ gravitate around Him. His life is their life, His joys, their joys, His peace, their peace. They have
no other life. "For me to live is Christ," said Paul. Paul was an eagle saint. Paul’s life was heavenly. He was above. He would not come down.

Carl Schwing has written, “Sonship is not a message. Those who proclaim such know nothing as they ought. Sonship is not something sought after, it does not come by a decision, man did not design it, cannot offer it and cannot attain to it. Sonship is a birthright predetermined by the Father, within His Holy Courts, before there was an age! However, there is a path which leads those ‘predestined souls’ to sonship. It is a lonely path of rejection, suffering, humiliation and complete abandonment. It is the path of the eagle! It leads beyond the natural realm, the religious realm, yea, even beyond the spiritual realm, to a place of unity with Christ and His Father. In this celestial realm of unity, we begin to learn and know Christ, beyond the scriptures. Too long, we, like the Jews of old, have sought the scriptures for in them we thought we had life. But now we are becoming one with Him whom the sacred page revealed. In the stillness of the Dawn our spirits possess a freedom from all other influences... a freedom to soar into the high and holy places known only to our Father. To enter into the storehouse of the Lord and learn the secrets of His wonders, to see the mysteries of the ages, far beyond the confusion of play-church, far above the strife of the land, and higher than the yearnings of the flesh, yea, even into the light of the Most Holy Place . . . the eagles soar!”—end quote.

In questioning Job the Lord said of the eagle, “Doth the eagle mount up at thy command to make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From hence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off” (Job 39:27-29). The eagle saint has the advantage, born of altitude. "Her eyes behold afar off." She looks out to the regions beyond, to heights and depths in God. The call of God is upon her. The life of God is in her heart. There is response. There are commitments, born of heavenly life. Heaven is in control.

The saint and the Savior share the same life, fly the same heavens, have the same destiny. Heavenly bounty fills all. Earth’s splendors are fading. Earth’s treasures hold nothing for him any more. Heavenly investments are sure. Eternal values are in view. "Her eyes behold afar off." Fear does not plague the eagle saint. "She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock." The rock is Christ. Her security is in the rock. She draws her life from above. Earth’s hopes must fade. They are made of poor stuff. The saints of all ages have known this. The Lord has taught them, in their hearts. The Lord cuts His elect saints off from the world, and the systems of the flesh, but in the same stroke, He grafts them on to heaven. They are to live in their new found life. The saints have found a new blood stream that will not be affected by death. This new life flows out of the very heart of God, like a river forever. It courses through the veins of the inner man, bringing life where ere it goes.

The heavenly life makes heaven. The life of God is heavenly life. The believer who says that should his body die, he will be dead like a dog, unconscious and non-existent, knows not that he has been born from above. The born again one has life from above. The impact of this new heavenly life determines everything. This life governs the universe, and nullifies the kingdom of darkness. Satan is never in his stride, in the presence of heavenly life. This is raptured life, the life from above. Webster defines rapture as: “Extreme pleasure or delight, ecstasy.” The eagle saint has raptured life, the joyful life, the glorious life, the satisfying life—he is not waiting for a "rapture" to come. Every step that the Lord Jesus took on earth was a raptured step. Every word that He used was a
raptured word. Every work that He did was a raptured work. The life of Jesus Christ was a raptured life. He was caught up all the time. That's what gave Him the heavenly touch, enabled Him to hear the heavenly voice of His heavenly Father within. That's what made Him what He was—the heavenly man. The eagle saint does not need death, or a miracle, or a meeting, to get him on the wing. He is in the heavenlies all the time. That's all the life he knows. He shares with the raptured Christ, the heavenly life. The eagle saint knows extreme pleasure, ecstasy, heavenly delight. Those that are born from above move in the orbit of above life. The problem is that there is a temporary outer life, a physical life that confuses many—a make believe, illusion, a mist that the wind bloweth away. The earth bound life is very strong for expression. This fallen life wants an outlet. It is very aggressive and demanding. The heavenly life is meek and lowly and humble in spirit. The earthly life will force its way and scheme to gain its point. The heavenly life is not so, but will take a back seat and wait the Lord's appointed time. "They that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as the eagle." Saints are laboring with a double life—the old life and the new in the same vessel. The low grade life must be given over to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. The milk and honey of Canaan is the heavenly life of the Lord in the saints. The newest cars, the finest homes, the most expensive clothing, the most beautiful furniture, the best paying jobs, and the largest bank accounts do not add up to heavenly life. "For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. But seek ye first the Kingdom (realm) of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:32-33). 'Things' are not life. Life is not things. Heavenly life has a monopoly on the needs of the human heart and spirit. Abundant life has nothing to do with physical health or longevity or with financial prosperity, material blessing, or any other earthly thing. There is much religious activity that does not spring from heavenly life. The counterfeit life is also very religious. The eagle saint lives in the heavenlies in "the sweet here and now"; he is not waiting for something better in "the sweet bye and bye." The heavenlies is no higher than the floor beneath your feet. Life in the spirit is life in the heavenlies. Jesus carried the heavenlies all the way to Calvary. Before Pilot and Herod, Christ was never fearful or upset. The heavenly life was in control, the life that stood up against Calvary and the stone-sealed tomb, and overflowed. Heavenly life was governing Him from within, and because He had heavenly life within He could say, "I have power to lay My life down, and I have power to take it up again."

The heart of man is on a quest for a place where his heart is at rest and where there is life, peace, and contentment—the place called heaven. The best word to describe heaven is "glory," and glory has been defined by one as: "Like it ought to be." Those that know glory are in glory. They are in a state, "Like it ought to be." They are in Christ and fashioned in His likeness. They have tasted of heaven, for they have tasted of the heavenly One, and their hearts, have been ravished. Christ is heaven, and heaven is Christ known and experienced in a living way. Our measure of Christ is our measure of heaven. The heart filled with God is full of heaven. The more of Jesus Christ that is wrought in the saints by the Holy Ghost, the more heaven is come to earth. Heaven is as large as the universe and as small as the human heart. Heaven is both macrocosm and microcosm. There is room enough in man to contain the universe (black holes are proof of that), and it takes the universe to contain man—the man Christ Jesus and His body the church, the One New Man.

Once heaven seemed a far-off place,
Till Jesus showed His smiling face;
Now it is here within my soul,
'Twill be while endless ages roll!
O hallelujah, yes ‘tis heaven,
“Tis heaven to know the Son that’s given;
O’er land or sea, what matter where,
Where Jesus is, ‘tis heaven there!

Learn to breathe the ozone of heaven—the rare, crisp, pure air of the heavenlies, that is sweet to the nostrils and life to the lungs and body. Mountain air is good. There is too much grime and smog in this low altitude. There are so many respiratory problems. There is so much low living and difficult breathing. The environment is wrong. It is good medicine to meet a saint that is above—a saint with eagle wings. They quicken and refresh. Spend time with those that live above. You, too, will learn how to stay above. Remember that the young eagles have to be taught to fly. If they refuse to learn they are destroyed. Learn to live the heavenly life if you would save your life. You may not be able to stand the strong winds of the upper altitude, but go as high as you can and stay as long as you can. Get away from the depressing order of the valleys. Learn to live in your habitat—your elements. Refuse to be embroiled in confusion and strife. There is nothing to gain. You may win the argument and lose the victory. Gossip—no profit! Tidbits of cheap news—no profit! We should not be glorying in other’s shame. If the other fellow falls out of the heavenlies, just do not follow him down to chew on his flesh. If you stay in the heavenlies, you will help draw him back. The wings of the spirit are eagle wings. The Holy Spirit of God gives you these wings. Learn how to use them. “Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” Abide in your true element. Choose to abide. You need, rich, healthy blood if you are going to fly. Heavenly vitamins and minerals—the Word of God, spiritual conversation, prayer, praise, pure thoughts and holy living. From what table are you eating? From what well do you drink? Where do you get your food supplements? Jesus said, “He that eateth not My flesh and drinketh not My blood, hath no life in him.” Feed upon Him. He is food to thy hungry heart, drink to thirsty spirit, and strength for flight in the heavens. This king of the air (the eagle) eats only live meat. You and I can scan the heights too, if we eat only live meat, the living word. We are what the life in us makes us. When the heavenly flesh of Christ becomes our life, life is no longer just an existence, or a religious exercise, it is heaven in manifestation, God in operation. As the peace of God settles down within man, man BECOMES THE MILLENIUM—the day of the Lord!

A TIME TO SOLO

The sons of God must ascend to their heavenly environment. Here is the place for which they were made, the place that was made for them. They must be drawn above—forced above—driven above. Drastic means must be used if necessary. How can we get young saints out of Egypt and into Canaan—the heavenlies? They still long for the flesh pots of Egypt. They still love the comfort of the nest—the church realm with all its meetings, activities, ministries, established creeds, security and mothering.

Picture with me a little eaglet snuggled cozily in a down-filled nest high in the mountain upon the crag of a rock. Everything is just beautiful; the parents sally forth daily and bring back choice tidbits for that ravenous young appetite. During the cold mountain nights the mother eagle settles over the nest and the eaglet snuggles securely under those warm, soft wings. In its spiritual application, this little fellow is newly born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit. He has learned about blessing, forgiveness, joy, gifts, healing, provision, and all the benefits of being a child of God. Hallelujah! Here life is wonderful and being a Christian sure makes life easy—no more problems or lack! Should any problem arise the
pastor or the church will promptly take care of it. What provision! What security! What a wonderful arrangement! The problem is just this—the young eaglet grows too fond of its nest and everything being done for it. This must not be. He must be roused up and trained to face the rough world. He must learn to fly. He must grow up. He must become strong and mature. He must learn to soar and discover His identity and being in the heights. He must fulfill his destiny.

How can we teach the young eagle saints to take their position in the heavenlies? How can we force them up if necessary? If they will not ascend, then what? Will the Lord use drastic means? He built that trait into mother eagle. That is the way eagles meet the situation. If the young will not fly, they are destroyed. And yet—this rarely happens. One remarkable characteristic of the eagle is its tenderness toward its young. No member of the bird family is more gentle and attentive in watching over its young. It builds its nest high up on a mountain crag. Both parents bring food to the little eaglets (the spirit and the word), and when they teach them to fly, both parents are involved in the training program (the right and the left hand of God). Deuteronomy 32:11 tells us how the young eagle gets his introduction to the practice of soaring in the heavens. Let the eagle saints listen carefully. It says that the mother eagle “stirreth up her nest,” “fluttereth over her young,” “spreadeth abroad her wings,” and “beareth them on her wings.” The time has come for the young eagle to learn to fly and strike out on his own—but he does not want to fly, he is having it too easy up there in that nest. He is given breakfast each morning in bed! He is nurtured and protected by others! All he has to do is warm the pew and watch the show! Why should he want to leave? The mother eagle knows that it is time to start flying. But looking down from the dizzy heights of the mountain peak, he is not ready to begin such a new and dangerous enterprise. He has “not passed this way before” and is reluctant to make a move. So the mother eagle begins to “stir up the nest.” She grabs a piece of the nest and drops it over the side of the cliff. Then she returns for another chunk, and another, and another. Finally all the down that made Junior feel so secure is at the bottom of the canyon. He is forced to sit on nothing but rough sticks with jagged ends. This is rough treatment, completely unexpected, and not understood by the eaglet. But there is a job to be done. It may seem blunt and cruel, but the lesson must be learned. She then takes the little one in her powerful beak and nudges him toward the edge of the ledge. The little fellow wonders what is happening now. The actions of his mother completely mystify him. His little heart is beating faster and faster, and as he is pushed closer to the edge he thinks, No, it can’t be! Mother wouldn’t do this to me! But she does. She takes him to the edge of the cliff. It is a long, long way down. Suddenly she pushes him over!

Bill Britton eloquently wrote about this amazing phenomenon in his book EAGLE SAINTS ARISE: “Oh, saints of God, does it seem that God is dealing harshly with you? Is he tearing up your soft, comfortable nest? Does the place in God that once met such need in your life now seem rough, tight, and uncomfortable? What is happening? The Lord is getting ready to push you off into heights you never dreamed of. Do the jagged edges of that which once was such comfort to you now stab you with grief and pain? Have you been wondering what the trouble was, and perhaps doubt that you were ever in the will of God? Doubt no longer, but expect in faith for the next great work of God to come forth in your life. It is not the wrath of God trying to destroy you. It is the love and wisdom of our God making you willing to take another big step in the plan and purpose of God for His church. We, by nature, love security. So the Lord has to make us utterly sick of our ‘nest’ in order to make us willing to launch out into pioneer spiritual journeys in the heavenlies”—end quote. The mother does not push the young eagle over the cliff to
destroy him. He screams with terror as he tumbles through the air—but instinctively his wings stretch out in an effort to catch the air. Down, down, down he falls as untried wings fail to function sufficiently to hold him up. But mother watches that little fellow as he falls and clumsily flaps his wings. When it appears that all hope is lost and he is about to be dashed on the canyon floor, she swoops underneath him and her mighty wings bear him up to the safety of the ledge from which he fell. “Praise God,” he shouts within, “what a relief!” Just as he is getting over his dizziness and decides that all is well, the bottom drops out again. The process starts all over and continues until eventually the little fellow begins to fly as she has shown him. Each time she flies a little farther and each experience brings a little more mastery of his wings. He becomes stronger and stronger, until one day he spreads those wings and rather than flapping discovers how to catch the currents of air and finds himself rising up and up, riding the mighty winds far above his ledge home and the nest that confined him. No longer a fledgling begging for tidbits, he is now one of the eagles—he is become a king!

Again I would share from the keen insight of Bill Britton on this beautiful theme of the eagle. “Those who rule with Christ must rule from the heavens. For that is where the throne is. Many sing ‘I’ll fly away...’, and dream of a rapture by and by that will carry them from this sin cursed earth, past the moon and into the wild blue heavens to some geographical spot in this physical universe to a big supper all set and loaded with goodies for them to eat. And they know nothing of the purposes of God for His eagle saints who will actually be caught up to the throne to rule and reign. But the time is at hand. And the Spirit is unfolding and revealing hidden secrets from His Word to those who are called to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. So He is teaching us to move in heavenly places. And sometimes it is terrifying. But His glorious Presence is there, comforting, directing and reassuring. Praise God!

“The chicken yard is very confining. You can go so far, and no farther. The Plymouth Rocks stay in the Plymouth Rocks pens, and the Rhode Island Reds remain in their allotted place. It would be scandalous if Farmer Brown’s hens slipped over to Farmer Jones and ate his corn, or laid their eggs in the wrong place. It doesn’t matter if you are in the Methodist pen, or Baptist, or Pentecostal, or whatever. You may cackle and crow about the advantages in your particular chicken yard over the others, but just be sure and remain within your confines. Not so the eagles! No chicken yard could hold him. He can only live and find happiness in the freedom of the uncovered and uncharted heavens. There is lots of room where the eagles gather. Unlimited revelation. Truth flows like a mighty River. No creeds, bylaws, or static statement of beliefs to separate the body of Christ. Sweet fellowship with all who dwell in this place, and no divisive man-made boundaries exist. The dull monotonous routine of a ‘chicken yard’ religious system is forever a thing of the past for those who rise on wings of eagles into this place in God. What a variety of glorious treasures in the Holy Ghost there is for those who dare to believe and who ‘are called according to His purposes’”—end quote.

Israel was noted for two kinds of eagles in the Bible days—the golden eagle and the imperial eagle. The golden eagle bespeaks of us as partakers of the divine nature and the imperial eagle bespeaks of us as kings. The two go hand in hand, for none is qualified to move in the power of the Kingdom of God until he has first been possessed of the righteousness of the Kingdom. Many ministries have fallen because they sought Kingdom power apart from Kingdom righteousness. But no son will ascend the throne until he has been perfected in the character of God. The golden eagle and the imperial eagle will fly together or they will not fly at all. Our divine right as sons of God is to reign
as Monarchs—and this heavenly dominion begins right within our own lives. The development of faith, rest, and triumph which lifts us above earth’s raging storms, is very precious. The circumstances that frustrate, perplex and defeat the world become launching pads to new heights in God. All that would come against us to discourage, defeat, or destroy, becomes the snake which an eagle rips open with one slash of his mighty talons or drops from dizzy heights to be crushed on the rocks below. This is our inheritance!

Of the eagle the Lord said, “Her eyes behold afar off” (Job 39:29). The eagle is noted for great vision. They are great watchers, with far-sighted vision. And so are eagle saints. The eye is the figure of light and illumination and it is as we know the truth and walk in it that we are purified to see God; for only the pure in heart see God. They see the plan and purpose of God beyond the traditions and superstitions of religion. To them the treasure house of wisdom and knowledge and spiritual understanding is opened. The deep mysteries, the sacred secrets of divine wisdom are unlocked within as the Lord reveals His will, teaches them His ways, and show unto them His glory. They can believe for things in God that others, whose eyes are riveted to the things of earth, cannot see or even conceive of. There is keen vision—knowledge and understanding of the true nature of all things—with the eagle saints. They are the pioneers of faith that break through into new realms in God. And because of their sharp vision, it is difficult to surprise or deceive them. The enemy cannot penetrate their defenses. Jesus is the perfect example and pattern. No one ever deceived Him with smooth words or flattery. No pious hypocrite ever survived under the piercing gaze of the Christ of God. Jesus knew what was in man. Even one of His own apostles was filled with the devil and moved to betray Him, but Jesus was not deceived or taken by surprise. No matter that he was one of the leaders, and cast out devils in Jesus’ name! His innermost thoughts and the secret intents of his heart were laid bare in the sight of that great Captain of the Eagle Saints. One of the marks of true sonship is the ability to see the true nature of all things and to discern the hidden spiritual source of all outward manifestations.

ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

There is still much that could be said about the eagle saints, but I will close this message with one more word. Aquila—The Eagle—in the Sign of Capricornus is pictured as a wounded or falling eagle. The eagle in this constellation is consistent with what we have noted in the whole Sign of Capricornus. The slain goat of the sin-offering is followed by the arrow of God’s judgment and the pierced or falling eagle. First and foremost, our Lord Jesus Christ is that royal eagle, flying high; the One who is at the right hand of God; who thought it not robbery to be equal with God; that glorious One, the Son of God from on high. Yet, that One humbled Himself and was pierced by the arrow of God’s judgment, and is seen here plummeting to the ground, the One who was so high descending so low that we might be raised up into His heights.

If we could only begin to fathom what this meant! Being in the form of God and existing in the glory of His Father, He could have stayed there, He was the Word of God, He was Divine; but to leave the glory above to come down to this sin-cursed earth, this death-ridden planet, with all its sin, suffering and evil, was taking a giant step down. He was not spared the lowliest kind of birth. Jesus was not born to wealth, comfort or fame. Into the arms of a gentle peasant girl He came, in a smelly stable with oxen and donkeys, yonder in a little land despised by the world, whose people were the helpless subjects of a foreign power. If one has walked in Bethlehem and walked in Rome, he surely must be
impressed by the contrast. And for reasons good enough. He came to found an Empire of which Rome, with her pride, and tyranny, could never be the symbol. He came to win an allegiance that no legions in shining armor could ever compel. That Empire is the Empire of Love and that allegiance the response that men can make to that which they know to be Love and which, because it is Love, commands their bodies by winning their hearts. So down this costly route of unsparing Love Jesus came. His birth-chamber a barn, His cradle a feeding-trough, and His lot in life cast among the poor. Two thousand years ago God wrapped a human form around His dear heart and appeared among the sons of men that He might get a closer look at this tragic thing that was making havoc of man and earth. He looked into the face of sin’s dark mystery, He gazed without any veil into the awful abyss of sin, sorrow, and death. It was the cry of the wounded eagle, outraged yet outreaching, as He fell down, down, down from the heights of glory to get beneath the lowest depth to which any soul can sink.

The first thirty years of His life we know little about, but it was through these years that He suffered, being tempted and tested. He had to learn obedience and be perfect as a man before He could start His ministry, and go to the cross. The Bible tells us little of those thirty years; only about His birth and when He talked with the leaders when He was twelve years old, in the Temple. But as a man, a human being, He lived through His childhood years, with all its problems and frustrations. He lived through the teen years, and had all the problems of growing up, and all the temptations any teenager has to face. He knows all about them. He went through His twenties the same way, and I am sure that during these years also He suffered through temptations. He was tempted in all points like we are, so He is able to succor those being tempted. “For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted” (Heb. 2:18). He knows all about it, for He suffered through it. He came down into this evil world unknown and unheralded, the masses of earth knew not that He had come during the years of His earthly walk. And those to whom He came did not want Him, “He came to His own, and His own received Him not” (Jn. 1:11). It is bad enough when strangers refuse to have anything to do with you; but when your own people turn you down and reject and cast you out, the pain runs deep. To be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be found in fashion as a man, to empty Himself, to strip Himself of all His former glory, must have been a dreadful experience. I doubt that we can begin to comprehend even minutely, the price He paid when He humbled Himself to fall into this dark world as the pierced eagle. Now He shares a common humanity with us. He became a man, not only to die on the cross for our sins, but after having redeemed us, to become the Captain of our salvation and lead man into the fullness of the divine glory. He became the falling eagle to lift us up high into His glorious realm, praise His name!

Consider the deaths to which He fell! At the last the deepest of all sorrows crushed on Jesus. “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!” Jesus then drank the cup He had asked to have removed. He then sounded the depths of death. The Father’s face was hidden from Him; He had gone as far as human suffering could go. Sin and death had veiled the Father’s love from Him. Sin could go no farther in its brutal demands than just that. Yet none of this was unexpected. The Bible tells of One who was to suffer. In the book of Psalms, you see the cross casting its shadow down the ages. There Jesus’ death in amazing outline is vividly pictured. Read in the light of prophecy, who can ever forget the twenty-second Psalm? “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” “A worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him seeing that He delighted in Him.”
They gazed upon Me with their mouths.” “Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death.” “They pierced My hands and My feet.” “They part My garments among them and cast lots for My vesture.” The strangest thing of all is that Christ’s death by crucifixion is pictured here and, yet, in David’s time, death by the cross was an unknown way of sending a soul out of this world. It was left to the Romans, not the Jews, to invent that horrid method of capital punishment. The cross, the gambling, the cries, the insolence of the crowd, the physical and soul suffering of Jesus, are all pictured in the twenty-second Psalm. With gentle hands and sympathetic heart, we turn to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. If the twenty-second Psalm tells us of the cross, Isaiah fifty-three gives the reason for it. Seven long centuries before Jesus was born, in this fruitful chapter of Isaiah, we have Jesus’ suffering, death, burial, and resurrection foretold and the why of it all. “He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” “He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.” “He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death.” “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; HE hath put Him to grief; when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days.” What a description of what actually happened, told in detail hundreds of years before it ever happened. Surely it bears divine evidence in the very fulfillment of the validity and truth that the suffering One was the Son of God, the mighty One dwelling here on earth to save and restore, to bear us up on eagle’s wings into the glory of God.

The following words from the pen of the late George Wylie graphically express the deep and precious meaning of Aquila—the Sign of the wounded and falling eagle. He wrote: “But this is not all, this is not the end of the story, not by any means—there is something more wonderful to come. A few years ago I was reading from John chapter twenty, and I read something that thrilled my heart, making me shout for joy as the significance of it dawned on my understanding. I could hardly believe it, but oh how it thrilled me through and through. It is the account of the time when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where the body of Jesus had been laid, and discovered it was not there, and she wept. When she looked into the tomb where His body had been, and saw two messengers sitting there, one of them said to her, ‘Woman, why weepest thou?’ She said unto them, ‘Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.’ Poor Mary, the One she loves so much, she wanted to be close to Him, even if it was only His dead body. So she turned away from the tomb with her eyes full of tears, and saw someone standing outside, and he spoke to her and said, “Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?” She thinking he was the gardener, said, ‘Sir, if you have borne Him hence, tell me where thou has laid Him, and I will take Him away.’ Then Jesus spoke her name. He was just a blur to her as she looked at Him through her tear filled eyes, but when she heard that Voice speaking her name—she had heard it many times before, and it was the Voice of the One she loved, and when she heard it she turned to Him and said, Rabboni, which meant, My Master.

“I don’t know what she was about to do, whether she was going to run to Him and throw her arms around Him, or just kneel down and kiss His feet; but I imagine she was filled with joy and beside herself. But Jesus said, ‘Don’t touch Me; for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God’ (Jn. 20:11-17). How my heart thrilled when I read these words. I pray the Holy Spirit will make them as real to you as He did to me. He didn’t say, ‘Go to My disciples,’ nor did He say, ‘Go to My servants.’ Nor, ‘Go to My friends.’ No! This time it was something altogether different, something far more intimate; a new relationship with Him. He said, ‘Go to My brothers.’ He was no longer
their Teacher; He was no longer their Master; no longer just a Friend; He was something more than that. Yes, He was still their Master and Lord, but He was something more—He was their brother. He said, ‘I ascend to My Father, and to YOUR FATHER, and to My God, and YOUR GOD.’ He was one of them. He is one of us. He wasn’t going to ascend just to His Father, but to their Father, and to our Father, and to our God as well as His God. I pray you can see this in the true sense of its meaning, and that it will thrill your heart as it did mine. He wasn’t going to ascend to God to present Himself as merely our Lord and Saviour, which He is, but He ascended as our BROTHER, as human being; the firstfruits of the human race. He represents us there at the right hand of the Majesty on High. He is one of us, one who has gone all the way through to the throne of God, the first man to do so. It is wonderful to think of Him ascending to the throne of God as our Lord and Saviour, one who is so far above and beyond us; but when we realize that it is our brother who is up there, and He has gone before to open up the way, how much greater is our assurance that we will get there also. There is a wonderful scripture found in Rom. 8:28-29. ‘Now we know that for those that love God He makes all things work together for good, for those who are called according to the Divine purpose. Those He has foreknown He has also predestined to share the likeness of His Son, that He might be the eldest in a vast family of brothers’ (Weymouth translation). Oh yes, we all belong to one family of many brothers, we are all brothers, and He is one of us, our elder brother.

“Before the eternal Logos left the glory above He was God. When He became man He stripped Himself of His Deity, to become a human being. After His resurrection and He had returned to His Father above, He did not put off His humanity that He had put on, He remained still a human being, still a man. But I want you to notice something that He prayed for before He left this earthly scene. In John 17, when He was praying to the Father, He asked to have the glory restored to Him that He had with the Father before the kosmos was. I draw your attention to His words, and want you to meditate on them. ‘And now O Father, glorify Thou Me, with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the kosmos was.’ He was asking to be glorified with the glory He had stripped Himself of, when He became a man. I want you to notice these words, ‘Glorify Thou Me WITH THINE OWN SELF.’ He was asking to be clothed with God, to be enveloped with Deity again, to be completely swallowed up and filled with all fullness of God. He didn’t shed His humanity, but He was going to put on the human being clothed with God, with the fullness of the glory of DIVINE BEING. He is no longer God’s Divine Son, nor is He still God’s human Son; He is now God’s DIVINE HUMAN SON, truly a GOD-MAN. This is the New Creation, not God and not man, but GOD-MAN. This is God’s man. This is God’s kind of man. This is the kind of man God purposed from the beginning when He said, ‘Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness.’ And what our elder brother is now, we are destined to become. We too are to become just like Him. WE too are to be filled with all the fullness of God. ‘That you may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that YE MIGHT BE FILLED WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD’ (Eph. 3:18). We are partakers of the divine nature, the personality of the eternal, to be clothed and swallowed up into the divine, to be glorified with the divine personality as Jesus, our brother, has been”—end quote.

Truly it is IN HIM, in His ascension, that we have power to ascend into the Mountain of the Lord. The victorious life of sonship is a matter of ascendancy. It has to do with getting above, and staying above. It is a matter of altitude. The sons have eagle wings. Man was made for that. He was made for altitude. He was made for ascendancy. He was made to be above and not beneath. This is why humanity in the lowlands is
continually wretched and miserable, always searching and seeking for some reality beyond and above. If you want to stay out of trouble, rise up into the holy heights of God and don't come down. If you find yourself in trouble, then you know you have come down. You can be beset on every hand by problems and pressures and still not be in trouble. No problem is a problem unless it is a problems to you. No pressure has any power until you allow it to press you. Christ is above it all. The saints are in Him. The saints are above. Stay where you are. Stay with your life. Stay with the real you. Stay with that inner man who is risen with Christ at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1). Stay above. Defeat is to come down. You must not come down. Your position is in Christ far above all. Christ came down so that you and I can go up. Hallelujah! He is the Eagle of eagles, and we are the body of the Eagle. He descended to us that we might ascend in Him.
Chapter 31
Capricornus-The Goat
(continued)

The third, and final, constellation in the house of Capricornus is a lovely little cluster of stars named DELPHINUS, or THE DOLPHIN. It is always pictured as a great fish full of life, vigorously leaping upward, out of the water. In contrast to the dying goat, it conveys the idea of springing up again out of the bondage of death. This is the filling of the picture and the completion of the whole truth as set forth in the Sign of Capricornus. First and foremost our Lord Jesus Christ came as our sin-offering, taking upon Himself our humanity with all its sin, weakness, sorrow, limitation and death. We see, however, that He was not to be left there, but, rather, He overcame temptation, He overcame sin, He overcame the flesh, He overcame the world, He overcame the devil, and He overcame death, rising up again wondrously into the heights of glory from whence He came. The dolphin is notorious for leaping forth out of the waves, breaking the surface and rising majestically into the air. So Christ—suddenly emerges from the waves of death as the almighty Conqueror of sin, death, and the grave by rising again! But He is merely the principal Fish of a vast multitude of fishes. Here again Jesus is identified with His people—His elect saints. Unto these chosen ones He speaks the precious and powerful promise: "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). He died to bring forth a living body, a body represented by a great school of dolphins, all of whom break forth out of the sea of humanity, leaping majestically into the air—viewing that higher world of the spirit to which they are apprehended.

THE OVERCOMER

The principle of the dolphin is the principle of overcoming. The reason so many people fail to attain to great heights in the Spirit is because they are unable to see God’s purpose, and therefore they have no particular incentive to seek the great heights that are in Him. So many Christians are far too taken up with carnal ideas and childish notions about mansions and harps and sitting on clouds eating pork chops with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in, to be able to grasp the true purposes of God! There are certain basic principles of the Kingdom of God that must be a part of the frame of mind and the experience of all who press forward into sonship to God. We must learn to think like God. We must begin to RULE WITH CHRIST IN THIS LIFE. Too many saints are weak, frustrated and defeated. May the dynamite of God’s Spirit blow us all out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy and triumph of His Kingdom. "Strength yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armour of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Wherefore put on the complete armour of God, so that you may be
able to stand your ground in the evil day, and, having fought to the end, TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD" (Eph. 6:10-14), Weymouth).

We are called to reign with Christ from the highest heaven. Such all-embracing majesty is far too vast for my feeble understanding, yet I know by the Spirit that the body of Christ is in practical preparation for the explicit purpose of UNIVERSAL DOMINION. But how can a man rule over principalities and powers and universes if he is unable to rule his own spirit? "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). The awful betrayal, trial, mockery, beating, and crucifixion of Jesus is the most shining example. It is difficult to imagine any humiliation more bitter than that. It is the worst indignity that anyone can be called upon to endure. Few have ever had to bear it. Never was dishonor less deserved, never was dishonor so bravely borne. Through that fierce and heated hour our Lord bore Himself with quiet dignity. Others were convulsed with uncontrolled passion, He alone was calm and self-possessed. His victory over Himself was greater than His victory over His enemies. In such experiences of provocation, truly, "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city". God is a God of principle. He does not do anything by chance. It is my deep conviction that what happens in your life and mine is a result of the use or abuse of the principles of the Kingdom of God. Learn this, beloved, and you will know one of the fundamental principles of reigning with Christ: OUR AUTHORITY IS OVER SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS F-I-R-S-T-L-Y I-N O-U-R-S-E-L-V-E-S! "To him that overcometh will I grant (consequentially) to sit with Me in My throne." (Rev. 3:21)

You can never rule anything until you first overcome it within yourself. To "overcome" means TO COME UP OVER THAT WHICH IS OVER YOU. The term implies the existence of obstacles in the pathway of the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God. When, within yourself, you rise up above the circumstance, the problem, so that it no longer controls or harasses you, you are then ready to begin to control it, to no longer be the victim of circumstances, but the master of them. Come up over what the religious systems have fed you. Come up over your own pride and inherent weaknesses. Come up over your desire to build a reputation for your name. Come up over the myriad pressures from within and without. Come up over the world of confusion and turmoil about you. You are called to be an OVER-COMER. Come over that wall! Come over into the Kingdom of God and a realm of complete victory. If we cannot come out victoriously over ourselves and over the little temptations and frustrations here, how can the Lord trust us to reign over that which is without? What kind of warriors would we make? How much could He depend upon us? He will give us the place for which we are prepared and qualified; we must set our faces to be overcomers if we are to sit with Him upon His throne and reign with Him.

As sons of the Most High, we have access to the same strength that enabled Jesus to live an overcoming life—and to conquer even death. He has given to us that same authority and power that gave Him victory over sin, death, hell and the grave. Have you ever wondered what would happen if Jesus would come and transfer places with you? If suddenly He would come to dwell in your body. I have often wondered what He would do if He had my circumstances, my weaknesses, my lusts, my pressures, my problems. If the Master came to me and said, "Move over, I am coming to live in your house for a season," I do not doubt that in a short period He would have all my problems straightened out and all of my weakness and turmoil under control. He would overcome all of the things that I struggle with. But the wonderful truth is, my beloved, HE HAS COME! HE DOES LIVE IN MY BODY! "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet
not I, but Christ liveth in me. . ." (Gal. 2:20). "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). The problem lies in the fact that we fail to yield to Him totally.

I do not believe that any man can experience the victory of Christ except WHERE HE IS. I do not want to distress any soul, but you must know Him where He is. I have union with Christ where He is, in the higher than all heavens. You cannot live in the reality of overcoming if you have not gotten into that region of calm. Why talk of coming up over that which is over me if I do not do it in union with the resurrected and ascended Christ? Practically we have to learn what the frigate bird does. When a storm comes on it gets above the region of storms, above the clouds, where there is none, and there it stays even for days until the storm is over. I am placed beyond the reach of storms; I am a frigate bird, for I am with Christ in a scene where there is no storm and no clouds. I am united to an ascended Christ. The Lord says, "The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them." A person might say, I cannot get this now. I answer, I belong to the glory now; I possess Him now in glory, and I am changed into the same image by the Spirit. I belong to the glory. This is where we fully come up over all that is over us. There is a beautiful promise to the elect of God in Rom. 16:20. "And the God of peace will soon bruise satan under your feet." Stronger words than these are not to be found! Greater words than these do not exist! The greatest and best thing of all about these words is that they are true. If satan is bruised under your feet, dear reader, it does not mean that he no longer exists. It does not mean that the negative realm is destroyed and has no more power to mislead, damage, or dominate. That satan is crushed under your feet signifies that you have risen up above him, gained the mastery over him, assumed the authority of the Christ within. When this becomes a personal life-giving light in the very depth of your being, then sin and satan and darkness and death has lost its power over you. He still exists—under your feet! Crushed under your feet! It is Christ in you who does the crushing. And He does it as you yield fully to the victory HE IS within you.

A pastor by the name of Barnhouse at one time met a member of his congregation and asked him how he was. The member responded, "Well, pretty good under the circumstances." Barnhouse turned sharply and said, "What do you mean under the circumstances? What are you doing under the circumstances? Don't you know that you are seated with Christ in the heavenlies—way above the circumstances? What are you doing down there?" The man was obviously quite startled. And yet, a great truth is there for us to consider. I am reminded of the story I read once of Spurgeon, the great preacher of another day from London. He was very discouraged at one time in his ministry. He paid a visit to one of the elders with him in the church, who was a farmer. He shared his struggles with this supportive elder. When he had finished the farmer said, "Look, pastor, do you see what that cow is doing?" Spurgeon looked out over the lush English field. A cow was standing by one of the picturesque stone walls that crisscrossed the countryside. Spurgeon answered, "Well, he's looking over the wall." And then the farmer asked, "Why is he looking over the wall?" The pastor replied, "I don't know." "He's looking over the wall, because he can't see through it." There will be times when you won't be able to see your way through a difficult experience. When that happens, stop trying to look through and begin to look over! There is always a way out of every weakness, problem or circumstance. The way out is always OVER! There is also the story of the stubborn old Chinese man who had a little shop. One day, a developer bought up all the other shops, but this little old man in the middle didn't want to sell, He wanted to keep his shop just the way it was. The developer threatened him, "If you don't let us buy you out,
we'll squeeze you out." So they bulldozed everything on each side of him and built two huge, modern department stores, filled them with the best merchandise, and hung the sign across the front, GRAND OPENING. The little Chinese man didn't let these huge department stores overwhelm him. He had a special sign painted and hung it across his store. In big bold letters it said: MAIN ENTRANCE. Ah, there IS a way to come up over that which is over you! The wisdom of God will show you the way.

When God gets ready to assume His rightful place in the universe again, He will say, "I have a people here who has been tested." How can we rule in the Kingdom of God unless we are tested first? How can God trust us to rule or to have dominion over the universe if He can't trust us with our own families. If God cannot trust us with ten dollars, how could He trust us with the wealth of the nations and the forces of the cosmos? Have you met the kind of person who can never keep a steady job? The first day that something goes wrong, they want to quit and look for another job. And usually the thing that went wrong was that the boss expected his money's worth! They might complain about the working conditions, but most folk simply want to complain about the work. The carnal mind is lazy. It doesn't want to work or exert itself. It is too slothful to OVERCOME! This is the kind of person who is unstable as water (Gen. 49:4). I do not hesitate to tell you that such cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Man's first instinct under pressure is to run, to extricate himself from the situation. When we run from the problem immediately we FLUNK THE TEST. When we fail to overcome IN the problem, our character in that area is left weak, undisciplined, and undeveloped. Oftimes, so they can appear "spiritual," men divorce their wives, wives divorce their husbands, parents abandon their children, people move from place to place, from job to job, from church to church. Often people pray like this: "Lord, deliver me from this job where everyone is filthy and the boss so hateful; give me a job with the Full Gospel Business Men where everyone is spiritual and praises God and speaks in tongues!" A prayer like this reflects a view of the world which is not uncommon among God's people. In this view, since the world is so unclean, it ought to be avoided as much as possible. Certain legitimate occupations are thought to be so hopelessly corrupt as to be shunned at all costs. For that matter, just about any ordinary job in the world would appear to be tainted. God's name, if used at all, is used in profanity. Co-workers drink too much at office parties. They tell obscene stories and circulate pornographic pictures. Cheating, lying, and stealing are commonplace. Overtly or covertly the men sexually harass the women workers. Gossip runs rampant, and deep-seated hostilities are cloaked with phony smiles. Selfish ambition and the love of money spur men to scratch and scramble over one another to reach the top. All this and more can be found in the typical workplace.

On the other hand, people who work in companies owned and operated by "brethren" are expected to live above all this. Working elbow-to-elbow with believers appears so clean and wholesome and spiritual in comparison to working in an ungodly environment! Ah, we seek an "environment" that is "conducive" to our "spirituality," little realizing that in that environment where all is so beautiful and harmonious we only appear to be spiritual because there is nothing to cross us, nothing to tempt us, nothing hostile, no adversities, no inconveniences, in short, NOTHING TO OVERCOME! You can run from the problem, my friend; you can isolate and insulate yourself from evil; you can position yourself in an environment where nothing is adverse to you; you can even have faith where God will solve all your problems and pour down healings, prosperity and blessings; yes, you can do all this and be a Christian, a good Spirit-baptized Christian, and make it to heaven someday; but I would be remiss if I did not warn you that you cannot do this and BECOME AN OVERCOMER, you cannot do this and BECOME A RULER! Yes, you can
achieve some peace by cutting yourself off from that part of your life which takes away your peace—but this is a cutting off from THE THRONE.

As I have stated previously, one can never become an overcomer while running from the battle. I never cease to be amazed at the number of believers who want to go through life without ever coming up over the things that are over them. Every time a hard place comes, the carnal mind drags them further and further into spiritual, emotional and mental bondage. They look for a way out. These folk will run to the next town, the next church, the next job, the next friendship...whatever is convenient. They refuse to mature. Anything negative that crosses their will is avoided with scheme after scheme energized by the fleshy mind that is hostile toward God. Some of you are running. Do you know what you will find when you stop? The thing which you have tried to escape is STILL THERE. You carried it with you. It is within you. The moment you stop running and face the issue, the wisdom of God is going to catch up with you and help you become an overcomer. Turn to God with sincerity, and let Him help you and deal with you. The great tests or trials that we endure are not necessarily what bring about our development as New Creatures. The little things, the everyday experiences, the nitty-gritty where the rubber meets the road, are where the real trials, the true testings, take place. By way of example, perhaps not many of us remember the era back in the late '20's or early '30s, when the in thing was for men to do things that were unusual or bizarre. Some of you may remember the name, Barney Oldfield. He was considered an outstanding automobile racer of that time. He set a speed record from Los Angeles to New York, driving his racer across country about 50 miles an hour—extremely fast for the 1920's! There were also other accomplishments. There was a man who rode a bicycle for the first time clear across the country. And that was the era when they had dance marathons—young couples wanted to prove they could dance the longest amount of time. There was one man who walked across the country from Los Angeles to New York. It took him quite a while, but when he finally finished his journey he was given quite a welcome in New York. When he was interviewed he was asked how he had managed to endure all the hardships. "What was the hardest thing for you to endure? Was it when you were out in the desert and it was so hot—100 to 120 degrees?" "No," he said, "that was very hard, but I managed to survive that." "Was it when you went through the mountains and it was so cold and the high peaks were difficult to climb?" "Well, that was tough too," he said, "but I endured that." "Well, just what was the worst part of the whole trip?" He said, "The hardest part of the whole trip was that I had to endure having sand in my shoes." A little thing, but so constant and irritating! And thus it is with us also; the hardest thing we have to endure is the "sand in our shoes"—the little, unavoidable, grating experiences of everyday living. And that is the reason we have a wonderful and sympathetic High Priest, our Forerunner into the Holiest of all, the One to whom we can turn for grace to help in every time of need. He understands the "sand in our shoes" because He suffered the same small, persistent trials—and overcame!

Many people, if they do not run from or evade the problem, seek "deliverance" from it! There is a vast difference between what the present religious realms call deliverance, and the Kingdom principle of overcoming. What most people call deliverance today is an effort to escape out of their pressure and problem, not an overcoming. Overcoming means to GAIN THE VICTORY OVER THE SITUATION. In deliverance God takes something away from you, as you would take a knife from a child. But in overcoming God’s sons are being processed, so that they will know the cause and deal with the root of the trouble within themselves. The knife is not taken away—you learn how to use the knife! The dealings and processings must be thorough, until HIS IMAGE be formed in us.
If your car has difficulty climbing a hill, you can do one of two things: (1) make the hill less steep, or (2) increase the horsepower of the car. God usually wants to change us, not the hill. How many of my readers have had a battle with a bad temper? No need to raise your hand! Temper in balance is a godly emotion, God Himself possesses the emotions of hatred, jealousy, vengeance, anger, etc. Jesus was angry with a holy anger when He took a whip and overturned the tables of the money changers and drove them from the temple. Anger and emotion was part of the original equipment man was given to give him an aggressive drive so that he can accomplish worthwhile things in this life. For example, controlled, temperate, balanced anger will neither ignore a child’s misbehavior nor abuse him. It will correct in the proper spirit of firmness and sternness—tempered with love. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6) Eph. 4:26 says, "Be ye angry, and sin not." In simple terms this means, "Be angry—but let it be a controlled, balanced anger will act effectively, not destructively." For you see, anger out of control is vicious, destructive, and often deadly. Uncontrolled or misdirected anger can devastate one’s life. But let me make one thing very clear—God has absolutely no desire to “deliver” you from your temper! Anger is not on God’s agenda for deliverance. He intends for you to OVERCOME it. God does indeed deliver people from things over which they have no control, or which they are ill-equipped to handle. God does take knives from children! But for sons emotion is not to be "cast out" like a demon; it is to be overcome and brought into its proper place in our lives in the mind of Christ. How many things believers seek God to deliver them from that He has ordained them to overcome! So many of us are like Helga in a story I heard. Helga and Henry were a Swedish couple. They were married for sixty years. They fought like cats and dogs every day of their lives. Finally, on their 60th wedding anniversary they began the morning with a terrible spat. They argued all day long. At the end of the day, Helga said to her husband, "Henry, tonight I think ven ve pray, ve better pray for peace. Ve been fighting each other for sixty years, Henry. May the Lord give us peace. So tonight, I think I’ll pray that the Lord will take you home and I’ll go live with my sister Olga.”

True men never seek escape from the difficulties of the way, whatever the issue may be. Someone has said that difficulties faced are half conquered. At any rate one who evades the pathway of the will of God discovers greater difficulties, as the prophet Jonah soon realized. The world’s greatest acclaimed men not only faced difficulties but conquered them; the pioneer fathers not only hewed their way through the trackless forests, but laid the foundations of what we today enjoy; Columbus not only sailed the stormy and uncharted seas, but he opened the gateway to hitherto unknown continents where, later, men might come and find their homes; Carey and Judson and Livingstone not only fought their way through the opposition of their friends, but also laid the foundation stones of all modern missions; Luther not only refused the advice of his friends to win a personal victory, but he set all Europe free in a religious reformation; George Washington and Abraham Lincoln faced tremendous odds, but steadfastly they went forward until a new nation was born and age-long wrongs were righted. It is how we learn to handle our challenges that separates the boys from the men—the children of God from the sons of God.

Do you feel overwhelmed with problems? Then let me show you how to discover the CHALLENGE that lies in every obstacle. I promise that if you look for the challenge, you will find it, and then you will be able to turn the stumbling-stone in your pathway into a stepping-stone to the throne! The divine principle of which I speak is found in the prophecy of Isaiah, "Out of the desert shall come streams of water" (Isa. 35:6). Out of every obstacle comes a new challenge—an opportunity to overcome. This is the point I
I want to make loud and clear. For if you want to overcome as Jesus overcame, you will need to tap into the dynamics of this principle. The only force that can cause weakness and failure is a challenge that is mistaken for a problem. But there will be no failure when we discover the challenge in the problem, grab hold of it, and use it as a stepping-stone to higher ground. On the other hand, we can never overcome anything as long as we allow some horrendous problem to blind us to the divine challenge that is inherent in every obstacle. In our Father’s great school of sonship, in His effective training program for the future rulers of the world and universe, He knows just exactly which obstacles to place in our pathway for our development and processing. If we try to use our faith to "move the mountain out of the way," such action will not bring us to the place where faith can be perfected and OVERCOME the mountain—scale its heights, climb over it, and conquer it. On one occasion Jesus, after telling the people of dreadful events to come upon the earth, brushed aside their anxiety as a mother wipes away the tears of her infant and soothes the childish woes of the one she loves. "When ye see these things begin to come to pass," He said, "then lift up your heads and rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh." Forget for the moment the eschatological interpretations the church systems have attached to this passage, and look to the experimental and practical. Jesus was not underestimating the awesomeness of the things that would come upon us, but well He knew that there would be a people on the earth in the latter days who would so discover the divine purpose in the trouble, the divine challenge in the tribulations, the divine ability to rise up and overcome in it all, that in these very difficulties they would be able to lift up their heads and rejoice because IN THEM THEY FOUND THEIR REDEMPTION—their challenge to move into a realm of faith and victory where they could truly be overcomers, the masters of all things! When the trials wax hot upon the obedient child of God it signifies that redemption is nigh—that the process is set in motion for the manifestation of a GREAT VICTORY. This is according to God’s great law of manifested sonship—Father lovingly arranges the obstacles before us, then marvelously gives the wisdom and power to overcome them, making us strong and victorious over all that appears so formidable and hopeless. Thus are born His warriors and kings who shall bring the kingdom of God to earth.

Some of you who read these lines and are facing severe problems today, are feeling frustrated, at this point, by my apparently trivial treatment of circumstances that tower so ominously and menacingly before you. You think I don’t understand just how bad your situation really is, or how many times you have failed. Listen! I would not make the solution so simple, if it were not simple. These are principles I have proven in my own experience through years of walking with God. The answer lies so near—right there within you. The difference lies in whether you view your situation as a problem or a challenge. "What difference does it make whether I call it a problem or a challenge," you say. The difference is all important! Here’s why: If you perceive an obstacle in your path as a problem, you will nurture negative emotions in respect to it—like anger, frustration, despair, hopelessness, and depression. These emotions are like grave diggers—they carve out the pit of failure and death in which to bury you! On the other hand, if somehow the Holy Spirit can give you the revelation of it, if you can see by the inspiration of the Almighty that the obstacle is God’s challenge—you have received the spiritual attitude in which spiritual emotions are released—like faith, hope, confidence, peace, rest, joy, thanksgiving, encouragement, wisdom, knowledge, understanding and power. These positive emotions, the fruit of the Spirit, will energize you and propel you through and over and out of and above the obstacle, bringing strength and triumph! You see, precious friend of mine, the only problems in the world are problems that are perceived as problems. When the problem ceases (in your mind) to be a problem to you you have
risen above it, come up over it, OVER-COME IT! Who cares how high a mountain is when he is flying high above it!

During World War II, a young bride from New Jersey followed her soldier husband to a U.S. Army Camp on the edge of the California desert. Her husband had advised her against going because he knew that living conditions would be primitive, at best. But she wanted very much to be with him and he was unable to change her mind. When the couple arrived at the desert camp, the only housing they could find was a run-down shack near an Indian village. The heat was unbearable: up to 115 degrees in the shade. The wind blew constantly, spreading sand all over everything. And, for the young bride, the days were long and boring. Her only neighbors were the Indians, none of whom spoke English. When her husband was ordered farther into the desert for maneuvers, the loneliness and wretched living conditions got the best of her. She wrote to her mother: "I can't take any more of this. I want to come home!" Several days later she received a reply. In it, the mother reminded her of the old family sampler on which the familiar lines were embroidered:

Two men looked out from prison bars,

One saw mud, the other saw stars.

The daughter read these lines over and over again. She began to feel ashamed of her response to the situation she was in. She really didn't want to leave her husband, and so she said to herself, "All right, I'll look for the stars." In the days that followed she began to make friends with the Indians. She began to take lessons in weaving and pottery from them. She became fascinated by their culture and history—everything about them. Moreover, she began to study the desert. In the process, she saw it wonderfully transformed from a desolate, forbidding place to a marvelous expanse of beauty. She studied the various forms of cacti, the yuccas, and the Joshua trees. She collected sea shells that had been deposited there perhaps millions of years before when the sands had been an ocean floor. Later, she became such an expert on the area that she wrote a book about it. A remarkable transformation had taken place. But what had changed, really, to make that possible? Not the weather. Not the desert. Not the lack of modern conveniences. Not the long days without her husband. Not the Indians. What had changed was her own attitude. Simply by changing her own attitude—"All right, I'll look for the stars," she said—she had transformed a miserable life situation into a highly rewarding experience. THIS IS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DOLPHIN—THE BREAKING OUT OF A LOWER WORLD TO VIEW THE HIGHER. This principle is redemptive, restorative, creative. It works on the natural plane, as in the story just shared, but in that higher dimension of the Kingdom of God it is the key to the overcoming life—the way to the throne! Hallelujah!

A great number of people assume that the spiritual life will give them a permanent resting place and a constant peace. They become Christians with the idea of having all their problems solved for them and their burdens eased. Their disillusionment begins when they discover that the walk with God is no Disney World experience, no eternal bed of roses. In fact it often seems just the opposite from gushing joy and undisturbed rest. It is the spur which demands that they move on higher than they intended to go and strive for a perfection and glory beyond the natural man's knowledge or expectation of attainment. The life of sonship to God is more concerned with the expansion of our life and the enlargement of our vision and the increase of our stature than it is to provide for us a
resting place. This life is bent on breaking the shell of the limitations and protections we are at such pains to create, and opening us up to the dangers and pain of development. Any teaching which leaves this out is a snare and a delusion. There is a rest in sonship, but it is not the rest of childish ease, but it is experienced only when we have at last accepted it as a spur to urge us onward and upward. Just this week we received a letter from precious friends in the Northwest and even as I read it I felt constrained in the spirit to share it with those who are reading this writing. Brother wrote, "Your opening the Word to us has changed our lives and we are really excited about it. We could never go back to our old concept of God. We feel that we have a new and greater love for Him than we ever had before. Almost as soon as we heard the message of the sons of God we opened our hearts to it and began to ask the Lord to consider us. We knew that we didn’t have the ability in ourselves but prayed that as we gave ourselves to Him He would give us what we had need of. Almost as soon as we prayed this way the trials and testings began like you could never believe. This was when Dorothy found that she had glaucoma and could be blind in three weeks. She lost 90% vision in one eye, and while in for a check-up she slipped and fell and broke a leg. While recovering from the broken bone she learned that she could have a cataract surgery and recover some of her sight. After the operation her eye inflamed. After four months of this we went to another clinic and they discovered that the first lens implant had been put in wrong and the whole operation would have to be done over. While recovering from this last operation she lost her balance and fell and broke her arm. Now she will have to wear a cast for six weeks. All the medication that they have experimented with has taken a terrible toll on her body. I am taking too much of your time, but wanted to tell you how each Bible study month after month has seemed to be exactly right for the stage of testing we have been in. And now this last one has been a balm for our souls. We are encouraged and sense that the long night (nearly two years) is passing and we are BEGINNING TO SEE THE DAWN"—end quote.

The journey to the throne of the universe begins in that small and undistinguished place where you are. The Kingdom of God is within you. The enChristed who are to reign with Christ from sea to sea, then from planet to planet, and finally from galaxy to galaxy, are being prepared. Think not in your heart, precious one, that you may pass your life here careless, indifferent to the dealings of God, and seeking only the blessings and joys of Christ, suddenly to awake one fine morning to find yourself sitting with Christ on His throne governing the universe, because such a thing will not be. Begin today to live the life of the OVERCOMER! This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over all the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up to sit with Him in the higher than all heavenlies. He is teaching us to rule, to reign in life, to overcome all things and subject them to Christ. And the place which He is preparing for each one is not only a world to come, and a Kingdom of Life and Light, but a place IN HIM, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, nature of His nature, life of His life!

LEAPING OVER WALLS

Faith is the only ship that sails for the Kingdom. Faith is the door to the heavenlies. Faith is the key to the glory of God. It is by faith that we are saved. It is by faith that we walk. It is by faith that we enter into the Outer Court, on into the Holy Place, and finally into the Holiest of all. It is by faith that we face every obstacle. It is by faith that we overcome the myriad of temptations, trials and problems confronting us daily in this world. It is by faith that we conquer sin, limitation and death. There is a beautiful passage penned by that
great and sweet singer of Israel, King David himself, wherein he says, "For by Thee have I run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall" (Ps. 18:29). How are you at leaping over walls? You and I who are apprehended to sonship have not been made for defeat. We have been made to conquer! When the power of this truth grips us, permeates us, possesses us; when we live in this power then things that destroy others cannot conquer us, things that knock others down cannot floor us and things that cloud the vision of others cannot diminish our view. The apostle Paul put it very aptly when he said that Christ always leads us forth in triumph, and we conjure up before our minds a picture of a great Roman general coming back from battle, leading the vanquished foes in his train. Christ always leads us forth in triumph. We are not made for defeat! Why is it then that so many saints are defeated? I am afraid it is because we never learn the secret of running through troops or leaping over walls. I think all of us have faced and do face and will face both of these.

Running through a troop and leaping a wall is a poetic way of simply stating the fact that we who are walking in the Spirit have discovered there have been circumstances which have arisen where we faced what appeared to be impossibilities, and by the living faith of the Christ within, we have been able to overcome them by our God. We have been surrounded by hostile troops and have been walled in by mighty walls. It seems that the adversary has taken the bricks of circumstance and built a mighty fortress of fear. With one brick of discouragement after another, the adversary has walled us in until it seems that there is no way out. There are overwhelming temptations, physical disablements, financial disasters, family turmoils and disappointments—all bricks that the negative realm uses to build what appears to be an evermore insurmountable wall that would close us in forever. If you, my friend, find yourself behind such a wall today, let the words of David be impressed upon your soul: "By my God have I leaped over a wall!!" That is what God calls us to do! You will notice that it is no vain boast, no carnal self-conceit. This is trust in the living God: "By my God," David said, "I have done this," for David knew that cursed was the man who trusts in the arm of flesh. It was David who boldly declared to Goliath on that fateful day when he came against him that it was not in his own strength but in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, who Goliath had defied. David was not such as trusted in himself; he trusted in the living God. In the preceding verse he declared that God would light his lamp. He faced what appeared to be an obscuring darkness that had crowded in upon him and the future, indeed, looked bleak. But there came an illumination in his soul and he said, "God will do this." And how did he know God would do it? David said, "For by Thee I have run through a troop: by my God I have leaped over a wall." And so we see that remembrance of past victories by the grace of God can be a great stimulus to present courage in the face of problems and temptations and overwhelming difficulties.

How about you, my beloved? Will you who are experienced saints in the Lord and have known His deliverance many scores or hundreds or thousands of times in the past, now lie down and die of despair because of some new threatening onslaught that seems as if it would engulf and overthrow you? And what about the most dreadful enemy of all—the last enemy, which is death? Who is this troop that comes against you now? What is this wall the adversary would build against you? Sound the trumpet of faith! Let the drums roll and the banners fly and watch that wall crumble as at Jericho! Leap over the remains and take the sword of faith and run into that troop as David did with the Amalekites who had kidnapped his wife and children and had taken them away. He had run through a troop and leaped over the walls of Jerusalem and captured that heathen city for the Kingdom of God. Are you a leaper and a runner? Or are you a crawler and a flopper? Some people
who face not a troop but merely one adversary which indeed may only be a shadow then
cry out, "There is a lion in the street!" and they are afraid to go out. As far as leaping over
walls is concerned, the chalk line will do sufficiently to hem them in. They have never
even so much as considered the fact that by God’s power they are enabled to leap over
every wall. How can we do that? How can we confront the hosts that gather around us so
menacingly? How can we leap over walls that seem so insurmountable? Do we each not
have our own walls and hosts? I do not know what temptations come at you like armed
demons, overwhelm your spiritual resources, and cause you to fall and grieve in guilt and
failure. I do not know what personal problems you have in your life. I do not know what is
happening in your family, what walls of separation and division have been built so high
that it seems nothing could surmount them. I do not know what problems you are facing
in your business. I do not know what doubts or emotions plague you and hinder you from
pressing on victoriously into the fullness of God. But it is my deep conviction that it is
possible to run through those troops and leap over those walls because God has told us
it is so.

How do we do that? We do it by Him—"by my God, through Christ," said David and Paul.
We do it by faith. "Yes, but how?" some will say. "How do we do this by faith?" Consider,
precious friend of mine, how it is that you have obtained your salvation; how it is that you
have obtained the gift of the Holy Spirit; how it is that you have obtained blessings and
answers to prayer. Is it not true that you came to the place where you rested your hopes
for eternal life and the blessings and benefits of salvation upon the work and the promise
of the Christ? In the trusting and in the believing it was done! As Jesus said, "... whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive it" (Mat. 21:22). And it is in
the very believing that we can run through a troop, we are like David who takes up his
sword and attacks the host of the Amalekites with a very small band and scatters them
every which way. We are like David who with a mighty leap overleaps the wall that seems
to be impossible, because we believe that God will enable us to do it. In the believing, it is
done. But you will notice that David also says, "I have run through the troop. I have
leaped over a wall." David did not sit there and tremble at the thought of that troop. He
did not walk up to the wall, feel it, and examine its height in despair. No! He took his
sword in his hand, rushed into the midst of the fray, and his enemies scattered before
him. He gathered himself together, he rushed at that wall, and he took a great leap which
some might have thought would surely have killed him. To the astonishment of all who
watched, David sailed over the wall by faith. That is the secret. If we will rise up to
conquer our enemies of fear, limitation, bondage, sin, weakness, frustration, failure and
death we will find that the wall will tremble before us and we shall find ourselves clearing
it with ease. And in all that we shall give glory unto God and shall cause the unbelieving
world to wonder.

In another place the Psalmist uses a similar metaphor, declaring, "It is God that girdeth
me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like Hinds’ feet, and
setteth me upon my high places" (Ps. 18:32-33). Do you grasp the significance of this
allusion? Hinds’ feet are of marvelous swiftness and made to carry their owner over
difficult places impassable to slower-footed creatures. The thought in the singer’s mind is
that of a divine enduement added to human weakness, an imparting of agility and
confidence to the soul, whereby it springs up, so to speak, out of the dangers which
assail it on the lower levels of life, and climbs lightly and surely to the uplands of the
spirit. Some years ago I read the story of an Englishman who visited the West of our
United States, in which he related the following incident. "It was in Colorado. Riding with
a small party of friends through the picturesque scenery of that mountainous state, we
came to a rugged defile which presently opened into a narrow glade wherein a herd of antelopes were quietly grazing. If I remember rightly another party coming in the opposite direction rounded the farther corner of the defile at about the same moment, so that the antelope were caught, as it were, between two fires. We didn’t intend to do them any harm, but should greatly have liked a closer look at them. That, however, we did not get. The instant they caught sight of us they leaped up the side of the cliff to our right hand, at an almost incredible rate of speed, following one another gracefully and apparently without effort, from point to point in the giddy ascent, making scarcely a sound as they went, till they were finally lost to view amid the towering rocks and trees far above our heads. It was all over in a minute or two, and we were filled with admiration as we watched the rapidly moving feet of the pretty little creatures springing from crag to crag. It could hardly be called climbing; they were not pulling themselves up; they jumped and stood wherever they liked, in perfect poise, and without the slightest hesitation. No fear of their way being blocked! They could go where a man could not except with utmost caution and at considerable risk to his own safety. They were absolutely secure, and they knew it. Up they fled, and were gone”—end quote.

It is obvious that king David had witnessed some scene of this kind long millenniums ago in the land of Israel. And how appropriate is the use he makes of it! "He maketh my feet like Hind’s feet"—the grace of God in the believing soul imparts to it a lightsomeness, a spiritual surefootedness, if one may so put it, a facility and confidence, whereby it is able to escape from any menace and find its way to heights where no evil can reach to harm or destroy. "He setteth me up on high." This is not to say that we shall never descend again, never mix with the rough-and-tumble of life on the lowlands. We must do so; but the point is that in every extremity there is always a way up. The way of escape is less often the way out than the way up. If our faith is real enough and strong enough, our feet shall be as hinds’ feet, and God shall set us up on high. Nothing is less able to resist the assaults of its enemies than the gentle creature here referred to as typifying the child of God. It could easily fall a prey to those that seek its hurt; it has almost no power to defend itself against them; but it has one great gift which makes it superior to them, it can move swiftly for the everlasting hills, and no natural hindrance is great enough to bar the way. Are you caught like a helpless deer in a horrible pit of death? The sun has hidden his face behind the frowning eminences; darkness has fallen in terror upon your soul; there is no way out; it is hopeless to look for an escape; all exits are closed to human wisdom and human strength. Ah, yes, but there is a way UP; there is always a way up in every situation, however, desperate. God calls you, O son, daughter of the Most High, to take the way up. Now is the time to prove the revelation God has poured into your life; now is your opportunity to take the highest ground and save your soul alive. Are you afraid? Are you too weak to make the effort? Do your weary limbs refuse to work? Then lay firm hold upon the mighty indwelling power of the Christ and the Christ within will not fail you. Look not to this preacher, nor to that ministry, nor to another’s gift. God will make your feet like hinds’ feet, and set you on high! Others will not tell you this. They will tell you that if you will sit under their ministry, eat at their table, join yourself to their church, drink from their fountain, then they can lead you into Life. But I point you today only to the God who can do all. I have no ministry to promote, no church to build, no following to gather, no movement to advance, no ego to inflate. My God, your God will make your feet like hinds’ feet and set you up on high! This is what sonship is all about. Only go; spring to the Rock of ages and seek shelter there; mount to where wide horizons break before you, and shining skies surround you on the blessed table-lands of heavenly life. This is God’s day, this is your day—arise and shine! 

65
The Shulamite in the Song of Solomon received a revelation of this same sublime truth. The Shulamite symbolizes the bride of Christ, whereas her Beloved represents Christ the bridegroom. There is, of course, a corporate application of this truth, but on the personal level the Shulamite is the soul and her Beloved is the spirit, for "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Christ the bridegroom is therefore within our spirit, wooing the soul into union with Him. The soul is that realm of our own mind, will, emotion and desire. The sharp contrast between our own human strength and ability and His divine life and power is described by the Shulamite in these graphic words: "The voice of my Beloved! behold He cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills" (S. of S. 2:8). Between the seven and eighth verses of chapter two, the Bridegroom has withdrawn. We are not told whether He withdrew Himself, or whether His withdrawal was caused by the carelessness and indifference of the bride. There are times when He withdraws or hides Himself that He may prod us into deeper depths of earnestness and abandonment as expressed in the old proverb, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." And there are times when we do not keep in touch with Him and are not quiet enough before Him, so that He can remain and unveil to us all His love and power. But now the bride hears the sound of His approaching presence; and before she sees Him, she rejoices in His return. As yet she has not seen Him, has not discerned His working within her, but she has heard His voice, and knows that He is coming. Suddenly she sees Him leaping upon the mountains; those impassable obstacles, which would prove insurmountable to any one else, are stepping places for His feet. He leaps from one to the other with the sure, swift feet of the roe or the young hart.

In the title of the 22nd Psalm, a Messianic Psalm, the meaning of Aijeleth hash-Shahar is, "The hind of the morning." Thus the title reads, "To the chief Musician—the Hind of the morning." And the word translated "hind," and the word that is rendered "hart," in the Song of Solomon, is the same word in the Hebrew. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the "Hind of the morning" and the "Chief Musician." As the first rays of the sun in a clear morning glance here and there upon this mountain peak and the crest of yonder hill, so Jesus Christ, the "Hind of the morning," came down to earth, leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills. How beautiful are the first rays of the sun in the early morning, as its beams touch first this and then that mountain peak. In the valleys, the shades of night seem to linger; and in contrast to these dark shadows, the touches of the sunlight appear all the more beautiful as they glance from hill to hill. So is the life of our Beloved in our spirit, as He arises within our consciousness to bring victory from within. He leaps over every obstacle, He disperses every shadow; He appears and disappears, now in sight and then not seen, but ever drawing nearer and nearer in our experience. Sometimes we see the difficulties in our lives and the hard things that seem impossible, we wonder if He can surmount them; for we know that we cannot. But He who could surmount the mountains of man's sin and separation within Himself, and the power of death and the grave, can surmount every mountain and hill that is in your life and mine. At first, we only look for Him in the joy and blessings; but He comes much oftener and more precisely as He leaps upon the mountains of difficulty. There are things so hard that none could undertake them but the Lord; but He will make these things stepping-places for His feet, and upon them He will reveal Himself to you in a deeper way then He has ever done before. He will come to you upon the things that are so hard you do not see how you are going to go through them; and you will wonder if even the Lord can lift you over them. He will come to you in the hard things in your life, in your disposition, in your weaknesses, in the testings in your body. He will come to you in the hardest surroundings and circumstances. And He will come leaping and skipping! He will leap over all the mountains of limitation and difficulty and skip along the hills of your fears and distress;
and if your eyes are anointed, you will see Him revealing Himself in the power of a life that is irresistible and unconquerable, immortal and incorruptible.

The Shulamite speaks of Him coming leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills, and how our glad hearts rejoice and our mouths pour forth their pearls of praise in the sacred knowledge of the very first words uttered by the Beloved, wherein He cries to her, "Rise up my love, My fair one, and COME AWAY!" (S. of S. 2:10). Ah, He will leap over the sin and weakness in you, He will skip over the corruption and death in you, and speak urgently to you and cause you to arise and come away with Him to leap and skip with Him in the immortal heights of the eternal mountains of God. Methinks you have heard the sound of His Voice, methinks you have been stirred in the deepeth depths of your being—arise, O beloved one, and ascend up into the heights of His victory and glory!
Chapter 32

Aquarius-The Water Pourer

Did you ever look up at night time and just gaze at the stars? I do; I am always enthralled by what I see. It was the Psalmist and King of Israel, David, who said, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge” (Ps. 19:1-2). A study of the incredible glory and dazzling splendor of the star-studded heavens will convince any unbiased mind of the fact of the Creator. One would indeed need to be a silver-tongued orator with a golden pen to even begin to describe the breathtaking grandeur of the vast universe of myriads of raging infernos and swirling nebulae that stretch outward into infinity. It was Abraham Lincoln, once walking with a friend in the late evening, who looking up, said, "I could understand anyone up there in the heavens, looking down on this earth, and not believing in God: but I cannot understand anyone looking up to the heavens and seeing the glory of the stars, not believing in God." The import of the Psalmist's words, however, are freighted with meaning far beyond the heavens evoking a mere belief in the existence of the Creator. Well may we hymn God's praise because of the glory of the constellations and galaxies, but know this, oh man: God had in mind and purpose realms much greater than an acknowledgement of His greatness in creation when He inspired David with those weighty words: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." The more our hearts bow down in meditation upon the eternal and heavenly and spiritual things of Him the more we are brought face to face with the wonderful truth enunciated by the apostle Paul to the saints in Ephesus: "For WE ARE HIS HANDIWORK, created in Christ Jesus with a view to good works which God prepared beforehand. . . " (Eph. 2:10, Wuest). The Psalmist said, "The firmament sheweth His handiwork." The apostle explained, "We are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus." Neither by the eloquence of words nor by the clarity of phrases can we say more plainly or more emphatically than this that the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows, reveals and demonstrates the nature and purpose of God's great creative work in and through His enChristed body, the elect saints, who are the new creation in Christ Jesus of which the natural creation is merely a faint shadow and a weak picture.

The Zodiac (Signs of the heavens) is the earliest revelation to mankind from his Creator. Each of the twelve Signs pictorially represents an aspect of the progressive unfolding of the dealings, plan and purpose of God in the grand scheme of creation and redemption. Each Sign portrays a dimension of SPIRITUAL REALTY wrought out, first of all, in the life of our blessed Forerunner and Head, Jesus Christ; and secondly in the life of each individual member of His body, the sons and daughters of God. 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. These are the emanations of God Himself in whom the scripture is 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). And again, "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). What glorious and ineffable prospects lie before us!

From the time when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God first shouted for joy, this universe, this eternal spiritual universe, this higher-than-the-heavens universe, this Kingdom of Heaven, has been the home and heritage of every son of God. Each son belongs to it, and it belongs to him. He is in it, and it is in him. He holds himself in harmony with it, and it fills his soul with its song. He apprehends its truth, enjoys its beauties, and partakes of its holiness. There is no place in it where he has not a right to be; for it has been the Father's good pleasure to give him the Kingdom. His life is not measured by years, but by its possibilities and expansiveness. Divinity and eternity are born within him. The Signs of the natural heavens but picture the wonders of the spiritual heavens, the lights and configurations of which we are. Many saints wonder and stand in doubt of this message of sonship and the Kingdom of God, because they feel, Who are we that we should enter into such fullness, this measure of glory, grace and power that has not been known from the foundation of the world unto this day. But it is not a case of "Who are we?" It is a case of "How great thou art, O Lord!" God is the all-wise and almighty Creator, we are but His handiwork; He is doing this for His own glory and praise, and not because we have by our own wisdom chosen the glory or are anything of ourselves. Old creation or New Creation, "It is HE that hath made us, and not we ourselves..." (Ps. 100:3).

THE SIGN OF AQUARIUS

In our series of messages on the Zodiac we come now to the subject of AQUARIUS — THE WATER POURER. If you have a sky chart you will notice that the Sign of Aquarius is the figure of a mighty man holding a great urn upon his shoulder, from which comes a seemingly inexhaustible stream of water flowing downwards until finally it flows directly into the mouth of a great fish (Piscis Australis—the Southern Fish), which receives it and swallows it all. In the right shoulder of the Waterman is the star called SADELMELIK, which means The Record of the Pouring Out. The other shoulder bears the star SADALSUUD meaning He Who Pours Out. You have no doubt heard the song, "It is The Age Of Aquarius." What does that mean? Just as the stars have moved through the procession of the equinoxes, so we have moved in time and world history from one mansion of the Zodiac to another. Interestingly, about the time that Christ Jesus came into the world, we moved into the Sign of Pisces, which is the Sign of the Fish and a symbol of the people of God. That Sign has lasted for approximately two thousand years after which we are, even now, moving into the Sign of Aquarius, meaning a time of FULLNESS. There is no doubt whatsoever that the old age is ending and another more glorious age is dawning. The sacred knowledge of this fact burns brightly within the hearts of all Christians on all levels of spiritual development. The prophets of our generation have proclaimed it, and the constellations of the heavens declare it!
Aquarius means something far more than what the astrologers and others today think it means. As we have seen, Aquarius is the one who pours out the water upon Piscis Australis, the Southern Fish. Water, of course, is a great symbol of the Holy Spirit which God promised to pour out upon His people and the earth. It is a glorious symbol of life and one of the happiest in all of the world. Next to light, it is God’s brightest element. Where waters come they bring gladness and rejuvenation, luxuriousness and plenty. Where they pour forth, sinking strength recovers, dying life rekindles, perishing nature revives, a thousand delights are awakened, and everything rejoices and sings with new-begotten vitality. In Aquarius that water is being poured out upon the figure of a fish. In the Sign Capricornus the dying goat is seen giving life to a fish emerging from its latter half. As Christ was the great sin-offering and through His death the Church or the fish was brought into life, we now see that fish sustained in life by the risen Christ, again in Aquarius, the Water-Bearer who is now pouring out the water of His Holy Spirit upon the living fish. This is a great picture of the outpouring of the fullness of the Spirit upon the sons and the daughters of God. The Lord Jesus said, "Whosever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). Again and again the scriptures testify of this mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit into and out from the people of God. Through Isaiah He declares: "For I will POUR WATER upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will POUR OUT 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 the Messiah and described His coming in these words: "HE shall come down like RAIN upon the mown grass: as SHOWERS that water the earth. 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!

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. "Behold, He cometh with clouds....." 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... IN THE CLOUD." 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. 77:15-20 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
storm? Israel was thus "baptized" IN THE CLOUD, as they had been "baptized" in the sea!

**THE WATER-POURER**

The above story has not been understood because multitudes of the Lord's people equate "baptism" only with immersion, or one being dipped into or put under water. They claim that in every case of scriptural baptism the person or thing baptized is moved or put into or under the baptizing element. The truth is, however, that in the vast majority of cases in scripture, if not in every case, the baptizing element or instrumentality is moved and put upon the person or thing baptized. Contrary to the teaching of many, and contrary even to certain scholars, "baptize" does not mean to "dip." Ultimately it is usage that determines the meaning of words in any language. In classic Greek the word baptizo is never used in the modern evangelical sense of putting a body into water and then immediately withdrawing it. It cannot be denied by those who know and love the truth that the Sign of Aquarius tells us far more about the true "baptism in the Spirit" than all the modern-day preachers have ever learned from the Word of God!

Now, what saith the Lord as to the mode of this real Spirit baptism, and this symbolical water baptism? Open your Bible and look into this matter very carefully, with humility and reverence, and you will find that never once is the person represented as being "dipped," "plunged" or "immersed" into the baptizing element or agency, but uniformly the baptizing element or agency is "poured out," or in some way comes upon the person baptized. The apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4), and the Spirit was "poured out" on them (Acts 2:16-33); they were baptized with fire (Mt. 3:7), and a tongue of fire come down from heaven and "sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:2-3). The children of Israel were baptized with or by or in the cloud, and the cloud "poured our water" upon them (Ps. 77:16-17; I Cor. 10:1-2). Noah and his family were baptized with the flood (I Pet. 3:20-21), and they rode safe and dry over its waves as it "rained" upon them for forty days and forty nights. Three thousand Jews received water baptism during the few closing hours of a single day, and in a city where there was no place the leaders and rulers would permit to be used for immersion. Paul was baptized in his own room (Acts 9:17-18). The inspired record says: "Anastas ebapisthe," that is, "having stood up, he was baptized." The jailer at Philippi was converted in the jail, at the midnight hour, and we are told that there "he was baptized, he and all his, straightway" (Acts 16:33). Cornelius and his household having had the Spirit fall on them and poured out upon them, water was brought and poured out on them, if the symbol is in any way to correspond to the reality (Acts 10:44-48). The Saviour was baptized with His sufferings (Lk. 12:50) and His sufferings were "laid upon Him" (Isa. 53:6). The Great Baptizer is Christ Himself, and He baptizes His people with the Holy Ghost when He "pours out" His Spirit upon them (Tit. 3:5-6).

In Heb. 3:10, the inspired writer, speaking of the Old Testament rituals, ceremonies and ordinances, says, "Which stood only in meals and drinks, and divers washings imposed on them until the time of reformation." The word translated "washings" refers to the ceremonial purifications under the law and is from the Greek word BAPTISMOIS, that is, baptisms. Can we ascertain the mode of these baptisms? Yes, with infallible certainty. In the very same chapter the apostle refers to the mode of these ceremonial purifications no less than three times and declares that it was by sprinkling. "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh. How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead
works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13). "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people.... moreover he sprinkled.... both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry" (Heb. 9:19-21). In Num. 19:17-18 we read of a ceremonial purification, or "baptism," and we read: "A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels and upon the persons." In Lev. 14:5-7 we read how a leper was to be cleansed: "And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean." A leprous house was to be cleansed in the same manner, by sprinkling (Lev. 14:50-52). And so in the case of other ceremonial baptisms there is no case on record in which an Israelite administered any of the ceremonial baptisms by putting the person or thing under water. Not one! In every case the baptism or cleansing was by sprinkling or pouring out water. When the whole Israelitish nation entered into covenant with God at Sinai, Moses "sprinkled all the people" (Ex. 24:8; Heb 9:19). On the great day of atonement the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled the Ark of the Covenant (Lev. 4:17; Heb 9:25). When the destroying angel passed over Egypt, only the blood-sprinkled were afforded protection (Ex. 12:7-13). When king David sinned he cried, "Purge me with hyssop," that is, sprinkle me with water or blood from the wetted hyssop, "and I shall be clean" (Ps. 51:7). When speaking of the spiritual cleansing effected by the blood of Christ, of which water baptism was the sign to believing Jews, Paul says, "the blood of sprinkling" (Heb 12:24); and Peter calls it "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:2). In all cases of the use of either water or blood in the Old Testament as a means of purification, sanctification or anointing sprinkling or pouring were the mode used. And in Heb 9:10 the apostle speaks of these ceremonial purifications, and calls them baptisms (baptismois). The Spirit's work is from Genesis to Revelation represented as a "pouring," a "sprinkling," a "coming down," a "shedding forth," and coming as the "rain" and the "dew". In the New Testament the Spirit of God is represented as descending, pouring out, shedding forth, falling upon, coming upon, sent from on high, to be drunk as water, anointing, sealing, breathed upon them, ministered to them, given to them, and received by them.

It is not my purpose in this writing to provoke a debate concerning the mode of water baptism. What you may or may not believe about external rituals, outward ceremonies, and natural ordinances is, in my opinion, but a paltry side issue of no spiritual significance and no eternal import. All natural things are but types and shadows to our understanding of spiritual things. Properly understood they open the door of understanding to the sacred secrets of God. All natural things have their spiritual counterparts, but I have absolutely no interest at all in seeking to establish or promote any external ritual, outward ceremony or carnal ordinance, for I declare to you that in this day, for those who have left the Outer Court and the Holy Place to find an entrance into the glory of the Holiest of all, the shadows have all passed away and reality has dawned within our hearts. Turn! oh sons and daughters of the Most High, from all these religious vanities, for the true light now shineth and the physical ceremonies having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with water, or formulas, or bread, or wine, or hands, or fleshly ministrations make the recipients thereof perfect. Depart from the carnal realm of empty and lifeless forms and flee away to the celestial heights in the mountain of God from whence streams the quickening and transforming river of Life from the presence of the Lord. One wonderful day, the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles in old Jerusalem, Jesus our Lord stood up and cried aloud to the people: "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). That, oh child of God, is the secret to eternal blessedness. Not only does He pour the water upon us, but our faith and union with the living Christ of God makes us the source of rivers of living waters, ceaseless in their abundant flow forever and ever and ever.

As Aquarius pours his water out from his urn, so the heavens pour down water upon the earth. 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. 7:37-38). A cloud speaks to us of a vessel, as an urn, 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. II: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. If the saints be full of God they will pour Him out upon the earth-natured, 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, the strong man of Aquarius with the water jar. Their life giving waters will be emptied upon a dry and cursed earth just as the waters were first emptied upon them—creation itself will be released into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God.

I mentioned that water is the symbol for both the Word and the Spirit (Eph 5:26; Jn. 7:37-39). The mystery of God is not far off in heaven somewhere. GOD IS THE WORD AND THE WORD IS GOD. Furthermore, THE WORD IS THE SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT IS THE WORD. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (Jn 6.63). Words are the most powerful thing in creation. All visible things were created by God's Word. "And God said, let there be. . . " (Gen. 1:3). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn.1:1,3). Let all men know that creation was not brought forth merely by the spoken word. The power of God's Word lies not in the fact that it is a LIVING WORD. "For the Word of God is living and powerful" (Heb. 4:12). The Word is living because it is energized by the Spirit. "It is the spirit that quickeneth (makes alive). . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The creation was not formed by the spoken word, but by the Living Word. "And the Spirit of God moved . . . and God said." The Word spoken was the Spirit—it was the Living Word. The scriptures state that we are born again by the Spirit and we are born again by the Word. Does that mean that we are born again twice, or on two levels? Not at all! It indicates that the Spirit and the Word are SO ONE that the Word is a LIVING WORD. The Spirit and the Word united are the Living Word. We are not born again by the spoken word—we are born again by the Word which is energized by the Spirit, the Spirit and the Word in
union—the LIVING WORD. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Pet. 1:23). The spoken word is not Christ, and the scriptures are not the Living Word. The people of Israel had the scriptures from the very mouth of God and thought that in that written word, in the mystery and magic of the word communicated in the Hebrew characters, they had life. They were wrong. Dead wrong. The word received at Sinai was THE MINISTRATION OF DEATH! There was no life in it! "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter: but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious...how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious" (II Cor 3:6-8).

Consider how plainly and powerfully Jesus rebuked the Jews who trusted in the mystery and magic within the written word communicated to them in Hebrew characters. "And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him. . . .but Jesus answered them, search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life" (Jn. 5:15-16, 39-40). The Living Word is the LIVING CHRIST! And He always was the Living Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. IN HIM WAS L-I-F-E; and the LIFE was the light of men" (Jn. 1:1,4). I have witnessed many men speak and preach the word with great persuasion and nothing happened. There is no "magic" or "mystical power" in the words of the scriptures. The only power they have is that they testify of CHRIST THE LIVING WORD, they point to HIM WHO IS THE LIFE. One can preach great sermons and die! One can expound the sacred secrets and die! One can teach the deepest mysteries and die! But when men are ministered the DYNAMIC REALITY OF THE LIVING WORD transformation takes place. The same Living Word that by its almighty power brought creation into existence was made flesh and dwelt among us. The Word was not made an alphabet. The Word was not made a book. The Word was not made a teaching or a doctrine. The Word was made flesh, divine substance in human form, the Son of God. We are born of that very same Living Word, the Christ; that Living Word is being poured out upon us and poured into us, we are drinking deeply of that Word and experiencing the living reality of the Christ within. The same Word that conquered sin and death in the person of Jesus Christ is being raised up in you and me in these days. Hallelujah!

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). Now, to what is God comparing His Word? To the rain and 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. God's Word! God's Word coming down from heaven! God's Word is not letters of the alphabet. God's Word is the EMANATION OF HIMSELF. God's Word will come down in power 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 with unfailing certainty, so shall God's Word, His emanation, His anointing, His Christ not return unto Him void, but it SHALL ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSE. There is a people in the earth in this hour that is letting that LIVING WORD rain down from above, and the New Creation is formed in them. And, sadly, there are those who are trusting in the "magic" within the written word or the spoken word, but are not touching the Living Word, and they shall die as men in spite of all their "deep sayings."

I hear a voice which we know well, speaking from the well of Sychar, and saying, "The water that I shall give thee shall be in thee, springing up unto everlasting life." It is the life of God in the Living Word; it is Christ Himself; and He has come to be in us, like a perennial spring, unstanched in drought, unfrozen in frost, leaping up, in fresh and invigorating beauty, like the cold refreshing spring that flows deliciously out of the earth into the desert heat. This is the picture presented to us by Aquarius, the Water-Bearer. It is the picture of a supply from a source so high, so abundant and unceasing, that it denotes FULLNESS. Our experience has been well expressed in the words of Paul, "for we know in part, and we prophesy in part... " (I Cor. 13:9). Throughout the past two thousand years of the age of Pisces, the age of the Fish, God has formed and fashioned His body, but it has been a thirsty fish. How we desire HIS FULLNESS! Yet we also praise God for those "times of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). If it is a long time between "showers," we get very dry. How we need that water that becomes an eternal and unfailing fountain within that springs up unto eternal life! That vital, essential work of imperative need is WITHIN—conforming us into His image, imparting to us His mind, developing His character, enriching us with the very nature of His peace, righteousness, joy and strength—then the more we shall become "a spring whose waters fail not."

I am saying all these things because I know that millions of believers have contentedly settled for the showers of blessings, knowing not that this state lies far beneath the provision of God for His people. Truly, "Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. . ." (Eph. 1:13-14). God's people are yet lacking in understanding. The Holy Spirit, Paul says, is the earnest of our inheritance in Christ. The Greek word translated "earnest" (ARRABON) means merely a pledge or first installment, a down payment, money deposited by a purchaser to guarantee that he will pay for an item in full when it is delivered. The balance must follow. The fullness is guaranteed by the earnest. In modern Greek the word is used for an engagement ring, the idea being that he who gives a girl such a ring will complete his agreement to marry her—the wedding band will surely follow! When this word is used in scripture it speaks of the gift of the Holy Spirit as God's "earnest" or "engagement ring." In other words, the seal of the indwelling Holy Spirit is therefore an earnest or advance pledge from God Himself that those who are apprehended and receive THE PROMISE will one day receive their inheritance IN FULL. 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, an initial endowment. As an initial gift, it stands in direct line to the expectation. The very fact of its reality is "the guarantee of our full inheritance." "Who hath 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 within us 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 damsel 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). Fulfilling the role of Abraham's servant, Eliezer, the apostle bestowed upon those who heeded his words a FORETASTE of the vast and unmeasurable wealth of the Kingdom of God, by imparting to them the gift and gifts 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 to this present time is but the "earnest" of the full inheritance which will be received when we have sufficiently matured to be entrusted with the balance of our inheritance—ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD! The earnest pertains to the age of Pisces—the church age. The fullness belongs to the age of Aquarius—the Kingdom age. And, bless your hearts, dear ones—THIS IS THE DAWNING OF THE AGE OF AQUARIUS!

Oh, what a grand and glorious realm lies before us in this expectation of the FULL INHERITANCE! The day of the full fruit of the Spirit! The day of Perfection! The hour of full and complete Redemption, spirit, soul, and body! The full and complete experiencing of HIMSELF! The fullness of Strength, Wisdom, 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 "earnest," the "firstfruits," the "down payment," and most of the Lord's people have no idea or conception of what the full inheritance is all about. If they have any thought at all it is the foolish notion that the full inheritance is a mansion over the hilltop, or a cabin in the corner of gloryland. They can see the healings, deliverances, miracles, prophecies, worship, etc., and they understand not that it is God in His great mercy inviting His people to enter in to their full inheritance. They do not realize that all this is not the end—it is merely the foretaste, the earnest of their inheritance, and that God bids them after sampling of His glory to arise and come away with Him to the Great Wedding Feast that lies before!

Completeness, perfection and fullness, however much desired, are not obtainable through an "in part" possession. Once we understand this one important principle, it becomes clear that we cannot reach the fullness in one grand leap. 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. What I am saying is that the glory of God's fullness cannot be ministered unto us out of the ministry of the earnest. It must come from a realm
BEYOND what we have received, even out of the Christ who has received the Spirit without measure. As children of God the Spirit of Christ dwells within 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 (FULL UNVEILING) OF JESUS CHRIST" (I Pet. 1:13). Christ ascended into the heavens and returned to indwell His body in a "firstfruits" measure of Himself. He came into us as it were in the limitation of infancy, just as a baby born into this world comes helpless, innocent and undeveloped, though containing the full potential of human life. The fullness of Christ remains locked up, as it were, in the unseen realm, locked up in His unappropriated, undeveloped, unexperienced life within ourselves. Thus, we must GROW IN GRACE AND IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, the process of the unfolding of Himself out of Himself within us. Hallelujah! In spite of all the revivals, soul-saving crusades, the signs and wonders and miracles wrought through the ages, we are yet to see the revelation of HIS FULLNESS. But the hour is wonderfully nigh at hand, praise His name. Truly, this is the dawning of the age of Aquarius!

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 for 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 the 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 moved 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, unexpectedly stood forth before the multitude. 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 echoed and 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! 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 the Living 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 now Rivers of Living Water." This He spake of the Spirit which they should receive. 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. 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! We have wondered why, with such a fullness of life, we have continued to be weak, limited, sick, oppressed, imperfect and dying. The answer is, of course, that we have tried to live an abundant life out of a trickling stream! I would not belittle or depreciate in any measure the wonderful life of the Spirit we have received; but at best it is merely the earnest, the sample, the foretaste, the pledge, the down payment, the first installment, the guarantee of the FULL INHERITANCE!

Let men now cast aside their pride of attainment. Pentecost is not the fullness. Pentecostal people love to call themselves "Full Gospel." There are people right here in El Paso who say, "We're a FULL GOSPEL Church!" No they're not! I am asked the question some times: 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 TWO FEASTS, while we proclaim THREE. They preach two Feasts and call them “FULL GOSPEL.” The truth is, they are but two-thirds of the Gospel, at best! Passover is not the fullness! It is but the beginning—the appetizer before the meal. Pentecost is not the fullness—it is merely the introductory salad. There is yet another Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of the FULL HARVEST AT THE END OF THE YEAR—the balance of the meal! Pentecost is the Firstfruits of the Spirit and the earnest of our inheritance. The Feast of Tabernacles, on the other hand, is the Feast of ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD at the end of the year, at the conclusion of the age, at the consummation of God’s dealings with His body—all the power and wisdom and glory and majesty of God to be manifested in the sons of God. This Feast will bring the fullness, and release to creation, and salvation to all the nations. The glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea! There will be a MIGHTY OUTPOURING! Praise God for the earnest—but let us follow on to receive the FULLNESS! Tabernacles is the Feast of fullness in the age of Aquarius.

God gave Ezekiel a prophetic vision of the glory of the Lord to be revealed at the end of the age. This vision revealed what the body of Christ would become as the Church age ends and the glorious age of the Kingdom comes in. It is so mighty, so overwhelming in scope, that at the time Ezekiel could neither comprehend it nor explain its meaning. In fact half way in to this prophetic vision the Lord stops, turns to Ezekiel, and asks, “Have you seen this?” (Eze. 47:6). It is as though the Lord is saying to him, “Do you comprehend the magnitude of what you see? Are you able to grasp the prophetic power of this vision? Do you yet see what the rising of the waters speaks of—how it is going to end? Do you see His glory coming, and the immensity of it? It is so awesome, so mind-boggling that I don’t want you to miss the true significance of this revelation!” The Holy Spirit was shown to him as a small stream which periodically increased and continued to rise until it became a mighty river. In this vision the prophet was conducted along the river by the angel of the Lord—in the form of a man. Hear now the beautiful description of the River of God in the words of the prophet himself. “Then my guide brought me again to the door of the house of the Lord—the temple; and behold, water issued out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple was toward the east; and waters came down from under, from the right side of the temple, on the north side of the altar. Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around outside to the outer gate by the way that faces east; and behold, waters were running out in a trickle on the right side. And when the man went on eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the water, waters that were ankle deep. Again he measured a thousand cubits and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that reached to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the waters had risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over or through. And he said to me, Son of man, have you seen this? Then he led me and caused me to return to the bank of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then he said to me, These waters pour out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah (the valley of the Jordan) and on into the Dead Sea. And when they shall enter into the sea of putrid waters the waters shall be healed and made fresh. And wherever the river shall go, every living creature which swarms shall live, and there shall be a very great number of fish; because these waters go there that the waters of the sea may be healed and made fresh, and every thing shall live wherever the river goes. The fishermen shall stand on the banks of the Dead Sea; from Engedi even to Eneglaim shall be a place to spread
nets; their fish shall be of very many kinds, as the fish of the Great or Mediterranean Sea” (Eze. 47:1-10, Amplified).

What is the meaning of Ezekiel's vision? What is this rising river which flows from the Temple eastward to the Dead Sea? The entire scene is freighted with keen interest and deep significance when we realize the river is a prophetic picture. We are looking upon the stream of Divine Truth and Life. I have stood on the Temple site on Mount Moriah and from Jerusalem I have looked upon the same view which Ezekiel saw in his vision. It is an incredibly dry, lifeless, barren desert area that stretches down the Judean hills to the Jordan Valley and finally to the Dead Sea where nothing lives. How many times throughout the scripture God is spoken of as a flowing stream of water! "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men . . . shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life” (Ps. 36:7-9). These words relate to one thing—that God Himself has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity AS LIFE. We may ask, in what form has God flowed out? He has flowed out first in His Son, in Jesus Christ; and then He has flowed out as the Holy Spirit. Let us see God's order: God Himself is the spring, the very source of the water of life; Jesus Christ, the first-born Son, is the fountain, the reservoir of this divine water; and the Holy Spirit, flowing through the body of Christ, the corporate son, is the living stream, the river flowing all the time. A river is a large stream of water that flows downhill through a channel, within banks. The water is the life, the outflowing of the Spirit. The banks are the earthen channel, the limits or direction of the flowing. The earth of your body, precious friend of mine, is the channel through which the stream of God's life flows. In nature there is water in every part of the atmosphere and in bodies of different magnitudes upon the earth, but a river is a concentrated and channeled current or stream of water. While God's love, and life, and light enfold and embrace all things, and all people, the River of Life is that River, that special provision and flowing of GOD'S CONCENTRATED and CHANNELED LIFE, intensified and magnified in its movement and power. These currents of God's Spirit which flow out through the people of God are the powers of heaven's own Divine Life and have the wondrous ability to wash away the very power and effects and results of sin and death! Every saint of God should seek that the Lord would open his eyes to show him that those who drink deeply of Him become the channel by which God flows out to humanity.

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

In like manner, the glorious River of God is first seen flowing out from the heights of the Paradise of God. Since all rivers flow downhill until they reach the sea, Eden would necessarily have been located at a high altitude, in the mountains or on a plateau. This high altitude or "higher realm" of the Garden of Eden typifies the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This Garden is Canaan, the Promised Land. "A land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11:11-12). God placed Adam the first in the Garden of Eden, or the Kingdom of Heaven, a place of light and beauty, from whence flowed the springs of the fountain of the River of Life, the source of Living Water. Without the Garden lies the "lower realm" of earth, bespeaking the human condition apart from God, the whole dreadful realm of darkness and death in which is contained every sin, sorrow, tragedy, pain, trouble, sickness, heartache, fear and torment known to man. The higher realm of Eden extends upward into infinitude, glory ascending above and beyond glory, for Eden is the gate to the unbounded and inexhaustible heavens. The lower realm includes this world and everything that is beneath it. It descends into the lowest realms of the bottomless and embraces the outer realms of darkness. And flowing from the highest realm of the Kingdom of Heaven to the lower realms of the Kingdom of Darkness is THE BLESSED RIVER OF LIFE. Its incorruptible waters of Spirit and Truth are more real and sparkling and alive than any river of earth. It pulsates with righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost and vibrates with the sheer, exquisite beauty of the divine nature of our great and glorious God and His Christ that is impossible for my poor pen to describe. Its glory surpasses the shining of a million diamonds in the sun, for it is the glory of the Lord God Almighty.

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

As the River flows out under the threshold of the door, it isn't a very great flow to begin with, just a little trickle, though it comes from a mighty depth within. There was a man there with a measuring rod to measure this outflow of life and he measured out a thousand cubits and brought Ezekiel through the waters. They had increased but it still was not a great River, just ankle deep. He measured another thousand cubits and the waters were knee deep; they had increased more. Again he measured a thousand cubits and the waters were to the loins, up to the waist. "Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." Each measure was a thousand cubits. ONE THOUSAND is the number of the Kingdom of God, the DOMINION OF THE DAY OF THE LORD. The measure is the measure of the outflow of His life in respect to the power and glory of the Kingdom, the rule of His Day. As the grace of God flows through our lives it doesn't decrease with the flow, there is no loss or diminishing, it ever increases; the more we allow it to flow the greater it becomes and the more grace there is flowing. This is the law of God. In God's pouring out there is no diminishing of Himself, He is increased and expanded, just as parents are increased and expanded by the extension of their life into their children. This is the wonderful part of God's great purpose. There is never any diminishing, there is always an increase. This is the law of the River of His grace, His love, His life and His glory. We do not need to have an abundance of grace in our hands at any particular moment so long as we are connected with the source. There isn't a lake full of water in the faucet in your bathroom, possibly just a cupful, but if you turn it on and keep it running you can run a lake full through it.

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

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

What glorious prospects lie before us! Very near the Temple is the desert and the Dead Sea — the rough, jagged hills on which nothing grows and over which men stumble, and the sea in whose waters no fish swims, and on whose surface no ship floats. Round about the City of God is a dreary desolation. Is it not true, even today? The stream that Ezekiel saw, as soon as it left the Temple, made straight for the east, for the Dead Sea — for that was the region of death, the region that most needed life and blessing. The River flows out toward the east country — the roots of civilization, the power of the flesh life. It goes down into the desert — the land of drought where there is a famine of hearing the Living Word of God. It goes down into the sea — the raging, surging masses of humanity, and the restless, agitated, uncontrollable emotions of the soul — and everywhere it goes it brings healing and life. Beloved, let us look to ourselves that we do not receive the grace of God in vain, but be laborers together with God, letting the grace of God flow, which is the River of all Divine goodness, life, love and power. If we are to be a part of that River we must keep in contact with the source and get into the flow of the River, the River that will flow to the east country, go down into the desert, bringing life and health to these regions and continue to flow down into the sea bringing life and blessing wherever it flows. All glory be to God!

One cannot begin to tell the blessings to be revealed, the glory to be seen throughout the earth, the release to be ministered to creation, as Aquarius, the Water-Pourer, pours forth the eternal stream of the River of Life unto all the fish in the sea in this, God's NEW DAY. I speak as a prophetic voice in the earth in this generation. The manifestation of glory and power and righteousness which will be manifested within our generation will eclipse all former moves. Who can carry on with the programs of man anymore, who can wade in the shallows of the trickle of former visitations once they have received the vision of what shall be realized as God's people launch out into the deep. The last or most recent "shower of blessing" came during the great Latter Rain outpouring during the years 1948-1953. The effect and blessing of that outpouring is with us still. But the celestial deluge is yet to fall in GREAT POWER AND GLORY. Glorious beyond words to describe was that wonderful outpouring of God's glory at Pentecost, but no language of men below nor of mighty angels above can begin to describe the SURPASSING GLORY of the outpouring in these last days. The "waters to swim in" are coming, the manifestation of the fullness of the spirit and life of the almighty Christ of God, and compared to these waters the former outpourings were flickering candles before the burning brilliance of the noonday sun, or trickling streams compared to the vast ocean currents beyond the power of man to either produce or control. Hear me now and believe me later — if you cannot believe me now — soon, very soon, there will come the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation has groaned for long millenniums and ages. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall flow out and fill the earth. His power shall shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before Him. The harvest of this age shall be
gathered. Everything shall live, whithersoever the River cometh. As on the Dead Sea, where once reigned silence, are now boats and fish and nets and fishermen, when its waters are touched by the Waters of the River, so the church and the world shall be transformed, and this old earth of ours shall become the Paradise of God. I tell you the truth. I lie not. The day is at hand! Rejoice and arise, oh ye sons of the Most High! The glorious dawn is now painting the eastern sky, and the River of God is full of Water.
The Sign of Aquarius is the figure of a mighty man holding a great urn upon his shoulder, from which comes a seemingly inexhaustible stream of water flowing downwards until finally it flows directly into the mouth of a great fish, which receives it and swallows it all. Water, of course, is a great symbol of the Holy Spirit which God promised to pour out upon His people and the earth. It is also the symbol of the Word of God — Divine Truth and Reality. Christ is both the Spirit and the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1). "Now the Lord is that Spirit" (II Cor. 3:17). All that God is was emptied into Jesus Christ, He became a receptacle, a vehicle for all the fullness of God. Now, all that 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. The nature of each son of God is to pour out the living water of the Spirit and the pure, living Word of God just as God poured it into Jesus and Jesus poured it into us. 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 strong man of Aquarius with the water jar. Their life-giving waters will be emptied upon a dry and cursed earth just as the waters were first emptied upon them — creation itself will be released into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God.

THE SOUTHERN FISH

We come now to the three Decans, or minor constellations, which surround Aquarius and which enhance or fill up the message of the Sign. The first constellation is a fish with a wide-open mouth into which flows the water from the huge urn which Aquarius holds. It's name is PISCIS AUSTRALIS, meaning The Southern Fish. This constellation is marked by a single bright star, FOMALHAUT, which means The Mouth of the Fish. The fish receives and drinks the water from the unlimited and unceasing supply of the waterman. It is the picture of the believing acceptance of the Living Spirit of Truth that Christ bestows upon all who come unto Him to drink. "If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me, and drink!"

In a previous Study I shared the great truth of the Law of Giving and Receiving which is the very law of creation and redemption. I showed that God in His eternal and immutable nature is love — all goodness. When we understand that God is love, we can then go on to discover the attribute through which we become aware of His existence — HIS DESIRE TO SHARE. This desire to share is the consequence, the effect of His goodness. A God of love without creation is unthinkable — impossible. Here we have the first principle of creation — God's infinite desire to impart led to the creation of a vessel to receive His blessings. The Creator's nature is love — sharing or imparting; however, there can be no sharing unless there is some object that can receive. So God's infinite
desire to impart implies a desire to fulfill every possible dimension and quality of desires to receive. Can we not see by this that God's infinite desire to give demands AN AGENT WITH THE DESIRE TO RECEIVE! The very nature of God requires CREATION! So the first step in creation was to bring forth the manifestation of the DESIRE TO RECEIVE! The creation of this vessel with the desire to receive was the beginning and the end of creation. He therefore created the universe with all the hosts thereof, and this world with its inhabitants. Thus the Creator could now bestow upon the creation His infinite love and inexhaustible abundance. God is the Lover, creation the beloved! "For God so loved the world..." That is the first fundamental revelation of the law of God in creation — God gives and we receive.

There naturally follows the second stage in which we learn the great truth that God only makes us Receivers in order that we may become Givers! Ah, first He must create in us the desire to receive; second, He must involve us in the grand purpose of the receiving — to mature us into His image until we have thoroughly learned the great law of His Being, of His Kingdom — it is MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE! This leads directly into the light of the truth set forth in the Sign of Aquarius and the constellation of The Southern Fish — Aquarius is THE GIVER; The Southern Fish is THE RECEIVER. From time to time and stage to stage the roles of Giver and Receiver change as the Receivers become Givers. But the Sign points to one thing — that God Himself has flowed out and is still flowing on this earth into humanity AS LIFE. We may ask, in what form has God flowed out? He has flowed out first in His Son, in Jesus Christ; and then He has flowed out as the Holy Spirit. Let us see God's order: God Himself is the spring, the very source of the water of life; Jesus Christ, the first-born Son, is the fountain, the reservoir of this divine water; and the Holy Spirit, flowing through the body of Christ, the corporate son, is the living stream, the river flowing all the time. On the one hand, the Lord Jesus Christ receives from God, we receive from the Lord Jesus Christ, and creation receives from the sons of God. On the other hand, God gives to Christ, Christ gives to us, and we give to creation. In each step Aquarius depicts the Giver, while The Southern Fish portrays the Receiver. This is God's divine order in the Kingdom of God!

PEGASUS

The second constellation in the Sign of Aquarius is PEGASUS — The Winged Horse. Here is the picture of a great horse galloping forward with full speed, with great wings spreading from his shoulders. The familiar figure of the flying horse moving swiftly has been made popular as the trademark of a well-known brand of petroleum products. A winged horse, however, is unknown to nature. It must therefore be understood as a figure. The meaning of this symbol is declared by the names of the stars in the constellation. There are 89 altogether. The brightest comes down to us with the ancient Hebrew name of MARKAB, which means returning from afar. Another bright star is called SCHEAT meaning who goeth and returneth; ENIF, the branch; AL GENIB, who carries; HOMAN, the water; MATAR, who causeth the plenteous overflow. Putting these thoughts together, we see Pegasus as One who returns from afar; He is the branch who carries the water, causing a plenteous overflow! In the first chapter of Zechariah the appearance of such horses are the symbols of those whom "God hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth," not merely to see and report the condition of affairs, but to shake and disturb nations, in order to bring deliverance and establish peace, righteousness and blessing upon all.
Pegasus was known to the Greeks as "the horse of the gushing fountain." He was a celestial horse, ever associated with glad song. Pegasus is winged; he moves with heavenly speed. On great wings he rides the winds. He is master of the air, god-like in his power. Pegasus is a prophetic revelation of the glorious coming of HIM who pours out the living water. In the religious systems of Babylon we have been led to think in terms of the first coming and the second coming of Christ, 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 thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee He shall 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 average Christian's 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 the Son man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mat. 26:64). 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." 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 to us 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 came to you, precious brother, sister, in mighty saving power and indwelling life even as He sits upon the throne on High? 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.

We dare not lose sight of the fact that our Lord has already had many comings, many appearings. 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 "appearing" of the Lord in the New Testament. BUT THEY DO NOT ALL REFER TO THE SAME EVENT. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty messengers, when He shall come to be GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS, and to be admired IN all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:7,10). Jesus Christ is coming again, and He is coming to be glorified IN His saints and to be admired IN the sons of God who by His grace have come into His image throughout the ages. These sons are the body of the Son of God. This is the fullness of the Christ. Not for the world nor all that is in it would I for one moment miss the glory of the age and ages which are to come! To reign with Christ and with Him usher all creation into the glory of God, which has been the vision of the prophets, the dream of the sages, the cry of the sons, the purpose of God, and the longing and expectation of all creation is a prize of far vaster worth than all the power and glory and wealth of all the nations of earth combined. Though God's Christ is One, it will take the ages to come to reveal His manifold beauties and graces. He is the one Christ, yet His body is made up of many redeemed souls. He is the true Vine, yet there are many branches. He is the only-begotten Son of God, yet He is leading many sons to glory. He is the only Saviour, yet He is bringing a whole company of saviours up on Mount Zion.

I bring you good news. YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST. Not the "mystical body" as the theologians of Babylon are wont to define it, but you are T-H-E B-O-D-Y of Christ and Christ is IN YOU of a truth, precious friend of mine, to manifest the fullness of Himself. We can think and know and act like God and not like men. Let us pray as did Paul: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again UNTIL Christ be FORMED in you " (Gal. 4:19). The New English Bible says, "I am in travail with you over again until you take the shape of Christ." The Amplified Bible reads, "I am again suffering birth pangs until Christ is completely and permanently formed (molded) within you!" Wuest's translation renders, "I am again striving with intense effort and anguish until Christ be outwardly expressed in you."

In looking at a piece of petrified wood we can see this. One time it was wood, NOW IT IS ROCK. For something has happened to it. Certain minerals entered into every cell of that piece of wood and wrought a complete change in it. The process continued until that piece of wood had become rock. Same shape, same size and it has exactly the same cell structure. But what a great change has taken place! THIS IS WHAT GOD IS DOING IN US. Something is happening to us. We do not understand all about it, but we know that there is a change going on in our innermost beings. It is God permeating us with Himself. God is impregnating us with Himself. God is taking over, filling even our very cells with all He is and will be. This change is taking place in our inner selves, in our minds, in our spirits, and even in our bodies. This process shall continue until we arrive at the condition of being saturated with God. God's life within us produces a metamorphosis. God shall so fill us, shall so overwhelm us that we take on the very characteristics of God. 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 "left overs" 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 in and 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.

All the comings of the Lord are set forth in the winged horse of the heavens riding triumphantly, the image of aggressive action, of a prosperous conquest. He comes as Deliverer and Blesser with great swiftness, power and joy. Pegasus typifies Christ as the horse of universal conquest. He goes on from conquering to conquer. He accomplishes this victory both within and through His people, His body, His many brethren, the enChristed. Experience His triumph in your own life, my beloved, then you, in union with Him, will ride the heavens victoriously in Him, and He in you. It is through us, precious saints, that the power of Christ's redemption is manifested upon earth. It is through us that this salvation is put to the test, and men see what it will do. It is in our lives, that its power to give speed, strength and victory is manifested.

THE SWAN

The last Decan or part of this story of Aquarius is CYGNUS — THE SWAN, the lordly king-bird of the waters. There is a cross in the northern sky, sometimes called the Northern Cross, in contrast to the Southern Cross. This star group is called CYGNUS, and it reveals a beautiful swan flying across the heavens. While it is called a cross, and appears as a cross, this beautiful shape is formed by the principal stars which outline the wings and the length of the body of the swan. Thus, it is in fact, a swan-cross. But this mighty bird is not falling dead, like Aquila, but is seen here in rapid flight. In classic writings the swan was considered the emblem of poetic dignity, purity and grace. It seems to be flying down the Milky Way, in the same general direction with the river which pours from the heavenly urn. It is thus the bird of matchless beauty, purity, dignity and grace, bearing aloft the cross, and circling with it over the blessed waters of life. As the white dove is the emblem of the Holy Spirit, so the elegantly pure and graceful Swan, bearing the cross, and moving with the life-flow of the Holy Spirit, is the symbol of the blessed MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION — the MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT in mercy, grace, goodness and blessing. It is the ministry of the sons of God and the joyous and abundant life they bring to all men everywhere. It is the swift heralding and bearing of
the glad provision of redemption and restoration to all people. It is the graceful holding forth of the reconciliation by His cross to the nations over which, with outspread wings, this ministry cries, "If any man thirst, let him come and drink!" "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely!" It is the ministry embodying both the cross and the river of God — reconciliation by His blood and transformation by His life!

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. He came to bring peace. Peace is alien to earth. When sin entered, peace fled. The moment that sin entered, peace fled, and Adam and Eve themselves were at strife with God and each other, so that their firstborn son had the spirit of the devil and was a murderer from the beginning. He slew his own brother. The second Man, the last Adam, was the Lord from heaven. When He was once rejected, in the days of His flesh, His disciples, with indignation, besought Him to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy these evil people. His answer comes down to us through the ages: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Lk. 9:55-56). The firstborn son of Adam was a murderer, but the firstborn Son of God was a Saviour. One was the peace-breaker shedding his brother's blood, the other was the Peacemaker shedding His own blood that He might make peace with God and man. Yet the Christ had power to destroy men's lives if He had the will. When He stood there with the cross in full view, He said to His persecutors that it was in His power to call twelve legions of angels. If that heavenly host which hovered about that Son could have once made itself manifest, oh, how they would have swept that doomed city, that accursed conclave of false priests, and those wretched, blind and filthy- minded heathen soldiers! How the breath of those heavenly angels could have swept the life out of them and swept them down into hell and the grave. But that is not God's way in redemption. That is not the mission of the Son of God nor of the sons of God.

"For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to RECONCILE ALL THINGS unto Himself, by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled" (Col. 1:17,20-21). "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto US the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:18-20).

It is utterly impossible for any man or any creature on earth or in heaven to exclude himself from the work of this most precious ministry — the ministry of reconciliation. Before the reader can shut himself, or any other man or being out from the application of this grace, he must prove that he does not belong to either the earth or heaven, or that he is not a part of the "all things" that were created by and in the Christ in the beginning, and that therefore he is excluded from being reconciled, since he has no identification with any of the "all things" that were created and that are being reconciled unto God. This he cannot do, and hence he must see that God is beseeching him and all to be reconciled! Every foot of this earth and every man upon this earth belongs to Christ, for He made the earth and He made every man. On that wonderful day when God created "all things" in earth and in heaven He also said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our
likeness.” Christ made every man and tasted death for every man, and therefore every foot of the earth and every man on the earth belongs to Christ my Lord, first by right of creation, and second by right of redemption.

I must emphasize that God is the Creator of ALL THINGS. Notice the things that the inspired apostle includes in creation. ALL things in the heavens, or all things that are in and constitute the RULING ELEMENT — "the heavens do rule" (Dan. 4:26). ALL the things on the earth, or all things that are in or constitute those elements which are ruled, or under authority. ALL things that are visible, or that are discernible to the physical senses — ALL that the eyes can see, ALL that the ears can hear, ALL that we can touch, feel, taste, or smell — has been created by God. ALL things that are invisible were created by our God — ALL the wisdom, ALL the knowledge, yea, even that which has not yet been tapped or conceived of by the mind of man — GOD CREATED. ALL the myriad machines and devices that shall yet come out of the mind of man, were created by God. ALL of the vast forces and powers and universal laws that science has not yet discovered, were created by God. ALL the thrones, and the glory and the power of those who occupy them, were created by God. ALL the dominions or lordships, the mastery and the supremacy, were created by God. ALL the principalities and powers, angels, intelligences, chief ones, in heaven and in earth, invisible and visible, spiritual and natural, were created by God. And it is not just the fact that all of these were created by God that startles us the most, but it goes on to say that BY THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS ALL THESE THINGS ARE RECONCILED TO GOD IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. This implies that the principalities and powers in the heavenly realms needed reconciling and are reconciled by the blood of God's Son. This is why the Redeemer was both a HEAVENLY BEING and an EARTHLY BEING. He was the Word from heaven made flesh upon earth, heaven and earth blended into one, so that the Son could say, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). Praise God, even the principalities and powers in the heavens are included in the glorious reconciliation and peace secured by the blood of His cross, the Man who was from heaven, born on earth, reconciling both realms into one IN HIMSELF. Glory! What more beautiful picture of this wonderful ministry of reconciliation could we find than the graceful Swan flying through the heavens in the configuration of the cross, following the life-giving stream of the River of God!

The most abusive and vindictive letters I have received through the years have come from people who claim to be in the sonship company through which God will set all creation free. One letter I well remember was from one of these "creation-delivering-sons" bitterly denouncing me and the teaching of the "reconciliation of all things." He said it is "destructive" and "satanic" and that he was sick of it all. When people call these precious and scriptural truths Satanic, they unwittingly blaspheme the Holy Spirit, for it was He and none other who inspired Paul to write these words: "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to RECONCILE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF." It was the Holy Spirit who said that "God was in Christ, RECONCILING THE WORLD unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation." And in the face of such wonderful and all inclusive statements as these, these have the brazen audacity to write to me and make such Holy Spirit-defying statements as: "I don't believe in the reconciliation of all things." The simple truth is, my beloved brethren, that until we are able to embrace God's immutable intention of reconciling all things unto Himself, we will never be able to clearly see God's plan for this present age nor for the other ages yet to come. And most certainly God will not entrust into our hands the blessed ministry of reconciliation as long as we remain hostile.
toward God's gracious purpose and vindictive toward men for whom Christ died and the creation we are sent to rescue and redeem.

The fact that we see and appreciate God's great and wonderful plan for all men leaves no room in us for a dilatory, don't care spirit. The elect of God are always conscious of their unique calling. We are given the high honor of being laborers together with God. Some day when the last devil has been subjected, and the last sinner broken in humility and contrition at the lovely feet of Jesus, we shall realize, as we may not now, just how great that honor really is, and how much we have missed if we fail to share in this task to which the Almighty has set His hand. I must confess that I am deeply grieved in my spirit when I meet these would-be sons of God who look with contempt upon those who still have a passion for souls and desire to see men delivered from the power of sin and satan. I am aware of the fact that the hour has not yet arrived when God shall deal with all nations, and multitudes of past generations, to bring forth His salvation in them, but it is my deepest conviction that one of the sure marks of sonship is THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION. Why speak of our great hope of what God shall do in the ages to come if the spirit of that hope is not now alive in our hearts? It is not the doctrine of reconciliation that shall change the world and all things, but the ministry of reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation springs from the spirit of reconciliation. If you would not walk across the street to see some poor soul delivered and converted by the redeeming power of Christ, don't waste your time relating to me how you are chosen of God to help in the delivering of the whole creation from the bondage of sin and death. The Spirit of Reconciliation must reign within our hearts. The Ministry of Reconciliation must issue forth from our lives. Rivers of living water must, even now, pour forth out of our innermost being, bringing hope and victory and life to all who will come and drink! May we soar and fly o'er the land in the graceful and gracious nature of the Swan!

This beautiful ministry of reconciliation is the activity of the Holy Spirit in and through those who are chosen, processed and equipped to bring life to the world. What a fitting symbol of the majesty, grace and power of this ministry is the image of the Swan flying through the heavens, displaying the cross, while moving with and by the flow of the river of Living Water. It has been God's purpose from the foundation of the world to indwell and express Himself through man. In the process of accomplishing this God has manifested Himself in three aspects of His Person. Electricity serves as an illustration of this threefold manifestation of God. It includes these three stages: the source, the manifestation, and the realization. These seem to be three different things, but in reality they are one. The source, the manifestation, and the realization are all three activities of the electricity. Electricity is energy, and if energy did not exist there could be no source, no manifestation, no realization. In the same way that you have electricity in three different stages, so there is one eternal Person of God expressing Himself in three distinct aspects and operations of His Being. At one end there is the source of the electricity —the generator producing it. Then there is the manifestation of electricity in a thousand different ways: the hot coils of the stove, the lighted filament in the light bulb, the running engine in the machine, etc. Finally, there is the realization of electricity — the light coming from the light bulb and flooding the room, the heat coming from the stove, etc.

The light that you read or work by, the heat in the house which makes you comfortable, the sound of the doorbell when it rings, these are simply electricity realized. As you read and work in the light you don't think very much about the bulb on the ceiling, or about the generator miles away. You just utilize and enjoy the light in the room! And yet, without the
bulb there is no light, and without the generator the bulb can produce no light. Each stage is necessary. Similarly, God as FATHER is the source of our divine life — the generator. God as SON is the manifestation of that divine life — the bulb. And God as HOLY SPIRIT is our realization of this divine life within — the light (life) filling our room: our hearts, minds, spirits and bodies. But these are not three different Persons! These are just three stages of the very SAME THING! The thing proceeding from the generator is energy, the thing flowing and manifesting through the bulb is energy, and the light filling the room is energy! Not three different energies, but the same energy. Likewise, the divine life in the Father is GOD, the divine life in the Son is GOD, and the divine life transmitted to us as the Spirit is GOD. Not three different Gods, but the one God! The Holy Spirit is in us as the very transmission of God, transmitting constantly all that God is in Christ to us. As the body of Christ we are the expression of God by the Holy Spirit to the creation. What a calling! What a potential!

The word "spirit," in the Old Testament, is the translation of the Hebrew word RUACH, the primary significance or root-meaning of which is WIND. The word "spirit" in the New Testament comes from the Greek word PNEUMA, whose primary significance or root-meaning is likewise WIND. The English word "ghost" used in the King James Bible, though now somewhat obsolete and not in general use, is derived from the Greek PNEUMA, its original meaning being exactly the same as the word "spirit," meaning WIND. But let no one hastily conclude that we are about to attempt to prove that the Holy Spirit is a holy wind, for nothing could be farther from our thought.

There are two basic characteristics of the wind which qualify it to so fittingly serve as the supreme symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wind is first of all a POWERFUL FORCE, and secondly it is INVISIBLE. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the SPIRIT" (Jn. 3:8). You cannot see the wind, and yet you are aware of its reality because of its power with the visible effects of that power manifested all around you. In earlier times the wind was used broadly as a source of energy. Man has always known how to use sails on a boat or ship. Later, he learned to use the same principle to construct a windmill, using the force of the wind to turn grindstones, pump water, and do many other kinds of work. In like manner, the invisible and powerful INWARD ENERGY AND FORCE which motivates and transforms our lives into the image of God is the HOLY SPIRIT! And God's ministry through us to creation is by the invisible but powerful energy and force of the HOLY SPIRIT. It is interesting to note that the Swan in the Sign of Aquarius rides the wind! The ministry of the sons of God, the ministry of reconciliation, is motivated, propelled and executed by the Spirit!

Jesus spoke a great spiritual truth when He said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." Nicodemus was unable to comprehend the idea of being "born again," even though Jesus used the wind as an illustration to help make it plain. The wind, as we have pointed out, is both powerful and invisible. It moves about, freely and powerfully, and while we may hear the sound and see the effects, we cannot tell from whence it comes, or whither it goeth, we have no control over either its coming or its going — "So is everyone who is born of the Spirit," Jesus said. Indeed, the way of the spiritual person, especially that of the Lord's elect, is as the wind that "bloweth where it listeth." That person becomes spiritual by encountering various growth experiences, passing through one stage of development after another, often involving one "church" and "fellowship" association after another, until ultimately they arrive at the place of spiritual stature called "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" where there are no religious trappings, no
denominational characteristics, no sectarian attachments, and no adherence to the traditions of the elders, or to the rituals, ceremonies, doctrines, programs, creeds, structure, or methods of the popular church system. These blessed ones are now free to be LED BY THE SPIRIT for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

The way of the Spirit is truly strange to the natural mind of man and the carnal precepts of religion, but to the spiritual person, His ways are life and truth and reality. The way of the Spirit-born person is as the wind that blows, and so also is the moving of the Spirit. The Spirit of God blows, first upon one, and then another, and another, touching the lives of those who are chosen for that hour in God. His Spirit is as the wind that "bloweth where it listeth," so that the sound thereof is heard, yet no one can control it or make a form or structure of it. That is certainly a different expression than one sees in the systemized programs of man! The blessed realm of the Spirit is a wondrous realm that cannot be intellectually learned or perceived, but we are experiencing the way of the Spirit by walking in that realm. Wisdom has declared, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all" (Eccl. 11:5). The flowing of the precious Holy Spirit is spontaneous and unpredictable as the wind that blows where He wills. Therefore, we cannot expect to know the works of God except by that same Spirit. The mighty, omnipotent movings of the Spirit of God are truly a mystery. Not one among us, of ourselves, could predict what He will do next. But if we are truly born of the Spirit of God, and are flowing in union and harmony with Him, we will then be blessed with the experiences necessary and vital to our new identity and ministry as SONS OF THE SPIRIT — C-H-I-L-D-R-E-N O-F T-H-E W-I-N-D!

In order for one to know and properly understand the all-sufficiency of the Spirit of the Christ within, he must first see what Christ is. I do not say who Christ is, but what Christ is. There are many different titles and names ascribed to Christ in the scriptures; however, we will not here consider the names of Christ, but the substance of Christ, His very essence. My automobile, made of metal, is called an automobile, but its substance is metal. What is the substance of Christ? "Now the Lord is THE SPIRIT" (II Cor. 3:17). What is Christ? Why, He is the SPIRIT! He may be called by many titles and names, all descriptive of His various attributes, characteristics, ministrations and offices. He may be known as Saviour, as Redeemer, as Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Comforter, Prophet, High Priest, King, Lord, I Am, and scores of other glorious titles. But what is His substance? "The last Adam was made a QUICKENING SPIRIT" (I Cor. 15:45). The message is clear — the substance of Christ is SPIRIT. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts" (Gal. 4:6).

Two things were essential before Jesus could return as the Lord, the Spirit. He must GO AWAY. He must BE GLORIFIED. "This spake Jesus of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn. 7:39). On our behalf, as man and the Head of man, Jesus was resurrected, and then ascended, being admitted into the full glory of the Divine, and His human nature received up into union and participation with the eternal Spirit (transcendent God), of the same essence and substance as the eternal Spirit, taking on the qualities of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. Is He omnipotent? "ALL POWER is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28:18). Is He omnipresent? In Eph. 4:10 we have this simple but instructive statement: "He that descended is the same
also that ASCENDED UP FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS, THAT HE MIGHT F-I-L-L A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S." Having ascended in Being into the fullness of the SPIRIT the Lord Jesus could now come down as the Spirit of the GOD-MAN —most really the Spirit of God, and yet as truly the Spirit of Jesus the man. He could come down as the Spirit of the GLORIFIED JESUS, to quicken our spirit by His Spirit, making us one in Him. God be praised! Jesus has been glorified! He has ascended up far above all celestial realms! He has emanated from that realm to fill all things! And now, praise His name, He is being glorified IN US!

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

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

The next thing we need to understand, to comprehend this mystery, is the meaning of the word "profit" Jesus used here when He said, "The flesh profiteth nothing." Now the profit on any investment is always the increase. It is that which was not, which is created out of the investment’s creative powers of that which one starts with. If I invest a thousand dollars, and it brings back two thousand dollars, then the second thousand dollars is the increase, the profit, that is literally brought forth out of the creative powers that were in the first thousand dollars to increase itself, to double itself, when properly invested. Therefore, this word "profit" is a creative word. It implies the power to create, to increase one’s self, or to reproduce one’s self. Therefore, when Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth
nothing," what He was trying to get over to us is that there is no creative power in the flesh — in anything that is physical and material in this earth. It cannot increase itself; it cannot reproduce itself; in fact, it can’t even sustain the life that it has, for if our spirit was to depart from our flesh body, it would immediately begin to deteriorate and go back to the dust from whence it came. When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," He was revealing to us that every visible, carnal, natural, material, physical thing in this world, including our own flesh body, is not creative. It has no power to increase itself; it doesn’t even have the power to sustain its own life. All it can ever be is the visible manifestation or expression of the Life of Spirit, and of the creative power that is in Spirit.

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

When Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing — it is the spirit that quickeneth, that is the source of your life," He was revealing to us the great truth that the source of our life is not in the flesh, not in the visible, not in the carnal, physical, material things, or anything that is of this natural world; but all those things are but outward manifestations of the creative powers that are in the Life of Spirit, and that the source of our life is in our own spirit. Now the problem with all of God’s people, you see, is that they have not known this great truth. They have thought that they are dependent for their lives on the carnal, material, physical things of the flesh of this world — natural money, natural housing, natural clothing, natural food, natural body, natural abilities, the laws of nature. All of us have thought that those things were the source from which our life came. In fact, we have so been deceived that those visible, physical, carnal, natural things were the source of our life that we were so completely dependent upon them that if we were cut off from them — if we lost our job, lost our money, lost our housing, lost our food — we thought that we would die! For you see, this is the great lie that the devil deceived man with through the fall. When man lost the consciousness of his spiritual nature, and degenerated down into the consciousness of the carnal, natural nature, the devil convinced man that he was
dependent upon the visible and the physical and the natural for his life — natural money, natural job, natural business, natural body, natural housing, natural clothing, natural possessions, natural food — natural, natural, natural! We have been so convinced that that is the source of our life that we have been scared to death that if we were cut off from that source of life, we would die.

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

Do you notice how easily Jesus did this? The scripture says that Jesus instructed His disciples, "Make the men sit down." You see, when you get bread from this source, you don’t have to get it standing up, with a plow or sickle in your hand, laboring and sweating, as men have for six thousand years, since they’ve been under the curse; but you sit quietly down and bring forth all things sitting down. The men sat down, and Jesus sat quietly down with them. The record states that Jesus just quietly took the loaves of bread, and when He had given thanks, He distributed it to the disciples — as much as they would. You see there was no shortage here. Everyone got to eat as much as he wanted, as much as he would! And Jesus did it so smoothly and so easily — He simply sat down, gave thanks, and began to hand it out. He didn’t have to go through all the soulish and natural things that we do today, in order to work up a little faith. He didn’t have to go through a thirty-minute praise service, dance around in the Spirit for ten or fifteen minutes, speak in tongues, prophesy, and then say, "In the name of Jesus, let there be bread!" This great truth that we’re seeking to share with you, that it is the spirit — the Spirit of Christ in your own Spirit — that is the source of Life, had become so real to Him that, moving in the spiritual law of faith, He could draw it, effortlessly, right out of His own spirit.

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

The measure of life unto which we have been called has been seen in Christ Jesus. "Far it pleased the Father that in Him should ALL FULLNESS dwell" (Col. 1:19). "For in Him dwelleth ALL THE FULLNESS of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). Though we, the members of His body, have received "of" that fullness, yet the concern of the Father in this hour is that there come to pass a further enlargement of our capacities to contain Him, to live out of Him, and to minister Him, for He seeks a body through which He can manifest all the fullness of Himself to creation. Paul prayed for the Ephesian believers to this end: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints WHAT IS THE BREADTH, and LENGTH, and DEPTH, and HEIGHT (of capacity); that ye might be FILLED WITH A-L-L THE FULLNESS OF GOD" (Eph. 3:17-19). Only the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God can minister to our yearning hearts the full comprehension of what is the breadth, and length, and depth of the supply of God in the Spirit and of our capacity to express Him. But one thing God would have us understand in all simplicity — the increase of our capacity COMES THROUGH OUR GROWTH AS MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY. This point is made very plain in Eph. 4:15-16 where we read, "But speaking the truth in love, may GROW UP I-N-T-O H-I-M in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, MAKETH INCREASE (ENLARGEMENT) OF THE BODY unto the edifying of itself in love." Ah — there is an increase, an enlargement of the body, not numerically, but an increase of expanded capacity for manifesting Him!

It is right at this point that the average Christian sells himself short. Especially the Pentecostal or Charismatic! How many of the Lord's precious people who seek the Holy Spirit mistakenly seek a "blessing," or an "experience." To "speak in tongues" is often their highest aim, or to be "slain under the power," and if they can attain to that phenomenon then they are happy and satisfied in their belief that they have received all, or at least most, of what God has for them in this life. HOW PITIFUL IS SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING! How desperately short we sell ourselves when we seek the Holy
Spirit as an "experience" that we are to attain instead of presenting ourselves as vessels to be filled with all the incomprehensible inexhaustibleness of GOD! This Spirit, who is God, and is sent forth by God, full of wisdom and truth, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, glory and power brings in His mighty fullness ever-increasing measures of His own unlimited and unfathomable abundance. May all who read these lines clearly understand that the fullness of which we speak is not quantitative — it is qualitative. It is not that we are filled with more and more of the same degree, but with higher dimensions, unfolding development, expanding heights and depths, maturity of life, reality more intense and perfect. Yes, God would fill us and then expand us that He might fill us the more, until we attain even that "measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST," which measure is nothing less that the full development within of HIM THAT FILLETH ALL THINGS!

I have observed in the ministry of Jesus that there was never a problem He faced that He could not solve, never a need that He could not meet, no victory He could not win, no realm of revelation, experience, or relationship to God that He could not possess. Some of us speak of the exploits we have done in Jesus' name, but we seldom mention all the times we have failed! Some of us fast and pray and wrest an answer from the Lord and then run squarely into another problem that we can't solve at all. If Jesus, the firstborn Son, needed the Spirit WITHOUT MEASURE, then we, His elect body, need it too!

It is interesting to note that nowhere in the Gospels was the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ ever associated with the gifts of the Spirit. No place does it ever say that Jesus received or operated in a gift of the Spirit. However, like most people, I assumed He did! And I could always make it fit. Every time Jesus healed someone I assumed that He exercised the gift of healing, although the scripture didn't say so. Every time He prophesied coming events I said that He moved in the gift of prophecy, although the Holy Spirit never said so. When He spoke to Nathaniel, revealing the secrets of his heart, I said that He spoke a "word of knowledge" although the record says no such thing. How is it that Jesus did not operate in the gift-realm? Because He moved in the fullness of the spirit of sonship. There is a world of difference between receiving a "gift" from God and possessing the SONSHIP ANOINTING. Jesus explained it this way: "He that cometh from above is above all.... for He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loveth THE SON, and hath given all things into His hand" (Jn. 3:31-35). How much greater is the Sonship Ministry than the gift-realm! "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor. 13:9-10). The ministry of Jesus was not in the gift-realm, not in the in-part-realm, not by measure — and therefore not even in the realm of New Testament Church economy. His ministry was the ministry of a SON OF GOD in the fullness of the power and glory of the Father!

For many years now there has been a great moving of the Spirit of God across the land and around the world. It has manifested itself through many movements on various levels. We have witnessed great evangelistic ministries, the divine healing ministry, the restoration of the New Testament Church order with its five-fold ministry, the nine gifts of the Spirit, the impartation through prophecy with the laying on of hands. But I can testify to you that none of these ministries has come within the range of the ministry of Jesus Christ the Son of God. No matter which of the healing ministries you watched, no matter what prophet you heard, matters not what miracle, sign, or wonder, it did not measure up to the ministry of THE SON OF GOD. We kept saying, "We have the same anointing, the same Holy Ghost, the same power, the same authority, and we can do all the works (or
even greater) than Jesus did!" And as hard as we tried, as strongly as we wanted to believe it, as much as we rationalized it, it still just wasn't true! We had the same anointing, alright, and the same Holy Spirit — but we had it in the form of gifts — not in the fullness of the SPIRIT OF SONSHIP! Therefore creation continues to groan, and we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the MANIFESTATION OF THE S-O-N-S OF GOD!

How much greater is the sonship ministry than the gift-realm! The prophet Isaiah prophesied of the Son and the sons: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. 11:1-2). This does not say that Jesus would receive a "gift" or "the word of wisdom." It says that what He received was the S-P-I-R-I-T OF WISDOM. It doesn’t state that Jesus had a "gift of healing" or "the gift of knowledge." He possessed the S-P-I-R-I-T OF KNOWLEDGE! Not a fragmentary word of wisdom here, or a fragmentary word of knowledge there, or a gift of healing working tonight, and a gift of prophecy operating tomorrow night. NO! Upon the firstborn Son rested all the fullness of the sevenfold Spirit of Sonship, just as the prophet declared, saying,

"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding,  
The Spirit of Counsel and Might,  
The Spirit of Knowledge and Fear of the Lord."

This sevenfold Spirit of God is the fullness of the wisdom, glory, nature and power of God. This is the Spirit WITHOUT MEASURE. This is the SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD. This is the SEVENFOLD BRIGHTNESS OF GOD’S GLORY! This is why our Lord Jesus Christ could heal every disease, could cast out every kind of devil, could raise the dead — even after they were deteriorated and stinking — could discern every thought and intent of men’s hearts, could command every element of nature, and even die and rise again! Some of us have been able to do a very limited amount of this. Some of us have had a gift of healing and have healed some sick people, but who has healed them ALL, even in one meeting? Some of us have been healed ourselves, but who among us has been healed EVERY TIME? Some of us have prophesied, have had a word of knowledge, but who has had every word that he has ever spoken come to pass? The miracles we have witnessed and experienced have been glorious, indeed: gas put in our tanks, batteries charged, finances supplied from unexpected sources, etc. But who among us has walked on the sea or fed five thousand men with five small loaves and two fish? Some have had their countenances lighted with the glow of the joy of the Lord, but who has stood on the Mount of Transfiguration with even their raiment shining as the brightness of the noon-day sun? Ah — therefore creation continues to groan, and we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the MANIFESTATION OF THE S-O-N-S OF GOD!

The Spirit of God has witnessed to many thousands of saints around the world in this hour that a New Day dawns upon the horizon. The next great move of God is even now at hand. There will not be another revival. There shall not come another visitation. It is not the hour for the restoration of the Church. A new day dawns. God is marching on. He shall do an entirely new thing in the earth. A new age lies directly before us. The
manifestation of God's sons is at hand. The Kingdom of God is at hand! In this New Day, in this glorious age of Aquarius, the Swan shall fly as the river flows — the ministry of the fullness of the Spirit of God shall be released through a people in reconciliation, blessing, and transformation unto all the ends of the earth! Praise His name!
Chapter 34

Pisces - The Fishes

As we move around the path of the sun, we now come to the seventh major Sign of the heavens: PISCES — THE FISHES. In the House of Pisces there are two fishes, one moving upward toward the North Polar Star; the other is swimming in the horizontal position along the path of the ecliptic, or the path of the sun. The two fishes are bound together by a band which is securely tied around the tail portion of the body of each fish. The band is also attached to the neck of Cetus, the Sea Monster; and Aries, or the Ram (or Lamb) has his paw across the band that connects the fishes. Directly above this scene is Andromeda — The Chained Woman. Andromeda is a line of bright stars picturing a woman with her arms and feet in chains, in misery and trouble, helplessly bound in the sky. Beyond Andromeda is the final scene in the House of Pisces, Cepheus — The King. Here we have the picture of a bearded man wearing a crown and a royal robe, seated upon a throne. In his uplifted hand he holds a scepter. He is a glorious king enthroned in the highest heaven and his right foot is placed firmly upon the North Polar Star — the central point in all of the galaxies and all of the heavens. In this strange picture set in the sky he is the Deliverer coming to liberate the Chained Woman.

THE FISHES

In Pisces the two fishes are a representation of the church, the called out, the people of God. At the beginning of His ministry, seeing Peter and Andrew casting a net into the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus said unto them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mat. 4:19). When God promised that He would bring again the children of Israel into their own land, His word was, "I will send for many fishers, and they shall fish them" (Jer. 16:15-16). So in Ezekiel's vision of the great River of God the word was, "And there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because the waters shall come thither" (Eze. 47:1-9). Christ speaks of the members of His body as "born of water" (Jn. 3:5). The early Christians were accustomed to call believers ECHTHUES and PISCES — that is, fishes.

In His wonderful parable of the Dragnet Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea. It is the picture of a great net that is let down into the sea, and is left, and it swings to the moving of the waters, and there are gathered into it fishes of all sorts, all kinds. Then towards the close of day, or early morning more often, the fishermen draw the net in, and as it comes in it encloses a vast multitude of fishes. Some of them are of no use. Others are valuable. The fishermen are seen settled down on the shore, and their first business is to sort and sift, to take out the valueless and worthless, and leave in the good, gathering them together in vessels, after the worthless have been cast aside. Several of our Lord's disciples were fishermen; much of His ministry was passed by the Sea of Galilee; we find Him on various occasions making use of a fishing boat for crossing that inland sea or lake, and once at least He preached from one. Such a scene as that described in this parable might be seen there any day, and may be still. For fishermen still ply their business on those waters; their boats still cross from side to side; their nets are still let down for a draught, and at other times may be seen spread on the rocks.
Our Lord has made the spiritual meaning clear. The parable is meant to represent the realm of Heaven, that is, the spiritual realm of God, or God's government on earth. What a fisherman does in gathering all kinds of fish into his net, and then bringing a separation between those that qualify for his purposes, and those who do not, is like what the almighty Father is doing throughout this age in the formation, development and manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Throughout the scriptures the sea is a type of the raging, restless, surging masses of unregenerate humanity, tossed to and fro by the inner storms of the turbulent character of the carnal mind. The prophet Isaiah penned these inspired words: "The wicked are like THE TROUBLED SEA, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:20-21). Jude also described natural men when he said, "These are RAGING WAVES OF THE SEA, foaming out their own shame" (Jude 13). John, on the isle of Patmos, had a vision of a great whore sitting on many waters. The angel revealed the meaning of the "many waters", saying, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, ARE PEOPLES, AND MULTITUDES, AND TONGUES" (Rev. 17:15). No one can dispute the fact that it is this restless, turbulent, raging carnal heart of unregenerate men that inspires every imaginable evil and devilish perversion, and has filled the world with ever increasing confusion, immorality, faithlessness, falsehood, fraud, hatred, violence, greed, cruelty, wars and rumors of wars, bloodshed and oppression. Ah, the SEA is the LOWEST REALM on earth, and this vast sea of degenerate humanity represents mankind at his lowest point — as bad off as man can be!

The net is the Word of the Kingdom that reaches out into the vast sea of humanity and draws men, by the power of the Holy Spirit, into the sphere of the influence of the Kingdom realm of God. "A net cast into the sea," let down from a higher world, out of a different sphere — such is the dynamic of the Kingdom of Heaven. The net is, furthermore, the ministry of reconciliation — the authority of God's Word and the power of His Spirit by which He draws men out of the restless surgings of sin and death, and the darkness and futility of the world system, into the calm peace, enlightenment and reality of a realm higher and grander — life in the Spirit — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. O glorious ministry of reconciliation! While the net is, to all appearance, the plaything of the waves, it is as a matter of fact held in the grasp of, and absolutely controlled by, One who stands upon the shore. See it as it is tossed about by the waves; they seem to do with it what they will, to bear it hither or thither as they please; to make or mar its shape and proportions; to all appearance its form and movement at any moment are the result of the action of the waters alone, they toss it from side to side, expand or contract it, bear it out to sea or dash it in their fury shorewards. Now it is borne with a rush in one direction, and now, in the grasp of some mighty wave, its whole course is altered. But as we watch we see the wondrous yet simple plan by which every thread of that mazy net is controlled by the Mind of Him who holds it in His hand. His intelligence, His Will, His Purpose, moves it and governs it, and runs along every delicate fibre, in spite of all its free play in the waters. He knows when to relax His hold and when to draw it in; He knows how to avoid undue strain from the force of the current or the rush of the captives within the net. At the time when all the cords are most lax, and all its movements most free, His hand gauges the strength of the pull, His Eye, His Mind is upon it all. That vast network of ministry and dealing by which men are gathered into the Kingdom of Heaven is but the Fisherman's Hand, its movements are the expression of His skill and purpose. The waters may have their way, but never so as to frustrate or hinder His Purpose.

That net floating amidst the waves, and tossed about so easily, betokens another world; it is the only representative of a mind acting from without. The natural man is incapable of
thinking beyond the impulses of the sea. But when God sends forth His ministry of reconciliation with the authority of His Word and the power of His Spirit a higher will, a more intelligent purpose than the battling waves know anything about, is lying there in the depths of the sea, sometimes passive, sometimes active, and each delicate thread is the channel along which that will and intelligence are borne. Whether the net lies slack and shifts with every heaving of the sea, or whether it strains and pulls, it is equally the act of the Mind of Him who holds it! In saving men the first thing God has to do is to get our attention. And to do that He chooses to use events which are instruments of either His goodness or His judgment, according to the need. Ah, yes, God has a great net and He knows just how to GET OUR ATTENTION! He can get it here and now. If He doesn't get it here, He will get it in hell. If He doesn't get it in hell, He will get it in the lake of fire. He will get it by gracious words and tender mercies, if He can. He will get it by severe judgments and awful wrath, if He must. But, blessed be His name, He will get our attention! When we consider the wisdom, purpose and power of the One who makes and casts and gathers the net, with what new and wonderful significance does the proclamation of Jesus Christ echo through the corridors of our spirits as we hear the impelling words sound from His lips, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, WILL DRAW A-L-L M-E-N UNTO ME" (Jn. 12:32).

Beloved, when God chooses to bring a people unto Himself, He is well able to do so, even to reach out to them without the use of a human vessel, if need be. He is the greatest Fisherman with the most marvelous Net! The Christ has been lifted up from the earth and now has all power in heaven and in earth — the omnipotent One. In due time He will bring His redemptive process into glorious fulfillment and consummation. If God wants to save Russians, He is well able to demolish the iron curtain and destroy the mighty bastions of communism, and cast His net into the sea of Russia. If He wants any number of Chinese, He is able to apprehend them in spite of the iron rule of an atheistic government. There is no continent too dark, no people too enslaved by satanic powers, no man too incorrigible but what His power can penetrate them. Christ has been lifted up from the earth, and He will draw all men unto Himself. He holds the net in His almighty hands. Its work is to enclose a multitude scattered far and wide, draw them together, and skillfully bring them to the shore, to that region from whence the net came; and it would be impossible to conceive of anything better adapted to carry out this purpose. Such is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. What more vivid picture could be drawn of it than that drawn by the hand of our Lord when He says, "It is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea; which, when it was full, they drew to shore." Such is the beginning of the Kingdom in our lives and in the earth!

But that is not the end of the matter. Gathered out of the sea the fishes are brought to the shore — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Mat. 6:10). The highest realm known to man is called heaven. The interpretations of poor human beings are always childish in the extreme, for we know nothing yet as we ought to know. We have tried to picture heaven as a far-off place of many mansions, full of splendid temples and exquisite gardens, where idle inhabitants while away an endless eternity flitting about in white night gowns over golden streets and shouting hallelujah. The Greek word for "heaven" is OURANOUS, meaning "elevation, height, exaltation, eminence." This word has both natural and spiritual applications. In its spiritual application it bespeaks of the eternal and omnipresent REALM OF THE SPIRIT in which God and all celestial beings dwell — far above the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. It is not a geographical or astral location. It is not a place. It is a DIMENSION OF LIFE AND REALITY, A STATE OF BEING, A SPHERE OF
EXISTENCE. Every spirit life-form lives on a plane of spiritual awareness and being. Each of these planes constitutes a "heaven", a spiritual realm above and beyond the physical and visible. Heaven is naught but the Biblical name of the REALM OF GOD'S SPIRIT, the invisible and omnipresent dimension of spiritual reality. And it is all around us. It is as near to us as the very air we breathe, yea, closer to us even than the blood coursing its way through our veins. It is just as real and near and invisible as the radio waves flooding the room where you are. We are one with it by virtue of our spiritual life. We touch heaven as we touch God. We behold heavenly things as we fasten mind and heart upon spiritual realities. We walk in heaven as we walk in the Spirit. Heaven is, furthermore, the realm of God's government — His infinite power and almighty authority. "Thus saith the Lord, the HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, and the earth is My foot-stool" (Isa. 66:1).

God is now in the grand process of bringing men out of the lowest realm of the sea of vanity, sin and death, up into the highest realm of heaven, to the fullness of His life, nature, and wisdom, to His throne, to the sphere of His omnipotent power and resplendent glory. In contrast to these the "earth" is the symbol of yet a third realm, a realm higher than the sea, but lower than heaven; an in-between realm which at its highest peak kisses heaven, and at its lowest level embraces the sea; yet, in the true sense is not entirely heavenly or spiritual, nor absolutely carnal and degenerate. In simple terms, it is a realm of MIXTURE! And this, precious friend of mine, is the realm of Pisces — The Fishes, the church realm of the past two thousand years. Just as the net gathers all kinds of fishes, so the visible church (including the one you may attend) gathers people of every kind — true believers and mere professors, mature saints and babes in Christ, spiritual and carnal, heavenly minded and earthly minded, wise and foolish virgins, wheat and tares — all are gathered together.

A tremendous revelation was given to John the beloved on Patmos. He was shown the seven candle-sticks "which are the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20). The seven churches represent THE WHOLE CHURCH REALM THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE CHURCH AGE. If you want to know what the church is like look at the seven candlesticks! There you have the divinely inspired portrait of the church realm during this age painted by the brushstrokes of the Holy Spirit of revelation. Were they not imperfect, carnal, childish, idolatrous, heretical, rebuked — a realm of mixture and duality? The Lord commends and praises them on the one hand, while warning and rebuking them on the other hand. Some of the saints are commended for their works and faith and love, while others are warned of impending judgment if they fail to repent, and some are even threatened with extinction. These churches reveal the true state and condition of the whole church throughout the age, and history and personal experience both testify conclusively that John was shown right. The early church was a church of mixture and duality, flesh and spirit, truth and error, law and grace, spirituality and carnality. Even a casual reading of the New Testament reveals this! And from that day to this, make no mistake about it — ALL CHURCHES HAVE BEEN THE SAME! They are today! And should the church age continue on for another thousand years the church would not have changed, it would remain a church of mixture, imperfection and duality. The Word of God immutably declares it! The seven candlesticks are the seven churches, and the seven churches are the church throughout the entire church age. The "New Testament Church" realm can never be different from what John saw in spirit, for that IS THE CHURCH IN THIS AGE.

As soon as this point was made abundantly plain John heard a voice saying, "COME UP HITHER and I will show thee things that must be hereafter." After what? Why, bless your
heart, after the candlestick realm! The promises had already been given, not to the churches themselves, but to "him that overcometh" — a company out of the church. "Come up hither," the voice commanded. John is now shown another realm HIGHER THAN THE CANDLESTICK REALM! It is the realm of the overcomer, of the throne, of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders, and John is invited to leave the candlestick realm to ASCEND IN THE SPIRIT TO THIS HIGHER REALM where the Lamb is in the throne. This is what the brethren don't want to do! How they cling to the candlestick realm with its five-fold ministry, New Testament order, rituals, ceremonies, and ordinances, with its limitation, imperfection, weakness, mixture, duality, methods, structures, etc. This revelation was given to John in the year A. D. 96. The churches of His generation refused to leave the candlestick realm and rise to a higher place in God, and within only a few years the great apostasy set in, by the third and fourth centuries the apostasy was complete, followed by an awful night of great and terrible darkness. Even secular history refers to that time as "The Dark Ages". It was the great "falling away" which Paul prophesied in which the man of sin was revealed in the temple of God in all of his dread and stark reality. Today, my beloved, if we would be overcomers, pressing into sonship, caught up to the throne, we must hear the call "Come up hither" and forsake the limitation of the candlestick realm to become related to CHRIST IN THAT PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WHERE HIS LORDSHIP SWALLOWS UP OUR LIVES, WHERE HE IS ALL IN ALL, WHERE HIS SPIRIT, MIND AND LIFE REPLACE THE OUTWARD STRUCTURE OF WHAT WE HAVE CALLED "CHURCH". Ah, the Lord is still out there in the candlestick realm, for John saw in the midst of the seven candlesticks "one like unto the Son of man." Oh yes, He is there, ministering on that level, blessing by His grace, saving and healing and helping, but I do not hesitate to tell you that HE IS N-O-T THERE TAKING MEN ON TO PERFECTION OR INTO THE FULLNESS OF SONSHIP TO GOD. The "up hither" realm is the realm of the overcomer, of the kings and priests who are given to sit with Him on His throne, even as He overcame and is set dawn with His Father on His throne.

If any brethren can show me any church order, including the early church, or their own, that has ever carried God's people on to perfection and fullness, I will be delighted to be a part of it. If any who read these lines can acquaint me with a church on earth today that is not a body of mixture — that has no division, no carnality, no childishness, no sin, no error, no fleshly methods or manifestations, no weakness, no sickness or limitation — I tell you before God that I will join myself to it tomorrow. If such cannot be produced, then let the immutable Word of God stand firm, and know and understand that I have no obligation to participate in that which is totally impotent to minister what I need in this hour to apprehend the vision set before. I would be remiss if I did not tell you that there is no single church, fellowship, group, or movement in the earth today which will enter into the fullness of God as a unit. Seek not, dear ones, for the perfect church, for truly I tell you that there is no such thing in existence upon earth. There never has been. I have attended fellowships which seemed so lovely — everyone and everything appeared so spiritual. There was naught but love and beauty and hospitality and depth in God all around. On the outside everything looked so perfect! But I discovered that if I stayed around for only a number of days or weeks an undercurrent would begin to be felt, the veneer would commence to peel and the hidden truth and dark reality begin to filter through. I soon found that beneath the glossy exterior lurked a seething cauldron of carnality and trouble.
Look not, my friend, to this preacher, nor to that ministry, nor to the other gift, nor to any movement. Many today will croon into your ear that if you will sit under their ministry, eat at their table, join yourself to their church, drink from their fountain, flow in their stream, embrace their revelation, you will make it into sonship. But I point you to the eternal and uncontrovertible truth that ALL churches, fellowships, movements and groups upon the face of the whole earth today are but mixtures, for the net STILL GATHERS ALL KINDS OF FISHES, and the almighty Lord STILL has somewhat against the candlestick realm. Only the deep dealings and relentless processings of the Lord can separate the fishes and gather into the heavenly vessels those who shall reign in life in the Kingdom of God. Truly, many are called, but few are chosen! Multitudes are caught in the gospel net of salvation, but few are separated unto God's eternal purposes. The Lord knoweth them that are His! Those that shall be caught up to the throne shall not be called into that position of perfection, glory and power as indiscriminately as they were gathered into the church realm. Like as the mixed multitude of fishes in the net drawn to the shore is then submitted to a careful testing and separation, the good and useful being gathered into vessels, while the unqualified and useless are cast away, so there takes place a careful testing of all who belong to the present order of the church realm to determine their qualifications to be separated unto the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. If God has singled YOU out to be a "special object" of His grace, you may expect Him to honor you with stricter discipline and severer dealings than less favored ones are called upon to endure. If God sets out to make you a son of the Most High, He is not likely to be so gentle as with those fishes that are merely cast back into the water or tossed to other purposes. A sculptor does not use a manicure set to transform the rude, unshapely marble into a thing of beauty. The saw, the hammer and the chisel are cruel instruments, but without them the rough stone must remain forever formless and unbeautified. The heavy hand of God will be upon you, my beloved, ere you make the transition from God's chosen vessel to that fish ready to be served up as meat for the life of the world!

In the Sign of Pisces there are two fishes, one moving upward toward the North Polar Star, the other swimming horizontally along the path of the sun. These bespeak of the twofold operation of God in and through His people — the two-fold manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven. To Abraham it was revealed as his seed (Christ) becoming as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the seashore. The fish shooting upward exquisitely pictures the "heavenly calling" of which the Lord's elect are made partakers. It denotes our position, experience and reality in Christ, seated in the heavenlies, far above all the powers, limitations and contaminations of earth. A unique race of men ascend to celestial supremacy, those born of the last Adam who is the Lord from heaven. All men in the first Adam are related by blood; we are united to Christ by spirit. Heaven for those who have been born from above is not a future hope. It is a present reality. Jesus, in His spiritual body of resurrection, ascended up "F-A-R A-B-O-V-E A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED." He was made to sit at the right hand of God, far above the realms of all the other forms of spiritual life that inhabit God's vast universe; not above them geographically, but above them in rank, in quality of life, in eminence and power and nature and glory! Christ is enthroned in the highest heaven. All those elect sons whom the Father chose "in Him" in eternity past are now therefore enthroned WITH CHRIST in the highest heaven. Ah, it is really true God hath "quickened" us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES WITH CHRIST JESUS! (Eph. 2:56). Our bodies may still be tied to earth, but the sons of God are discovering the glorious and eternal reality of HEAVEN NOW! "As is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:48).
Christ is now in the highest heaven in this universe. I believe most of my readers understand now what it means to experience the ascended Christ, to daily live out our lives in the triumph and victory of the Son of God, far above the sorrows, strife, sin, problems, limitation, struggles, fears, disappointments, and death of the carnal realm. THIS is sonship! Sometimes I hear people say, "Oh, I am so worried," or, "My, I am quite depressed." Do you know what that means? It means that they are under the power of death. But when you stand in union with Christ you are high above the mountains, not in the valleys. You will be in the heavenly places, far above the circumstances of earth. The problem is that far too often we forget that we are ONE WITH such a Christ who is ascended far above all! We do not appropriate Him. We do not come to Him. We do not contact Him in our spirit. We do take our stand in union with Him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). The truth of who and what and where we are is spiritually discerned. When the truth is quickened in my spiritual consciousness I can shout, "Praise the Lord! Praise God! I am in Christ! I am raised up and made to sit together with Him in the higher than all heavens! All my troubles, all my distractions, all my problems, all my hardships, all my weaknesses, all my struggles and all my burdens are under my feet. They have become my footstool. I can rest my problems: I can rest my struggles. The more troubles I have, the more I appropriate the ascended Christ in my spirit. This is the experience of Christ! This is the reality of living in heaven — N-O-W! This is the fish swimming ever upward into that center where reigns the King upon the throne.

The second fish swimming horizontally answers to the fact that the Kingdom of the Heavens is established upon the earth — lived out by men walking in the flesh (body). Heaven must cast its shadow upon earth, heaven must come down to earth, heaven must seize hold upon earth, God's rule must come and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. We reign from the heavens, but our reign is over the earth. Heaven and earth meet in us as they did in Jesus. Jesus the Christ, when a man on earth, was at the same time in heaven. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man WHICH IS IN HEAVEN" (Jn. 3:13). Our Lord was in heaven; He came down from heaven, and still was in heaven. It is something a person can be in, can descend from, and still possess. His outer man was conscious in the earthly realm and one with it, but the inner man was conscious in the eternal realm and one with it. The heavens were open to Him, He dwelt and lived and walked and manifested out of the divine sphere of life. But His rule was horizontal — upon the earth, through the earth, and over the earth. As the perpendicular fish He lived and had His being in the heavens, far above all earthly cares. As the horizontal fish He brought heaven's life to bear upon all things earthly. As the horizontal fish He taught and healed and cast out devils, commanded the winds and waves, fed the multitudes, raised the dead to life again, and revealed the glory of the Father through His human life. Right now, as the perpendicular fish, you can think and know and live within yourself in triumph as an overcomer; and right now, as the horizontal fish, you can minister love, joy, peace, understanding and victory to those about you in the home, in the neighborhood, on the job. The upward fish stands for what you are in Christ. The horizontal fish speaks of how that Kingdom life is brought to bear upon all things, people and circumstances in the natural world.

THE BAND
The first Decan, or minor constellation, in the House of Pisces is THE BAND. This band binds the fishes, being fastened around the tails of the two fishes so that these two are inseparably tied together, so that one cannot go on without the other. The message is clear — our heavenly life and our earthly life are connected in such a way that it is no longer we that live, but Christ that liveth in and through us. Now the band is also fastened to the neck of Cetus, the Sea Monster, denoting a state of limitation, restriction, oppression and persecution. However, Aries, or the Ram (or Lamb) has his paw across the band, portraying the fact that the mighty Christ takes the bridle in His own hand; all that happens to us in this realm is under His control and working together for our good. Throughout this long age of the church the people of God have been buffeted, persecuted, oppressed, tried and tested. We have been sustained and encouraged by the Word of the Lord to us, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you" (I Pet. 4:12). Our trials and testings are associated in the Word of God with the ministry of satan. You never thought of satan having a ministry? "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted (tested) of the devil. And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, if Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Mat. 4:13). "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, THAT YE MAY BE TRIED...be thou faithful...and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, satan hath desired to have you, THAT HE MAY SIFT YOU AS WHEAT: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren (Lk. 22:31-32). "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same AFFLICTIONS are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (I Pet. 5:8-9).

If we can realize that behind the acts of satan is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes" (Ps. 119:7). Praise God! When we begin to see the good that comes from the assaults of satan on our lives, we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and the depth of the wisdom of His great mind. Praise His wonderful name! He is truly a God of power and might, and ALL things are in His hand — even this adversary whom we call the devil.

May the Spirit of God grant understanding to all who read these lines to know of a certainly that there is purpose in adversity and in the adversary who brings it. Yes, my brother, my sister, there is purpose in the existence and work of satan! Without this understanding all the work of God in all ages becomes a hit and miss, trial and error affair unworthy of our mighty God of whom it is written: "The Most High...liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and HE doeth ACCORDING TO HIS WILL in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and NONE CAN STAY HIS HAND, or say, What doest Thou?" Dear saints of God, don't believe for one moment that anything in God's great universe is out of control! God is GOD. He IS in control. The band of restriction in your life may be tied to the neck (will) of the Sea Monster, but the Lamb's paw is upon that band! HE is in control of every sphere of activity and all the interplay between good and evil that touches your life. Truly, as the inspired apostle has taught us, "the trial of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth" (I Pet. 1-7). ADVERSITY builds strength of character. If we were never exposed to trials and tribulation, we would grow up weak indeed! The more we are
exposed to adverse circumstances, the more we have to wrestle with our environment, the more we are challenged by the world around us, the stronger we become. Saints, if we would be the sons of the Most High we must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might! There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God, and a great work our Father has for us to do in the ages to come, and He is preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us. Can we not see that all the opposing forces we now encounter are working together for our good — to develop the strength, character, wisdom, and power we must acquire? This is God’s plan for us!

**ANDROMEDA — THE CHAINED WOMAN**

Andromeda is a line of bright stars in the House of Pisces picturing a woman with her arms and feet in chains, in misery and trouble, helplessly bound in the sky. Here is another picture of the church, this time not represented as a fish. It is interesting to note that in some of the ancient planispheres these fishes are depicted as having the face of a woman because another picture of the church frequently used in scripture is that of a woman, of a bride. The true church is the bride of Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:21-33; II Cor. 11:2). Here again is another picture representing the same great truth. Andromeda is the figure of a beautiful woman in what appears to be a sitting position, bound with chains upon her hands and feet. Her name in Greek (Andro-meda) means Man-Ruler. It is interesting that though she is bound and seems to be helpless, yet this "helpless" woman is to be ruler of men.

It is impossible for me to explain the glory of such a thing as this because we are blinded by the impenetrable mystery of a realm that long ago passed away. Nevertheless, the moment that we understand that man in the beginning was created male and female and that male and female IS the image of God, then we can understand for the first time the awesome glory, power and exaltation of the bride of Christ. When God formed the body of Adam from the dust of the ground, He did not make man and woman, for Adam was both in one — after the image and likeness of God. The image of God is not a body with a torso, two legs with two feet and ten toes, two arms with two hands and ten fingers, and a head with two eyes, two ears, a nose and a mouth. The image of God is the emanation of the nature of God. You see, the Bible states clearly that in the beginning there was only God — omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, holy, perfect, who is love. But because God had a Father Nature, He had to birth a Son: because when one has a father nature, the deepest craving of his nature is to beget and bring forth out of his own being an offspring in the likeness of himself. Therefore, because God had a Father Nature, He had to birth a Son; but the problem was He didn't have a wife. Now this would have been a problem for us, but it was not a problem for God, because He had His wife in His own side, for in that beginning, before human flesh was, God had both Male and Female within Himself. We know this is so because everything in the whole vast universe came out of God, and if God had not been Male and Female within Himself in the beginning we could not have male and female in the earth today — in His image.

When he that readeth can grasp the truth that God bears within Himself both the characteristics of male and female, of Father and Mother, then he can better understand the divine word spoken "in the beginning" when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so...in the image of God created He him; MALE AND FEMALE created He them!" (Gen. 1:26-27). When Eve had been built by the skillful hand of the Creator and presented to Adam, he had an immediate name for what Eve obviously was. Not her given name, Eve, as we term it in English, but what kind of creature she was.
Hebrew is simpler than English, and more plainly explains exactly what a woman is: ISH is the Hebrew word for man, and ISHA is the feminine form of ISH or man. Adam said, "Now here is bone exactly like my bone, and flesh exactly like my flesh, because she was built from what was taken from me, I will call her "isha" — a FEMALE MAN! Adam merely added a single letter to the word which stood for himself, to define the quality of difference: sex. And God confirmed Adam's understanding that they were both exactly alike despite the obvious outward differences: "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called THEIR name ADAM, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:13). To both God and Adam it was ONE CREATION "in the image of God."

Ish. Isha. Male. Female. Both Adam. Both man. Both in the image of God! Isha signifies, no matter how uncouth the sound to our ears, MAN-NESS. So in the old Latin the word for man is VIR and the word for woman is VIRA — a FEMALE MAN! The English word "woman" also confirms this truth, for it is a contraction of the old Anglo-Saxon term "womb-man" — a MAN with a womb! When Adam said that Eve must be called "isha," it was as though for "wife" one would say "she-man." God blessed the union of ish and isha, this ONE CREATION HE CALLED ADAM.

Those who read these lines should meditate deeply upon the wonder of man's primordial glory — male and female — set together in splendor over the works of God's hands. All creation being set in order, one was needed to take the headship, to bring the authority and blessing of God's Kingdom over all things. "And God said, Let us make man in our image and after our likeness; and let THEM have dominion...so God created man in His own image...male and female created He THEM. And God blessed THEM, and God said unto THEM, Be Fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and HAVE DOMINION over...every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26-28). My reader will observe the change from him to them. We are not presented with the actual fact of the formation of the woman until the next chapter; though here we find God blessing them, and giving them JOINTLY THE PLACE OF UNIVERSAL GOVERNMENT. All realms from the lowest of the bottomless to the highest of the heavens were set under their joint dominion, as typified by the fish of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the fowl of the heavens. These three realms symbolically encompass all spheres of existence from the lowest depths of darkness unto the highest dimension of light and exaltation. Jesus confirmed the true scope of man's dominion when, as the last Adam, He descended into the lowest parts of the earth and then ascended up far above all heavens. He liberated the captives in the prison house of Hades and ascended up above all heavens to reign over all things. ALL POWER is given unto Him, both in heaven and in earth. THIS, precious friend of mine, is the magnificence of that dominion given to Adam — male and female — in that long ago beginning.

Eve received all her blessings in Adam; in him, too, she got her dignity and position and power. Not yet called into separation out of Adam, she was, in the purpose of God, part of the man. Universal dominion was not given to Adam alone, it was not said, let him have dominion, but "let them have dominion." There was no other creature so near to Adam as Eve, because no other creature was part of himself. What affection did not Eve owe to Adam! What nearness she enjoyed! What intimacy of communion! What full participation in all of his thoughts! In all his dignity, and in all his glory, wisdom and power, she was entirely ONE. He did not rule over her, but with her. He was lord of the whole creation, and she was ONE WITH HIM! THEY were king and queen of the universe! All this will find its full antitype in the ages to come. Then shall the True Man —
the Lord from heaven, the corporate man composed of "many sons brought to glory" — take His seat upon the throne, and in companionship with His bride — the New Eve, the cleansed and perfected Church — rule over a restored creation. This church is quickened out of the grave of Christ, taken from His riven side, being thus "of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." He is the Head and she the body, making ONE NEW MAN, as we read in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, "Till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). And who is this "Perfect Man"? CHRIST AND HIS BRIDE, CHRIST MALE AND FEMALE — THE LAST MAN ADAM AND THE NEW EVE!

The sons of God are the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16; Rev. 11:1-2,19). The bride of Christ is the city of God (Rev. 21:9-11). That city is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Every stone of that city is a living stone, a glorified CHRIST BEING. Every stone is a living, ransomed soul just as every member of the body of Christ, which is the temple of God, is a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. We cannot fully explain nor understand a mystery so awesome as this, but the eye that sees by the Spirit sees the temple as a living thing, composed of living saints. In that temple redeemed men, the sons of God, are the pillars and foundations, and Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, growth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom we also are builded to become the habitation of God through the Spirit. In holy vision the apostle John was transported in spirit to a great and high mountain, the majestic heights of the Kingdom of God, from which he was permitted to see the perfected bride of Christ in all her beauty and glory. From his lofty vantage point the eyes of John were ravished with the electrifying sight of the unequaled majesty and infinite splendor of the bride adorned for her Husband. Not a city of stone as was the Old Jerusalem, but a New Jerusalem, a living city, a bride beyond compare, a virgin pure and holy, composed of incorruptible saints brought forth out of the living substance of Christ. Words utterly fail me to describe the wonder of such unsurpassable glory, for ours are but the words of men, but that holy and beautiful city belongs to THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. Now at last the perfection, the image of God, Sons and Daughters, Male and Female, Temple and City, of which Adam and Eve were but a frail shadowy type, has come; the many-membered Bridegroom, the last Adam, with the many membered Bride, the Holy City, Adam and Eve, the first and the last, in the image and likeness of God JOINTLY RULING OVER ALL THINGS! The nations shall walk by the light of this city and the rulers and leaders of the earth shall bring into it their glory. The tree of life is in the midst of it and the water of life flows from the throne of God in the midst of it. This is GOD, male and female, united with the image of God in man, male and female, ruling over all the endless vastnesses of infinity unto ages of ages! May the Holy Ghost unfold these things more fully and powerfully to our hearts, that we may have a deeper sense of the conduct and character which are worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called.

One of the deepest mysteries of the ages is that this glorious bride of Christ, destined to rule over the nations and all things, is also Andromeda, the Chained Woman of the heavens! The names of some of the principle stars in this constellation mean "the weak; the afflicted; the chained" — an eloquent picture of the church throughout this church age which has been in affliction, weakness, bondage, and in chains. Joseph Seiss wrote of the bride of Christ in her chains: "And thus, again, we have a striking picture of the unfavorable side of the church's condition in this world. Jealous rivals hate her and clamor against her. The world-powers in their selfishness fail to protect her, and lend themselves for her exposure and destruction. Innocently she is made to suffer. Though a
lovely and influential princess, she is hindered by personal disabilities and bonds. It will not be so always. The time will come when those bonds shall be broken and that exposure ended. But for the present affliction and hardship are appointed to her. She cannot move as she would, or enjoy what pertains to her royal character, her innocence, and her beauty. She is bound to the hard, cold, and ponderous rock of this earthly life. Born to reign with her Lord, apostles and prophets can only wish that she did reign, that they might reign with her. She is within the sacred territory, but it is as yet a place of captivity and bonds. She never can be truly herself in this mortal life." — end quote.

This present time is a time of trial, testing, proving, washing, cleansing, processing and preparation for the glory that shall follow the marriage of the Lamb. Bride of the Lamb! do not repine when those who should understand your love for your Beloved, smite and persecute you; the Lord holds it all, and He hears all that is said. Do not grieve if your name is cast out as evil, and you are rejected and defamed by those who should tenderly care for you and bind up your wounds. Jesus knows it all; and if you look unto Him He will pour in oil that will heal every wound and ease every pain. Do not fret if your separation to your Lord is called fanaticism, and you are branded as strange and offensive; He knows it all. It was He who marked out the path for your feet, and who first journeyed over it to the cross. It was He who said that the gate is narrow and the way straightened that leadeth to life. As you press onward, counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus your Lord; as you bear about in your body the dying of the Lord, and His life becomes manifested through partaking of His death, your hair will take on the purple of suffering and of the overcomer, and the King will be held captive by one tress of your purple hair!

There are, however, chains of bondage far more subtle and sinister than the hatred and persecution of the world. These chains are the Babylonian captivity into which the people of God have unwittingly sold themselves. Let me unfold for you the mystery. Under Old Testament economy God alone was King over His people until Israel demanded a human king in order to be like the nations around her. Before the time of these human kings, the government was a theocracy in the truest sense: that is, the government of the state was by the immediate direction of God Himself by the Spirit. Great was the condescension of God to thus honor the nation by becoming its political Sovereign, performing all the functions of an earthly monarch, and receiving the customary homage paid to a temporal king. Great was the dignity lent to the nation by the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth dwelling with them first in a tabernacle, afterwards in a splendid temple, there having His table, His altar, and His ministers. Great was His condescension to tolerate their displays of external splendor and pomp, to go forth with and command the army in war, to legislate, to execute laws, and to do all things that pertain to the office of an earthly sovereign. And yet the Israelites were not satisfied. They wished to have another to rule over them, a human king, as the nations about them had. God granted them their desire, and Israel forsook the Lord, provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods and abominations, and sacrificed to devils, provoking Him to anger. Israel, under the old covenant, was the bride of Yahweh, and He their Husband. God was very lenient with them over a long period of time; but justice demanded judgment and He finally gave them a bill of divorcement, putting Israel away. Therefore, since Israel would not be in submission to God as their Husband and King, He decreed that throughout the time of His indignation they would, as a consequence of their folly, be made to serve the kings of their enemies.
Under New Testament economy the Christ of God was to be the one and only Head of His church. But the spirit of the world was for prostituting this church and causing her to commit fornication with the kings and governments of the world, in that she began to be joined with them as she only ought to have been joined to HIM. Under God's perfect order for the New Testament age, both emperors and beggars must meet on common ground. Both are sinners; grace alone can intervene. Both must acknowledge their guilt and plead for mercy. Both should then be equal in dignity, in authority, in meekness, and in charity, deriving all their spiritual stature from HIS WORK WITHIN, and possessing none by virtue of what they are naturally. In the days of the early apostles, men were made christians by the operation of God alone, and thereby they were taken out of the nations as a people for His name (Acts 15:14). The ministries in the body of Christ were sovereignly raised up and anointed by the Holy Spirit of God. With what power, signs, and wonders did they witness to the living presence of the Christ! There was no manmade organization, no carnal church boards, no dominating hierarchies, only the dynamic presence and power of Christ manifested in and through the living members of His body.

Even before the apostles had passed from this life, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and many people were wearing the Babylonish garment. They were instituting rules and regulations, laying down laws, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and ordinances, elevating human government, becoming disciples of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas, and of many others. The captivity had begun and the mysterious chains of Andromeda had begun to shackle the feet (walk) and wrists (service) of the little virgin bride of Christ. Before too many years had passed men began to set themselves up as "bishops" and "lords" over God's heritage in place of the Holy Spirit. Instead of conquering by the power of the Spirit and Truth — as in the early days — men began to substitute their ideas and their methods. Soon the glory and power, the presence and word of God in the morning time church began to be eclipsed, and the power of carnal minded men gradually took the place of the awesome presence of God. Consequently, man's carnal understanding was put upon the scriptures, and as the Spirit of Christ fled from their midst, men established a vast and elaborate system of substitutes to take the place of reality. Dioceses and parishes were established. Ecclesiastical centralization commenced. The weapons of excommunication were forged. The festivals of the church were created, along the lines of pagan celebrations. Catechetical schools were created to teach the faith systematically. The formulas of baptism and the sacraments became of great importance. Costly and ornate edifices were constructed for worship. The services became ceremonialized and elaborate. Sculpture and painting were enlisted in the work of providing aids to devotion. Relics of saints and martyrs were cherished as sacred possessions. Religious observances were multiplied. The church, with its array of gaudily bedecked clergy and of imposing ceremonies, assumed much of the stateliness and visible splendor that belonged to the HEATHEN SYSTEM which it had supplanted. The mission of the church was lost sight of in a degrading alliance with the State. Christianity was now a pageant, a ritualism, a vain philosophy, a superstition, a formula, an ARM OF THE STATE! The little virgin bride of Christ had become a beautiful woman sitting in the heavens of power, exaltation and authority — CHAINED! She appeared to be ruling, but was in fact a slave to the system of religious Babylon!

The people of the Lord have long been held captive by the spirit of the world. Thank God, there has been a little light in Babylon, and there has even been the voice of the bride and the Bridegroom (Rev. 18:23), for the people chained in that horrible darkness have been the Lord's people. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular
churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead a few to the Saviour. A few of these receive and teach a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit. These have in measure tasted of His reality and received of His gifts. But from here on, practically everything that is taught is nothing but defilement and shame: nothing but the precepts of the elders, and the lies and deceptions of the antichrist. Organized religion today, while totally ignorant of the fact of there being an antichrist, is busy teaching his doctrines, observing his forms and ceremonies, and glorying in his shame. To His people who sit shackled in these chains of Andromeda the Word of the Lord commands: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins...for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:4-5). Thank God, the chains of the Babylon system are doomed to destruction. This mysterious system is to be finally and irrevocably destroyed. Wherefore, the Lord saith, "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. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: LOOSE THYSELF FROM THE BANDS OF THY NECK, O CAPTIVE DAUGHTER OF ZION. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money" ( Isa. 52:1-3).

CEPHEUS — THE KING

In this third and final constellation surrounding Pisces we have the picture of a bearded man wearing a crown and a royal robe, seated upon a throne. In his uplifted hand he holds a scepter. He is a glorious king enthroned in the highest heaven. He is the Deliverer for whom the Chained Woman waits. The Egyptians called him PEKUHOR, which means The Ruler That Comes. He is known as Cepheus today, which is a Greek name that comes from a Hebrew word meaning The Branch or Royal Branch. The Ethiopians called him HYK, The King. Star names add to the imagery. The star ALPHIRK in his belt means The Redeemer, while the brightest star in his body is called ALDERAMIN which means Coming Quickly. Do we need to ask with the Psalmist, "Who is this King of Glory?" We can respond as in the Psalm, "The LORD of hosts, He is the King of Glory!"

The hour of the final deliverance of God's people and the manifestation of His glory, majesty, wisdom and power upon them is at hand. The King is coming! Hallelujah! He is coming within to set His people free, that they in turn may deliver creation. The chains of the beautiful Andromeda shall now be broken. Her release from all bondage and captivity is even now under way. Once the church is cleansed from her idols and defilement, she will be in a position to bring deliverance to a sin-sick and judgment-weary world, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea" ( Isa. 11:9). Only when Christ's church is cleansed from her idols can she ever hope to bring deliverance to the world. And that deliverance has to come. It will come through those who have given up their all, those who have lost everything to be married to their Lord, and who henceforth live only unto Him. The water of life must now flow from the city to bring healing to the nations. But before we may have any part or lot in the great work, we must forsake all and follow the Lord alone. No one can deliver men from the lies of the antichrist while continuing to preach those lies. No one can deliver the world from the bondages of sin, fear, carnality, limitation and death while himself remaining a captive of those things. And before God's true church can persuade men to give up their idols, and loose their bands, she must first get rid of all her own golden calves and march in victory out of Egypt's domain.
George Hawtin has ably written: "The hour has come far us to realize that only THE LORD knoweth them that are His. Only THE LORD can separate the sheep from the goats. Only THE LORD can call His sheep by name and lead them out. Only THE LORD can look into the four corners of the earth and call forth His elect. Who, then, am I to circumscribe anything? I must learn to know men not by what they say, what they believe, where they are, or least of all because they are members of a certain group, but by that strange witness that made Jesus say to Peter, 'Thou art Peter,' and by that same spiritual revelation that made Peter say to Jesus, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' How often we have been shockingly disappointed in men! It was because we knew them only after the flesh and we did not know them after the Spirit. We accepted them because they were inside a certain circle and said they belonged to 'The Move.' Yes, indeed, they may have been inside the circle and they may have been in the move, but where were they in God’s eyes? That is the important question" — end quote.

The truth of the things I now write to the elect of God, which also has been inscribed in the Signs of the heavens from the dawn of creation, cannot be more graphically confirmed than by the remarkable vision given by the Lord to evangelist Tommy Hicks in 1961. He wrote: "I had hardly fallen asleep when the vision and the revelation that God gave to me came before me. The vision came three times, exactly in detail, the morning of July 25th, 1961. I was so stirred and so moved by the revelation, that this has changed my complete outlook open the body of Christ, and upon the last — the end-time ministry. The greatest thing that the church of Jesus Christ has ever been given lies straight ahead. As the vision appeared to me, after I was asleep, I suddenly found myself in a great high distance. Where I was, I do not know, but as I was looking down upon the earth, suddenly the whole world came into view: every nation, every kindred, every tongue came before my sight, from the east and the west, from the north and the south. And I recognized every country and many cities that I had been in. I was almost in fear and trembling as I stood beholding the great sight before me. At that moment, when the world came into view, it began to lightning and thunder. As the lightning flashed over the face of the earth, my eyes went downward — and I was facing the north.

"Suddenly I beheld what looked like a great giant; and as I stared and looked at it, I was almost bewildered by the sight. It was so gigantic and so great in stature; his feet seemed to reach to the north pole and his head to the south; his arms were stretched from sea to sea. I could not even begin to understand whether this were a mountain or whether this be a giant, but as I watched it, I suddenly beheld this great giant. I could see it was struggling for life, to even live. His body was covered with debris from head to foot. At times this great giant would move its body and act as if it would even rise up. When it did, thousands of little creatures seemed to run away — hideous looking creatures would run away from this giant. When he would become calm, they would came back. All of a sudden this great giant lifted his hand toward the heavens, and then it lifted its other hand. When it did, these creatures by the thousands seemed to flee away from this giant and go out into the darkness.

"Slowly this great giant began to rise, and as he did, his head and hands went into the clouds. As he arose to his feet, he seemed to have cleansed himself from the debris and filth that was upon him, and he began to raise his hands into the heavens as though praising the Lord. As he raised his hands it was even unto the clouds. Suddenly every cloud became silver, the most beautiful silver I have ever known. As I watched the phenomenon, it was so great, I could not even begin to understand what it all meant. I
was so stirred as I watched it, and I cried unto the Lord, and said, "Oh, Lord, what is the meaning of this?" It felt as if I was actually in the Spirit, and I could feel the presence of the Lord even as I was asleep. From those clouds suddenly there came great drops of liquid light raining down upon this mighty giant, and slowly, slowly, this giant began to melt — began to sink, as it were, into the very earth itself. As he melted, his whole form seemed to have melted upon the face of the earth, and this great rain began to come down; liquid drops of light, as it were, began to flood the very earth itself. As I watched this giant that seemed to melt, suddenly it became millions of people over the face of the earth. As I beheld the sight before me, people stood up over the world. They were lifting their hands and they were praising the Lord.

"At that very moment there came a great thunder that seemed to roar from the heavens. I turned my eyes toward the heavens, and suddenly I saw a figure in white, in glistening white — the most glorious thing that I have ever seen in all my life. I did not see the face, but somehow I knew that it was the Lord Jesus Christ. He stretched forth His hand upon the peoples and the nations of the world, men and women. As He pointed toward them, this liquid light seemed to flow from His hand into these persons, and a mighty anointing of God came upon them, and those people began to go forth in the name of the Lord. And this is the miracle of it — this is the glorious miracle of it — those people would stretch forth their hands exactly as the Lord did, and it seemed that there was this same liquid fire in their hands. As they stretched forth their hands, they said, "According to my word, be thou made whole." As these people continued in this mighty ministry, I did not fully realize what it was. And I looked to the Lord and said, "What is the meaning of this?" And He said, "This is that that I will do in the last days. I will restore all that the cankerworm, the palmerworm, the caterpillar — I will restore all that they have destroyed. This, My people in the end-time, shall go forth. As a mighty army shall they sweep over the face of the earth."

"One of the things that seemed remarkable — after I had reviewed the vision so many times in my mind — I never saw a church and I never saw or heard anything of a denomination, but these people were going in the Name of the Lord of hosts. Hallelujah! As they marched forward, everything they did was the ministry of Christ. These people were ministering to the multitudes over the face of the earth. Tens of thousands, yea, millions came to the Lord Jesus Christ as these people stood forth and gave the message of the Kingdom — of the coming of the Kingdom — in this hour. "Suddenly there was another loud clap of thunder that seemed to resound around the world. I heard again the voice, the voice that seemed to speak: "Now, this is My people. This is My beloved bride." When the voice spoke, I looked upon the earth and I could see the lakes and the mountains. The graves were opened and the people from all over the world, the saints of all ages, seemed to be rising, and as they rose from the graves, suddenly all these people came from every direction and they seemed to be forming again this gigantic body. I could hardly comprehend it, it was so marvelous — it was so far beyond anything I could ever dream or think of. But, as this body suddenly began to form — it took shape again in the form of this mighty giant — this time it was different. It was arrayed in the most beautiful, gorgeous white — its garments were without spot or wrinkle — as this body began to form. The people of all ages appeared to be gathering into this body. Slowly, slowly, as it formed up into the very heavens, suddenly from the heavens above the Lord Jesus came — became the Head. I heard another clap of thunder that said, "This is My beloved Bride for whom I have waited. She will come forth, even tried by fire. This is she that I have loved from the beginning of time" — end quote.
In our series of messages on the Signs of the heavens, we come now to the Sign of ARIES — THE RAM OR LAMB. Let us look at some of the names by which the constellation of Aries has been known from ancient times. Aries usually carries the symbol of the ram, but many of the oldest Zodiacks portray a lamb (with no horns), and in some ancient Zodiacks the lamb has a circular crown on its head. The presentation of a lamb instead of a full grown ram is confirmed by the meanings of the names associated with Aries. The Hebrew name is TALEH, meaning The Lamb Sent Forth. The Greek name is KRIOS, also meaning The Lamb. In Latin it is called ARIES (the name by which we know it) which means The Lamb, The Chief, The Head. The Arabic name, HAMAL, means Sheep, Gentle, Merciful. Furthermore, the Sign of Aries emphasizes that the lamb is also a sacrifice. The brightest star, ELNATH, means The Wounded or Slain. The nearby star, called SHERETAN, has a name meaning Bruised, and the other notable star is MESARTIM, whose name means The Bound. The ancient Akkadians called Aries BARA-ZIGGAR; BAR meaning Altar, or Sacrifice, while ZIGGAR means Making Right. The full meaning would be The Altar, or The Sacrifice of Making Right. Another truth conveyed by the names in Aries is that of kingship. The name Aries itself bears the meaning of Chief or Head. There are other names also indicating the idea of a Reign. In putting all these ideas together, Aries presents to us A LAMB SACRIFICED BUT REIGNING!

A Lamb is obviously a very familiar figure in the Word of God. The first blood earth's startled soil ever drank was shed in that primeval Paradise in Eden. Thousands of years later John the Baptist began the ministry of Christ by proclaiming, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). In the last book of the New Testament we read, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing..." (Rev. 5:12). In the opening chapters of Genesis we read: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make COATS OF SKINS, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:7,9-10,21). We would be totally void of understanding as to what kind of victim it was that provided this blessed covering for the sinning man and his wife, were it not that the Holy Spirit has shed precious light upon this wonder, revealing that Christ is "the LAMB slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) who verily was "a LAMB without blemish or spot...foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:19-20). I now invite you to meditate deeply upon my words. In the process of changing our garments, covering our nakedness, and clothing us in the righteousness of Himself God brings us to the LAMB, which has its base in the foundation of God before the world (kosmos - world system) began, for Christ the Lamb was foreordained before the foundation of the world, and He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and however you interpret "the foundation of the world" that certainly carries us back to Eden.
Redemption is not an afterthought of God by which He hopes to salvage a few of the broken and shattered pieces of His creation. Redemption is PART OF THE PLAN OF CREATION. If the fall of man is part of the plan of God, then the redemption of the fallen creation must also be a part of the same plan that issued forth from the fathomless depths of His omniscient mind. If Peter was speaking the truth when he wrote of God's Lamb, "Who verily was FOREORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, but was manifest in these last times for you" (I Pet. 1:20), then the fall of man must certainly be a part of the plan of the Creator. For what possible purpose was the blessed redemptive Lamb foreordained before the world began if redemption itself were not already in the mind and plan of God? All Christians love to quote the Golden Text of the Bible, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son..." (Jn. 3:16). Yet what is the real message of this beautiful passage? Is it not that God SO LOVED that He GAVE His Son? Does not I Pet. 1:20 make it very plain that the actual giving of that Son was before the world began and before man was driven from the Garden planted eastward in Eden? Ah, the agonies of the cross were endured only two thousand years ago on Golgotha's hill, but the actual giving of the redemptive Lamb took place before the present world-system began and the actual slaying of the Lamb took place from the beginning of the world-system, in the mysterious mists of the sacred Garden of long ago.

It is clear that the plan of redemption was prepared in its fullness before ever the voice of God commanded,"Let there be!" It was not completed just in case man should fall, but because the fall of man and his redemption from sin and death was part of the process by which he would come into God's image and live in the eternal realm as a creature of experience and knowledge, completely redeemed, completely purified, completely perfected, completely matured, completely instructed, and completely incapable of sin or death forevermore. Is it any wonder that John on Patmos heard every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and all that are in them exulting in such a plan as this and crying out in ecstasy, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto THE LAMB for ever and ever!" (Rev. 5:13). Creation and redemption walk hand in hand through all the pilgrim journey from Eden to the new heaven and the new earth.

The glorious theme of the holy scripture is the Person and Work of Him whose lovely title is "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." This gracious title for our Lord Jesus Christ is indeed one of the most charming symbols used in the Bible to describe Him who loved us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood. Whenever the serious seeker after truth explores the meaning of the various Semitic symbols used to depict the Person and Work of the Saviour he becomes aware that each stands for a specific aspect of truth. In the case of the "Lamb" it is with the truth of redemption that we deal, for redemption is by the blood of the Lamb. "Ye were not redeemed by such corruptible things as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18-19). "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" — not the child that was born, though He was indeed worthy. Not the miracle-worker of the sea, or by the grave of Lazarus. Not the teacher whose words entralling the multitudes on the mountain, or across the waters of blue Galilee. Not the healer restoring sight to the blind, or causing the lame to walk again. But — "Worthy is the LAMB THAT WAS S-L-A-I-N to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!"

We would have thought that in calling our Lord "the Lamb" this name would have been used only in respect to His humiliation in His earthly life. However in scripture it is most
used in reference to His eternal glory in the heavenlies. Peter saw Him as the Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world. John saw Him as a Lamb that had been slain from the foundation of the world, highly exalted, standing in the midst of the Throne. This slain Lamb is IN THE MIDST of everything: in the midst of the Throne, and of the four Living Creatures, and of the Elders. This Lamb is peculiarly the One who is IN THE MIDST, just as the tree of life was IN THE MIDST of the Garden of God. His eternal centrality is set forth in these significant words: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist...and having made peace through THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS, by Him to RECONCILE ALL THINGS unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col. 1:15-20)

The term "Lamb" is used of Christ no less than twenty-eight times in Revelation, and has two vital characteristics. Christ is the sacrificial Lamb and the conquering lamb. He is never presented this way except in the majestic scenes around the Throne. We see the Lamb marching to the ultimate throne of universal empire in complete triumph and as absolute victor. Confronting the power of the beast and the kings of the earth, and the hordes of hell, and the lewdness and deception of the harlot system, and the wars and battles and bloodshed that fill the soul with dread, is THE POWER OF THE LAMB, whose victory has been assured and whose glory is guaranteed. God has given the Lamb for a leader and a counselor; so He is both our leader — for we are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth — and He is our counselor and commander; a counselor to counsel us concerning the things of God and His Kingdom, the Kingdom that hath no end. So glory to God and to the Lamb! Glory be unto God and the Lamb forevermore! And the Lamb shall have the victory! Of this we are assured, though all the wild beasts and the wolves, and the dogs, and the goats and bulls of Bashan, the spotted leopards, and all the wild heifers of Ephraim, the horses of Pharaoh, and the wild Ishmaels, profane Esaus, envious Cains, which may gather in a brotherhood, and Gog and Magog, professor and profane, if all these rise against the Lamb and His followers, without or within, yet I say the Lamb shall have the victory over the beast, the whore, and the dragon, over the flesh, the world, and the devil, for Christ is Lord over them all, for He was slain before they were, and will be reigning when they are gone, blessed be His wonderful name! He has conquered and shall conquer all who rise up against Him. For seventy years the ruthless, atheistic communist regime in Russia blasphemed the Lamb and jailed, tormented and killed all who proclaimed His name. They planned and purposed to eradicate His Kingdom from the earth. Today the communist government no longer exists in Russia and it is ironic that the Russian government, through its ministry of education, has invited a consortium of sixty American evangelical groups and Christian colleges to train educators in 120,000 Russian public schools on how to teach Christian and spiritual principles. In commenting on the invitation, Evgeniy Kurkin, the Russian deputy education minister told U.S.A. Today on November 10, 1092: "Seventy years ago, we closed God out of our country and it has caused so many problems in our society we cannot count them. We must put God back into our country and we must begin with our children." "AND THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME THEM!" This is the great and beautiful message of the book of Revelation, and this is why the Spirit witnesseth "Blessed (happy) is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).
But the Lamb in the book of Revelation has another note. The word used for LAMB here is peculiar to this book. It is the diminutive form of the Greek word for lamb, and is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. It means a young lamb, or a lambkin, weak and small. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is THE LAMB of God, and joined to Him are the members of His body, His brethren, the younger sons of God, the lambkin company. To see this company as the body of the Lamb is not to magnify man, but to exalt Christ, for it is HIS LAMB LIFE formed in them and lived out through them, giving expression to the Lamb nature. We know that HE is the preeminent One, and that it is HIS LIFE which is given, and by that life we are conformed to HIS image, made partakers of HIS divine nature, becoming the revelation of HIMSELF in the earth. All the qualifications of The Lamb must now be found in this people who make up the body of The Lamb. As one has written: "THE LAMB beautifully took care of all the work on God's side towards man, and the lambkin will have a beautiful ministry from man's side, to bring things back to God. His kingdom shall come, His will shall be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. There are many paths through the sunshine and the shadows, but we learn to see His hand in it all, for He is preparing and fashioning those who shall become part of the lambkin, who are ONE IN THE LAMB, to be given for the salvation of the ends of the earth."

It is in keeping with this that in Revelation chapter fourteen, we find the Lamb standing an Mount Zion. Having been rewarded with "the glory that follows," He is now highly exalted. We are told that in eastern countries where, of course, this symbolic scene is set, when sheep and goats are left to roam where they will, the goats invariably climb to the tops of the hills, while the sheep ordinarily seek the low places, the valleys. So to John it must have seemed most unusual that a Lamb should be on Mount Zion. By this is brought to light a most important truth concerning Jesus, The Lamb of God. He did not attain to His high position on Mount Zion by means of self-exaltation, but because, sheep like, He had sought the low places." He humbled Himself, and because of this His heavenly Father exalted Him. It was because Jesus permitted Himself to be led as "a lamb to the slaughter" and did not open His mouth in self-defense or seek otherwise to justify Himself before His enemies that the Father, by resurrection and ascension, highly exalted Him. It was because He "made Himself of no reputation." It was because, coming as a man, He "took the form of a servant." It was because, as a bondslave, He "learned obedience." It was because, in obedience, He went all the way, even "unto the death of the cross." "WHEREFORE, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:5-10).

Even now, as Christ sits enthroned at the right hand of the Father, He reigns in virtue of the fact that He is a Lamb. He reigns as a Lamb-King, because God is raising up lambkins in the earth, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit in the earth to establish in each member of the body of the Lamb in the earth the nature, and the character, as well as the authority of Him who sits on the Throne. "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jn. 16:14). It is the work of the Holy Spirit not only to impart unto His people the POWER of God, but ALL that pertains to the exalted Lamb, His very nature, and character, and life, that He might be here in the earth, dwelling in His body, to be to you and me, yea, to be through you and me EVERYTHING THAT JESUS IS UPON THE THRONE. The "lambkin" as a figure of Christ is indeed complete and perfect; yet it is a type of Christ in a limited measure and at the same time in the greatest measure. How strange this sounds to our ears, how curious to our minds! 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 redemption, 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 the total triumph of the Lamb is achieved within, Christ is unlimited to us, He becomes ALL IN ALL. It is His almighty strength in the heavens revealed through the weakness of our humanity on earth — the TRIUMPHANT LAMBKIN! Hallelujah!

THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

What is this stream of life from the Lamb upon the Throne, and why is the Lamb so highly exalted until eternity re-echoes the song of His praise: "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing!
"
The wonderful answer comes: "Thou art worthy...FOR Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood."
"It is the blood of the Lamb that bestows this glory upon Him. By His own blood He has entered the Holiest of all, and is seated upon the Throne of the Majesty in the heavens. His blood has accomplished this. The blood of Jesus is the greatest mystery of the ages, the deepest mystery of divine wisdom. Let us not imagine that we can easily grasp its meaning. God thought four thousand years necessary to prepare men for it, and we must take time, yea, sacrificial time in His presence, if we are to gain a knowledge of the awesome and marvelous power of the blood. I know of no word in the Bible or in human speech that contains such glories! This great and eternal truth shines with ever increasing brilliance from Eden's fragrant Garden of long ago to the jasper walls of the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven; from Adam's covering of skins and Abel's humble sacrifice of the firstfruits of his flock to the very Throne of God Himself where, glorious in power and might, the Lamb reigns and the seven Spirits of His divine Life are sent forth into all the earth.

The blood of Jesus Christ is of such vast importance to God the Father that He has decreed that there shall be (1) no remission, (2) no salvation, (3) no atonement, (4) no redemption, (5) no propitiation, (6) no cleansing, (7) no justification, (8) no peace, (9) no new covenant, (10) no sanctification, (11) no reconciliation, (12) no entrance into the Most Holy Place, (13) no sonship, without the blood of Jesus Christ whose blood is called by Paul the BLOOD OF GOD (Acts 20:28; Heb. 10:19-20).

Never forget, precious friend of mine, that Jesus came as THE PRICE WHICH COVERS, the substance in the scale that replenishes all deficiency. He shed His blood — His divine life — pouring it out for us. Life and blood are synonymous. Spirit and blood are synonymous. Spirit, blood, and life are all different names for the same element. Jesus performed His mighty works by the shores of Galilee, but then He died, resurrected and returned in mighty SPIRIT POWER to be the MIRACLE WORKER WITHIN. Nothing less must become ours, than HIS LIFE — the divine life He lived in human flesh. "As I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me even he shall live by Me," Jesus said. The truth is so simple — He has poured out His blood-life to us to quicken us again to the glory of God that belongs to man. Our spirit is quickened by His Spirit and in union with Him we are
brought to union with God. Christ gave Himself FOR US and TO US. Our spirit must be
quickened by His Spirit. This is the power of His redeeming blood. That He might liberally
pour His dear-bought treasures into benighted human storehouses, was the inspiration of
Jesus' intense human sacrifice. Some hold not to this truth, choosing rather to believe
that they are a self-sufficient god within themselves, needing no Saviour beyond the
development of their own inherent divinity.

There is a deep longing and intense hunger in the hearts of vast numbers of the Lord's
people in this significant hour. They are earnestly searching for reality but the church
systems and so-called revival movements have failed to meet their need. But the
profound hunger, the intense need in their life cries loudly for satisfaction, their soul
seeks ardently and resolutely after truth, life and eternal substance. Their great need is
not being met by the churches nor by the television evangelists, nor by the crusades, nor
by all the good meetings with their tongues, prophecies, healings, manifestations, and
preaching of faith and prosperity. So these dear folk begin to look to other sources. Many
of these "other sources" are dangerously deceptive, especially to those who desire "more
knowledge," "deeper truth," or "the latest revelation." My beloved, there is an invasion
right into the camp of those whose hearts have been moved by the call to sonship of
"humanistic — new age" philosophy that is deceiving many precious people today. It was
prophesied by the apostle Peter that this enemy of the Lamb of God should appear right
in the midst of the very elect. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even
as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,
even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction
(separation from the flow of divine life)" (II Pet. 2:1). The key word is — "even denying the
Lord that bought them." The denial is against the atonement, the ransom, the redeeming
blood. They are offended at the Lord that bought them, though they may be devoted to
the Lord that taught them. Ah, in very fact, they do not deny the Lord - they call Jesus
Lord and esteem Him as the Son of God, the Christ, our Guiding Teacher, our Great
Example, the Way-Shower, our Pattern. They speak effusively of His goodness, His love,
meekness, unselfishness, understanding, compassion, mercy, power, and wisdom. They
believe that His mission was to show us just how great is the potential of the true spiritual
identity within every man, and the raising up of the Christ-consciousness within. They
proclaim that Jesus became the Saviour by blazing the trail and showing the way of
salvation to all who would follow in His steps. The only problem is that they are required
to go in their own power, their own inward identity, their own godhood, their own inherent
divinity, to follow Jesus into the fullness of the divine life. There is no reconciling, atoning,
redeeming, cleansing, sanctifying, justifying, transforming power of His precious blood
involved, no quickening of His life, no new birth, no washing of regeneration or renewing
of the Holy Ghost. And yet, to the natural mind it all sounds so good — so very right! But
we must truly allow the Holy Spirit of Truth to give wisdom and understanding that we
may discern the difference between the precious and the vile. These satanic agents are
described by the inspired apostle as those who appear to be teachers of the deep
mysteries of God, yet they bring in damnable heresies, in all cunning craftiness and
subtlety, consummating in the repudiation of the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ. It is
not strange that there is resentment against the mystery of the blood which does not exist
against any other thing in the vast panorama of Truth. It is not strange that the ministers
of satan, appearing as the apostles of Christ and messengers of Light, should fortify their
lies and hypocrisies by contending for almost every phase of revealed truth, including the
bright hope of sonship; yet subtly omitting, or violently denying, the one and only point
upon which the interests of God and satan divide.
In the testimony of scripture the order is ever: "Unto HIM that loved US, and WASHED US from OUR SINS in HIS OWN BLOOD." And, "to as many as received HIM, to THEM gave HE power to BECOME the sons of God." Break these links and the chain is gone. Let us never forget this! Some trust so strongly in their own divinity, in the raising up of the Christ-consciousness within every man, that they need no Saviour beyond themselves, no sun or wind or rain from without to quicken the life within. The unwary are caught by it. All this time the blood of Christ is omitted or ignored. Not one word is said about it. The silence is ominous. Do let us understand truth clearly, for "there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even DENYING THE LORD THAT B-O-U-G-H-T THEM and bring upon themselves swift destruction." The destruction is the drying up of the spiritual life, the aborting of the spirit of sonship, and ultimate separation from the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. Do away with the blood of atonement, the blood of remission, the blood of salvation, the blood of propitiation, the blood of reconciliation, the blood of justification, the blood of cleansing, the blood that gives eternal life, the blood of the new covenant, the blood that speaketh better things than Abel's, the blood by which entrance is made into the Most Holy — destroy, I say, this wonderful stream of the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot and every room within the towering temple of reality comes crashing down to earth! The love of God became a man, the love of God became human flesh, the love of God in Jesus Christ has flowed into our souls as the precious blood of Christ to wash away the veil of carnal consciousness and quicken us again to our true heritage in God. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed by such corruptible things, as silver and gold from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." Hallelujah for the blood!

Multiplied millions of Christians in all lands hold the blood of Christ to be precious. The word precious means of great price or value, costly, of great desirability, honored, esteemed or beloved. But there must be a reason why the blood is precious! Through many years of my Christian walk I never learned of any reason why it is esteemed except that God counts it to be the most valuable and precious of all blood to Him. I was never told whether it was intrinsically valuable or if it was valuable because of what it could and did accomplish. To be intrinsically valuable or precious means that it is of itself precious and does not necessarily need to accomplish any work to get its value. For example, the value of precious gems is determined not so much from their usefulness as from their intrinsic value and the desire that people have to own them. My sincere prayer is that the spirit of wisdom and revelation may enlighten the eyes of our understanding until we clearly see that the blood of Jesus Christ was and is precious both in respect to its INTRINSIC VALUE and because of WHAT IT COULD AND DID AND DOES NOW DO.

The mystery of the blood is far too intricate for my little mind to fully grasp, but there is a most interesting statement found in the very first command which God gave to man after the awful judgment of the flood in the days of Noah. After the wickedness of man had reached its peak in antediluvian days, God, in order to spare the human race from complete corruption sent a great flood upon the earth and destroyed all men except one single family which by the grace of God had still remained "perfect in his generations." With this new family on a cleansed and renewed earth, the Lord begins a new chapter in the history of humanity. No sooner had God, however, released Noah from the ark, than He gave him some instructions concerning his conduct, lest another judgment fall upon them. Chief among these instructions was the commandment, "Eat No blood." "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all
things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ye shall not eat" (Gen. 9:3-4).

Because life is in the blood, and not in the flesh of God's creatures, He permitted men to eat flesh but it must be without blood. God is very insistent, even in the New Testament, on this point. In giving the national dietary and ceremonial laws to Israel He repeats the prohibition of Gen. 9:4. "And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel...that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. FOR THE LIFE OF THE FLESH IS IN THE BLOOD" (Lev. 17:10-11). God says, "It is sin to eat any manner of blood." So serious was this sin that the transgressor was to be put to death! Meat which had not been thoroughly drained of its blood was unfit for food as well as all things strangled. Today, the orthodox Jew at least, still remembers this prohibition, and will eat nothing but kosher meat, that is, meat that is without blood and slaughtered according to the law. Every kosher meat market and every bit of kosher food is evidence of the sacredness of blood!

God's commands are never arbitrary but always logical, reasonable, and with divine purpose. Many reasons can be found for abstaining from blood. We might mention the reasons of health and hygiene, but there are two reasons which stand out most prominent. First, the life is in the blood — and life is sacred. It was God's special gift and the effect of His own breath. Moses tells us in Genesis this wonderful and little understood fact: "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and BREATHED into his nostrils the BREATH OF LIFE; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Truly do I declare unto you that a profound mystery lies here! Since life is in the blood, all flesh is lifeless without blood. Here then is Adam formed of the dust and lo, he lives. Now mark well, God did not cause Adam to begin to breathe the air in the atmosphere around him. It was not breathing air that made Adam a living soul. GOD BREATHED into his nostrils. God is Spirit. It was the very breath of God that entered into Adam, the very spirit of life from God. Since the life is in the blood, it is my deep conviction that it was blood which God added to that body when He breathed into him the breath of life! Not the mortal, corruptible, dead blood that flows in mankind's veins today. Adam's body was of the earth but his blood was DIRECTLY FROM GOD. Since the life of all flesh is in the blood, and in view of the fact that God typified the regeneration of man's blood by the slain animals of Israel's altars, God demands that we respect the life of all flesh and to eat blood, therefore, is to insult the life of God! Ah, the power of the blood is in the worth of the life. In the blood of Jesus THE POWER OF THE DIVINE LIFE DWELT and worked — hence its intrinsic value. He came with a blood not unlike the first Adam's blood before he sinned and the spirit of life fled from him. He was the Son of God by conception but the Son of man by birth. He was a specially prepared body to contain a SPECIALLY PREPARED BLOOD that was to be THE LIFE of all humanity. This blood was precious from the fact that it was a unique blood which would do something for all humanity that no other blood could ever do. It was the Word that became flesh, who was made man. It was the life of God that dwelt in Him. That life gave His blood, every drop of it, an intrinsic value. The blood of a man is of more worth than that of a sheep. The blood of a king or a great general is counted of more value than hundreds of common soldiers. The blood of the Son of God! — it is in vain the mind seeks for some expression of its value; all we can say is, it is His own blood, the precious blood of the Son of God!

Jesus came as the Head of an entirely new creation. In fact He Himself WAS A NEW CREATURE, different from any that had ever been. I want to make it very plain that
Jesus was in no way derived from the First Adam, either by flesh or by blood. If He had even one ounce of the first Adam's blood coursing through his veins, then He Himself NEEDED A SAVIOUR. Hear now what Paul says of the Christ: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is THE LORD FROM HEAVEN" (I Cor. 15:45-47). Jesus was not fifty percent the first Adam and fifty percent the last Adam. He was one hundred percent the last Adam! He was not fifty percent the first man and fifty percent the last man. He was not fifty percent the man of earth and fifty percent the Lord from heaven. The second man I-S (100%) THE LORD FROM HEAVEN. To be the second man and the last Adam He could in no way contain any part of the first Adam. To be the man from heaven He must not be a descendant of the man of the earth. He must be an entirely NEW KIND OF MAN, separate from every other creation of God, as was the first man Adam in the day when he was created. The first Adam was truly without father, without mother, and without descent — he was not derived from the life of any other man who had ever lived. So the last Adam! Though He was conceived IN the womb of Mary, He was not OF Mary. He was not formed from the union of the sperm of God with the ovum of Mary. His genes were not half from Mary and half from His heavenly Father. "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called THE SON OF GOD," declared the angel to Mary. Mary was merely a surrogate mother. That fact should settle for all time the morality of surrogate motherhood! Jesus was as truly man, as truly flesh, as was the first man, but He was also as truly a UNIQUE CREATION OF GOD as was the first man in Eden.

Oh. the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! Jesus Christ was THE WORD MADE FLESH; He was not old Adam's flesh imbued with God's life. He was the second Man, the Man from Heaven, the God-man, Head of a new species of Men, a new creation of God in the earth, each member of which is a SON OR DAUGHTER OF THE MOST HIGH! The life is in the blood. As the value of this life, so the value of the blood. In Christ there was the life of God; infinite as God is the worth and the power of that blood! In Christ there was the life of man in its perfection; in His humility, and obedience to the Father, and self-sacrifice, that which made Him unspeakably well- pleasing to the Father. The blood of Jesus, God and man, poured out in death, that was a perfect fulfillment of God's will, and a perfect victory over sin and self, effected an everlasting atonement for sin, and put it forever out of the way, destroying both sin and death and him that had the power of it. Therefore it was, that in the blood of the everlasting covenant Jesus was raised from the dead: that in the power of that blood He entered the highest heaven; and THAT PRECIOUS BLOOD IS NOW AND FOREVER AVAILABLE TO US WITH ALL ITS INCORRUPTIBLE POWER. His blood is His divine spirit of life which has come into us — Christ in us, our hope of glory.

Beloved sons and daughters of God! The blood of Jesus! The blood of the Lamb! Oh, think what it means! God gave it for your redemption from Adam's race and your transformation into the image of God. God accepted it when the firstborn of the new creation entered heaven and presented it on your behalf. God points you to it and asks you to believe in its omnipotent energy, in its everlasting sufficiency. Ah, this heavenly Man was injected into a whole world full of men descended from the earth- man to impart something we had lacked from the day Adam was driven from Eden's portals. That something was LIFE, LIVING BLOOD, for He said He came to give life to the world. He could impart a life to the world that would change it completely.
When Adam transgressed, the life of God, which had been breathed into His nostrils, departed from him and all that was left was a residue, that mortal something which flowed as blood in the veins of his body. This blood contains nothing of the life of God and in its composition and nature is similar to the blood of the animal kingdom, for when the glorious power of divine life departed from Adam, he entered into the kingdom of death. Adam was made a living soul. From the Greek the statement reads, "The first man Adam was made a zoe psuche (living soul)." ZOE is the word which throughout the whole of the New Testament is used of the life of God, divine life, eternal life. PSUCHE, on the other hand, is used of the natural life of animals and men. This life, ZOE, is the life Jesus promised to give to man when He said, "I give unto them eternal life (zoe), and they shall never perish," and this, beloved, is the LIFE THAT DEPARTED FROM ADAM when he transgressed, leaving him ashamed, fearful and dead. The life is in the blood, but our blood, being devoid of eternal life (zoe), is in reality dead blood capable of sustaining only physical, animal life (psuche), and that only poorly until man returns to the dust from whence he came. It is not without significance that, when the bodies of men are embalmed, the first act is to remove the corruptible blood that the dead body may be better preserved. To redeem this dead sinner, life must be again imparted. The only remedy for death is LIFE. This life is in the blood, and so blood must be furnished which is sinless and incorruptible. Now none of Adam's race could do this, for "in Adam all die." There was only one, yes, ONLY ONE, who could furnish that blood — the virgin-born Son of God, the Man from heaven, with a human body, but sinless supernatural blood, inseminated by the Holy Ghost.

Jesus came to bring life to the world. Here is where His blood differed from the ordinary blood or life of men. His blood was precious in that it was able to do something for all mankind which mankind's own blood or life could not do. The natural blood or life of mankind was only for a few years at most, but the blood of the Christ was the LIFE OF THE AGES. So there must somehow be a discontinuance of the blood of a few years, that the blood or the LIFE OF THE AGES might be injected into mankind.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). It was impossible for the blood of Old Testament sacrifices to take away sin because that blood was dead blood. There was no power of life in it. Nevertheless, because of the faith of the worshippers in that BETTER BLOOD which was to come, those animal sacrifices were accepted by God for the time then present or for the time being, and by this faith the worshippers were sanctified, and being thus accepted by God they patiently awaited the day when the BETTER BLOOD OF THE LAMB OF GOD, in which was eternal life, would not only remove their sin, but erase the sentence of death, quickening them in spirit and transfusing their beings with the incorruptible blood of the Man from heaven. We say, and rightly so, for the scripture says, that Christ died for us. There is marvelous significance in those words, however, for when He died He GAVE HIS LIFE TO US. The precious blood that drained from His body on the cross is now manifest as THE SPIRIT, the LIGHT OF LIFE. That eternal life, which two thousand years ago was confined to the blood of His body, now, being loosed by death, is SHED ABROAD to become available as life eternal to all who believe. By the shedding of His blood life was given. By the receiving of His life DEATH IS CANCELED. In the light of life darkness and death flee away. Hallelujah for the blood!

THE CLEANSING OF THE BLOOD
In the service of God as ordained by the hand of Moses for Israel, there were two ceremonies to be observed by God's people in preparation for approach unto Him. There were the SACRIFICES and the CLEANSINGS. Both were to be observed but in different manners. Both were to typify the redemption by which the Lord Jesus Christ would restore men to right relationship with God. As a rule it is only the sacrifices which are regarded as typical of redemption through Christ. The writer of the book of Hebrews, however, points out that the DIVERS WASHINGS as well as the SACRIFICES were figures "for the time then present" of the "good things to come" through the High Priestly ministry of Jesus Christ and through His blood. We are told in I Jn. 1:7 that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." This word "cleanseth" does not refer to the forgiveness received when we first trust in Christ; but to the effect of God's grace IN God's children who WALK IN THE LIGHT. The word is: "If we walk in the light as He is in the light...the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, CLEANSETH US from all sin." That this cleansing refers to something more than pardon appears from what follows in verse nine: "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness."

There are two kinds of functions of the blood of the Lamb. One is to take away or kill, and the other is to add or supply. On the one hand it takes away the negative elements we should not have in us, and on the other hand it adds in the positive elements we should have in us. What is taken away is the element of Adam in us, and what is added is the element of Christ — the new creation life. What is taken away is old. What is added is new. What is taken away is earthly and carnal, and what is added is heavenly and spiritual. What is taken away is dead, and what is added is living. When the blood of the Lamb works within us, it has these two kinds of functions manifest within us: one is to progressively take away all of our old creation man, and the other is to continually add all of God's new creation man. In this way HIS LIFE within us gradually increases from glory to glory.

It is like the blood in our physical body, which contains two kinds of elements: the white corpuscles and the red corpuscles. White corpuscles have one function, to kill germs that invade the body; the red corpuscles also have one function, to supply nourishment to the whole body. When the blood circulates and flows within us, the white corpuscles kill and clean up the germs which have invaded our body, while the red blood corpuscles supply every part of our body with needed nourishment. Likewise, when the blood of the Lamb works within us, or when the life of God in the Lamb works mightily within us, the two elements, life and death, contained in the life of God have the function of killing and supplying within us — that is, killing the spiritual germs of the carnal mind and the fleshly nature, and supplying us with spiritual nourishment, which consists of the life and nature and power of God Himself.

Concerning the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb, no greater statement of truth was ever made than that given by the beloved John on the rocky steeps of Patmos: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5). Some modern translations substitute the word "freed" for "washed", but a look at the Greek word shows that they are in error. The word is LOUO meaning "to BATHE THE WHOLE PERSON in the same way clothes are laundered in water." But praise be to God! this is not an outward washing but an INWARD CLEANSING. One aspect of the power of the blood of Jesus lies in its marvelous ability to ABSORB all that is in the blood or the life of the Adamic man. The apostle Peter by inspiration penned these words of deep and wonderful truth: "Who His own self BARE OUR SINS in His own body on the
tree, that we, being dead to sins, should LIVE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS" (I Pet. 2:24). This one who hung upon the cross possessed a life or a blood that would course its way through the veins of our inner nature and remove all our sins, infirmities and death. It is very wonderful and thrilling to many Christians to stand up and testify that they have been washed in the blood of Jesus. But if you would ask them to explain how they were washed in the blood, about the only answer many could give is that it was by faith. The Christian who has testified concerning being washed in the blood of Jesus has been unable to tell how because he has not understood the significance of one word that he was using. That word is WASHED. We have somehow in the past unconsciously given to that word "washed", as used in connection with the blood of Jesus, some special meaning. It must be that we have not been able to associate such a common and lowly procedure as washing clothes with the work done by the blood of the Lamb. And that is just where we have missed the whole point!

I would point you to this simple and self-evident fact: WHAT IS TO BE WASHED IS DIRTY. That is the reason for its being washed. It is filthy and contaminated and it needs to be washed. And the result of the washing is that the article becomes clean! Ah - what a good feeling it is after a day of sweaty, dirty work, to come home, take a refreshing bath, and get into some clean clothing. The dirt and grime and filth of the work has been washed away and we feel like a new person. All the members of Adam's race need washing! Not physically, but mentally, emotionally and spiritually. The mind, the heart and the nature of mankind are as full of the filth of the flesh as it is possible to be. The life of the blood is as full of filth and corruption as is the man, so it can do nothing to cleanse. Man's nature is literally saturated with sin, evil, fear, pride, self-righteousness, hatred, bigotry, weakness, anger, lust, sickness, sorrow, limitation and death. We know what it means to wash our clothes in water, how they are plunged into it and saturated with it, for several minutes agitated and moved about in it until the dirt is softened and loosened, it is then removed from the garment and SUSPENDED IN THE WATER and carried away. The water has TAKEN UNTO ITSELF all the defilement that was in the clothing. After some rinsings the clothes are taken out of the washer, sparkling clean, and with none of the filth that was in them in the beginning. How beautiful they look! How fresh they smell! Such is the process used today by millions in the washing of clothing. Yet this has not generally been associated with the wonderful washing process that mankind goes through in the blood of the Lamb.

Where does this washing take place, and what is it that is washed? It is the heart. It is in the deep, hidden, inner life of man that this effect of the blood, the life, the spirit of Christ is experienced. Sin has penetrated into the heart, and the whole nature has become saturated with it. The blood too must PENETRATE THE NATURE; as deeply as the power of sin has gone, so deeply must the inner nature be cleansed by the blood. This is wrought by the daily experiencing of HIS LIFE in the nitty-gritty of everyday experience. This is not some mushy, sentimental, religious experience at the altar of some church, but the APPROPRIATING OF HIS LIFE in the crucible of each problem, trial, temptation, weakness, testing, and difficulty we encounter, until self and sin are completely dealt with, washed away, and the mind and will of Christ reign supreme in our lives. Clothes are agitated when they are being washed; in the old days and still in many areas of the world they are beaten with rocks to loosen the dirt. Ah, we hope to kneel on a thick carpet before a plush altar and experience the wonderful cleansing of the blood of the Lamb, but it can never be so, my friend. It is in the midst of all the agitation of the pressures of life, in the turbulence of crisis, trouble, pain and despair that we encounter HIS LIFE WITHIN as the answer, and submitting, receive a mighty and eternal cleansing. Where sin ruled,
His life must rule. Where self reigned, His precious mind must reign. Where the flesh manifests its lively activities, there the spirit of the Lamb must conquer, bringing righteousness, peace and joy. It is in the minds and hearts of men that the cleansing of the blood must take place. Out of the heart "are the issues of life" — just in proportion as the heart is cleansed, so the entire life is cleansed, the whole man outwardly and inwardly is TRANSFORMED by the power of the blood!

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

There is a wonderful statement in the Song of Solomon wherein the Shulamite maiden, beautiful type of God's elect, says, "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand" (S. of S. 5:10). This was in answer to a question put forth by the "daughters of Jerusalem." The daughters of Jerusalem represent those who are truly people of God, saved by grace but who never grow up to maturity, they fail to go on to perfection, and do not press into the depths of Jesus Christ. These are the children of God, not the sons of God. They are not quickened to enter into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with HIM — thus are no part of that blessed company standing on Mount Zion who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." These daughters of Jerusalem ask the Shulamite, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?" (S. of S. 5:9).

The scene is set in the Shulamite's search for her Beloved. As she pursues her Beloved the flame of her love burns brighter; faster and faster she hastens through the streets of the city to find Him, all the while He appears more wonderful to her soul. In her marvelous description of her Beloved, she mentions, first of all, the combined, though contrasted colors of "white and red." To a superficial reader, this might signify only health and beauty. Let us bear in mind that the daughters of Jerusalem did not ask for a description of her Beloved. They inquired in what He differed from, or was more than another beloved. You see, the daughters of Jerusalem always have lovers other than Christ — lovers of earthly things, jobs, homes, cars, hobbies, lovers of men, personalities, preachers, someone whom they can follow and commit the care of their souls to; lovers of religiosity, denominations, movements, church systems, multiplied religious works, rituals, ceremonies, programs, sacraments, etc. — all of which supplant a living relationship with Christ alone. The Shulamite needs and desires nothing but HIM, while the daughters of Jerusalem find many other things just as important in their lives as Him. So they asked concerning the distinguishing features that belong to Him alone, what it is that the Shulamite sees in HIM that causes her to forsake all else and all others for the knowing and possessing of HIM. From the question asked and the motive in asking it, we see at once that "white and ruddy" do not have the significance of "health" when used by the Shulamite to describe her Beloved.

These two colors make her Beloved different from, and more than every other beloved. They, above all, make the Christ of God different from, and more than all others. They, more than all else, make Him the only fruitful Tree in all the forest of the sons of men. These two colors distinguish Him and mark Him out before all eyes; and because of which, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. She knew, as some even who profess to be sons of God do not know, that all religions are not "a way" into union with God! The meaning of the word "white" is dazzling, bright, illuminated by the sun, sunny. Dazzling white, as the brightest sunlight. The meaning of the word "ruddy" is red, to show blood, to dye or make red. The one name above all other names, by which the Christ of God is known, is "the Lamb."
This is the name by which He is known as the sacrifice of God. John the Baptist calls Him "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It is the pure, spotless Lamb of God to which the sacrifices of the Israelite worship pointed, and whom they foreshadowed.

The characteristics of the meaning of "white," namely, "dazzling, illuminated, and shining as the sun," were literally manifested in the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount. 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 the 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 lightening." 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! None can overlook the precious significance here, when the scripture is compared with the clause that we are now considering in the Song of Solomon. The Shulamite declares that her Beloved is "white", or that He is dazzling, white as the light, shining as though illuminated by a mighty sun.

Ah — was this not a "breaking forth" of the glory of the incorruptible blood of God flowing through the veins of His perfect humanity? With this wonderful thought in our minds let us with humble reverence consider the words of the apostle John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In Him was LIFE; and the LIFE was the LIGHT OF MEN" (Jn. 1:1,4). Notice the words: IN HIM WAS L-I-F-E. Now: THE LIFE IS I-N T-H-E B-L-O-O-D. Finally: THE LIFE WAS THE L-I-G-H-T OF MEN. In these statements we discover three synonyms: life, light, and blood. In an article that has come across my desk are found these words of truth: "You have heard of the light of a candle. You have heard of the light of the stars. You have heard of the light of the moon. But this is the light of life. When men speak of the light of the sun, we understand. When they speak of the light of the moon, we understand. May we not now understand the truth of Christ's words: the light of life? I doubt not that my next sentence will be a disturbing jolt to the understanding of many, but the truth as I see it is simply this: Life and light and blood are one and the same thing, manifest on three levels just as vapor and water and ice are one and the same thing on different levels. I am well aware that what I am saying is entirely new and may come as a shock to many who read.... a proper understanding of it will assist us to grasp the greatness of that prominent Bible theme, the precious blood of Christ. Not only will we better grasp its meaning, but we will know why that precious blood of Christ is THE LIFE OF THE WORLD. I see no way that we can avoid the conclusion that His LIFE is in fact RESURRECTION itself. It redeems from sin, because sin found man in life and brought him to death, but the blood of Christ, which is eternal life, finding man in death, brought life, and that is what redemption is."

The glory of the transfiguration was the momentary unveiling of the glorious heavenly light of Christ's blood-life. It was in truth the manifestation of the light of life promised by our Lord Jesus in Jn. 8:12: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the LIGHT OF LIFE." It shone from His face. It glittered from His garments. It surrounded Him like a halo. It radiated from Him like the rays of the sun. His eyes were like lamps of fire — the light that swallows up all darkness and death of the carnal realm. There in the Mount of Transfiguration His disciples beheld Him in the glory of the light of life of His incorruptible blood. This was resurrection life, kingdom life, heavenly life, incorruptible life. And, my beloved, this beautiful picture tells us what OUR
INCORRUPTIBLE BODIES WILL BE, the glistering light of life that Christ Himself actually is. What a powerful metamorphosis when this light of life has matured and bursts forth from within all the sons of God, vanquishing all that pertains to this mortal realm. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body, the inspired apostle tells us. Those who imagine that the incorruptible body will be a body that sleeps, drives a car, goes to work at a factory or office, and eats hamburgers have never seen by the spirit the glory of the resurrection. When Jesus burst out of the tomb in resurrection He came forth in the full brilliance of this divine light of life. In this glory Paul saw Him in his Damascus vision, a light brighter than the noonday sun (Acts 16:13-14), and in this way John beheld Him in the wonder of his Patmos vision (Rev. 1:16). This, my dearly beloved, is the full and glorious and eternal reality of the PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST. it is the blood, yea, the life the saints will possess when the fullness of His resurrection has been experienced in spirit, and in soul, and in body. It is the glory of the manifested sons of God!

OVERCOMING BY THE BLOOD

If your desire is to truly be an overcomer in all things, a part of the firstfruits of God’s redemption in this important hour, a most wonderful key is found in I Jn. 1:7. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST GOD’S SON CLEANSETH US FROM A-L-L S-I-N." There is a way for the Lord's people to be freed from ALL SIN! "If we walk in the light." How? "AS HE IS in the light." Do not forget for one moment, dear ones, that the life is the light and the blood is the life. To walk in the light as He is in the light means to walk in the LIFE as HE is in the LIFE. There is a great principle here!

Paul says in Rom. 8:1-2, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." What makes me free from the law (power) of sin and death? Why, the LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE makes me free! Do we not understand that life swallows up death and light dispels darkness? His precious life — blood (spirit) flowing through our lives accomplishes this. But haven't we always had it turned around in our thinking? How many of us have been struggling to "die" so we can live! How often have we told ourselves, "If I can get rid of my old man, if I can conquer this habit, overcome this temper, this unruly tongue, this lust, this nature, this...this...this...then I will have the life of Christ manifested in me!" We have tried to get rid of sin so we could have righteousness. We have made valiant efforts at conquering the death in us so we would have life. We have worked at eradicating the darkness from our lives so we could walk in the light. Dearly beloved friends, we have had the cart before the horse! It is like saying, "I will stand here in this dark room and rebuke the darkness, and when all the darkness has been chased away I shall have light." The simple fact is you can rebuke the darkness until men carry your dead body out to the mortuary, but THE DARKNESS WILL NEVER LEAVE UNTIL YOU TURN ON THE LIGHT. There is no vacuum that can suck up darkness, no chemical that disintegrates it, no force that can move it. The problem is not to get rid of the darkness, but to produce the light!

The LAW OF LIGHT is that it always dispels darkness. It never fails! So if you have been trying to get rid of the darkness of the carnal mind and the fleshly nature in you, by rebuking it, resisting it, struggling with it, fighting it, ignoring it, praying to be delivered from it, having hands laid on you for it — FORGET IT! These are one and all efforts at
self-reformation. None of those methods has one iota of power to remove the darkness from a life. Only LIGHT is able to remove darkness! Brother, sister, TURN ON THE LIGHT in your life, expose yourself to the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, open yourself to the creative power of His Word within, thrust yourself into the living stream of His precious blood, and the LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF HIS LIFE working powerfully within will begin to make you free from the law of sin and death. You can't take death out of a corpse to make it live, but put life in it and it will live! And there is no way that you can remove the law of sin and death from heart and nature, but you take the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ into you and I tell you the truth — the death will be swallowed up!

I have had the experience of becoming so involved with the pressures of everyday living until the vital presence of God was crowded out of my life. When we spend all our time working and visiting and fellowshipping in carnal things, reading the newspaper, watching television, tinkering with hobbies, and multiplied other natural activities the Spirit is crowded out of our lives, the flow of His life-blood is hindered. How filled our lives are with EARTHLY THINGS! Constantly going, going, and doing, doing, doing. Occasionally we spend a few minutes in prayer, or in the Word, or in blessed fellowship with another saint, or time and effort wasted in some dead meeting, and then wonder why there is no power in our lives and we are not overcomers! There is a LAW OF LIFE that must be at work in us. But you don't really need to be concerned about the law of life, you just need the LIFE! The law will work naturally. When the life is there the law will work. When the law is working the power of darkness and death is annulled, the negative realm is neutralized. Therefore, seek LIFE! If the glorious presence of God, the light of life, can keep me in the spiritual state of overcoming victory for ten minutes...or for two hours...or for three days...then the same substance of HIS LIFE WITHIN can keep me in that condition of victory and transformation for as long as the flow of His life is maintained — this is the absolute unfailing key to overcoming! Death always sets in in any body member where the flow of blood is prevented. People have lost hands and arms and feet and legs when for some reason the blood circulation was cut off. Maintain the flow of the precious blood of Christ and you will have little trouble with the flesh.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11). All who would be sons of God must overcome the dragon of the carnal mind and the beastly nature of old Adam. It comes not by "pleading the blood," thinking positive, or confessing the promises. In proportion as we live in close and abiding contact with the blood we shall experience increasingly its powerful, omnipotent effects. He who gives himself up to continual intercourse with THE LAMB, joined in one spirit with Him, will experience through His blood a TRIUMPHANT LIFE beyond his conception. He will see the law of life at work. The old carnality, the old weaknesses, the old desires, the old thoughts, the old emotions, the old frustrations will begin to fade away, diminishing and diminishing in the cleansing of His blood. Ah, precious saint of God, try no longer to "get rid of," or "quit doing," or "kill," or "die," or "change," anything! Only expose your whole being to the light and you will begin to live by the life of God's dear Son.

The blood of the Lamb is described as a "fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness (Zech. 13:1). By the power of the Holy Spirit it streams through the heavenly Temple. I must in faith turn away from all that is seen, to plunge into that spiritual fountain, with the assurance that it will manifest its blessed power in me. WE ARE BEING CHANGED — even as by the Spirit of the Lord. God is seeking the fully developed life of His Son in us in order to manifest HIMSELF through us as the central
revelation of Himself to the Whole Creation. God in the Lamb IN YOU is His purpose! So let us with childlike, persevering, expectant faith, open wide our souls to an ever increasing experience of the wonderful power of the blood of the Lamb.
Chapter 36
Aries- The Lamb
(continued)

In this Study we come to the first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Aries — CASSIOPEIA — THE ENTHRONED WOMAN. Cassiopeia is the figure of a queenly woman, matchless in beauty, seated in exalted dignity. She is seated on a throne, high and lifted up. With one hand she is arranging her robe; in the other she holds the branch of victory and triumph, at the same time arranging her hair. She seems to be making herself ready for some presentation or great public manifestation. Near her sits King Cepheus on his throne. In Arabic this constellation is called EL SEDU, which means the freed. Albumazer, an ancient authority, says this woman was anciently called the daughter of splendor, hence, the glorified woman. Her common name is CASSIOPEIA, meaning the beautiful, the enthroned. This woman is obviously the Bride of Christ, the Lamb's Wife, the New Jerusalem of whom John the apostle said, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). This scene is in stark contrast to what is seen in the constellation of Andromeda. In Andromeda the woman is bound, in chains, cast down. For two thousand years the bride of the Lamb has been in bonds and disabilities, in weakness and limitation, despised by the world, chained within the harlot system of religious Babylon, under affliction and attack, and even in danger of being destroyed. But here we see the same woman at last freed, delivered, exalted and enthroned! The whole picture in Cassiopeia is that of deliverance, preparation, and heavenly triumph — the church triumphant, the queen who has made herself ready to reign in splendor with her husband, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

One will never be able to understand the deep mystery of Christ and His bride until first he understands the great mystery of God Himself. I have previously pointed out in this series that man in the beginning was created male and female in the image of God. The moment we understand that male and female IS the image of God, then our hearts will throb with heavenly rapture at the awesome glory, power and exaltation of Christ and His bride. When he that readeth can grasp the wonderful truth that God bears within Himself both the characteristics of male and female, of Father and Mother, then he can better understand the divine word spoken "in the beginning" when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so...in the image of God created He him; MALE AND FEMALE created He them" (Gen. 1:26-27). Most people speak of God and His Son without even giving thought as to how it is that God has a Son. All nature with unified voice reveals that one male, or two males, or a thousand males, or a billion males can never produce an offspring. The invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead (Rom. 1:20), and creation immutably proclaims the mystery that it takes both a male and a female to produce life. This simple law of life is a divine revelation of the GODHEAD! God is within Himself both a Father and a Mother and it was within this unique reality of His Being that God brought forth His Son and His sons. I would not for
one minute nor in any way seek to dishonor or diminish the glory, the honor, or the
majesty of our Father — the Lord God Almighty. But He is completely pleased to have
me declare to you the reality of Himself which is male and female. Motherhood is a most
profound revelation that is rooted in the deepest essence of God Himself.

"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the
likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and
called their name Adam, in the day when they were created" (Gen. 5:1-2). Male and
female. Both Adam. Both man. Both in the image of God! God made His image exactly
alike, yet opposite. From the very beginning we can journey into the depth of God's Being
in the revelation of His image and nature as male and female. Adam is a figure we are
pressing through to know God. With what divine clarity does the inspired apostle teach us
that Adam himself was but a type of the Christ. "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam
to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's
transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14). This presence on
the earth of man — male and female — is the glory of God emanating out of the sphere
of His invisible substance and the figure, the symbol, the picture, the prophecy of the last
Adam and His wife — Christ and His bride! It is not important how man was created, nor
even when he was created — but to see the mind of God radiate and descend and
express itself into human form, He made His invisible nature of male and female into a
model creation could see and comprehend, though the female at creation was still hidden
within the man, just as the female nature of God was hidden within Himself from eternity.
As God separated Eve from Adam, giving her form and raising her up into an identity,
and exalting her and setting her together with Adam over all the works of His hands, so
God is separating out of Himself through Christ the wife He has in His own side, giving
her form and raising her up into an identity, and setting her with Christ on the universal
throne of authority, glory and dominion over all things in all realms. This glorious God-
Woman is Cassiopeia — The Enthroned Woman — the Lamb's Wife, the Bride of Jesus
Christ! God's agenda is to get this woman into her own identity, to give her form and
substance, to raise up the consciousness of this woman, that she may find herself and
fulfill herself in God's great Kingdom.

TWO WOMEN — TWO CITIES

Why does God want to bring forth in the earth a spiritual woman — the bride of Christ?
The answer is found in the typology of the first woman, Eve. "And Adam called his wife's
name Eve; because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). The mother of all living!
The mother of all living is the image of God — the mother of all mankind in the image
of God is the revelation of the feminine reality in God. Let us find this woman, this mother
of all living in the revelation of God. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by
a bond maid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born
after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for
these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage,
which is Hagar. Far this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem
which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free,
which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that bearest not; break
forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she
which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise"
(Gal. 4:22-28). Here Paul is telling us about two distinct and different women, two distinct
and different Jerusalems, which are two different and distinct covenants. Abraham, Sarah
and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael are used as illustrations. In the allegory, Abraham
represents God, the Father. Sarah, as his wife, represents the original promise and covenant God made with Abraham to bring forth in the earth a people, a race, a nation. This promise and covenant preceded the giving of the Law and the raising up of Israel as a nation under the Law.

Just as Sarah was old and barren and had no son, so there were no children by this covenant, there was no nation birthed out of the first, the Abrahamic Covenant. When the Egyptian bondservant, Hagar, was given to Abraham as a wife, she pictured the second covenant — the covenant of the Law given by Moses. Thus, Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, typified the natural Israel, the nation of people developed under the Law Covenant after the time of Moses. Finally, Isaac, the seed of promise was born, picturing a spiritual people developed out of the spiritual promise and covenant — without Law, thus the covenant of Grace. Then Paul made a comparison of Hagar to mount Sinai (the Law) and the capital city of Jerusalem in the land of Israel, declaring, "For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Sarah, on the other hand, typifies the freewoman, the spiritual covenant which brings forth the promised seed — Christ. And this Sarah is also Jerusalem — not the earthly Jerusalem, for that is Hagar — for the apostle explains, "But Jerusalem WHICH IS ABOVE is the mother of us all." "Jerusalem which is above" pertains to the heavenly promise and the spiritual seed — the enChristed. Ah — the Jerusalem "which now is" is the one with which the saints in Galatia were well acquainted in that day, the natural city there in Palestine built on seven mountains and surrounded by a great wall, and containing a magnificent temple that was first built by Solomon and later rebuilt by Zerubbabel. It was the center of Jewish worship, as well as their governmental capital city. It was the central place where the Law given to Moses on mount Sinai was administered to the people. In other words, it represented the "law" system which is in "bondage" and all the natural seed which serves God "under law." But he contrasts that Jerusalem which represents the natural seed and the law system that regulates the flesh of the outer man, with another Jerusalem, "Jerusalem which is above." This second Jerusalem is a free system, not a bondage, and she represents a spiritual seed and she is our spiritual mother! The prophet said she would dangle her babes (converts) on her knees and let them nurse at the breasts of her consolation — mother care.

Two women. Two cities. Two covenants. Two seeds. The covenant of Hagar, the natural Jerusalem, is the Law of mount Sinai with its darkness, tempest, and lightnings. It makes people servants, fearing the wrath of God. How sad that the churches today still major in that covenant! Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." The bondwoman is Jerusalem the natural, the law, bondage, ritualistic religion, the flesh, sin and death system. But the Jerusalem which is above is also a covenant — the New Covenant. It is free and is our mother. She gives birth to our being, our sense of reality, bringing us out of the natural sense and into the spiritual, out of the earthly consciousness and into the heavenly. This woman is a covenant and a people birthed of that covenant, and to her covenant she contains a promise in her womb, in which the seed has come to bear again the Christ, for the Christ is birthed in us; that is the way He comes to us. We are the children of the freewoman, and her consciousness is being raised up in us — the feminine side of God. This is the realm of freedom in Christ into which we have been birthed. Thank God, we do not dwell in a place of law, nor of commandments and outward ordinances anymore! We are children of the heavenly Jerusalem. We are not waiting to enter through the pearly gates in the sweet bye and bye.
on some distant shore, for "We ARE COME unto mount Zion, and unto the CITY OF THE LIVING GOD, THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM...to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven...and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:22-23). Yes, beloved, we are come. This entrance into the realm of the heavenly city is not future, not off in space: this is where we NOW have come. We are now seated in the heavenly places, we have now entered into through the gates of the city, we are now walking the streets of gold — walking out the divine nature of God. We have a right to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. While multitudes look for a literal city from outer-space, we are come to the New Covenant City of inner-space, where Christ in us is our hope of glory! How few realize this precious truth! And this city to which we are come, this heavenly Jerusalem, IS THE M-O-T-H-E-R OF US ALL!

Let us UNDERSTAND! The reason there is this mysterious attraction between the masculine and the feminine is because the feminine was taken out of the masculine. The woman was taken right out of the man, and something you (women) are is uniquely what we (men) are, and therein lies the phenomenon of why male and female seek union. Jerusalem above is the mother of us all. What does that mean? There is a divine quality of God that is feminine that has birthed ALL SPIRITUAL LIFE and it is the same divine quality of God that is birthing us in this realm of sonship to God. All Jerusalem's children are born of the spirit, and led by the spirit of God. And now in this heavenly light, power and spirit, they come to be heavenly Jerusalem's children, that is from above. So they are heavenly Jerusalem's children, born from above, of the spirit and the light.

This heavenly Jerusalem is the mother of all them that are born of the spirit and walk in the spirit, who gives them power to become the sons of God, and they that believe in the light that the spirit brings are the children of the light, and walk in the light of their mother, New Jerusalem. And you may read how this New Jerusalem is garnished with pearls, symbolically, and there is written on the gates the names of the twelve tribes, and on the foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. So here you may see that there is no night here, but always day, in the holy city, new and heavenly Jerusalem, that is from above, that is from the higher realm of the spirit. All the children of the light, of spiritual understanding, that are born of the spirit from above, see it as their mother; and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of this city, New Jerusalem, that is from above. And all Jerusalem's children, that have overcome, have right to the tree of life, and drink of the water of life, which flows out from Christ and out of our innermost being in this new and heavenly Jerusalem. And in this heavenly Jerusalem there shall be no more curse and no more death; all who wait for another city shall die and not live, but all who dwell in this city may eat of the tree and drink of its quickening water. And he that overcomes, saith Christ, "I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name" (Rev. 3:12). We understand by now, do we not, that the Jerusalem which is above and is free and is the mother of us all is God's high realm of the spirit, wherein we may walk in perfection, intimacy of fellowship, and vital union with God. The New Jerusalem is the Kingdom of God, which is another way of saying the rule of God within us, by which Jesus Christ has become sovereign King of both our thought-life and our actions. The New Jerusalem is that condition described by Paul when he spoke of "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). She is a city that is not located away out there somewhere in the blue, but in the heavens
or exalted places of the human spirit. To walk in her light is to walk in the state or kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The church has been called the mother. Why? Because the church is the dispenser of the life-giving seed of the Spirit and the Word, and the church is the formation of God's divine nature within a people on the earth. The first concept that calls us out of the world unto Himself is a woman. Long millennia ago the mighty Moses brought this word to the Lord's people: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Ex. 20:12). What blessings accrue to those who honor their father and their mother! Again and again we are told to honor our father and our mother, and this is the first commandment with the promise of life. We have this as a natural law — and I am not seeking to diminish that natural law — for verily I say to you that he who truly values the heavenly Father and the heavenly Mother will ultimately value his earthly father and his earthly mother as well. We have learned to honor God the Father, but it should be obvious to all who read these lines that few have learned to honor God the Mother — that unique aspect of His own Being that births all spiritual life and reality.

FROM THE OLD TO THE NEW JERUSALEM

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:8-16). The scriptural, spiritual, heavenly symbolism of truth is illustrated in simple terms for our understanding. In this magnificent passage we are told that Abraham looked for a city. He did not want Babel, for he departed from the land of Babel. He wanted a city that has eternal foundations. He did not want a man-built city; he looked for one whose builder and maker is God. When he looked for it he left kindred and country, and wandered about homeless in the very land which he was to inherit. Did he ever find it? No. But by faith he saw it afar off, and he will find it, he will see it really.

All who follow in the steps of faithful Abraham are strangers and pilgrims on this earth — in this present world-system. This outer fleshy realm is not their home, their realm of dwelling, their state of being. They are looking for that city that is being built by God, for they are citizens of the New Jerusalem which is of heavenly, spiritual quality. Those who are looking for a heavenly, spiritual city know full well that they are only strangers and pilgrims in this present carnal, mortal world. They endure their life, living as in a temporary state. They have no desire for the things of this realm of dust, for they seek a better country than this. No nation, civilization or system built by man can make claims of permanency. Nations we know once existed, not a cobblestone of their existence can be found. World empires, during my brief time on this planet, have folded up their tents, pulled down their banners, and they are lost. Men whom we thought could never leave us died, and we wept when they did. Others whose names we feared and who held life and
death in their hands for millions, like the withered grass are but dirt, a haunting memory in the minds of their victims. The plastic film replays their pomp and threats with the cavalcade of military might, which is but a story, like Grimms' fairy tales. Nothing permanent, nothing lasting exists in this material realm. Egypt with her mammoth stone structures of a glory long lost, testifies to the centuries that man can make nothing permanent. I have watched men build large churches and mighty religious organizations expecting them to be permanent, now they can't be found. Their death was the end of the large following and the movement disintegrated.

Abraham looked for this permanent order. I look for this permanent order. This was the city of God that the man of faith looked for, not a vast earthly empire. All sons of God look in the same direction. "Those who are born of the spirit," Jesus said, "SEE the kingdom." Not of this world, but something far in excess, the real of the real, the permanent of the permanent, the eternal abiding place, the city of refuge, the Holy of holies, the promise of all promises, from corruption into incorruption, from mortality to immortality, from death unto life uncreated, from time into eternity where measurement has totally lost all its sense. As God's elect walk with the Lord in this strange land, God is preparing for them a city, a sphere of dwelling, a state of being of eternal substance, raised up within by the glorious mind of Christ. I do not mean by this that the city of God is located in some far-off heaven somewhere. It cannot be too strongly emphasized here that the New Jerusalem is not heaven (as that term is commonly understood) in any sense of the word, nor is it a literal city made with brick, mortar, stone, wood, or gold someplace out in the vastnesses of infinity. This glorious city of God is a spiritual city made up of living stones forming a spiritual house, a heavenly people, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh — the bride of Christ. It is heavenly in character, but is found here in the world, though not of the world.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3). Jerusalem, Jerusalem! There is probably more confused and erroneous teaching on Jerusalem than on any other name in scripture. One of the major sources of confusion in the preaching in the popular churches comes from preachers and teachers who are unable to separate the natural from the spiritual. Because the old city still exists and still carries its ancient name, they assume prophetic Jerusalem must have something to do with the old city of Jerusalem. Perhaps you are acquainted with the history of the ancient city of Jerusalem. It had its origin many centuries, yea, millenniums ago. Rich in history, drenched in tradition, sanctified by religion, and stained with blood, Jerusalem remains forever young, forever old. Here David and Solomon reigned gloriously, Jesus of Nazareth walked, the apostles preached; here Muhammad is believed by the Moslems to have ascended to heaven; here the Saracens, Turks, and Crusaders fought; here the Israelis have exuberantly returned. In ancient times Jerusalem came not only to be the capital of the kingdom of Judah, but also came to be almost universally looked upon as the symbol of Divine Kingship. As a real city of marble and stone, it became already in antiquity one of the major world centers. In Second Temple times, Jerusalem's fame spread westwards through Europe and reached as far as Indochina in the east. Its population then is estimated at 300,000 - 400,000, a very large city in those days. Jerusalem has endured throughout history, surviving wars, the deaths of empires and countless attempts to destroy it. Even its appearance speaks of its age and timelessness. Throughout the centuries, stonemasons have worked the quarries of the Judean hills for the distinctive rose-colored stone with which the city is built. Even
in this modern generation, by law every building in Jerusalem must be built of this same "Jerusalem stone." How beautiful it is! Yet, in spite of its enduring and romantic quality, far too many people place too much stress, where prophetic events are concerned, with the physical city of Jerusalem. The church world has somehow missed the fateful edict of Jesus Christ against that historic city. The Lord Jesus saw and predicted His rejection by the Jews and the long night of wandering in unbelief that would follow. In Mat. 23:37-38 we have depicted the Lord Jesus Christ standing on the mount of Olives. He was weeping over the great city of Jerusalem that lay just below Him, and the great love of His heart for the Jews was poured out in most tender and sympathetic words. He exclaimed, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

What a beautiful figure Christ is using here to express His tender love for His own people according to the flesh! "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah" (Heb. 7:14). When the mother hen sees a storm brewing, immediately her first concern is for the fluffy little chicks that compose her brood. She gathers them under her wings, and protects them from the storm or from the hawk that may be flying overhead. Close to her breast they are sheltered and can feel the very heartbeat of the mother bird's love for them. This is the picture of the MOTHERHOOD OF GOD revealed in Jesus Christ. So He expressed Himself concerning the Jews. He would have gathered them to His bosom, and they would have felt His heartbeat of love for them, if they had only given Him a chance to do so; but they had rejected Him and were just getting ready to cry, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" He knew all about it. Jesus could foresee the whole scene of trial and crucifixion, and as He stood there upon the mountaintop weeping over them He was forced to exclaim, "Your house is left unto you desolate." The great and beautiful temple would soon be a desolation and a mass of debris. The service that had been the center of the worship of Yahveh for centuries was about to come to a close. Great Zion, the glory of the whole earth, would soon be a heap of ruins, lying in the dust.

They have been rejected and despised as they have gone from nation to nation, until the Jewish name became a byword in almost the entire world. Just a few Jews continued to dwell in the city of Jerusalem during the centuries, and from week to week they came and continue to come out to a spot called the "Wailing Wall," and there they have wept, longing for the return of those wonderful days of the long ago when Judah and Jerusalem were basking in the sunlight of the favor of God and they were considered the joy of the whole earth. But although twenty centuries have passed by, their tears and prayers have been of no avail, for their house is still left unto them desolate. The city, in spite of its dazzling beauty, and in spite of its sentimental memory; the land, in spite of its lush natural productiveness; the religion, in spite of its outward ceremony and pageantry; all is completely empty and void of spiritual life, there is no living reality, no quickening spirit, no righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and no way for them to pass over again to the old days of glory. The halo of glory has faded off those ancient stones, and has passed to rest on the true city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, which rises beyond the mists and clouds of time, in the light that shines not from the sun or moon, but from the face of God. In other words, in this universe there is a holy society of men and women, pure and lovely, the elite of the family of man, gathered in a realm which the hand of man has never touched, and the sin of man has never soiled. Into this holy realm nothing can enter that defiles or works abomination, or deals in lies. The patriarchs caught sight of this city in their pilgrimage, it gleamed before their vision, beckoning them
ever forward, and forbidding their return to the country from which they had come out. And the Seer of Patmos beheld it descending from God out of heaven, bathed in the divine glory.

There is a most instructive proclamation in Rev. 11:19 wherein the beloved John describes a scene in the heavenlies thus: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." These words point us to the passing of the old and the inauguration of the new. At the very moment of the doom of old Jerusalem, when city and temple perish together — when all the ceremonial and ritual of the earthly and transitory are swept away, the temple of God in heaven is opened, and the ark of His covenant is seen in the temple. That is as much as to say, the local and temporary passes, but is succeeded by the heavenly and eternal; the earthly and symbolical is superseded by the spiritual and the true. We have in this representation a fine comment on the words of the epistle to the Hebrews, "The way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." But no sooner is the "first tabernacle" swept away than the temple in heaven is opened, and even the sacred ark of the covenant, the shrine of the divine Presence and Glory, is revealed to the wondering eyes of men through the new and spiritual and heavenly temple of living stones. Access into the Holiest of all is no longer forbidden, and "we have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus."

In the book of Revelation John is carried away to an exceeding high mountain and there he is shown that which is called both a bride and a city. From the top of that high mountain John looks out and sees a most wonderful city, coming down out of heaven from God, filled and flooded with the glory of God. The description that follows sets forth to the uttermost bounds of human understanding the grandeur and beauty of the glorified bride, represented by this great city. Its dimensions are perfect in proportion and in their outer relations. Its foundations are adorned with the costliest, most precious stones, the walls are built of jasper, and each gate is one immense pearl; but the city itself is builded of a gold as transparent as pure glass. The name of the city is New Jerusalem. Now why is this city called New Jerusalem, instead of New York, New Providence, New Brunswick, or some other name? Well, Jerusalem of old was known as "the city of the Great King." The expression "new" stands for another order, a new dispensation and economy in which only the transformed body of Christ takes part. The glowing description of this city indicates the excellency and perfection of the new heavens and the new earth ruled by the new capital city. Its lofty gates of pearl upon which are emblazoned the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, its twelve foundations of precious stones, upon which are inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and its jasper walls and golden streets are merely representations faintly shadowing the transcendent majesty of that new and perfect government. In the midst of the city is a river of water of life clear as sparkling crystal, signifying every life-giving blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God flowing out to mankind from this grand city.

That city for which Abraham looked is a city formed of Christ people which has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, nor the light of any candle, for the Lord God is the light thereof. These Christ people have no need for the outward light of creeds, doctrines, laws, ceremonies, rituals, ordinances, baptisms, organizations, programs, etc., for the very presence and life of God Himself within is their illumination. The nations walk in the wondrous light of this city's reality, and the kings of the earth bring glad tribute of their glory into it. Through the open gates no evil thing will ever enter. Within its precincts
stands no temple made with hands, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple of it, 
those who abide in Him are its priests and its sacrifices are those spiritual sacrifices 
offered up from within by Christ Jesus. On each side of the river is the tree of life yielding 
continual fruitage. And the leaves of the tree are the word which brings healing to the 
nations. The heart never fails to respond with a quickened beat to the lines: "His servants 
shall serve Him; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads" — 
that is, His nature and character shall radiate out of their lives. Description is far beyond 
the utterance of my poor tongue! Its majesty and fame and power and blessing escape 
me! Methinks that we can but tarnish its exalted glory by our frail attempt to describe it. It 
will abide forever and through those wide gates that never close will flow forth to all 
nations the illumination and quickening and dominion until God has gathered together in 
one all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth.

Rare indeed is the man or woman in the religious systems of earth who has a true and 
spiritual understanding of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem Bride of the Lamb, but alas, 
all view it as some kind of new constellation which will come from the skies into close 
proximity to earth and be near or upon it. As one has written, "No doubt the sudden 
coming into sight, from heavenly space, of a glittering object, unknown to astronomers, 
self-luminous, above the brightness of the sun, steadily approaching, till it enters our 
atmosphere, and comes in close proximity to, if not in actual contact with this globe, 
transcends all human experience, and defies all natural phenomena." Men seem intent 
upon calculating the city in cubic miles as though it were nothing more than a huge 
metropolis slightly more wonderful than those at present on earth. According to Rev. 
21:16-17 the city lies foursquare, 1,500 miles each way with a wall around it that is one 
hundred and forty four cubits high. That makes the wall 264 feet high. I can just imagine a 
city 1,500 miles square that lands and covers the earth from the Mississippi river to the 
Atlantic ocean! It smashes all the farms, villages, cities, people, cattle and industries over 
2,250,000 square miles! Now just what might be the population of such a city? If each 
individual was given one cubic mile of this city, the population of it would be 
3,375,000,000 people — more than half the present population of the earth. But again, if 
each individual were given one cubic acre, the population of the city would be something 
like this: 51,840,000,000,000! What a city! Another waxed eloquent about the size of the 
mansion each inhabitant would possess, replete with space for gardens and fountains 
and other such childish nonsense.

Until our spiritual minds are able to grasp the truth that the body of Christ is the temple of 
God and that every room and mansion in that temple is a living son of God, a literal 
habitation for God through the Spirit; and until we understand that the city of God is the 
bride of Christ, and that the stones of that city are all living stones, as Christ Jesus 
Himself is a living stone and the only foundation that can be laid, we have understood 
nothing at all. The book of Revelation shows the development of this Bride-City from 
glory to glory. Each view is a fresh and further comprehension of the grandeur of the 
purposes of God for all who are called to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. The 
total victory for all the elect is detailed in all its glorious and eternal reality. This is the 
beauty of the Church Triumphant! This is that glorious church that is without spot or 
wrinkle. It is so great and mighty! It stands in the age and the ages to come clothed in the 
awesome majesty of the glory of the Almighty! It is seen in all of its splendor and 
heavenly beauty. It was birthed into the earth at Pentecost and has been processed and 
matured during the 2,000 year church age. It comes into its final divine perfection and is 
viewed in the ultimate eternal triumph and purpose of God. Thus we see that the New 
Jerusalem, contrary to the driveling childishness that is taught, is not a fanciful
monstrosity some fifteen hundred miles high, which will one day come floating or crashing down out of the clouds to settle and rest on the earth like a bump on a little boy's head, throwing it out of balance and off its course. God made this earth complete and as it should be long, long ago. He created it a perfectly functioning reality, and "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it" (Eccl. 3:14). Truly, unspiritual men, who walk after the flesh and its imaginings, can invent many fairy tales. Thus saith the Lord: "And they shall call THEM, the HOLY PEOPLE, the redeemed of the Lord; and THOU shalt be called, Sought Out, a CITY not forsaken" (Isa. 62:12). It is evident that a PEOPLE are the CITY. There can be no doubt that the city in Revelation is not a literal city, but rather those who have adorned themselves with the very nature, the very qualities, that their Husband requires. Those qualities are the very characteristics, the very nature of God. "But ye are come unto mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...to the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:22-23). The message is clear — the bride doesn't live IN the city: the bride IS the city! To that city we have come. It has come down into our hearts; day by day we walk its streets; we live in its light, we breathe its atmosphere, we enjoy its rights.

CASSIOPEIA — THE ENTHRONED WOMAN

Jerusalem of old was the capital city of the national Israel; and as that old order was but a type and shadow of the new (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:16-17), therefore the New Jerusalem must be the capital city, or the ruling element, in Israel today, which is Christ's Kingdom and of which our Lord said, it "is not of this world" (Jn. 18:36). In other words, the New Jerusalem is the ruling class, the kings and priests unto God: those who have attained unto the highest position of honor and might and true greatness in grace. It comprises those who rule with Christ upon His throne. We, therefore, who have been accounted worthy to suffer with Christ (II Tim. 2:12), are the New Jerusalem which shall rule over God's infinite realm for evermore. We are the city four-square, which is the bride of the Lamb. This is the Jerusalem from which, in the age and the ages to come, the Word of the Lord shall go forth to all the earth (Isa. 2:3; Mc. 4:2). In fact, it is even now going forth. This is the Jerusalem from which even now the Lord has uttered His voice (Joel 3:16). This is the Jerusalem from which, during the age and the ages to come, living waters shall go forth to the whole world (Zech. 14:8). "And everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Eze. 47:9).

In the Bible a city pictures a government. Abraham was seeking for a government — the heavenly arrangement, a divine rule by the Spirit upon earth. Cities of old were nations in themselves. They had walls and were self-sufficient. Some of the great cities of ancient times were Babylon, Athens, Rome. The city was representative of the nation. Some cities were nations within themselves, others ruled over territories beyond their walls. The power and might of the land flowed from the city. They were not intended merely as dwelling places, because most people were involved in agriculture and were self-sufficient. As man multiplied, some of the people began to live in cities; and then cities became centers of power and ruled the surrounding area of the land in which they were located. It did not avail an enemy much if he conquered the land surrounding the city. The city itself had to be conquered for the victory to be significant, and only then could it be said that the land had been taken. The real seal of government, power, and authority resided in the city. The walls of the city were formidable protection. Armed with this understanding, we can see the use of an illustration by Solomon in Prov. 25:28, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." A city without walls was an easy prey for the enemy. Likewise, anyone unable to control his
emotions and passions is an easy prey for his enemies (the flesh, the world, and the devil) and can be overrun by them.

Oh glorious city of God! In the 48th Psalm we read the description of the city of our God, and we begin to see deep meanings in these comparisons. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness." It is in this city, that praises to God ascend day and night. The bride rejoicing in the Lord in light and in darkness, in easy things and in hard things, offers unto Him the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving continually; and thus she is like Jerusalem. We are told that she is "beautiful in elevation (situation)." Jerusalem was not builded in low swamp lands, but upon a beautiful elevation. Neither are we build up so that we are "comely as Jerusalem," when we remain upon the low lands, amid the fogs, and vapors, amid the miasmas of earthly swamp lands, bogged down in carnal understanding, fleshly wisdom, or in negativism, fear or despair. Upon the high lands, the air is clear, and as we climb higher and higher upon the mountains of God, we become "beautiful in elevation" — full of grace, faith, wisdom and might.

This is "The city of the great King," and "God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge." How high is our calling when God has chosen us to be a part of "The city of the great King," "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building fitly framed together, growth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22). Truly in this city of the great King God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge — a high tower. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and are safe" (Prov. 18:10). Has He not made Himself known in every palace of this heavenly city, as the Strong Tower and Rock of Defense to every tempest-tossed and tested soul? Only in Him is there safety; only in Him is there protection; only when we are consciously in Him, and continually reckon upon our union with Him can we turn and withstand the enemy victoriously. Praise God! He is more and more making Himself known in the palaces as the days go by, and victory and life become our portion, swallowing up all darkness and death. "Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth" (Ps. 50:2). But before He can shine forth from the palaces of the New Jerusalem, He must command light to shine out of darkness, and He must shine into our hearts, "To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

We read that "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compacted together, whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Yahweh, for an ordinance for Israel, to give thanks unto the name of Yahweh" (Ps. 122:3-4). The word translated "compacted" has most precious meanings, which more perfectly apply to the heavenly Jerusalem, than to the earthly city. We need not think that this is strange, when we bear in mind that the earthly Jerusalem was the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. And we are melted before God when we apprehend the full import of these meanings when applied to the bride of the Lamb. "Compacted" means "to join together by means of fascination; to be charmed and thus bound together; to have fellowship." This sets forth the harmony and the beauty in architecture of the earthly Jerusalem, with its lofty walls, its beautiful palaces, its glorious temple. But it sets forth the harmony, the fellowship, the perfect unity of the living stones of the New Jerusalem. These stones, which are built upon the only foundation, Jesus Christ, are compacted together in Him, through the drawing and welding of the Holy Spirit. It is not the unity promoted by commitment to a preacher, a ministry, a church or a movement, but the love of Christ, the power of His Word, and the
fellowship of the Holy Spirit which draws them together, and they are made steadfast through the deep dealings and processings of the Lord. It is God Himself who joins member to member and builds all together as an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ray Prinzing has shared a thought which is most fitting here. "Thus Abraham sought — looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. This was in great contrast to Cain — we read Cain went out from the presence of the Lord...and he built a city (Gen. 4:16-17). If we walk after the way of the flesh, of the world, we seek to build our own city, we seek to establish our own righteousness — and all we have wrought is a magnification of VANITY. But when we cease from our own works, and SEEK HIM who is the Builder and Maker — then HE builds the city. Indeed, 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it' (Ps. 127:1). How many yet 'LABOUR IN VAIN!' Here the Hebrew word is SHAV meaning: vanity, falsehood. They think they are building something true, but it is useless, fitted for destruction, a counterfeit to the real. Only Christ can live the CHRIST-LIFE through us. Only GOD can do the works OF GOD! So it is imperative that we come into UNION WITH HIM, to be led by His Spirit, so that whatever we do is "not by might, nor by power, but BY MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6) — end quote.

Yes, Jerusalem is a city compacted together. Any number of houses without inhabitants would not be a city, and on the other hand millions of people turned loose on the prairie would not be a city, for don't you see a city is a compound structure of houses filled with people and of streets? The houses form the material framework and the people form the living soul, like the soul in the body. In this glorious city the outer man, the outer ministry is the house — the inner man, the life-flow out of the spirit is the inhabitant. Both Paul and Peter referred to their body as a "tabernacle." The two united together as the expression of HIS GLORY make the city of God. Body and soul united with spirit form a palace in the city of God. "And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house (temple). And Solomon's builders, and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stonesquarers, so they PREPARED TIMBER AND STONES TO BUILD THE HOUSE" (I Kings 5:17-18). "And the house (Solomon's temple), when it was in building, was built of stone MADE READY BEFORE IT WAS BROUGHT THITHER: so that there was neither hammer nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building" (I Kings 6:7). "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (II Cor. 6:16).

Truly the glory of the latter house shall exceed the glory of the former, as the New Jerusalem exceeds in glory the old Jerusalem — a whole new dimension of His glory and an entirely new arrangement is at hand. The primary work of this hour, I believe, is an INDIVIDUAL work. It is like Solomon's temple. Long before there was the "putting together" of all the members of that magnificent edifice and the filling of the house with Glory, there was an extensive and extended preliminary INDIVIDUAL WORK wrought meticulously upon each member. The giant cedars of Lebanon were cut down, each board was hewed and shaped. The gold was mined, refined, and beaten into form. The exquisite tapestries were cut and sewn. The stones were individually quarried and chiseled to perfection. Only when all the INDIVIDUAL WORK was completed was the building raised up and compacted together WITHOUT THE SOUND OF A HAMMER! Seems to me many brethren have tried to put the body of Christ together as a visible organism and expression before the deep work of preparation has been accomplished upon each "living stone." That is why we continually have divisions, church splits, groups that fall apart, and ministries that self-destruct.If you try to build this city by camal
strength and soulish manipulation you will hear the sound of many hammers — but it still won't stand! If your "group" has fallen apart, if your "church" has split, if your "congregation" has changed then nothing you have done represents the "building up" of God's house — it is still merely the INDIVIDUAL WORK that precedes the raising up of the temple of God. In the fullness of time God's temple of sons and God's bride-city WILL come together — by a sudden, powerful, sovereign move of God!

Jesus walked among the people, calling twelve, and seventy, then multitudes of disciples, teaching, preaching, healing, doing signs and wonders, demonstrating the Kingdom of God. There were vast multitudes of people who followed Him, but there was no cohesion, shape, or form. It was an unstructured Kingdom. It was a great company of stones not yet assembled. But when the day of Pentecost was FULLY COME, SUDDENLY... God put something together, stood it up in the earth, and revealed His glory. We stand today in an hour not unlike the days preceding the day of Pentecost. The next great Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles is about to "fully come." The Christ is among us in a fresh manifestation, there is a new message going forth, a declaration concerning the next step and phase of the Kingdom of God, there is a unique dealing of God, and a manifestation of ministry.

The greater glory to come, the bride adorned for the marriage of the Lamb, the manifested sons of God upon the heavenly mount Zion, the city foursquare coming down from God out of heaven, the tabernacle of God among men, the new order for the new age will be birthed suddenly and sovereignly BY GOD HIMSELF when the fullness of time has arrived. This greater temple will speedily arise in glory and majesty and power in the earth without the sound of a hammer — with no carnal efforts of soulish works to produce it. In the meantime we must individually submit ourselves to Father's dealings, and the word and ministry He sends our way, continuing to press experientially into Him, in preparation for the manifestation of His life without measure.

Sometime ago Sister Alma McClure sent out this timely word of wisdom in her paper THE WINNOWER: "In one sense, we are each an individual temple, for Christ dwells in us by His Spirit. But as a corporate body, each one is a separate stone. Separate, but not to STAY separate! When we are PREPARED IN THE QUARRY, fully ready for joining, we 'as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ' (I Pet. 2:5). Yes, we are to be JOINED TOGETHER! So why have we so often found ourselves alone, on the backside of the desert, not fitting in with any group, even when we tried to do so? George Warnock has said, ‘You will recognize that you can't make it alone, that you need the body. God WILL join you with the body. But don't get under condemnation in the meantime, as God works PREPARATION within you! Because He is joining PREPARED member to PREPARED member! Often it takes the isolation, the separation, the ostracism, to prepare you to be a temple stone truly fitted and shaped by the Lord, to be effectually joined to that stone that God has in mind to set you next to!' Each stone was 'made ready at the quarry,' that there need be no hammer or any iron tool needed when the stones are put together! Does that help you to understand the 'strange path' that you have been required to travel? Yes, the hammer, ax and iron tools of the Lord's choosing have struck us in our place of preparation, and we have cried out in pain, not understanding why the trials have been so great, and seemingly without end! But, be of good cheer! It has been a necessary PREPARATION to FIT IN OUR PLACE, in His glorious temple, not made with hands! Ray Prinzing has written, "They who have ears to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to His called out ones, are coming out of Babylon, and leaving the woman (harlot religious systems) behind. They will no longer give their strength unto these women, nor pour their resources into her coffers. They refuse to be defiled by her whoredoms, and
will not play her games. It has taken some tremendous purgings to become free from the
taints of the spirit of religious institutions. We find that many, upon first being called out,
literally go through a time of withdrawal pains spiritually speaking. They feel great pains
for fellowship, yearning to be with people, to get another high from a service, etc. And it
takes much time ALONE WITH GOD to be cleansed until their spirit is pure, and wholly
joined to His. It seems that many who have been much alone are now finding other lone
stones who have been in their own desert preparation, and a joining is beginning to take
place, more and more! Hallelujah! Rejoice! God's timing, and His purposes are perfect!
PREPARED STONES are coming together, and the Temple shall be complete ON TIME"
— end quote.

COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN

One of the beautiful symbolisms given us in the book of Revelation is the Holy City
"coming down from God out of heaven" (Rev. 21:2). When John said this city comes
down from God out of heaven, he wasn't talking about coming forth past Mercury, Saturn
and Mars. He meant not that it would settle down over the mount of Olives or any other
geographical location. As previously pointed out, in the Bible a city represents a
government, and the "holy" city is a righteous government. It is not a man-made
government. It doesn't have a "Democratic" or a "Republican" or a "Labor" or a "Socialist"
party. It emanates from God, out of heaven, and is established on earth through a
heavenly people. May the blessed spirit of revelation grant us the clarity to see that this
city shall never rule until it has in all truth become the "holy" city, prepared, adorned, and
"made ready." She comes down from heaven. Her origin is divine, her nature, her
character, is heavenly — "out of heaven from God." One is reminded of the scripture, "As
IS the heavenly, such are they also THAT ARE heavenly...we shall also bear the image
of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:48-49).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven
saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and they
shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall
wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor
crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And
He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:25). My
beloved, John saw the city descending down from God to earth. He did not see us going
out into space somewhere. God is going to perfect the church right here upon the earth
and it is going to reign upon the earth. We are not going off to some celestial city
somewhere in space. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men! God is coming to dwell
in and with mankind. Yet millions of Christians vainly imagine that they are going to a city
up in the sky to live there with Jesus forever and ever. Multitudes believe that somehow
they will escape "The Great Tribulation" by being raptured and snatched up to heaven.
The testimony of scripture is just the opposite of man's childish superstitions. God has
always come to man. In the sacred mists of long ago Eden the Lord God came dawn and
walked and talked with Adam. In another place we find that the Lord appeared on the
plains of Mamre and walked and talked with our father Abraham. God instructed Moses
to build the tabernacle in the wilderness so that He could have a dwelling place in the
midst of our Israelite forefathers. Long centuries later "the Word was made flesh, and
dwell among us" (Jn. 1:14). John saw the city descending down from God, and it is
descending down from God. With every message from God that is preached, the Holy
City is coming down to earth. With every person that is born from above and becomes a
part of that city, it is coming down to earth. With every person who receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit and grows up another step toward perfection, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every new revelation that comes to us from the Spirit of God and that takes us on into the fulfillment of God's perfect plan for our lives, the Holy City is descending down to earth. As the principles of the Kingdom of God — righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost — are established in our lives, the Holy City is coming down from God out of heaven. Every time an individual steps up another step in God, the Holy City is descending to earth. When the nature and character of our heavenly Father are formed in us and His precious mind rules in our hearts, the Holy City is descending down to earth. With every victory over sin and sickness, over limitation, darkness and death, the Holy City is descending down to earth. Beloved, it will continue descending with the development of the body of Christ into its full stature. It will descend and descend until the prayer that Jesus taught for sons is fulfilled: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

While writing this message an article arrived in the mail from Terry and Tykie Crisp. How timely the thoughts they share! "Why is it that this Great City is coming DOWN OUT of heaven? It's because of the burdened appeal of creation! Beloved, there is coming a GLORIOUS CHURCH in these last days, a church which has been caught up to the highest heaven, to the very throne of God...but who, because of the spirit of sonship in their hearts, will not be able to ignore the groaning of the prisoners! They will come down from the heavenlies in High Priestly attire, bearing their gem-studded breastplate, which is the burden of mankind upon their hearts... with deliverance, with power, and with authority, to set the captives free! Imagine, if you will, a church so virtuous and bright that the nations of the world will walk in the light thereof, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor to it, submitting themselves to her authority, and seeking wisdom from her mouth!" — end quote.

This Great City, the Heavenly Jerusalem that started coming down on the day of Pentecost, shall continue to come down from God out of heaven. That is, it shall continue to descend from out of the divine consciousness and life of the Lord into the receptivity and consciousness and experience of His people on earth. It shall persist until all that dwell upon the earth shall walk in its light and enter in through its gates. Then shall the whole earth be filled with the glory and the knowledge of the Lord. Even now the new heavens — THE NEW MIND — is descending into our hearts, our nature, creating within us a new earth for the tabernacling of God. Everything that God sends down out of heaven is infinitely good and glorious. Nineteen hundred years ago He sent Jesus as His best gift, and all the world has been blessed by that gift. When He brings heaven down to us we know that He is bringing His best. A king once gave a diamond to one of his friends, and the friend said, "Sir, this is too great a gift for me to receive." But the king answered, "it is not too great a gift for a king to give." In like manner, if the full manifestation of the life and glory of God in you, His elect, seems beyond what you deserve or are capable of, remember! it is NOT TOO MUCH FOR GOD TO GIVE AND DO!

According to the beloved John everything on earth IS going to be transformed. He speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. At present heaven and earth are quite separate states of existence, but in the new city of God which John beheld in spirit they are no longer to be two but one. It is my conviction that the veil between seen and unseen is a very flimsy one, and that this seemingly solid matter which forms our prison-house is not so very solid after all. Probably it is nothing more than our own thought
exercised upon a very limited plane, a darkened perception. It is quite conceivable that we might wake up, as it were, from a sleep, and realize that there never has been a material and a spiritual, but that we have all the time been living at the very center of reality, only we did not know it. If men were only endowed sufficiently with the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and ready for the change, the veil between heaven and earth would be taken away, the heavens would be opened, and the two would be seen as one. This is what John means by the city coming down; it is heaven taking possession of earth and absorbing it into itself.

The world is to be won for God; there is to be a transformed society of men on earth; in the end earth will become heaven. Death will be abolished, and sin and sorrow will flee away. When John used the language of Isaiah about the city needing no light of the sun he meant it in even a grander way. Henceforth God in Christ is to be the light of every man's life, all the nations are to walk in that light, and love and brotherhood be all in all. But he makes a bold stroke at this point by departing from the Old Testament dream of the Jerusalem Temple. He says that God Himself will be the Temple, and men shall worship Him in spirit and in truth. Looking back, as it were, upon the desecration and destruction which had fallen upon the temple that was formerly the pride and glory of Israel, he says in effect: Well, let it go! At the best it was only a beautiful symbol for a still more beautiful reality. Nothing is lost by the ruin of that which was built with hands. God Himself is our Temple — God in Christ! We need no other. The whole earth is full of His glory, and in Him we live and move and have our being. By destroying the outward it throws us back upon the inward; it removes the local and temporary to fix our gaze upon the universal and eternal.

We are builders of that City,
All our joys and all our groans,
Help to rear its shining ramparts,
All our lives are building stones;
But the work that God has builded,
Through our bleeding hands and tears,
And in error and in anguish,
Will not perish with our years.

It will be at last made perfect
In the universal plan;
It will help to crown the labors
Of the toiling hosts of man;
It will last and shine transfigured
in the final reign of right;
It will merge into the splendors
Of the Kingdom of the Light.
In our previous Study on the Signs of the heavens we considered the first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Aries — CASSIOPEIA — THE ENTHRONED WOMAN. Cassiopeia is the figure of a queenly woman, matchless in beauty, seated in exalted dignity. She is seated on a throne, high and lifted up. With one hand she is arranging her robe; in the other she holds the branch of victory and triumph, at the same time arranging her hair. She seems to be making herself ready for some presentation or great public manifestation. Near her sits King Cepheus on his throne. In Arabic this constellation is called EL SEDU, which means the freed. Albumazer, an ancient authority, says this woman was anciently called the daughter of splendor, hence, the glorified woman. Her common name is CASSIOPEIA, meaning the beautiful, the enthroned. This woman is obviously the Bride of Christ, the Lamb's Wife, the New Jerusalem of whom John the apostle said, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). In the book of Revelation John is carried away to an exceeding high mountain and there he is shown that which is called both a bride and a city. From the top of that high mountain John looks out and sees a most wonderful city, coming down out of heaven from God, filled and flooded with the glory of God. The name of the City is New Jerusalem.

THE GLORY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

When John saw the Holy City descending down from God, the Spirit was giving him a vision of the bride of Christ as she would be in her perfection. If we follow John in the magnificent view that was given him of the Holy City, and study the various parts of the City as John saw them in the vision, and if we let the Spirit of God show us the spiritual realities of which these parts or portions of the Holy City are symbols, then it shall be revealed to our hearts how true it is that the Holy City is the Bride in her perfection. Until our spiritual minds are able to grasp the truth that the body of Christ is the temple of God and that every room and mansion of that temple is a living son of God, a literal habitation of God through the Spirit; and until we understand that the city of God is the bride of Christ, and that the stones of that City are all living stones, as Christ Jesus Himself is a living stone and the only foundation that can be laid, we have understood nothing at all. The book of Revelation shows the development of this Bride-City from glory to glory. Each view is a fresh and further comprehension of the grandeur of the purposes of God for all who are called to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. The total victory for all the elect is detailed in all its glorious and eternal reality. This is the beauty of the Church Triumphant! This is that glorious church without spot or wrinkle. It is so great and mighty! It stands throughout the ages to come clothed in the awesome majesty of the glory of the Almighty!
This City, John says, has THE GLORY OF GOD. What is the glory of God? The literal meaning of the Hebrew word for glory is weight or substance. In the eyes of men this literal meaning frequently lent itself to the idea that a person possessing glory was laden (heavy) with the substances of this world. Jacob's flock was his "glory" (Gen. 31:1). The Assyrians' power was their "glory" (Isa. 8:7). Joseph's high position in the kingdom of Egypt was his "glory" (Gen 45:13). But when the word was applied to God, it was meant to bring out the weightiness of God's nature, character, attributes and power. His love, His wisdom, His knowledge, His righteousness, His justice, His truth, His power — these weighty spiritual substances are the "glory" of God! His glory is the emanation of what He is. To me it is a wonderful thing to hear John say that the New Jerusalem "has the GLORY of God." It speaks to us and of us. For has not the Lord "called us to His kingdom and glory" (Col. 2:12)? Paul says in II Thes. 2:4 that we have been called "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Again, "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). "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" (Rom. 8:18). "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). "And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them...that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me" (Jn. 17:22-23). Can any doubt remain in any open mind that the saints ARE INDEED the Holy City, New Jerusalem "which has the glory of God"!

When God reveals this New Jerusalem people in all His fullness the world will know this wondrous fact, that "the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them." The glory of God is the LIGHT of this great City. Not only is it the light of the City, but also of the whole world, for "the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it" (Rev. 21:24). This is that true light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn. 1:9). "His life is the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). "YE are the light of the world" (Mat. 5:14). The light of God is pure light, total white light, for "in Him there is no darkness at all" (I Jn. 1:5). The light of God is the light of the City. All through scripture we find that light has been a symbol for the truth. When the Bible says of the Holy City that her light shall be like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, it simply reveals the true church as having come to all light, perfect light, all truth, purest truth, absolute understanding, and walking and living in absolute light and truth — the perfection of the mind of Christ within.

The revelation of the Christ within brings illumination, understanding, perfect clarity about the true nature of all things. This is that light that "shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). The light of this City is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal — that is, transparent. To live in that City, and in the light of it, is to walk in a state in which we "see right through" the illusion of this world, the external form of it, and the denseness of the lower, outer meanings of the letter of the Word of God — to see right through into the mind and heart of God by the spirit. It is the revelation that carries one beyond doctrine and the external forms of religion right into the glorious and eternal reality of God Himself. It penetrates beyond the denseness of carnal understanding and natural comprehension to behold the substance of God's person and the glories of a realm not seen by the human eye. This is the realm beyond the Outer Court and the Holy Place — the most inward realm of the Holiest of all. Moses raised up the Tabernacle in the wilderness, but of this glorious City of God the Spirit testifies, "Behold, THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IS WITH MEN, and He will dwell with them, and
they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God" (Rev. 21:3).

The witness of the Holy Spirit is that this City, New Jerusalem, corresponds in symbol to the Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon — but there is no veil there. As I recall the layout of the old Tabernacle, the Outer Court had no covering, so its light was the sun and the moon. In the Inner Court, the enclosed area just within the Outer Court, lamps were used as the source of light. But in the innermost Sanctuary, the Holy of holies, the Shekinah, the glory of God was the only light. The New Jerusalem does not need the sun or the moon nor the light of any lamp, because in this Holy of holies dwells the eternal presence of the Almighty God and His Son who are the light thereof (Rev. 21:23). This City has no Outer Court or Holy Place. The Holy Place of Moses' Tabernacle was oblong in shape, being thirty feet in length, fifteen in width, and fifteen in height. The Most Holy Place, on the other hand, was fifteen feet in length, width, and height, or a perfect cube. The only other cube described in the Bible is the Holy City, New Jerusalem! The perfect cube of the Holy of holies now finds its fulfillment in the City of God! "The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal" (Rev. 21:16). Now a cube is the most perfect figure, being equal on every side — finite perfection. It has what you call finality, it is the most comprehensive, and holds the most — nothing contains as much as a cube — and therefore, it is given here, as the expression of perfection and fullness. It is divinely inwrought perfection and fullness — the very glory of God — and therefore it is spoken of as a cube. The message is clear — you can never know the glory, illumination and power of this City in the Outer Court of popular religion, nor yet in the Holy Place of Pentecostal, Charismatic, or "New Testament Church" economy. Only those who by faith enter beyond the veil into the glorious and eternal reality of the Most Holy Place can even begin to touch and know the surpassing glory — perfection and fullness — of this realm of God's life.

"And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). No one whose nature has not been transformed shall enter into this City. Since this City is the true church in perfection and fullness, only those who have been born again of the Spirit of God and are walking in the Spirit of God until He has changed completely their nature, so that they have come to perfect purity, perfect wisdom, perfect knowledge and perfect love, shall arrive at this STATE OF PERFECTION AND FULLNESS which IS the Holy City. This is the wonderful plan that God has devised whereby nothing that defiles can enter into this City. For all who come to this state will have arrived at perfection and fullness and there will be no sin, lack, limitation, darkness or death left within them. The Bride, the Lamb's Wife, the New Jerusalem, the Holy City with all its foundations, wall, and gates are then in reality the total unveiling and manifestation of the mystical revelation of the fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ in His church for the age and the ages to come.

John measured the City and it was twelve thousand furlongs or fifteen hundred miles: the length and height and breadth were equal, as I have pointed out — a cube. The measurements are in multiples of twelve which are a symbol and signature of God's purposes in His elect. Twelve is the number of divine government. One thousand is the number of the Day of the Lord (II Pet. 3:8). Twelve times one thousand is God's light and illumination multiplied by God's authority and rule — the perfect and full dominion of God by the revelation of His glory without mixture, limitation or darkness. The Holy of holies of God's eternal Kingdom is, therefore, in type, 528,000 TIMES MORE GLORIOUS than the
Holy of holies in the Mosaic Tabernacle that was a cube of only fifteen feet each way! The true measure of the City is the Lord Jesus Christ: "...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). The people who come to this measure will be the glory of God and the light of the world in the fullness of what that means, and will bring the total restoration that God, who cannot lie, has promised to all creation. Hallelujah!

This, my beloved, is the hour of preparation. "And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). The Greek word for "adorned" is KOSMEO and is here used of the "adorning" of the bride of Christ for her Husband. She is now fully processed and matured, qualified to be the Queen of Heaven, glorified as His Wife upon His throne. By right of marriage she takes His name (nature), is the complement of Himself, has joint-ownership of all His possessions and co-dominion over all His realms. From this word KOSMEO, comes our English word "cosmetics." The noun form is KOSMOS, which means "order, arrangement," and is translated in our Bible as "world." The meaning is just this: The world is to be MADE BEAUTIFUL! But it will be made beautiful by a beautiful people! There is a vital connection between the adorning of the Bride and the restoration of creation to the life of God. The latter shall spring from the former. The Bride is clothed, as she chooses the Lord in the midst of earth's pressures. Therefore, she is arrayed with all manner of precious jewels. In Isa. 61:10, we see the Bride adorned in precious jewels, which speak of the process of refining in fire, and of anointing. The wood, hay, and stubble are gone and her adornment is only that which is of the heavenly nature of her Bridegroom lover. What we build in our lives is either gold, silver, and precious jewels, or wood, hay, and stubble; and all shall pass through the fire! These terms refer to our works, the outer expression of our inner being. These works are not what we do for God, not the keeping of the law, rules, regulations, precepts, and traditions. Our works are the expression of the fruit of the spirit (or the lack of it) in our lives. Pressure will cause us to be either a precious jewel, or a heap of ashes. There can be no restoration of creation, precious friend of mine, no demonstration of the Kingdom, indeed, no manifestation of the sons of God apart from the Bride. By marriage she is joint-heir with the King of kings. The throne (sons) of God is in the midst of her. The fragrant tree of life nourishes in her street for the healing of the nations who hitherto walked in darkness and the shadow of death. The river of life flows from her midst, the foundations of God are laid in her, and the glory of God is revealed upon her. Out from her we hear the sweet strains of a new message, never heard before in all the history of the world. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." Hitherto the Spirit of Christ has invited the chosen, the elect, to come. From henceforth the New Jerusalem bride will be the vehicle of the Spirit's call, saying, "Come," to all the kindreds, and nations, and tongues, and peoples of the world, and the restitution of all things will begin. The twelve gates of the City will be opened by day and never closed, for there is no night there. In response to the glad message, "Come," proclaimed by the Spirit through the Bride, the nations in glad procession will bring their glory and honor into the City, a procession which will never cease until every descendant of Adam who has ever lived or died has entered through the gates of the City back to God from whence he came. No words from human lips could ever fully describe the wonder of this thing. Only the Holy Spirit can carry us away and reveal it to our hearts. Christ will not rule without His bride, for His throne is in the midst of her. She rules and reigns and redeems and restores in the authority of His wonderful name. She dwells with Him in the union of eternal love, devotion, purpose and fellowship. The Bride alone can give to Him that which His heart longs for. She has the capacity to satisfy the very heart of the Almighty! She is His wife, His beloved, the completion of Himself! Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the glory of it!
THE WALLS

Another of the beautiful symbols given us in the New Jerusalem is that of its majestic wall. "And had a wall great and high. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper..." (Rev. 21:15-18). According to this passage the City lies foursquare, 1,500 miles each way with a wall around it that is one hundred and forty four cubits high. That makes the wall 264 feet high. Now, if this is a literal city in heaven, who are the enemies this wall is designed to keep out? What would be the purpose of a wall 264 feet high? Or, if we understand this City carnally, will the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness be so wicked that walls are needed to protect and defend it? Even in our time, what protection would a wall 264 feet high provide? Would such a wall hinder jet planes loaded with bombs or missiles carrying warheads?

The literal interpretation of these beautiful symbols cannot explain any purpose for this wall. But understood spiritually, the walls have deep meaning and wonderful significance. The walls of this City are SALVATION. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks" (Isa. 26:1). "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise" (Isa. 60:18). "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zech. 2:5). "The name of the Lord is a strong tower (literally: a walled place)..." (Prov. 18:10). The mighty power of God's salvation in our lives is the wall of the City of our God. God is raising up this wall within us from glory to glory. The wall has a measurement — there were an hundred and forty four cubits, according to the measure of a man. The man is Christ Jesus! That is the measure of the angel of the Lord. That is the measure of the last Adam, the perfect man, the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ (Eph. 4:13). This measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ IS THE SALVATION that shall bring the believer into that safety where no enemy can harm. As we come into the perfection of Christ we dwell within the walls of His salvation. The power of the Lord formed within is our defense, HIS LIFE becomes the strength of our life. It is the formation of His life in us that overcomes sin, defeats satan, dispels darkness, and conquers death. This is the eternal salvation that has been brought to us by Jesus Christ. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1) . Thank God, the Lord Himself is the keeper of the Walls of Salvation in the City of God! This Wall of Salvation has nothing to do with so-called "coverings," elderships, headships, fellowships, rules, regulations, laws or doctrines. If there was really "safety" in any of those orders you wouldn't see so much division, church splits, disgraced ministries, and fellowships falling apart. The Wall of Salvation reflects the glory of God in the life of the child of God as the faith and strength and power of God is formed as a nature in him.

There is another aspect. Walls are not for protection only, but for exclusion. Everything is excluded that defiles. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). Nothing can come into this City but that which is the life of Christ. Anything that is not of His life must be excluded. Those who inhabit this
glorious realm are separate from the filth of Babylon and the flesh-pots of Egypt. They abide in union with Christ. They put on His glorious mind and are transformed into His wonderful likeness. Nothing else is permitted entry into their world.

THE GATES

"And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it" (Rev. 21:12-13,25-26). Rare indeed is the man or woman in the religious systems of earth who has a true and spiritual understanding of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem Bride of the Lamb. In one remarkable prophetic word the prophet Isaiah carries us beyond the symbol to the reality, saying, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy WALLS SALVATION, and thy GATES PRAISE" (Isa. 60:18). How clear that the idea of a material city is but a product of carnal minds and childish understanding, as the Holy Spirit pulls aside the veil and identifies for us just what the walls and gates of the City of God really are. The WALLS are SALVATION and the GATES are PRAISE. Salvation and Praise are wrought out through a people — not through stone walls or pearly gates. There are twelve gates of praise — twelve aspects of HIS PRAISE lived out through the lives of those ministries by which men are ushered into the realities of the City. Twelve is the number of divine government, thus the rulership of the Spirit in our lives evokes that praise by which HE is glorified. Jesus, our elder brother and pattern, was ruled by the mind and will of the Father at all times and in all things. His life was a praise to God. His life, in all its words, attitudes and actions GLORIFIED GOD. Praise is often associated in our minds only with singing, thanksgiving, and noise — but true praise lies beyond what one speaks — it is a state of being. Christ's life was a praise to God. It was in harmony with the purpose of God and revealed the character and glory of God.

The gates are the entrance into the Kingdom realm of God. "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it" (Job 28:7-8). "It shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err and go therein" (Isa. 35:8-9). It is only by and through the wisdom, grace, and Spirit of God that we can find an entrance in through the gates of the Holy City. Nothing that is unclean or that defileth, nothing of the world, the flesh, or the devil can enter into this eternal divine relationship with the Lord. This Holy City and Divine Government of the Lord is composed of only those that have been made fully ONE IN HIM, filled with His fullness, invested with His nature. They have laid aside the corruptible things of this life and have put on the Lord Jesus Christ, being granted an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ. These are they whose life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is their life, appears, they will appear with Him in His glory (Col. 3:3-4).

The twelve gates of the City bear the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. This fact has led some to erroneously assume that the natural Israel, the fleshly seed of Abraham, the multitude of nations that have come out of his loins, the thousands of millions of physical descendants of Rebekah and Leah, are the bride of Christ. But such can never be! The book of Revelation is entirely a book of symbols. A symbol is never the
reality, it merely points to the reality. The City as seen by John in holy vision is not a literal City — it is a symbolic city — a people. The gates are not literal gates — they are entrances into the presence and glory of God. The river of water of life is not a babbling stream like the rivers of earth — it is the eternal outflowing of the life of God in the Spirit. The wall is not like that wall which surrounded the ancient Jerusalem — it is the almighty defense of His salvation-power in our lives. The throne is not a golden seat in some far-off heaven somewhere — rather, it is a symbol bespeaking of the realm of His omnipotent power and universal authority. Thus, when we read of the names of the tribes of the children of Israel upon the gates of the City it cannot mean the literal names written with letters of the alphabet, nor can it signify the fleshly Israel — else the symbolism here breaks down and what is intended as merely a symbol becomes in fact the reality. It must point beyond the outward and physical to the inward and spiritual. The things pertaining to the Tabernacle of God are heavenly — not of the earth, earthy. They belong to the new creation — not the old.

The names of the twelve tribes of Israel are deeply meaningful to us in the Spirit. An understanding of the tribes reveals to us ways and means by which we are able to enter into the New Jerusalem today. The first is RUEBEN, meaning "Behold a son." God is perfecting the spirit of sonship in a people, and this spirit is one of the entrances into the governmental realm of God. The Throne (sonship, government) is within the City. The second tribe is SIMEON, meaning "Hearing." The admonition to the overcomer is: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7). Faith comes by hearing the Word of God — the Living Word — and this spiritual capacity to truly hear is another of the gateways into the High Calling of God. LEVI, the third of the tribes, means "Unity" or "Joined," and truly "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (I Cor. 6:17). It is the principle of abiding in Christ. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). Those of the spiritual tribe of Levi have discovered the secret place of the Most High. The fourth is JUDAH, and means "Praise" — a people transformed to show forth HIS virtues and excellencies, to become His praise in the earth. The fifth tribe, ZEBULON, means "Dwelling." It speaks of possessing our possessions, of apprehending that for which we also have been apprehended, entering into and laying hold upon that which has been promised. This principle is another mighty door of entrance into the power and glory of the City. The sixth tribe, ISSACHAR, means "Bearing a reward." This bespeaks of attainment — that which surpasses grace and gifts and imputation — something bestowed in recognition of actual accomplishment and qualification. Issachar becomes — it is the development and maturity of the new creature. GAD, the seventh tribe, denotes "A seer" — the spirit of prophecy, the opened heavens, divine wisdom by which one understands the true nature of all things. Without doubt this is an important prerequisite for rulership in the Kingdom! ASHER, the eighth of the tribes, means "Happy." "The joy of the Lord is our strength" — not soulish joy worked up by singing and clapping for fifteen or thirty minutes, not the bubbly, giddy, superficial excitement of spiritual children over God's goodness and blessings; but that deep, confident, abiding joy of the spirit which is undisturbed by anything that happens in the outer world of appearances. This is the Kingdom Attitude that is unmoved and unshaken by events, a fundamental quality that admits us into the inner calm and stability of the Christ. The ninth tribe is NAPHTALI, meaning "Wrestling." This denotes victory in spiritual warfare — OVERCOMING — for "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high (heavenly, spiritual) places" (Eph. 5:12). The tenth tribe, EPHRAIM, means "Double fruit" — that which becomes provision for all men out of the
abundance of HIS LIFE. It is provision and ministry. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn. 15:8). The eleventh tribe, MANASSEH, means "Forgetfulness" — representing the ministry of reconciliation, mercy, forgiveness, and blessing, even that beautiful characteristic of God's nature wherein He says even to the rebellious, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for ALL shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I REMEMBER NO MORE" (Heb. 8:11-12). The twelfth tribe is BENJAMIN, meaning, "Son of the father's right hand." Benjamin is the youngest son and the figure of authority and power, revealing the great truth that all the foregoing principles and characteristics must be thoroughly established in one's experience and life before he qualifies to share the dominion of HIS THRONE!

There are twelve gates to the Holy City — three gates on each side — and each gate is one great pearl (Rev. 21:13,21). Think of it, beloved: the Seer of Patmos does not tell us that the gates are made of pearl, but that each of the gates IS ONE PEARL! Why is every gate a pearl? You remember the heavenly merchant man in Jesus' parable of the pearl of great price. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mat. 3:45-46). You may say, "That is the sinner seeking the Saviour. Jesus is the one Pearl of great price, and we must sell all we have and are to obtain that priceless stone." Indeed! a sinner selling? What has old Adam got, what has the natural man got to sell but his sin, lack, limitation, darkness and death? What has the carnal, baby christian got to sell but his wood, hay, and stubble? Nay, the pearl of great price is not Christ Jesus, but the Church! Not that filthy harlot system which calls itself the church, but the true elect of God born from above.

I do not hesitate to tell you that the Christ went and sold all that He had, He emptied Himself, made Himself of no reputation, being made in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, laying aside the glory He had with the Father before the world was, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross — truly He paid ALL for the Church! The inspired writer has borne divine witness: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves...to feed the church of God, which HE HATH PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD" (Acts 20:28). "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT; 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). The pearl of great price is the Church in her unity, beauty, perfection and completeness — the Bride adorned for her Husband, the Wife of the Lamb, the exalted Queen of Heaven, the glorious City of God! This Bride so fascinated the Lord Jesus, was of such value and preciousness unto Him, that He parted with "all that He had," to get that pearl.

The pearl was the most precious substance known to the ancients. A large pearl is almost priceless. A single ordinary pearl's worth may be as high as $200,000. And there is a reason for the pearl's great value. Some one hundred years ago, a common mussel living in the Tennessee River, began feeling mighty uncomfortable. A fragment of shell from some other mussel, long since dead, had washed into its housing. This shell fragment became an irritant within the mussel. Immediately the mussel began a response, a healing response, to the irritation. Because of the irritation and hurt, a juice or fluid began to be exuded by the mussel to "coat" the foreign substance. Secreting streams of pearly saliva or nacre — one of the things mussels as well as oysters do best
— this particular mollusk managed to cover all the rough edges of the fragment. This provided some temporary relief. But each time the substance hardened it again created suffering, renewed pain, on the part of the mussel. Another layer of nacre was added. As the years passed, it added more and more coats of nacre until the fragment became deeply hidden in the pea-like object. Each layer added hardened into a spherical form of lustrous beauty. Thus was born an authentic North American fresh-water pearl.

The value of a pearl more than an inch in diameter is fabulous. The world's largest natural pearl found anywhere (recorded by Guinness) turned up in a giant killer clam off the coast of the Philippine Islands. It weighed a little more than 14 pounds. The pearl is baroque in shape, a little bigger than a man's head, and was valued at $4,080,000 a few years ago. How staggering is the statement that the portals of the New Jerusalem are each a single pearl! Each one represents the wealth of a world. Twelve of them matched! It stuns the imagination.

The pearl is formed within a living creature by a living process. Pearls do not grow in the open air, or exposed to the outer elements. Most are formed within an oyster, hidden away within the depths of the seas. The oyster is certainly not a beautiful creature on the outside, yet God has ordained a spiritual lesson for us in that on the inside of the oyster, through processes that He has ordained, something BEAUTIFUL and of GREAT VALUE can be formed. Thus a pure heart, a divine mind, a heavenly nature is formed in the center of the ugliness of an outwardly earthly creature. It is a living thing — a living process — and has its seat at the very center of the life. The creation of the pearl is initiated by the introduction of an irritant — and in the life of the overcomer that irritant is THE CROSS. It is produced out of suffering, and the crucifixion of a life. The "sea" is a type of the soul, and the living process involved in making the pearl is the living, dynamic work of GRACE that flows out from our spirit joined to His Spirit, in response to the inworking of the cross, producing the beautiful character qualities that give us an entrance into the higher dimension of God's Kingdom. Our hearts are made pure, the new creation life is formed in soul and body, through the crucifixion of the natural life and the outflowing of His grace. The cross enters our lives as something that hurts — we may see it as a trial, a difficulty, a hard place, a crisis experience — but it pierces the flesh-life, evoking streams of the pearly nacre of HIS LIFE AND GRACE, forming the beauty of the Christ within.

Never forget, precious friend of mine, that each gate, each means of entrance into that City, is a PEARL — we cannot be admitted to the Heavenly Jerusalem unless God has produced something in our lives akin to the beauty and value of the pearl. As someone has pointed out, pearls can be found anywhere in the world, even in waters that are somewhat shallow, but the best quality pearls are found in the depths of the sea, speaking to us of a deep work of God in our lives. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep" (Ps. 107:23-24). Without a doubt a pearl is one of "His wonders in the deep." As God does a deeper work in us, piercing to the very depths of our life, then truly "deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the waterspouts" (Ps. 42:7).

Leland Earls wrote: "A pearl cannot be produced without suffering in the oyster. Heb. 2:10 says that Jesus was 'made perfect through suffering.' The Greek word used here is PATHEMA, meaning 'something undergone, i.e. hardship or pain.' Another Greek word is used in Heb. 5:8 where we read that Jesus 'learned obedience by the things which He suffered.' The word in this passage is PASCHO, which means 'to experience a sensation
or impression.' Thus it was ALL the experiences that Jesus went through which prepared or perfected Him for His role or ministry as KING-PRIEST in the Kingdom of God. And remember — Jesus is not only our Saviour, but also the PATTERN SON for all the sons who are to be brought to His same glory and share in His King-Priest ministry and rule. We are now being prepared for future roles of responsibility. And the experiences of life correspond to the 'irritants' that 'invade' the oyster! How we respond to them is important. If we let the Spirit of God 'exude' divine grace within us, even as the oyster exudes a living substance to form a pearl, then our right and grateful response to every experience can be used of God to form the pearl-like beauty of His nature and character in us. Pearls may be rose, cream, white, bronze, brown, or pastel shades of lavender, blue, green, etc., depicting the various ‘hues’ of the Lord's work in us by His Spirit. It is not the 'irritants' (experiences) themselves that make us overcomers, but rather our drawing upon His grace — His divine life substance, that builds layer upon layer of pearl-like beauty in us. The appealing iridescence and the luster for which pearls are prized are due primarily to the reflection and refraction of light on the surface of the translucent gem. Ah, beloved, the light of the New Jerusalem is the GLORY of God. Can we be ready for that City unless when that glory shines upon us there is a reflection and refraction of HIS OWN beauty and image developed within us?" — end quote.

In ancient times, pearls were regarded as a symbol of perfection. This came about because of their pure color — predominantly white with some rose, pinks, lavenders, delicate purples, greens and tones of gold. Their appearance was also regarded as softer, more feminine, than that of mineral gems such as diamonds and emeralds. Because they are softer and vulnerable to scratches, pearls need gentle treatment. A modern comparison of pearls and other precious gems, made by a woman's magazine some time ago, stated in a mock-serious vein that, while diamonds make a woman appear harsh and mysterious, pearls make her more sexy and sensuous. Is it not remarkable, in the light of this worldly evaluation, that two millennia ago the Holy Spirit used the pearl as a symbol of entrance into the company of the prepared, adorned, beautiful and glorious bride of the Lamb! She is prepared, perfected, matured, adorned with goodly pearls as a bride for her Husband. Corporately, it is the feminine qualities of God formed in a people and united to Himself. Individually, it is the soul cleansed, sanctified and transformed, made one with the spirit. Oh glorious City of God!

THE FOUNDATIONS

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth, the twelfth, an amethyst" (Rev. 21:14.19-20). As we read these wonderful words it becomes at once clear that the use of gems in the description is not by chance but instead by divine purpose, because it specifies the kind to be used in relation to each foundation and the gates. What wealth of joy and instruction for God's elect is contained in this highly figurative language! Here we are told that the twelve apostles of the Lamb are the foundations of the City. This alone should be ample evidence to us that God never intended to present the idea that this New Jerusalem is a literal city. For it says that human beings, the twelve apostles of the Lamb, are the foundations of the City! In Eph. 2:20 we are told that we who are the temple of God are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. So we
see that the apostles and prophets are the foundation and that we are to build upon this foundation. We, the body of Christ, are God's building; we, the body of Christ, are God's Holy City that He is building.

There are twelve foundations — not separate foundations apart from one another supporting different parts of the City, but twelve foundations laid one upon another, giving perfect and full support to the whole. Since these foundations are adorned with dazzling stones it is evident that they are not beneath the ground, but underneath the City in a heavenly realm, clearly visible for all to see. Jewels are brilliant. How often the clear sparkle of a gem set in a ring or as an ornament of adornment catches our eye, and almost without thinking our gaze follows its every movement. We are fascinated by the delightful way facets reflect in varying hue the rays of light that fall upon them. Oftentimes the large, well-cut gem seems to possess an inner light apart from that which strikes it. However, this we know is only an optical illusion, because no jewel possesses light within itself. So with the saint of God and the gifts and graces that are conferred upon us. Apart from God we are nothing, even as the brilliance of the jewel darkens and dies when taken from the light.

Jewels are beautiful. Precious stones have a beauty of form and color that delights the eye. Visualize spread out before you on a cloth of midnight blue velvet, some jewels of beauty. The clear, icy sparkle of the diamond, the warmth of glowing red of the ruby, the cool green of the emerald beside the regal purple of an amethyst. See also a sapphire reflecting the blue of heaven; a chalcedony, pale blue, translucent, and wax-like; and interspersed among them all, lustrous pearls, warm glowing spheres so strikingly different from the sharp facets of the other gems, all reflecting the same light in gloriously different hues, none detracting from the other, but all enhancing the beauty of the whole. Those many-hued stones bring out the varied qualities of God, made known through His people. There will be different rays of His glory revealed through them, illustrated by these different precious stones, which are the emblems employed, to set forth the luster of God's elect, in heavenly glory, and the way in which He displays the beauty which He has formed in them. Put a light through an emerald, and it is quite different from that of the ruby, and although we are all partakers of the grace and glory of God, that grace and glory will shine through each differently, and no two are alike. It would be an immense pity if all the saints were like a truck load of bricks — all the same shape, and color. What a dull, drab City it would be! Just as there are not two leaves of the forest alike, so there are not two saints of God alike. All are alike in being perfected in His image, but all are different in the expression of that image, just as children are different expressions of their parents.

My heart has been thrilled and stirred beyond measure as I have mused upon the glories of the Holy City of God's great and eternal Kingdom. It has stood out to me that the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are inscribed upon the twelve foundations of the City. Time and space do not permit us to explore the deep meaning within each of the names of these apostles, but each bespeaks of a foundational principle in the governmental realm of God. In the various symbols of this City we see different representations of truth and the purposes of God in His people. The walls speak of the strength of the Christ within as our defense against every enemy of the spiritual life. The gates portray those precious truths and experiences in God by which we are given an abundant entrance into the High Calling of God. The foundations figure for us those foundational truths, experiences, ministries, and characteristics upon which the whole economy of God's Kingdom rests. The Church is built upon the foundation of the apostles
and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. This means that Christ is foundational in the life of the New Creation — there is that of Him which is laid in us as the basis, underlying principle, substratum, and support of all that is raised up in our lives. Christ Himself is the apostle of our profession, says the writer to the Hebrews. The apostles, that is, the apostolic ministry, is one of the underpinings of God's house.

Our English word "apostle" transliterates the Greek word APOSTOLOS which means one who is sent. During the earthly ministry of Jesus twelve disciples were called "apostles". In Rev. 21:14 these are called "the twelve apostles of the Lamb." This means that the twelve were specifically those who followed Jesus and were sent forth by Him during the days of His earthly walk as the Lamb of God come to live among men and be slain in sacrifice for them. The scriptures clearly show that the twelve were uniquely the apostles of Christ to the Jews (Acts 1:15-26; Acts 1:8; Gal. 2:8). Thus, the twelve were an entirely different order of apostles than those set forth in Eph. 4:7-11 where we read: "Therefore He saith, WHEN HE ASCENDED UP ON HIGH, He...gave gifts unto men...and He gave some apostles..." These apostles were not given by the Christ during His three and a half years of ministry while He walked the earth in a flesh and blood body as the Lamb of God. This order of apostle was given by the RISEN and ASCENDED Lord, and given not to the Jews, but to THE CHURCH which is His body. This order of apostle went beyond the twelve and included Barnabas and Paul (Acts 14:4), Sylvanus and Timothy (I Thes. 2:6), as well as Andronicus and Junia (a woman!) (Rom. 16:7) among others. These were all apostles to the early Church, even as the twelve were apostles in Jerusalem among the Jewish believers.

May the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God grant us understanding in this unique and momentous hour at the end of the age! It is my deepest conviction that God is raising up and sending forth an entirely NEW APOSTOLIC MINISTRY in this present day. I do not hesitate to declare to you that the apostle's ministry has always been essentially that of bringing in a NEW ORDER. A friend has shared the following insights into this great truth: "Apostles build where NO OTHER MAN HAS BUILT. So if a man is doing what others have done for years before him, or what was done two thousand years ago, I do not see that as a true apostolic ministry today. Moses, as an apostle, brought in an entirely new order. He went up into the mountain and brought down the 'house-law' for the new dispensation. Jesus, as the 'apostle of our profession' ushered in a whole new age, and the Church Age apostles established that new thing. Apostleship is associated with NEW THINGS, foundation layers, those who CRACK THE FORM OF THE FORMER AGE and bring forth the essence of it and build the essence. Jesus, as an apostle, cracked the form of the Old Covenant and brought forth the essence of it in Himself.

"Many brethren have felt an inward call to apostolic ministry in this hour, and not yet understanding the fullness of what the Lord is doing have tried to apply that call in the wrong realm: moving under Church Order in an attempt to fulfill it. The sun is now setting on the Church age and the transcendent glory of that brighter and greater age when the body of Christ has been brought to its fullness, the manifestation of the sons of God, and all nations brought under the dominion of the Kingdom of God, is even now dawning upon us. It is now time for the APOSTLES OF THE KINGDOM to be sent forth, and these apostles will CRACK THE FORM of the Church age and bring forth its content as an essence that the Church has never yet known. These can be naught but the FIRST of the FIRSTFRUITS COMPANY. These must be brought forth prior to the establishing of the Kingdom, as the foundations of the Kingdom are laid in them."
THE STREET

Can we not see that all natural things have spiritual counterparts? John on the Isle of Patmos, beholding these glories in the Spirit, wrote, "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass" (Rev. 21:21). Here I would share the comments of another on this passage which eloquently sum up the very truth the Spirit has quickened in my own heart. "In the symbolism of scripture, gold is the symbol of the nature of God. As much as gold is the perfect metal that cannot be tarnished, so God's nature is perfect and it cannot be tarnished. From times immemorial men walked on streets. So the street of the City speaks of our walk. The fact that the street of this City was pure gold reveals to us the truth that in our walk, we will have come to the perfect walk in the nature of our God, having attained to the perfect nature of our God, walking in perfect purity, perfect holiness. We cannot overemphasize the truth that the idea that so many christians have in their spiritual immaturity — that some day they're going to go to a literal, physical city, in space somewhere, with streets paved with literal gold and buildings made out of jewels is merely a notion that is the product of spiritual childishness. There is no physical city anywhere in God's vast universe having streets paved with gold and buildings constructed of jewels. There never will be any physical city with streets paved with gold and buildings made out of jewels as our 'heaven.' Our heaven is revealed to us in Eph. 2:1,5-7, where the scripture says, 'And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...but God...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: that in the ages to come He might show (display) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.'

"To became exactly like Christ — this is our 'heaven', no matter where we happen to be in God's great universe. "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' (Rom. 8:29). This is our final dwelling place, our final state of being, when we have come to our glorified spiritual state, come to perfection in Christ Jesus, and have become the Holy City. Then we will not go to this city or that city or any city, but God's whole universe will be our dwelling place. We will be free — free from the limitations of flesh, free from the tyranny of sin, free from the power of death, and therefore free to live in God's universe as citizens of God's universe. Of what benefit would streets paved with gold be to us after we have attained our glorified body? We will have no need to walk on any kind of streets then. We will have come to the resurrection life of Jesus. After the Lord Jesus was resurrected, we don't find that when He wanted to go somewhere He had to walk down streets. When He wanted to go to the upper room where the disciples were gathered, He simply appeared to them there in the upper room. When He wished to join some of the disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, He simply appeared to them there. When He wanted to meet with the disciples in the hills of Galilee, He simply appeared there. When the disciples were fishing on the lake and He appeared to them on the shore, He didn't need to walk there, He just was there.

"When we have attained to the resurrection power of Christ and we want to transport ourselves from one place to another, we won't have to walk down any literal street paved with gold, or asphalt, or anything else. We will simply think the thought in the will of the Father and we will be there. So streets paved with gold would be of no value to us, or buildings of jewels, because we won't live in physical buildings. Our dwelling place will be in God by the Spirit! The only reason that gold and jewels are so attractive to us now is because we are still physically in our carnal state and these things are beautiful on this
plane and have real monetary value. They have carnal value here on earth. When we have attained to our spiritual state in spirit, soul, and body, such things will mean nothing to us because all things will be ours. Not one physical thing will have more value than another to us. So we see that there never was, and never will be, any literal city in heaven someplace with streets paved with gold. These are simply symbols which God uses to present to us spiritual realities. That spiritual reality is the Holy City which is the Church in perfection. With our spiritual mind we see that the street paved with gold is a symbol of a perfect walk in the Spirit of God, having attained to the perfect nature of God. We see that street of gold walked out in the lives of our brothers and sisters who walk out the nature of God even here on earth."

THE TREE OF LIFE

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2). What would you expect to find in the midst of the street of a great city? Without doubt, the din of endless traffic, and the hurrying of eager feet. But was there ever half so beautiful a street as that seen by the aged eyes of the Seer of Patmos? In a loving description of the New Jerusalem, he noticed that in the midst of the street there was a river, and on either side of the river there was a tree — the tree of life. A tree in the street! And what a tree! Ever young and fair, bearing fruit all the year round, and dressed in leaves which were able to heal the sick and torn nations of the world as soon as they entered this street of the City of God and plucked thereof. Beautiful street of a glorious City! If only our unbelieving eyes could catch a sight of such a street with the magic, beneficent tree in the midst of it, how eagerly we too would run to pluck its leaves and heal our distracted hearts!

Thank God, the work of God upon the world is not yet done. The nations of earth are sick, even today; the mind and the heart are not sound; they need healing. And they find it on the leaves of the tree in the street of the City of God. So it would seem as if the vision that sustained the aged heart of this true Seer was that of some heavenly City in this world. True, there lies upon this City a wondrous light, such as never was upon sea or land; and no city that has ever been built by human hands can compare with it for the nobility of its inhabitants. But it seems, after all, to be a City set up upon the earth, inhabited not by angels but by living men, with the living God among them. The Word does not say "trees" of life, but the "tree" of life. You see, there is only one tree to give life to all of the City, and healing to all the nations of the world. It says that this tree was on either side of the river. On both sides of the river. How could one tree be on both sides of a river? Because it is the tree of life, my beloved. It is simply PERFECT UNION WITH THE SPIRIT OF GOD. In the blessedness of Eden, back in the beginning, man walked in perfect union with the Spirit of God, and therefore he was feeding upon the tree of life. He was partaking of the tree of life continuously. When he followed the serpent in his temptation and turned away and broke his communion with the Spirit of God, he ceased to partake of the tree of life, and began to partake of the tree of the carnal realm — the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As man comes back into that perfect union with the Spirit of God that he knew in the beginning, he once again has perfect access to the tree of life. The one tree is on either side of the river of life — it is only through union with the Holy Spirit, who is the river of life, that we have access and are partakers of the tree of life. It is as we are continually beside the river of life, yea, in that river, that we know the power of that tree.
Notice that the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. There has never been anything given to mankind for the healing of the nations, healing of the dread sickness of sin and death under which all are cursed. There has been no medicine, no philosophy, no governmental arrangement, no social order, no set of laws, no religious system — nothing that has or can heal. Healing comes only through the Word of God. So the leaves of the tree are the truths of God's Word that are given to us by the Spirit of God, which is the river of life, by which we partake of the tree of life, and of its leaves which are the eternal truths of God's Word, truths which alone will bring the healing of the nations. Let me make it as plain as possible. The river is the Spirit — the tree is the Word. The Spirit and the Word! It is out of the Spirit of God that the Word of God issues forth. The Spirit is life. The Word is an incorruptible seed planted within the river. We are born again of the Spirit, and we are born of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. We drink of the Spirit, whereas we eat of the Word. When the ministry of the Spirit in the Lord's body brings forth the Word of life in all its power and authority — the nations will be healed!

The tree of life bears twelve manner of fruits. Twelve is the number of divine government, and the fruit is the fruit of the spirit. Therefore the twelve manner of fruits that the tree of life bears simply represents to us the fruit of the spirit borne in our lives in POWER AND DEMONSTRATION. The Kingdom (rule, government) of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When the fruit of the spirit is produced out of our lives until the nature of God is revealed powerfully and communicated effectually to men producing change and transformation — there is the blessed fruit of the wonderful tree of life!

THE RIVER

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). This wonderful river is called the "water of life" because of its life-giving properties. Earthly streams usually have their source in some mountain spring, but this river of living water, has its source in the throne of God and the Lamb. This stream originates unpolluted, incorruptible, and undefiled in all the power, all the authority, and life of Christ. This is the river and the water that Jesus spoke of to the woman at the well, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus 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 spake He of the Spirit" (Jn. 7:37-39).

This pure river of life of the Holy Spirit brings unto every believer the divine life and nature of God that is made available unto us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ has made us partakers of His divine nature. He has given us His own divine life. This Holy City flows with ALL that God is; even NOW this river and all that it possesses is flowing through the channel of our lives by the Holy Ghost. This is the eternal river of the Spirit and Life that flows in the heart and life of every believer and eternally from the throne of God and the Lamb until all creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Praise God! Already we are beginning to drink of that water of life; we are able to overcome death; the tears are being wiped from our eyes. Already we do not weep as those who have no hope. The spirit of the New Jerusalem is in us; therefore, death has no power over us. We have victory over death, the last enemy we
must conquer. The complete and final fulfillment of these things is yet to come because we are still growing and maturing. Now we are beginning to experience a foretaste of the glory that lies before us. Hallelujah!
Chapter 38

Taurus- The Wild Bull

As we continue our study on the real meaning of the Zodiac, we come now to the Sign of TAURUS — THE WILD BULL. Taurus, The Bull, has the same meaning in virtually every language in which it is known. It is a picture of a great beast, a bull or ox, with his head lowered and his horns pointed forward. He is untameable and irresistible. He is charging forth — rampaging, raging, bringing destruction to all that is in his way. It is interesting to note that the Sign of Taurus is only the forepart of the bull: actually, as it is seen in the heavens, it appears to grow right out of Aires, the Lamb. The picture is of a lamb that changes into a Bull. In a previous constellation we saw Capricornus, half goat and half fish, giving birth to the Fish, the body of Christ; the slain lamb giving birth to the people of God. Here we see the gentle and redeeming Lamb taking on a different form and character — now giving rise to the Christ coming in great glory and in swift and powerful judgment. In salvation and deliverance we meet and know and experience Him as the Lamb, but to all that is contrary to Him — the world, the flesh and the devil — He becomes the irresistible Lord of Judgment.

The chief star in Taurus is Al Debaran, located in the bull's eye, and means The Captain, The Leader, or The Governor. Then there is the cluster of stars known as Pleiades which means The Congregation of The Judge. Also the second Decan of TAURUS is Eridanus meaning The River of The Judge. So there is no doubt as to the significance of TAURUS — judgment! This character of the bull, as denoting the Christ coming forth in judgment, is presented by the pen of inspiration in these enlightening words: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 1:7-8). Long millenniums ago the prophet Isaiah declared, "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter. For My sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of My curse, to judgment. For the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood...for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion" (Isa. 34:1-8).

What a picture of divine judgment! The subject of judgment is a large one in the Bible, running through scripture from Genesis to Revelation, and it is so manifold in meaning, purpose, and application that it eludes simplification. The judgments of God run deep and are so vast and multi-faceted that they lie completely beyond the comprehension of the carnal mind and beyond the grasp of mortal man. As exclaimed by Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how UNSEARCHABLE ARE HIS JUDGMENTS, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33). David prophesied, "...for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth" (Ps. 96:13). Paul urged the Athenians to repent "because
He hath appointed A DAY in which He will JUDGE THE WORLD in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Judgment is inseparably related to the coming of Christ and His Kingdom. "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).

We have met some brethren in this word of sonship and the kingdom of God who have exaggerated the bright side of the love of God out of all proportion to its other aspects. The love of God has been presented in such a way that it is a weakness rather than a strength. It has been presented on the sunny side of the street with nothing on the other side ever mentioned. There is a "love" of God preached that has become such a one-sided, mushy, gooey, sugar sweet thing that it contains nothing of the vital and vigorous concern of a Father for the best interests of a son — it would never love enough to chasten, scourge and correct that son! They have perverted love, making it sickening rather than stimulating, causing it to slop over on every side like a sentimental feeling rather than expressing an abiding concern for the object of love. The kind of God we have revealed in the scriptures is a God of both love and judgment. He is not a nebulous nonentity of sentimentalism. He is a God of character. We thank God today that He is a God of love, forgiveness and mercy — and there would not be one of us alive today to breathe His fresh air, if it were not for His amazing love toward us. But those who do not want to believe that God will administer a sufficient amount of corrective judgment upon the disobedient and rebellious, should he reminded that God is exactly that kind of Being. In the very cradle of human history, we find God pronouncing a curse upon our first parents on account of their transgression. He even pronounced a curse upon the earth itself on account of their sin.

There is going to be a unique and different unfolding of this One we call Jesus Christ! We have known Him as the Saviour of the world — but He is about to go forth bringing His judgments to the whole earth, to the entire bestial order that the carnal mind of man has erected. In the book of Revelation we see the Christ riding forth on a white horse with the armies of the sons of God following in His path, "judging and making war." In Revelation 6:16 it is called "the WRATH of the LAMB." What an amazing divine paradox! The "Lamb" of God who "takes away the sin of the W-O-R-L-D" on the one hand, and the "wrath" of the Lamb on the other hand. The Lamb — precious embodiment of meekness, mildness, lowliness, gentleness, patience and sacrifice — coming upon the world for which He died in the hot fury of vengeance, until men are found fleeing from the wrath of the Lamb! Ah, this is Aries, the Lamb, who becomes Taurus, the Bull! Is it not written in the heavens?

This dual nature — the meekness of the Lamb and the vengeance of the Wild Bull — makes Him what He is, both the SAVIOUR and the JUDGE of the universe. In His redemptive activity His face is set against sin and death. Nothing can ever alter that. He will go to all lengths to turn men from evil, and restore them into harmony with the mind and heart of God. The sheer simplicity and sincerity of His passion is enough to melt and win the most sophisticated or the hardest of men. The wrath of the Lamb is beyond our understanding. But the Seer of Patmos was shown the unveiling of the wrath of the Lamb. I want to declare that God is going to come forth in these last days in a revelation of Jesus Christ with the judgments and wrath of God. This shaking and purging will affect the very church of the living God. The hour is come when judgment must begin at the house of God, but the whole earth will reel violently under the overflow. And do not think, precious friend of mine, that this judgment that begins at the house of God pertains to Jim
Bakker and Jimmy Swaggert. The judgment of these brethren is the judgment of God revealed against that great city, Babylon. The judgment that begins at the house of God comes first to those who have received the call to sonship, to those apprehended to the high calling of God, to those predestined to be conformed into the image of the son of God that they may rule and reign with Him in His Kingdom! The Lord comes suddenly to His temple as a refiner's fire and as fullers soap. He shall thoroughly purge His floor, and purify the sons of Levi.

There is a two-fold working of God in the lives of the Lord's apprehended ones. First, SELF must be dethroned, and in the accomplishment of this Christ is the Wild Bull, clothed with strength and majesty and terribleness. As the Wild Bull He will crush every bone in the body of your self life and tear away and destroy every vestige of your flesh. But as the Lamb He wondrously imparts of HIS LIFE that you may live by the spirit. The Wild Bull is Christ warring, destroying, conquering all that pertains to the nature of old Adam. The Lamb is Christ AS OUR LIFE, that we may appear with Him in glory. But further — these same qualities and characteristics must be fulfilled in the elect as we are conformed into His image, made ONE IN HIM. The company of the sons of God shall bear both the image of the Lamb and the Wild Bull. The strength and ferocity of the Wild Bull nature shall function through the sons in perfect unity with the gentle and ministerial character of the Lamb. These two streams of the divine nature, working together as one, in judgment and in mercy, shall flow mightily and great, and will cause the very earth to shake, will move heaven and stir hell, and bring the triumph of God's Kingdom among men. Hallelujah to the Lamb! Hallelujah to the Bull!

I pointed out previously that the chief star in TAURUS is Al Debara, located in the bull's eye, and means The Captain or The Leader. Then in the constellation of TAURUS there is a cluster of stars known as PLEIADES which means The Congregation of the Judge. Ah — God is revealing not only the righteous judgments of our Lord and Leader, Jesus Christ, but He is preparing and forming His WILD BULL COMPANY, those blessed ones made one with the heavenly Taurus and the Lamb on Mount Zion. This glorious ministry shall prevail in the earth and restore all back into God again. The scriptures reveal that the church is the body of Christ, and God's blessed Christ must include both the Head and the body. All true saints must be aware of this sacred secret — that the body is the body of ALL THAT THE HEAD IS. If Christ the Head is Saviour, then the body of Christ the Head is the body of the Saviour — a body of SAVIOURS. If Christ the Head is King, it follows that the body of the Head is the body of the King — a body of KINGS. And armed with the knowledge that Christ the Head is the great and universal Judge, it should be perfectly clear that the body of the Head is the body of the Judge — a body of JUDGES! The purpose of the firstfruits being judged is that they in turn may be qualified to judge. The judgments of God shall be executed upon the human family and the ages to come by this glorious CORPORATE CHRIST, Jesus Christ the Head and all the sons and daughters of God, His body, the completeness of HIS THRONE which shall smite the dark kingdoms of this world, and the saints shall take the kingdom and reign with Christ in power, authority and glory.

God is preparing a mighty COMPANY OF JUDGES whose responsibility it shall be to JUDGE THE WORLD in righteousness! Daniel 7:21-22 sheds much light upon this subject. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN TO THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Again, "And he that overcometh...to him will I give POWER OVER THE NATIONS: and he shall
rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN UNTO THEM" (Rev. 20:4,6). The apostle Paul adds, "Do ye not know that the SAINTS shall JUDGE THE WORLD? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that WE shall JUDGE ANGELS? how much more things that pertain to this life" (I Cor. 6:2-3). Jesus spoke of this same beautiful truth when He said to His disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father has appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in the kingdom, and SIT ON THRONES JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL" (Lk. 22:28-30). Most of the Christian world is waiting for Jesus to come at "any minute" and bring judgment upon the earth. In the greater light of present truth we now understand that the judgment which HE IS, and which is now wrought out in His saints, the firstfruits of His redemption, will ultimately be manifested to creation in and through the sons of God. The judges for this day are now in preparation for their awesome task. Yes, YOU shall judge the world, saints...but you will do it in humility and with a broken heart full of compassion and love. Taurus, the Bull, emerges out of Aries, the Lamb. The first aspect of the ministry of the judges in the coming age is JUDGMENT. This work, however, shall be swiftly followed by the second ministry of MERCY and RESTORATION, for God's judgments are ever by correction unto redemption.

THE SWEET INFLUENCES OF PLEIADES

In the neck of Taurus is a cluster of stars called PLEIADES, also known as the Seven Sisters or the Seven Stars. Pleiades, as I have pointed out, means The Congregation of the Judge. In the thirty-eighth chapter of the book of Job God asked Job some very pointed questions. One of the most suggestive of all these questions, and one that may well cause the reader to ponder deeply, is found in the thirty-first verse. Here the query is raised, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" A gentleman who spent the first forty years of his life in ancient Mesopotamia, the land where Job lived, brought some light upon this rather fascinating query. He said that though they are, of course, close together in the sky in that far-away eastern land, the Pleiades and Orion are the constellations which introduce the spring and winter seasons. So this is a pertinent question that God asks of Job, nor can it be answered by any man since Job, including the present generation. When the Pleiades shone in the sky at night, the men of that land knew that spring had come. Note, then, this question carefully, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" That is to say, when sap has begun to flow, when the leaf has appeared on the bough, and the tree has put forth her blossoms, when the grass springs forth from the sod, and the brooks begin to sing, is there any human influence which can lock them again in the still bands of winter? In a word, when God begins to make a spring, no man can hinder or retard. In the same sense of finality, when Orion flamed in the sky of that land, winter had come. How utterly fantastic for man to seek to reply in the affirmative to this question of the Almighty, "Canst thou loose the bands of Orion?" No man can loose the bands of winter. When the blossom and the leaf disappear and all the singing waters are locked in the icy manacles of winter, who can hinder God in the progress of the season?

Spiritually, no one can hinder or stop the ongoing seasons of God as He brings forth His purposes in the earth. Historically, the purposes of God have marched forward triumphantly from age to age, from dispensation to dispensation, from dealing to dealing, unfolding God's Kingdom in the earth from realm to realm. The New Testament record begins at the period just before and at the time of the coming of Jesus into the world. Just
like the seasons, "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4). He came into the world to do away with the old dispensation and covenant of law, which had no power to bring life to dead souls and is symbolized by winter, and to usher in the new dispensation of grace, which is symbolized by spring. The law of God has never been fulfilled excepting in Jesus Christ. That which man could not do, Christ came and did as He walked upon earth and when He died upon Calvary. The darkness and winter of condemnation and bondage which rested upon man, were done away by the Lord Jesus Christ, who satisfied every demand of the law. The rain of the Holy Spirit which came with the doing away of the law softened the ground and prepared it for the bringing in of a better covenant.

As we think of the faint light that the people of God had under the old dispensation, we see that it truly was winter. It was like the warmth of the sun in midwinter, when its rays can scarcely penetrate and disperse the frost in the air. There was no more power in the law to give life to one soul, than there is power and warmth in the midwinter sun and atmosphere, to bring out the flowers of spring and the fruits of summer and autumn. Not through works of the law or religion, nor of himself, is man saved; but it is the gift and work of God. He has given unto us eternal life, and the life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath the life; and he that hath not the Son hath not the life. In the individual, this is a picture of the soul who is dead in trespasses and unbelief; full of deadness and darkness, full of fruitlessness; whose life is bleak, cold, dead, like midwinter. When the breaking up comes, and the rays of the sun begin to fall upon the winter of death and unbelief, the clouds of doubts and fears and ignorance begin to roll away; and the warmth of the "Sun of righteousness" brings life and warmth to the soul. It is the rain that comes when winter begins to break up that prepares the ground for the seed and fruitfulness. It is the breaking up that comes in deep conviction and dealing, with godly sorrow and repentance, that prepares the heart of man for the seed of Christ and fruit-bearing. The rain cannot bring fruit any more than can the snow and winter; but it prepares the ground for the germination of the seed, which has life in it, and has life more abundant.

As the summer comes on the flowers appear upon the trees and upon the vines of the heritage of the Lord. As yet there is no fruit, but the blossoms give promise of a rich harvest from every shrub and plant, from every vine that the Father has planted in His vineyard. This is the beginning of the setting up of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. Everything is either in blossom or in flower; upon the olive tree and upon the vine appear the bud, the blossom, the green fruit. Though the fruit has not yet ripened, though the "many brethren" have not yet come fully into the likeness and image of the Firstborn Son, yet the fragrance and beauty of the first days of spring cover the Lord's vineyard; the sunshine of God's approval is over His heritage. The warmth of His grace and the light of His glory are wooing the buds to burst forth into flowers, the flowers to give place to the tiny fruit, and the immature fruit to go on to perfection. And, blessed be God! none can hinder or stop the mighty working of God in this hour to bring forth His sons and the manifestation of His Kingdom. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" Can you? Can any one?

The wonderful truth is: NO ONE CAN HINDER OR STOP THE PROCESSES OF GOD! God has a plan! At the beginning of the church age the world was visited by events so momentous in their power and glory that all things were changed from that time onward. In the eternal realm before the ages were formed, and ages before man first saw the light of earth's day, the almighty Lord set in motion His omniscient and immutable purpose for the ages which were to follow. As a year is filled with weeks and a week is filled with days
and a day is filled with hours, so time is filled with ages and ages with dispensations. Let it be thoroughly known that our all-wise heavenly Father planned the events of each successive age from the very first age unto the ages of ages far beyond the comprehension of mortal man. It is not by accident nor by natural evolution that the world has progressed from the darkness of paganism to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is by divine design. The plan of the ages conceived in the heart of Him who purposed all things after the counsel of His own will is being worked out one step at a time in each succeeding age in like manner as people who read these lines have often planned in advance the work for each successive day of a week or each week of a year. Is it not true that many of the wives and business men now reading this paper have plans in mind for today and tomorrow and perhaps even months and years in the future? Whether consciously or unconsciously we all plan ahead, daily and hourly working toward some human goal. There is nothing that opens the wellspring of love, of faith and understanding, in the human heart like the knowledge of God's purpose. What infinite joy, what satisfaction and assurance flood our souls when for the first time in our lives our great and wonderful Father is seen to be a God of purpose, knowing the end from the beginning because He planned the beginning and planned the end! He created all things by His omnipotent power that His glorious purpose might be fulfilled. And the power that made all things and brought forth all things into being is the same power that upholds all things and controls all things and shall almightily bring to a successful conclusion the divine purpose in all things.

My dear brother in Christ, Stacy Wood, recently shared with us the following word which masterfully sums up the point I am making. "Two millenniums ago God began a work in His people, and in the book of Revelation He recorded it through His servant John. 'These things,' He says, 'must shortly come to pass' (Rev. 1:1). The Greek word here translated 'shortly' doesn't mean that these things would come to pass within a few days; it means that when they begin they will continue until they have been fulfilled or brought to completion. I am persuaded that we are in the fulfillment — we are in the days when things are 'shortly' coming to pass — when the purposes of God are marching forward to their fulfillment and completion. We are in the days when events are suddenly happening about us, God has set into motion events which have been progressively unfolding in His body from age to age, each age becoming brighter and brighter and better and better until finally God pulls the veil off from who we really are and causes us to BE. God started something that HE is completing, and that is where our confidence has to be.

"'Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1:6). It is GOD who began the work in you, beloved. I did not begin it, it was not a preacher that began it, it wasn't our ability to grasp hold of some light that began it. It was the Light Himself, who is the Light of our being, who dawned upon our consciousness and began a good work in us. Since He began it, we must trust Him to finish it. We may think we know what He has in mind for us, but the One who drew up the plan and began the work is the One who really knows what the finished product is all about. So we must rest upon, confide in and trust that the One who began the good work in us will bring it to completion.

"I do want to define this term 'good work.' In the English language when we think of ‘good’ we relate it to that which feels good, tastes good — what we like. If we don't like it, it's not good. If it pleases us, it's good. But that would be an inaccurate understanding of this word ‘good.’ A better English rendition of the word would be WORTHWHILE. God has begun a WORTHWHILE work in you! And He will complete it! The word worthwhile bears
wonderful significance for me because I realize that with the good there is also the bitter and difficult, but it all works together for good. I do not look at everything that comes my way as being 'good.' In fact, the vast majority of things that come my way, if I were to judge it as being good or bad, I would say is bad, not good! But you see, now I've learned that it's not a matter of good and bad — it's a matter of worthwhile or worthless. I'm learning that everything that comes my way by the hand of the Father is certainly WORTHWHILE! Sometimes it's very bitter, but it's worthwhile. So God has begun a worthwhile work, a worthwhile endeavor — in us. And He is capable of bringing it to its fullness, its completion, unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" — end quote. Thank God! He shall complete the work in us. To us, as to Job of old, the question comes, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?” No way! God's truth, God's will, God's purpose, God's seasons, God's new creation march relentlessly and inexorably onward.

The prophet Amos spoke the word of the Lord concerning the heavens and their relationship to the elect when he said, "Seek Him that maketh the seven stars (Pleiades) and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is His name" (Amos 5:8). Paul Mueller has written concerning this beautiful and significant prophecy: "Not only do the heavens 'declare the glory of God,' but also 'the firmament showeth His handiwork.' God's present work involves making or creating 'the seven stars.' 'Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion.' These 'seven stars' represent the remnant gathered out of the seven periods of the church age who shall come forth in the fullness of their brilliance to begin the kingdom age. Not only is the Lord making the 'seven stars,' but He is also making or creating 'Orion,' as the prophet Amos has declared. The prophet mentioned both the seven stars and the constellation Orion as having special prophetic significance. This is not the word of a man, it is the word of the Lord. Therefore, Orion, as well as the seven stars, must have particular importance for the elect in this hour. As we read the Bible, we will find that the Lord has veiled His truth in parables, allegories, types and shadows. Such is the case with the truth of Orion, which is a constellation in the heavens associated with Taurus, the bull.

"When doubts assail and fears dismay, we should look to the heavenly example, and see Christ Jesus, our faithful High Priest. He is completing the circuit in the heavens, thus giving us a clear picture of the victory that is ours in the fullness of time. He is running His course as a strong, happy youth, starting from the distant skies and whirling through the full extent of it, just as we are doing in this world. We are seen as stars in that heavenly realm. We are the 'seven stars' that are in the Lord's right hand, thus indicating that we shall complete this course in the strength, power and authority of His right hand. Let the blessed words of truth be a constant encouragement, for as He is in His heavenly sanctuary, so are we in this present world of carnality and corruption. This is the truth of 'the mystery of the seven stars' that are in His right hand. The mystery of the seven stars and of the gloriously adorned Orion in the heavens presents a picture of great hope for all the apprehended ones, and for the whole creation. As the seven stars are a part of the great Orion Prince in the heavens, so are we essential parts or members of the Princely Christ Company who is destined to rule the world.

"This Christ company of today is far greater than the resurrected and glorified Jesus. All during this age, a vast company of sons has been joined to Him by the Spirit. Therefore, John saw Him as being ‘like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the
foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength' (Rev. 1:13-16). Seven stars are seen in His right hand which He holds with honor, dignity and hope. We are the seven stars that He proudly holds in His right hand, for He has purchased our salvation, and is also leading us to the fullness of sonship. He who is 'the great First Cause of the universe' is 'guiding His many children (sons) to His glorious salvation' (Heb. 2:10, Smith-Goodspeed). And again, 'These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars' (Rev. 3:1). He who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks holds the seven stars representing His holy remnant. This Christ company is anointed with the seven spirits of God, illustrating their divine power and authority. They are made up of the remnant gathered throughout this age. The union of these seven stars into the one body of Christ is depicted in the heavens as Great Orion. In the fullness of time, the Lord will ‘loose the bands of Orion,’ and the manifestation of the sons of God will take place.

"In His discussions with Job, the Lord asked him where he was when He laid the foundations of the world, and also, 'when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy' (Job 38:4-7). The implication given here is that the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, when the Lord was laying the foundations of the earth. Why did they/we sing on that blessed, primeval occasion? Because the Father taught us the wonderful truth of the deliverance of the creation, and of our part in that magnificent work of restoration, as stars in union with Christ, who is the primary Star. This is the mystery of the seven stars in His right hand. The 'mystery' of this great truth is becoming less of a mystery as the Spirit reveals the truth of it. When we come into the knowledge of the fullness of all truth, the mysteries will no longer be mysteries, but will be fully revealed and known by all the wise. The truths found in this portion of the book of Job are deep mysteries that can only be understood by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. But when the Spirit reveals them to us, we feast on its glories and rejoice in the magnificence of the Father's great plan of redemption and restoration" — end quote.

Brother Mueller has touched on a most precious and significant point in his writing quoted above. God is "making" both the seven stars (Pleiades) and Orion. Let all who read these lines know that the seven stars of which the prophet Amos spake and the seven stars in the right hand of the One like unto the Son of man in John's vision on Patmos are the same seven stars. "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels (messengers) of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20). It is significant to note that the word "angel" in both Hebrew and Greek simply means messenger, which in no way limits it to celestial beings of a different order than men. "Angel" means messenger: one sent with a message, who is both the message itself and the personal representative of the Sender. The Hebrew word MALACK equals messenger. The Greek word AGGELOS means messenger. Anyone sent with a message is a messenger — an angel. If there had been Western Union messengers in Bible times they would have been called "Western Union Angels," for "angel" means messenger.
The very same word is used of those sent by men, those sent by satan, and those sent by God. Any messenger sent by a king, or any other person, is in both the Hebrew and Greek languages, an angel of that person, viz: a messenger. If sent by a human being, the messenger-angel was the personal representative of that one, in the message he was commissioned to bear. Luke 7:18-28 speaks of the messengers of John the Baptist as angels and in verse 24 we read, "And when the messengers (angels) of John were departed..." These same messengers are called disciples in verse 18. If sent by God, the messenger-angel was the personal representative of God, in the message he was given to bear. In Luke 7:27, John the Baptist is denominated as an angel, "Behold, I send My messenger (Greek: "aggelos" — angel) before thy face..." It could just as well have been translated, "Behold, I send My angel before thy face..." The context always decides whose angel the messenger is. John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, to bear a message from God, and accomplish a mission for God and His Anointed One — the Christ. In the anointing, the word, and mission, John was a man-angel of God, the greatest prophet born of women!

The mystery of the seven candlesticks is that they "are the seven churches." The seven churches represent THE WHOLE CHURCH REALM THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE CHURCH AGE. Some say they are seven church periods or ages, and I do not doubt there is truth there. But the seven churches also represent the entire church within any given period of time. All the states and conditions within those seven churches are with us in each and every generation. If you want to know what the church has been like during the past two thousand years — look at the seven candlesticks! There you have the divinely inspired portrait of the church realm during this age painted by the brushstrokes of the Holy Spirit of revelation. The Lord commends and praises them on the one hand, while warning and rebuking them on the other hand. These churches reveal the true nature of the whole church throughout the age, and history and personal experience both testify conclusively that John was shown aright. And from that day to this, make no mistake about it — ALL CHURCHES HAVE BEEN THE SAME! They are today! And should the church age continue on for another thousand years the church would not have changed. The word of God immutably declares it! The seven candlesticks are the seven churches, and the seven churches are the church throughout the entire church age. The "New Testament Church" realm can never be different from what John saw in spirit, for that I-S THE CHURCH IN THIS AGE.

In the vision there is One who stands in the midst of the candlesticks and in His right hand are the seven stars. Not only are the seven stars in the right hand — they are the right hand. This meaning is often expressed in common speech: "He is my right hand man," meaning the one who carries out my instructions, accomplishes my will, and does things in my place. The seven angels are a messenger company in the realm of the spirit, a revelatory people, having the seven spirits of God, the seven-fold intensified spirit of the Lord formed within as the Knowledge, the Wisdom, and the Power of God. Each of these seven stars are a SPIRIT, a HOLY SPIRIT, personified as the WORD OF GOD. Altogether they are the arm of the Lord, the hand-ministry of God in the midst of His people and in the earth. The seven churches are one church or body of the Christ. The seven spirits are the Power and Knowledge and Wisdom of God flowing through a spiritual ministry to that body. The seven messengers are the spiritual instrument through which the deep things of God are communicated to the churches. They are not so much persons as the anointing, the spirit of wisdom and revelation, the spirit of prophecy, the dispensation of God out of the realm of the Spirit. The seven messages are seven dimensions of the revelation of Jesus Christ to those who are called to sonship — the
overcomers. The seven messages are the complete and perfect revelation of Jesus Christ. Each of the seven messages is given BY Jesus Christ THROUGH the angels, the messengers, the anointings. Each message concludes with the combination warning-call, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what THE SPIRIT saith unto the churches." Each individual message has a word to all the seven churches as well as to the individual church which is named. Those seven churches are still in the world today. Every believer who dwells in the candlestick realm is part of at least one of them, and a part of them all. And God has a special and challenging message for the churches in this hour, for we have come to the end of the church age when ALL MUST BE FULFILLED. That message is embodied in a hand ministry — the seven stars in the right hand of the One standing in the midst.

When he that readeth can grasp the mystery of the seven stars, which are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven spirits of God, he will better understand why the word of the Kingdom is committed to an elect company of saints in this significant hour, and not to the run-of-the-mill believers in the popular church systems. Not all have the spirit of prophecy or the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. Now I would draw your reverent attention to a most significant point. The King James Version of the Bible prefices each message to the churches with these words, "Unto the angel of the church at Ephesus...or Smyrna...or Pergamos...or...write." It sounds as though John is writing TO the messengers of the churches. But such is not the case. John is by no means communicating the message TO the messengers, but BY or THROUGH the messengers. In an even deeper sense John is receiving the message FROM the messengers. The messengers are not the recipients of the message from John, but with John and in John they receive the message from the Lord Jesus and give it to the churches.

Let us UNDERSTAND! The term "unto" in the command of the Spirit to John is, in the Greek, in the dative case. Greek is different than English, and in the Greek language of the New Testament the dative case is used to signify not only "to" and "for," but also "in," "with," and "by." Let me give you a couple examples of such usage. Indeed, there are many! "Of His own will begat He us WITH the word of truth" (James 1:18). The construction here of "the word" is in the dative case and is translated by the preposition "with," as the means of begetting us. He does not say "to" the word of truth, rather, He begat us WITH the word of truth, or BY the word of truth. Again, "Blessed are the poor IN spirit..." (Mat. 5:3). The Greek here is in the dative case, and is translated "in," rather than "to." It would make no sense at all to say, "Blessed are the poor unto spirit." This is the identical form of the definite article "the," which is used in each of the messages to the seven churches and is translated "to" — "Unto the angel...write." But the meaning is "in" or "by" or "through" the angel, and not "to" the messenger. The Emphatic Diaglott correctly renders this phrase: "By the messenger of the congregation in Ephesus, write." There is a lot of difference between writing TO a messenger and writing BY or THROUGH a messenger. The true sense of the action is reflected in the following passage: "Until the day in which He (Jesus) was taken up, after that He THROUGH THE HOLY GHOST had given commandment unto the apostles whom He had chosen" (Acts 1:2). In other words, "BY the anointing, BY the spirit of revelation, BY the spirit of prophecy, BY the dispensation of God unto the church at Ephesus...write!" The anointing within the seven stars, the spirit of prophecy within the hand ministry, was the MEANS by which "the Voice" communicated the message. And today, my beloved, unless we, too, are quickened by these same seven spirits or seven angels or seven stars we will understand absolutely nothing of what we read in the book of Revelation! Only as we
become identified with the seven stars and the seven spirits will mind and heart be quickened to truth as it is in Jesus.

The message of the book must come to us, not merely from the pen of the beloved Seer, not by carnal comprehension of the words written on paper, but from the seven spirits — the seven-fold intensified spirit of the Lord! The book apart from the illuminating messengers, the seven stars, is empty, dead, unintelligible and unprofitable. You see, precious friend of mine, John was "in the Spirit" in the day of the Lord when he received the Revelation. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:10-11). So many are looking today in the natural for the events unfolded in the Revelation to come to pass, but John was in the Spirit when he wrote the book — he wasn't in the natural! He was in a realm beyond the natural, and beholding events in a realm beyond the natural. These things are written in a language that only the spiritual mind (the seven angels) can understand. A natural mind produces a natural concept. It should be obvious that only a person who knows French is able to read a book from France written in French. A Frenchman is the most likely person in the world to understand the most difficult treatise in the French language. In like manner, the book of Revelation was written IN THE SPIRIT, in the language of the Spirit, and it requires a spiritual unfoldment to understand it. Only the man who lives and walks in the Spirit can receive from it. You must be a citizen of the land — the heavenlies — where the language of the book is known. You must read and understand it in the language in which it is written. You must know the language of Spirit. We must be quickened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, the spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus, for the message to be comprehended. A spirit message must be spiritually discerned. We must penetrate into the realm of the seven stars, the seven angels, the seven messengers, the seven spirits, by whom and through whom the message is communicated to the seven churches! Nothing less will avail. Each message concludes with that awesome and significant admonition. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the SPIRIT saith unto the churches." That is what is meant! These are deep and very sacred principles of God. May the Lord grant unto all who read these lines understanding to grasp the vital significance of this great truth.

ORION

The first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of TAURUS is Orion. It is one of the most magnificent of all the constellations of the heavens. Of Orion Kenneth Fleming has written in his book, GOD'S VOICE IN THE STARS, "Orion, is, without doubt, one of the most spectacular and wonderful sights in all the heavens. The brilliance of Orion is seen both in its starry wonder and in its prophetic significance. It is magnificent. Two of its stars are of the first magnitude: Rigel, a pure white star, and Betelgeuse, an orange-red color. All the other leading stars are white. Orion is a mighty hunter with a tremendous club raised high in his right hand. In his left hand he holds the skin of a lion which he has killed. The lion skin is marked by a curved line of small stars. His belt and sword are well known and his head is marked by a small triangle. His left foot is raised to crush the head of his enemy, Lepus. The scriptures mention Orion as a constellation, twice in Job and once in the prophecy of Amos (Job 9:9; 38:31; Amos 5:8). The Hebrew name means A Strong One, A Hero. The Egyptian name means This is He Who Triumphs. The hilt of Orion's sword is the figure of a Lamb, and He is thus identified with the Lamb that was seen in Aries. Orion means Coming Forth as Light. Historians and scribes have sought to
flatter earthly heroes by comparing them to Orion, from Nimrod to Napoleon. However, all these heroes pale into insignificance before HIM of whom Orion truly speaks — the Prince of Glory. Orion pictures His glorious coming: 'Who may abide the day of His coming?' (Mal. 3:2)" — end quote.

The aspect of Orion that portrays the Lord coming forth as light confirms the prophet Ezekiel's vision of the presence of the One whose voice John described, in the book of Revelation, "as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:15). Ezekiel associates that appearing with the Glory of the Lord, stating, "Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and His voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory" (Eze. 43:2). The result is that the earth is bathed in the Glory of the Light, of which Glory the prophet said that it "was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord" (Eze. 1:28).

Of the Glory of God revealed in type by the constellation Orion one has written: "One of the most inspiring and thrilling of the secret disclosures of astronomers is that there is a great empty space in the north in the Nebula of the Constellation Orion — a cavern so gigantic that the mind of man cannot comprehend it, and so brilliantly beautiful that words cannot adequately describe it. But, surpassing the immensity of its size, its exquisite beauty and luminous colors are unlike any on earth. Professor Learkin, at Mt. Lowe Conservatory, gives us the following descriptions: 'These photographs reveal the opening and interior of a cavern so stupendous that our entire solar system would be lost therein. I have watched it since the days of youth in many telescopes of many powers, but never dreamed that the center is the mouth of a colossal cave. Pen of writers and brush of artists alike are lifeless and inert in any attempt to describe this interior. The depths of the Orion Nebula appear like torn and twisted objects, and rivers of shining glass, irregular pillars, columns of stalactites in glittering splendor and stalagmites from the mighty floor. The appearance is like that of light shining and glowing behind the clear walls of ivory and pearl, studded with millions of stars.' There must be some reason why all this grandeur is lavished on this one spot in the heavens. The colors are a hue peculiar to the Orion Nebula and studded around the opening so that they appear as a pavement of starry sand. No wonder the astronomers say that they feel some Almighty 'Presence' while scanning this part of the heavens, and become speechless before this great outburst of grandeur extending for trillions of miles through space" — Howard B. Rand.

Paul Mueller has shared the following beautiful observations concerning the glory of Orion. "The astronomers' knowledge of Orion's glory is nothing compared to the reality of the anointed company that is represented by Orion. This company is still in preparation, but the hour of their manifestation is near. The astronomers have little or no understanding of the plan and purpose of God displayed in the heavens, yet they are thrilled and excited by what they see. They use the most expressive terms possible to describe what they see. We believe the constellation Orion specifically illustrates the coming manifestation of the sons of God. Orion therefore represents the body of Christ coming forth out of the wilderness of this world in the very light and glory of God. This manchild company is the Glorious Prince who comes forth triumphant. In Orion, he is seen as coming forth in great light, prepared and anointed to judge and to rule. Every one among this anointed company has overcome the mystery of iniquity. This 'man' is gloriously adorned like unto the 'Son of man' just as John saw him in vision. He is 'girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters' (Rev. 1:13-15)."
"Our triumphant, omnipotent Lord of all is making the ‘seven stars’ and ‘Orion.’ He is preparing each one who makes up the ‘seven stars’ so that He may join them in the holy bond of divine love into one body, thus making one corporate company with Christ their Head. Orion depicts the body of Christ coming forth in the image and likeness of Christ, for Orion means, the coming of a mighty, triumphant, glorious prince, he who triumphs, who comes forth as light. This complete Christ body is represented in the heavens as Great Orion, the mighty, majestic prince who shall both judge and rule. He is made up of the saints who are in union with Christ their glorious Head. And we who have joined Him 'outside the camp' are privileged to be partners with Him in His great redemptive work. Nothing is lacking of armor, power, wisdom, authority and strength, for he is anointed with the seven spirits of sonship. His sword is the word of God. His breastplate is the breastplate of righteousness. He is girt about with truth. He has the shield of faith, not a man’s faith, but the very faith of the Son of God who is represented as a lion lifted high in his left hand. He is wearing the helmet of salvation, for this company has partaken of the fullness of salvation, which is the transformation of their bodies. And whether we realize it or not, this anointed prince company IS NOW warring in the Spirit (Eph. 6:12-17). We are now wrestling in the Spirit against the rulers of the darkness of this world, for the kingdoms of man are coming down with lightning like speed.

"Here is another vital truth displayed in the heavens. Every time Orion comes to the meridian, or to his highest point, he is accompanied by several adjacent constellations of great splendor. The manifestation of the sons of God will be much greater than Orion’s display in the heavens now, greater than the glory of God at Sinai, greater than the transfiguration of Jesus and His appearance with Moses and Elijah, and greater than the tongue of mortal man can tell. The hour of manifestation is approaching. This Christ body shall soon come to his meridian. The hour of culmination is at hand. We shall soon reach the point of high noon, the highest point in the heavens. Then the whole Christ body will be at its meridian, which is the highest point of spiritual attainment. When the sons of God are manifest, the angelic hosts and all creation will then explode in praise and worship of Him who has wrought such a grand deliverance. As Orion is accompanied by several adjacent constellations of great splendor when he comes to his meridian, so the sons of God shall be accompanied by the hosts of heaven in a glorious display of the light and power of God that will overshadow all other previous events. Christ, the mighty Stone, soon will appear to complete our salvation, and launch our glorious unveiling" — end quote.

If you can receive it, it was 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.

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, THE DAZZLING BRILLIANCE AND LUMINOUS BEAUTY OF ORION, 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!

We are appointed to shine with the exquisite beauty and glittering splendor of Orion. The glory of Orion is unequaled by any other sight in the heavens. 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 at times! But, my beloved, you may be poor, despised, unlettered; but if, through grace, there is a link in the heavenlies connecting you to the grandeur of Orion, then you are, in very deed, a son of light, 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 Lord Himself who maketh the seven stars and Orion. 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 where He holds the seven stars in His right hand, 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 natural 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.

ERIDANUS

The second Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of TAURUS is Eridanus, meaning The River of the Judge. It is pictured as an immense, fiery, molten river that flows out from before the glorious Orion, running past Cetus, the Sea-monster, and disappearing finally into the extremities of outer darkness. This Sign speaks again of judgment, associated with fire. This same picture is presented in the Psalms. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him" (Ps. 50:3). "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory" (Ps. 97:1-6). Also, we read in Isaiah: "Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue as a devouring fire. And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and
shall show the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones" (Isa. 30:27,30).

Again the scripture testifies of this fiery River of the Judge, "HE is like a refiner's fire...and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver" (Mal. 3:22-23). Nothing is more certain than the fact that Jesus Christ has already come, or shall yet come into the world of each of us in FLAMING FIRE! Because of the gross misunderstanding of almost all people concerning the fire of God, I would draw your reverent attention to the natural process of fire. In the book of Revelation the Holy Spirit describes the manifestation of God as fire under a remarkable symbol. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the LAKE WHICH BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE..." (Rev. 21:8). The word "burn" means combustion, or to consume. To consume does not mean to annihilate, for the law of the conservation of energy precludes any such thing as annihilation. You can annihilate a form, but not a substance. When fire consumes the charcoal in your grill it does not destroy any of the elements within the charcoal, it merely changes their form. Combustion is the process by which chemicals combine to form new chemicals. For example, a tree might be cut down, sawed into fire wood, and burned. In the first place, the tree was formed by drawing chemicals out of the earth and air and rearranging them into the form of a tree. Now, when the wood burns, the heat causes those same chemicals to vaporize, mixing with the oxygen in the air to form new chemicals, including water and the gas carbon dioxide. So what was formerly a tree can no longer be identified as a tree, but it still exists in its entirety — the substance thereof is now simply changed, transformed into a DIFFERENT FORM! Thus, to burn means to CHANGE. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that fire does not burn down; it always burns up; it seeks the highest level. And all that it consumes (changes) "goes up in smoke," to exist in a new form in a higher dimension. Even if you take a pan of water and place it over a fire, before long the water will take on the property of the fire and will begin to go up in steam. To burn means to change, and the change is always upward in motion.

FIRE is the heat and light you feel when something burns (changed by heat). It takes heat to start a fire, but once the fire is started it produces heat that keeps the process going. Thus, fire is really heat and light. In my study of the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (which lake is formed by the fiery River of the Judge) I was very much helped and impressed by the understanding given by Charles Pridgeon, and I would like to quote from his scholarly work on the subject of BRIMSTONE. He says: "The Lake of Fire and Brimstone signifies a fire burning with brimstone; the word 'brimstone' or sulphur defines the character of the fire. The Greek word THEION translated 'brimstone' is exactly the same word THEION which means 'divine.' Sulphur was sacred to the deity among the ancient Greeks; and was used to fumigate, to purify, and to cleanse and consecrate to the deity; for this purpose they burned it in their incense. In Homer's Iliad (16:228), one is spoken of as purifying a goblet with fire and brimstone. The verb derived from THEION is THEIOO, which means to hallow, to make divine, or to dedicate to a god (see Liddell and Scott Greek- English Lexicon, 1897 Edition). To any Greek, or any trained in the Greek language, a 'lake of fire and brimstone' would mean a LAKE OF DIVINE PURIFICATION. The idea of judgment need not be excluded. Divine purification and divine consecration are the plain meaning in ancient Greek. In the ordinary explanation, this fundamental meaning of the word is entirely left out, and nothing but eternal torment is associated with it" — end quote.
I realize that the above thoughts define the subject very briefly, but let us summarize the meaning thus: BURN means combustion, to change the form of. FIRE means heat and light. BRIMSTONE means divine. Putting these three together can we not see that the lake burning with fire and brimstone is, actually, DIVINE HEAT AND LIGHT PRODUCING AN UPWARD CHANGE! If you think the Kingdom of God is rosewater, or eua-de-cologne, you are mistaken. You cannot war on the devil with that. You cannot war on the carnal minds of men with that. You have to make war on the world, the flesh and the devil with weapons that are mighty through God. You have to make war on the carnal mind and the fleshly nature with fire, divine fire, that must burn up every inherent altar of Baal, and lick up the very dust around. Make no mistake! OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE! He is man's "horse breaker" and He will break you, my friend, and bring you to the foot of the cross of Jesus no matter how hot He has to build the fire around you! Even if long ages of fiery judgment and tormenting darkness fall upon you, they will last no longer than till the Great Fire of God has melted all arrogance into humility, and all that is self has died in the bloody sweat and all-conquering cross of the Christ, which shall never give up its redeeming power till sin and sinners have no more a name among the creatures of God. This mighty River, this fiery River, this River of The Judge shall flow and flow and flow until all things have been made new and God becomes all- in-all. Praise His name!

There is no better way to deal with filth than to deal with it by fire. The human heart, according to the testimony of scripture, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The heart is the filthiest of all things in God's great universe. The punishment by penal fire leads back to the beginning of things. The final work of God in this world will be the destruction of the world (order) by penal fire. That will change all things. That will melt all the elements, so that no man can tell you where his original grab was. It will burn up all the governments, institutions, systems, and fruitage of the carnal mind. It will melt all the customs, cultures, traditions, and practices of society and make of this earth a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Every man's work will eventually be tested in this fire. The fire will try every man's work of what sort it is. If you and I build into our walls wood, hay, and stubble, that fire will find it out, and the wall will come tumbling down. We will be saved though as by fire, saith the Lord. When God turns on the HEAT, the BLAZING LIGHT OF HIS SPIRIT AND WORD — some things begin to change! The fire is never sent to destroy the person, but to purge out all that hinders and separates him from his God, to consume the pride, arrogance, hostility, defiance, and rebellion of the flesh and the carnal mind, that he might then be wooed and drawn by the Holy Spirit of Love unto the Father of Spirits and live.
Chapter 39
Taurus- The Wild Bull
(continued)

In the previous Study on the Signs of the heavens we considered the Sign of Taurus — THE BULL. It is a picture of a great beast, a bull or ox, with his head lowered and his horns pointed forward. He is untameable and irresistible. HE is charging forth — rampaging, raging, bringing destruction to all that is in his way. It is interesting to note that the Sign of Taurus is only the forepart of the bull; actually, as it is seen in the heavens, it appears to grow right out of Aires, the Lamb. The picture is of a Lamb that changes into a Bull. Here we see the gentle and redeeming Lamb taking on a different form and character — now giving rise to the Christ coming in great glory and in swift and powerful judgment. In salvation and deliverance we meet and experience and know Him as the Lamb, but to all that is contrary to Him — the world, the flesh, and the devil — He becomes the irresistible Lord of Judgment.

This dual nature — the meekness of the Lamb and the vengeence of the Wild Bull — makes Him what He is, both the SAVIOUR and the JUDGE of the universe. In His redemptive activity His face is set against sin and death. Nothing can ever alter that. He will go to all lengths to turn men from evil, and restore them into harmony with the mind and heart of God. The sheer simplicity and sincerity of His passion is enough to melt and win the most sophisticated or the hardest of men. The wrath of the Lamb (as the Wild Bull) is beyond our understanding. But the Seer of Patmos was shown the unveiling of the wrath of the Lamb. I want to declare that God is going to come forth in these last days in a revelation of Jesus Christ with the judgments and wrath of God. This shaking and purging will affect the very church of the living God. The hour is come when judgment must begin at the house of God, but the whole earth will reel violently under the overflow. The judgment that begins at the house of God comes first to those who have received the call of sonship, to those apprehended to the High Calling of God, to those predestined to be conformed into the image of the Son of God that they may rule and reign with Him in His Kingdom. The Lord comes suddenly to His temple as a refiner's fire and as fullers' soap. He shall thoroughly purge His floor, and purify the sons of Levi.

We come now to the third Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Taurus — AURIGA. We have seen the picture of a mighty Bull rushing forth in judgment, followed by Eridanus, the fiery River of the Judge; and now we see AURIGA — THE GREAT SHEPHERD. He is seated upon the Milky Way, holding up on his left shoulder a she-goat, who has her paws around the neck of Auriga. The goat is looking down in fear and apprehension at the terrible, raging, rampaging Bull. On his lap, and held by his left hand, Auriga supports two little kids, apparently new-born, and bleating, affrightened and trembling, but obviously safe and secure in the strong embrace of the Shepherd. The name Auriga is derived from a Hebrew root which means "A shepherd." Is not this the celestial portrayal of the Good and Great and Chief Shepherd gathering the lambs in His arms, and carrying them through all the judgments, disciplines, purgings and processings
of God — in His bosom? Is He not saying, "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa. 40:10-11). Furthermore — the exceptionally bright star in the foot of Auriga is called El Nath which means "wounded" or "slain." Is not this indeed He who was once bruised or wounded in the heel (Gen. 3:15)? He is the "GOOD Shepherd," who gives His life for the sheep (Jn. 10:11), and He is "the GREAT Shepherd," brought again from the dead (Heb. 13:20), and is now "the CHIEF Shepherd," seen in the day of His glory among the sheep of His fold who hear His voice and follow Him all the way to Mount Zion (I Pet. 5:4).

It should not be surprising to find Auriga, The Shepherd, connected with Taurus, The Bull — the constellation denoting judgment. Judgment begins at the house of God and the Great Judge of all is also the Great Shepherd of all. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in Thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing" (Jer. 10:23-24). What security, what safety — and what peace fills the heart of the trusting child of God who understands the great truth that it is not in man to try and direct his own way, the responsibility is not cast upon him, but upon GOD. It is true — "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way..." as the prophet declares in Isa. 53:6, the Lord has allowed us to wander off this way, knowing that we shall have awesome experiences by which we shall learn vital lessons which later shall be used in our instruction and correction. A story is told of one who talked with a shepherd in the high Alps. While talking, the shepherd gathered a handful of the best grass and went to a low shelter nearby. "I have a sheep there with a broken leg," he said. "How did that happen?" queried the visitor. "It did not happen," answered the shepherd. "I broke it intentionally. That sheep was headstrong and unruly. It did not love me and was always leading the other sheep astray. Now it knows its dependence on me and loves to eat from my hand. When it is well again, it will keep nearer to me than any of the sheep.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Among the many emblems of our Lord in the Scriptures and in the Signs of the heavens, I think there is none more beautiful than the one in which He said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." The writer to the Hebrews says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will..." (Heb. 13:20-21). "The God of peace who brought again from the dead the GREAT SHEPHERD..." It means that He already was the Great Shepherd before He entered the tomb, for it was the Great Shepherd that was brought back from the dead. In the Hebrew Old Testament the God of Israel is designated as "The Shepherd of Israel," or Pastor and Leader of the nation. When our Lord Jesus Christ declared Himself to be "The Good Shepherd" the Jewish leaders knew that He was claiming to be Yahweh in- the- flesh. Although the hierarchy rejected His claim, the elect gladly accepted it. Those who followed Him, who heard His voice, and were fed and guided and taught by Him knew Him experientially as the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd.

Just how great is the Great Shepherd? Great through His creative power? Yes. Great through His miracle-working power? Yes. Great through His preaching and teaching power? Yes. Great through His nature, His personality, and His attributes, human and
divine, that were combined in Him? Yes, He was in the days of His flesh the greatest in that respect that ever walked this planet. But in Heb. 13:20 there is the unfolding of actual greatness. The Greek text reads, "Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead that Shepherd of the sheep, Great by the blood of an aionian Covenant, even our Lord Jesus Christ." He is Great through sacrificial love, He is Great through sacrificial power, He is Great through the out-pouring of HIS LIFE on behalf of, and unto, His sheep. To have given us a Shepherd was much; but to have given us such a Great Shepherd is marvelous! More is meant than the mere quickening of the dead body of Christ Jesus. There is included, also, His exaltation by the right hand of God, to be a Prince and a Saviour, a King and a Redeemer, a Forerunner into the Kingdom of His Father. This, my beloved, is the grandeur of Auriga seated in the heavens high above the Milky Way with the kids upon His shoulder and on His lap!

George Wylie shared some precious insights into the Shepherd ministry of the Lord Jesus, of which I would share a portion. "What a Shepherd He is! What I have been impressed about is His care for the individual sheep. He is not just a shepherd of a vast flock of sheep, He knows each individual sheep and calls them by name and His care for the individual is just as great as for the flock. This is illustrated in the parable of the one lost sheep. When He brought His flock into the fold for the night one sheep was missing. What would that matter! What was the value of one sheep among the multitudes that He had. Who would miss one little sheep — HE did — He left the rest of the flock in the shelter of the fold and went out to find the one lost one. It meant just as much to Him as did the rest of the flock.

"'He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. And he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out' (Jn. 10:2-3). To know them by name means that each has a separate identity and possesses characteristics peculiar to the individual. In the natural sphere this is true also. It is remarkable, but has often been verified, that however large the flock, the animals are individually known to the shepherd who recognizes each one by its face. This almost incredible fact has been proved again and again in courts of law, where the testimony of the shepherd that a stolen animal is his, because recognizable to him by face, has been accepted as proof of ownership. The humble child of God must never suppose that he is only one among many. Though untalented and undistinguished he is of equal consequence to Christ as those distinguished for gift and activity. All are equally precious to the Shepherd, and His most particular care is reserved for those who need Him the most.

"The 23rd Psalm has become very precious to me in the last few months. It starts out by saying, "Yahweh is my shepherd." Now I know this is referring to God, the Father, but the Son is the manifestation of the Father to us. He takes the Father's place in all things. So what is said here of Yahweh also applies to His Son YeHoshua. David wrote this Psalm, and what impressed me was the individual tone he used in writing the Psalm. Yahweh was known as the Great Shepherd of Israel. David could have said, 'Yahweh is our shepherd; we shall not want. He maketh us to lie down in green pastures...' but he didn't. He said, 'Yahweh is MY shepherd,' and all the way through the Psalm he emphasized the individual care he received from God. Just notice: 'He maketh ME to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth ME beside the still waters. He restoreth MY soul; He leadeth ME in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with ME; thy rod and thy staff they comfort ME. Thou preparest a table before ME in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest MY head with oil; MY cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow ME all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever.' All the way through the emphasis is on the individual care he received from the great Shepherd.

"Yahweh is my shepherd; I shall not want.' When I went to Sunday School as a child one little boy in the class was quoting this Psalm. We had to learn it by heart. He said, 'The Lord is my shepherd, that's all I want.' With a shepherd as He is what else do we need or want. He is the supply of every need. He doesn't just supply our needs, He isn't just the supplier of our needs; HE is our need, our only need. He doesn't supply our needs out of His storehouse or pantry; He gives of Himself to us. What He gives is not something He has an abundance of in His great storehouse; it is Himself He gives to us, of His own person and being, something of what He is. This is our need, our only need — more of HIM. We will never be in need while He is our Shepherd.

"Let us look at some of the things mentioned in this Psalm that we will not have any want or lack of. 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.' This is a picture of a sheep lying down contentedly in a field of luscious verdant grass. It has partaken abundantly of the luscious green grass and is full and satisfied. I can picture it lying down in this lovely pasture, resting and contentedly chewing its cud with not a care or worry in the world. This tells us that we shall never want for rest, provision, contentment and satisfaction. 'He leadeth me beside the still waters.' I can imagine this beautiful setting, a beautiful green meadow with a lovely little lake at the end of it, the waters reflecting the clouds drifting by and the trees growing along side casting their cool shade. I used to like to find a place like this for myself an a nice summer day and stretch out on the grass and watch the clouds as they slowly made their way across the sky, constantly changing shape; looking at times like animals, ships, people and faces. There is a place in the Spirit with the Good Shepherd just like this, a place of rest and calm in ones' soul where nothing disturbs the tranquility of the spirit, where all is peace and rest and confidence. Though the world around may be falling apart, millions starving and thirsting for lack of the necessities of life, the Good Shepherd makes His sheep to lie down contentedly, at peace in the green pastures of His abundance, and beside the still waters. The waters of life may be turbulent, they usually are; but in the spirit we are beside the still waters.

"I should say something here that may be helpful to some. We have here a picture of a sheep that will never know what it is to feel the pangs of hunger or thirst; there is always an abundant supply at hand. The Lord said, 'He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst,' yet we also have the scripture that says, 'They that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.' There are times we will be hungry and thirsty for the things of God; in fact I always am. I eat and eat and yet I hunger for more, I drink and drink and yet am still thirsty. Why should this be? Jesus said we would never thirst again, and yet I do, all the time. One thing good for us to know is that most things in the spirit are diametrically opposed or opposite to the natural. Natural laws and spiritual laws are different. For instance, in the spirit realm, up is down and down is up. By that I mean if you want to make something of yourself in the natural, you aspire to great things. You climb the ladder of human ambition, striving for the top and caring not how many people you trample under foot to get there. In the Spirit realm it is different; if you want to be great in the Kingdom of God there is only one way, and that is down. You must humble yourself and become the servant of all, not the head and ruler and oppressor of others. The law of God is, 'Humble yourself in the sight of God, and He will lift you up.' Try to lift yourself up in pride or self-assertiveness and you will be brought down. So up is down, and down is up.
"In the natural when we eat and drink until we are full we are no longer hungry or thirsty, but in a few hours we will be — we always get hungry and thirsty again. This is hard to explain, but in the Spirit, like the sheep that is lying down in green pastures and beside still waters, we can be satisfied and contented, yet there remains a strong desire for more. This is a different kind of hunger and thirst than we have in the natural. We can be full, satisfied, and contented, and yet at the same time hungering and thirsting for more. My experience is, the more I partake of the things of the Shepherd, the greater becomes my hunger and thirst for more. So I am full, satisfied, contented, and at the same time hungering and thirsting for more of the deep and glorious things of God. This is a paradox and hard for the natural mind to comprehend — but so it is in the realm of the Spirit. We will never hunger and thirst again as we do in the natural — because we lack — and yet, we will never cease to hunger and thirst after righteousness until we come into the fullness of Him. In the natural, when we eat and drink we lose our hunger and thirst for a time; if we don't eat and drink for a season we will soon get hungry and thirsty again. It is just the opposite in the realm of the Spirit. I find that the more I eat and drink of the bread of Life and the water of the Spirit the greater my desire for more. If I neglect to eat and drink regularly of the things of the Spirit of God, I do not get more hungry and thirsty; rather, I begin to lose my appetite for God and my thirst for the things of the Spirit diminishes. This is just opposite to how it works in the natural! I have never been more satisfied, full and contented in my spirit than I am today, and yet I have never been more hungry and thirsty for more of His life and reality. Try to explain that in human terms! There are many paradoxes in the spirit — 'As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things' (II Cor. 6:8-10).

"'He restoreth my soul.' What has really blessed me is the knowledge, brought out by this Psalm, that He is not just the Shepherd of a great flock of sheep, but that He is my personal Shepherd; totally involved with me in all my affairs, taking care of me as though I was the only sheep He had. Have you ever been in the place where you needed your soul restored? Because of the trials, tribulations, adversities, pressures, reverses, battles against the powers of darkness; when things seem to have gone all wrong and nothing seems to be right; when the thick darkness has settled all around you, and there seemingly is no light at all; when you are hemmed in by the multitude of trials and troubles and there appears no way of escape, all hope is vanished, even the Lord seems to have forsaken you; you are disillusioned, despondent, and in despair you cry out in your distress, 'Lord, where are you? Why is all this happening to me? I don't understand it!' He's there, beloved. He is never far away. He is the Tender and Good and faithful Shepherd. He is at hand to restore your soul, to lift you up out of your distress and despair and to restore you again to that joy and peace and confidence and power that you once have known.

"'He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.' There is much said about righteousness in the scriptures. What does righteousness mean? God is righteous; He is righteous because He does all things right and is never wrong. This is what God is — righteous, right. We are exhorted in the Word to seek and receive this same attribute. This is part of our inheritance as sons of the Most High. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS' (Mat. 6:33). 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness...he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what HE had promised, He was well able to perform. Therefore it was imputed unto him for
righteousness.' Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead (Rom. 4:3, 20-24). So by believing in Yahweh who raised our Lord from the dead we have righteousness imputed unto us. It is wonderful to have our sins forgiven and not imputed against us any more, and to have the righteousness of God reckoned to us; but having righteousness imputed to us doesn't make us righteous; we are only counted righteous for His sake. We can have His righteousness imputed to us and still be very unrighteous, doing many things wrong, and few things right.

"God doesn't want to leave us in this unrighteous state; He wants to make as righteous. He wants to impart His righteousness to us, not just impute it. 'For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD in Him' (II Cor. 5:21). We are to possess and become the righteousness of God. To be righteous as He is righteous, to be holy as He is holy. Who wouldn't want to become this righteousness? To always be right in all we think, in all we say and in all we do. To never again think anything wrong; to have no wrong thoughts or ideas. To never again say anything wrong, and to never do anything wrong; but to be always right in everything. What a blessed state! Impossible? No! It is what He has planned for us and is working on in us. Of this very truth the Psalmist wrote when he said, 'He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's (nature's) sake.' He leads me in the paths that will bring me to this glorious state. HalleluYah!' — end quote.

THE SHEPHERD LEADS

Recently the revelation of Jesus Christ as a Shepherd with His flock caught my attention in a special way. One particular aspect that struck me as I read the parable in John's Gospel is where Jesus says that the rightful Shepherd "entereth in by the door" to where the sheep are, and "leadeth them out." He leads them out! These days the idea seems to be to get behind the flock, see which way they're heading (via opinion polls), and then hurry in that direction! Real leadership, of course, isn't a matter of finding out what the conventional thought is, or what the sheep imagine is right, then going along with it. The Kingdom of God is not a democracy. We need to follow something higher. We need the real leadership provided by our "Good Shepherd," Christ the way, the truth and the life. Think how Jesus illustrated this Christly leadership. Virtually all that He said and did ran counter to popular opinion. But His words had the spiritual power to break through conventional concepts. The apostle John records, for example, that officers sent to take custody of Jesus returned without Him, saying, "Never man spake like this man." The true leadership of the Christ has its source in God, the Spirit. So, Christ shepherds us with spiritual wisdom and love. Even the most intimidating, complex questions in our lives find answers when we seek guidance from the omniscient indwelling God.

What Christ says about God, man, and our own lives never simply follows human convention, worldly philosophy or popular religious theology. What Christ says comes from the perfection of God's Being and tells us — in ways just right for us at that moment — of God's real nature, His true ways. God can't be seen or understood by the physical senses or the human intellect. Because the man God creates is spiritual, that new creation which we are depends on God alone. God gives His man everything. So we should be looking to the Spirit for everything that's necessary in our lives. And this is especially true when it comes to the spiritual principles and realities we need to learn and know. If it is truly the mind of Christ within that is leading us, we'll have the courage and strength we need to go forward even though the way may be challenging. It's not
necessarily easy where Christ leads, but the rewards are sure. And when Christ leads we need not be concerned over whether others are doing the same thing.

"And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice" (Jn. 10:4). These words of our Lord Jesus Christ are a great blessing and comfort in these days of uncertainty and rapid change. Our blessed Lord does not push His sheep ahead of Him into uncharted wilderness — He goes before them. The sheep do not know the way. How could they? They have never come this way before! But HE knows the way! As the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night went before the children of Israel as they crossed over to the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land, so our Lord Jesus Christ has gone before us as our forerunner who has not only entered into heaven itself and the Most Holy Place within the veil, but He has walked out every step of that great and terrible wilderness that lies between. There are no uncertainties or uncharted wildernesses with Him. And "He goeth before them." So, a worried sheep is a foolish sheep. A worried sheep must be listening to other voices than that of the Good Shepherd. A worried sheep must have forgotten that he is not leading, but following. No enemy can touch the sheep unless He can first overcome the Shepherd. What confidence this evokes in our hearts!

Shepherding isn't an easy job. Sheep don't just take care of themselves. They require a considerable amount of guidance and attention. The flock needs fresh pasture, clean water, and protection from extreme exposure to the elements. And the sheep must be provided with a safe place far the night. In Bible times, this sometimes meant piling stones in a circular arrangement as a protective wall of sorts. The shepherd would lie across the opening, guarding the entrance so that wild animals or thieves couldn't get at the sheep. A reliable shepherd would not allow himself to become drowsy or fall asleep if there was danger. The welfare of the flock would always be uppermost in his thought.

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep" (Jn. 10:1-2). The sheepfold is for defense and has but one door, none is to enter by any other way. And none is to enter but the shepherd and the sheep. As someone has written, "If any one 'climbs up," showing by so doing that he is superior to the sheep — if he goes by another nearer or higher way, in which the sheep, being only sheep, cannot follow him — he may prove that he can do what they cannot, but he proves also that he has not a shepherd's heart, and would never lead the sheep whither he goeth. Such an act shows that he is a thief. For in meddling with sheep a man will either be a shepherd or a thief. Men do not meddle with them without intending either to serve themselves or serve the sheep. The true shepherd serves the sheep. Therefore he goes by the way they can go. If they are in the field, he with them is in the field, consumed by day with drought, by night with cold. If they need a door, he stoops to enter by the door; a ceaseless toiler for lower natures, who knows not what he gives up and bears in such a service. In a word, this is Christ's service; that wondrous coming down by which the Son of God stooped to the place of brutal erring men; not helping us afar off, but coming to us right where we are; sharing our sleeping and waiting, our weakness and our lacks; that by His humiliation He might meet our folly and our need, and in due time bring us safely home to God and His Kingdom. He leads from where we are to where He is, praise His wonderful name!

HEARING THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE
The following words by Ray Prinzing are a pertinent and powerful admonition to all those apprehended to sonship. "My sheep hear My voice..." MY sheep hear — the Greek word for 'hear' used here is AKOUO and while there is included in its meaning the thought of 'to give ear' because you discern a sound, it also includes the meaning of TO HEARKEN, a responsive action to one's hearing. This goes beyond the outward hearing of the natural ear, when Jesus said, 'My sheep hear My voice!' There is a LISTENING to hear the sound thereof, a receptivity within, and a responsiveness to follow in obedience. 'He goes before His sheep, and they follow Him, for they KNOW His voice.' Now we have another Greek word for 'know,' this one being OIDA, absolute knowledge. Praise God, we are to have absolute knowledge of His voice — without doubts or questionings. The sheep — the mature ones, shall come to a place where they unmistakably know His voice. And they know that they know that they know! But as for STRANGERS — they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"And now we have an allegory, with the shepherd, and the stranger, and there is a sense in which we have them both within us. The Shepherd is the VOICE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD, the stranger is the voice of the carnal mind. I dare say, our spiritual maturity is evidenced by the 'voice' which we hearken to, and follow. God is SPIRIT, and He contacts us through our spirit. 'There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding' (Job 32:8). It is interesting to watch a gathering of various levels of spiritual growth. When the Spirit of God is moving deep into the hearts of those who HEAR HIS VOICE, others seem to withdraw and almost appear bored with the service. Then if another voice begins to speak — appealing to the soulish realm, they suddenly come alive and respond accordingly with their manifestations. And finally, as another voice simply speaks that it is time for the 'pot-luck lunch to be served' there are those who endured all the service thus far, now they begin to respond. Each has heard a 'voice,' whether of the Shepherd, the stranger, or just the flesh. As for the physical, earth realm, obviously there is a time and place for its voice and message, HE placed us in this realm for a purpose, to be exercised and trained thereby. The natural is not 'sinful' until it becomes perverted and out-of-place. But there are those, as Paul wrote, 'many walk...whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things' (Phil. 3:18-19). When we hear the physical voice for a drink of water, some food, some sleep — and the needs are met, the voice remains silent. But when the voice keeps on, LUSTING AFTER MORE, then it has certainly entered into the realm of the unholy stranger; may God help us to flee from it, and not know it.

"There is something upsetting about the voice of the stranger, once you have determined before God to follow only the VOICE OF THE SPIRIT. Yet, uniquely enough, often times you cannot tell others that the voice being heard IS TO YOU the voice of a stranger — for in their response to that voice they are blessed in some degree and manner. And we would make it clear, we praise God for ALL that HE is doing on any level, and through whomever, and whatever means HE has purposed to work. However, our personal experience is such that we find more and more the voice of the 'charismatic move' has become to us the voice of a stranger. The projection of human personality, even though clothed with its charisma and religiosity, rings shallow and strange when one has heard the call of God into the depths and heights of the vision that leads to the realm beyond.

"'The inspiration (in-breathing) of the Almighty giveth understanding.' How we yearn for more and more of that DIVINE IN-BREATHING. For far too long we have relied on the proper atmospheres for our breath. The singing had to be just right, the praise service, the favorite preacher or teacher, and when conditions were just right to form that
particular atmosphere, we breathed deeply and enjoyed it. But there is a dimension wherein one does not rely on the outward atmosphere, for they live by the CHRIST WITHIN, and they hear HIS VOICE, and become, as Paul so aptly stated it, 'I have come to learn, in the circumstances in which I am placed, to be independent of these and self-sufficient' (Phil. 4:11, Wuest Expanded). ‘...with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early’ (Isa. 26:9). I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search' (Ps. 77:6)" — end quote.

A. B. Simpson was a man of deep spiritual experience. I quote the following from his article LISTENING. "A score of years ago a friend placed in my hand a book called TRUE PEACE. It was an old medieval message and it had but one thought — THAT GOD WAS WAITING IN THE DEPTHS OF MY BEING TO TALK TO ME IF I WOULD ONLY GET STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR HIS VOICE. I thought this would be a very easy matter and so began to get still. I had no sooner commenced than a perfect pandemonium of voices reached my ears, a thousand clamoring notes from without and within, until I could hear nothing but their noise and din. Some were my own voices, my own questions; some were my very prayers. Others were suggestions of the tempter and the voices from the world of turmoil. In every direction I was pulled and pushed and greeted with noisy acclamations and unspeakable unrest. It seemed necessary for me to listen to some of them and to answer some of them; but God said, 'BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.'

"Then came the conflict of thoughts for tomorrow and its duties and cares; but God said, BE STILL. And as I listened and slowly learned to obey and shut my ears to every sound, I found after a while that, when other voices ceased, (or I ceased to hear them), there was a still small voice in the depths of my being that began to speak with an inexpressible tenderness and power and comfort. As I listened, it became to me the voice of prayer, the voice of wisdom, the voice of duty, and I did not need to think so hard or pray so hard or trust so hard. That still, small voice of the Holy Spirit in my heart was God speaking in my secret soul; was God's answer to all knowledge and all prayer and all blessings, for it was the living God Himself as my life, my all. It is thus that our spirits drink of the life of the risen Lord and we go forth to life's conflicts and duties like a flower that has drunk in through the shades of night the cool and crystal drops of dew. But, as dew never falls on a stormy night, so the dew of His grace never comes to a restless soul. Oh, the calm! The rest! The peace which comes as we wait in His presence until we HEAR FROM HIM!" — end quote.

It is all-important in this crucial hour that the sons of God truly hear and follow the Shepherd, for those who hear the voice of the Shepherd, the Son of God, will LIVE! I cannot do better than share from the anointed pen of Paul Mueller in this regard. "As Jesus continued to teach the people, He emphasized the need to HEAR HIS WORD. He said, 'But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and THE SHEEP HEAR HIS VOICE: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: FOR THEY KNOW HIS VOICE" (Jn. 10:2-4). I trust you are as blessed by this passage as I am. It is thrilling to realize that the Lord of all the universe knows my name, and that HE LEADS ME OUT to His green pastures. He takes me out of the confinement of the Babylon system and into the abundant pastures of His truth and life. When He wants to get my attention, He calls me by my name. And with this intimate communion and relationship with my CHIEF SHEPHERD, I no longer need the shepherdship of men. To whom then could I go for guidance in these times of darkness?
Beloved, there is none other, for He alone has the words of life. Indeed, Christ is our Apostle, our Prophet, our Shepherd, and our LIFE. HE IS ALL WE NEED.

"The life of Christ — to possess His image and likeness, is the promise before us. Christ came that we might have LIFE, and that more abundantly. And it is by hearing His voice that we shall attain unto His fullness. Jesus said as much, when He said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, HE THAT HEARETH MY WORD, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you. The hour is coming, and now is, when THE DEAD SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD; AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE. For as the Father hath LIFE in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have LIFE in himself' (Jn. 5:24-26).

"Throughout all the clamor and clutter of these times, there rings forth the glorious truth of God which is as a clear trumpet sound to all who trust in Him. The prevailing message and truth of this hour is found in this passage: 'THE DEAD SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD; AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE.' Repeat it often and believe its inspiring words of divine truth, for there is a people now abiding in the death of this life who shall HEAR the voice of the Son of God, AND IN HEARING THEY SHALL LIVE. Now, in the end of this age, we have come to the set time when the Lord has set 'a definite day, a new Today' (Heb. 4:7), when He shall speak to His elect, and those who HEAR shall LIVE.

"When Jesus spoke this truth, He made reference only to those who would be able to HEAR, when He said, 'AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE.' And those who will hear the voice of the Son of God are the elect who will be raised to His life. Let us now see the clear distinction Jesus made between the elect who will be raised to His life by hearing His voice, and the dead who are to be resurrected later. In John 5:24-26, Jesus spoke of the elect, while in verses 28-29, He referred to those who are in the graves: 'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming (which is not now, but future), in the which ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation' (from the Greek 'krisis', not damnation, but more properly judgment as in vs. 22 & 30).

"SOME MUST ENTER the rest of God and partake of the life of Christ IN ADVANCE of others, thus establishing that PATH for those who are to follow. The Lord's elect of this hour will HEAR HIS VOICE and will come up out of this death to be among those 'alive' ones who are 'alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord' (I Thes. 4:15, 17). The goal is before us and the challenge great, but the Lord is able and by those 'two immutable things,' that is, by the infallibility of HIS OATH and the life of HIS PERSON, we shall attain unto that foreordained purpose in Him. This is the message of that Prophet, even the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom Moses referred when he prophesied of One to come who would be a true Prophet. Peter quoted the prophecy of Moses, who said of Christ, the anointed Prophet of the restitution of all things, 'Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you' (Acts 3:22). Let us then HEAR HIM. He is our Shepherd, our Apostle, and our Prophet. And if we are the sheep of His pasture, we will surely hear Him and will follow Him unto LIFE ABUNDANT, thus beginning the times of the restitution of all things" — end quote.

THE SHEPHERD SEEKS THE SHEEP
In a most precious and unique sense the Lord's believing people are the sheep of His pasture and fold. But in a broader and just as scriptural sense all mankind are His sheep, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). Truly, "ALL WE like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on HIM the iniquity of us ALL..." (Isa. 53:6). If the Christ indeed died and bore the iniquity of every man, then every man is part of His great flock that has gone astray, and for whom the Good Shepherd gave His life. Yes, the Good Shepherd is going about on earth still calling His sheep, seeking His sheep, rescuing His sheep, leading His flock, feeding His flock and protecting His flock. And who are His flock? They are the poor, the weary, the downcast, the sick, the sad, and the sinful who have strayed far from Him and His love. Long ago He was moved with compassion upon them as He saw them scattered abroad, fainting, tired and wandering as sheep without a shepherd. Humanity is His flock...sin-cursed and disease smitten and death-bound humanity is the great flock for whom Christ died.

Lost sheep! Can you not see them? They fill the world today. They have wandered away to browse on some sweet grass that looked greener and enticed them forth; they have been separated from the care of the Shepherd and scared and driven by dogs, till at last they bleat hopelessly alone, or fall into pits, weakened by exposure and fatigue, the easy prey of lion or wolf. Far from the fold, torn, wounded, bleeding, covered with filth, frightened and certain to perish, unless rescued by the Shepherd. Such were all of us. "We were as sheep going astray." How shall we sufficiently thank and praise the Good, Great, and Chief Shepherd of our souls, that He did not leave us to our hapless fate, but came after us — down mountain slope, through thorny bush, over jagged rocks, seeking until He found us, and pressing us to His bosom, brought us back. We "are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" (I Pet. 2:25). Safe sheltered in His fold we bear His name branded on us and He calls us affectionately by our name, and we are now confident in the certain knowledge that "when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them; and His sheep follow Him."

In Luke 15:4 we read, "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost UNTIL HE FIND IT!" In this passage we find that at the end of the day, the shepherd finds that he is just one little sheep short of completeness. There is only one outside — so why bother to go after that one, for perhaps that one is one of the rebellious ones anyway and will not choose to come back! But the Shepherd we are dealing with in this story is not an ordinary shepherd. This is the Great and Good Shepherd of the sheep and nothing will stop Him or prevent Him from finding that last sheep. This Shepherd will not be content with even an extraordinary effort to find the sheep and then give up, feeling that He has done His duty. Neither does He "call" the sheep, and then wait to see if the sheep "decides" to come, and if not, just leave him there in his lost condition to die. This Shepherd searches UNTIL HE FINDS. And the FINDING of this Shepherd is not only the locating of the sheep, but it also includes the bringing back into the fold of that sheep.

If you know anything at all about sheep, you know that a sheep is helpless to find its way back to the rest of the flock. Not only that, but it becomes subject to every danger that is near to it, yet it never recognizes that danger. This is exactly the condition of mankind today. Mankind, being dead in trespasses and sins and in rebellion against God, does not know how to get to God. In fact much of humanity does not even think of getting to God. They have come to the point where they are quite satisfied with their condition just as the sheep is satisfied with its condition as it feeds, knowing not that it is lost. Mankind does
not know their way back to God. Mankind must wait until it is found. He does not even know he is lost. He accepts his sad state as the norm. How will the lost ever come to God of himself, of his own "free will"? If he were able to come HE WOULD NOT BE LOST. Men do not even know they are lost, or where they are going. Ah, the Shepherd must find the sheep, not the sheep find the Shepherd! And Jesus said the Shepherd would seek until. Jesus said He came to seek and to save those lost ones. Not the lost ones seek God, but God seek the lost!

Most of the religious teaching today would have us believe that Christ has done all He can for the sinner, so He has now gone back to His heaven and is seated upon His golden throne waiting for all who will to be saved. According to this thinking, God through Jesus has done all He can possibly do and has now left the work of saving souls to the church, hoping that some, at least, will be persuaded to accept the Saviour. The church must go out and contact all the sinners they can and see if they cannot get them to "accept Christ." But, of course, if the sinner does not want to be saved, then even God in all His omnipotence cannot intervene and nothing is left but eternal hell fire and damnation for that sinner. But just what does this line of reasoning reveal? The tragedy of it is that it shows us nothing but the SOVEREIGNTY OF MAN'S WILL and the IMPOTENCE OF GOD'S WILL. The will of the sheep to remain lost exceeds the will of the Shepherd to rescue him and carry him back to the fold.

Another thing this line of teaching suggests is that God, having finished the work of redemption, then turns it all over to a rather carnal church that does not walk in the Spirit, does not even understand God's great plan of the ages, and cares far more about making proselytes to a denomination or sect than in bringing people into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. The average church today cares more about its programs, its doctrines, its rituals and ceremonies, its buildings, its committee meetings and its budget than it does about making known to the world the glad news that God has reconciled the whole world to Himself and He shall not rest until every heart has surrendered and the last one is found. Nothing will stop the work of the Shepherd until that last sheep is made to correctly know the Shepherd, who He is, and His great love For him. The Shepherd does seek until He finds the last one, no matter how long it takes or to what depths He must search! He will search through this age or through the ages to come. He will search through earth or He will search through hell. Time or place mean nothing to this Great and Good Shepherd — only the lost sheep means much to him.

Let us have these things right and straight in our minds. Let us see these things correctly. Let us believe the word of the Lord Jesus, the Shepherd-Saviour. Nothing is left in any way to chance. The Shepherd sends no one out to look far the sheep, but goes Himself. Granted, HE GOES THROUGH HIS BODY, but He is not sitting idly by to see what will happen. His mission goes on until it is one hundred percent successful and the last one is found. Nothing will stop the work of the Shepherd until that last sheep is made to correctly know the Shepherd, who He is, and His great love For him. The Shepherd does seek until He finds the last one, no matter how long it takes or to what depths He must search! He will search through this age or through the ages to come. He will search through earth or He will search through hell. Time or place mean nothing to this Great and Good Shepherd — only the lost sheep means much to him.

Someone will ask, "But doesn't God command sinners to choose this day whom they will serve and to seek the Lord while He may be found?" ABSOLUTELY NOT! Oh yes, the scripture does say, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the god of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. but as for
me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Jos. 24:15). But those words were never spoken to the unsaved man, without God and without hope in the world; these were the words of God's prophet to Israel, God's people, as they possessed the promised land! God has nowhere, in all the pages of His blessed Book, commanded unconverted sinners to "choose" between Him and anything else. DEAD MEN DON'T MAKE CHOICES.

And yes, the scripture does say, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6-7). But again, these words were never addressed to the unregenerated man who has no relationship with the Lord. They were thundered by the prophet Isaiah to GOD'S BACKSLIDING PEOPLE in a time of spiritual declension and apostasy. It is God's own people who must "choose" between God and idols, who must "seek" the Lord, and "return" unto the Lord; not the man who is lost and cannot find his way. Saints must return unto the Lord, but lost sheep must be found by the Shepherd. Thus it is that Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST" (Lk. 19:10).

In the true and eloquent words of another, "Christians blindly strive under the mistaken idea that, if they will only meet certain conditions, God will reply by bringing every man into the fold of Christ in this present age. My friend, this is a very great error. It is about as far from the truth as anything could possibly be. God does not intend to bring all men into the fold now. If that were His intention, He could do it with but one word of His omnipotence. When God's eternal voice speaks, saying, 'Let there be light,' then light immediately floods the universe as it did in the beginning. There is no need for a candle nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light. That light could not be matched by ten thousand suns, for the light that shone out of darkness in the beginning is the same light that lightens every man that comes into the world (Jn. 1:1-10). It is the light that shines into the benighted souls, bringing the life of the ages to men who are sleeping in death. 'Lazarus, come forth!' called the Lord, and a dead man sprang from his tomb to reply. 'Saul! Saul!' Jesus called to a disconsolate and determined persecutor, and he quickly replied, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do!' And so will it be when He calls you, your child, your husband, or your wife with His still small voice, speaking to the inner ear. Whether it be John, George, Henry, Joan, Phyllis, or Louise, all will fall at His feet in penitence and brokenness the moment He speaks, crying, 'Here am I, Lord! What wilt Thou have me to do?" — George Hawtin.

To tell me, as I find in the Westminster Confession of Faith, that God had, by a predestined plan, so constructed man that he was born, and from all eternity designed to be wicked, and a vessel of wrath, that God Almighty might show His power by sending him to everlasting hell — that is the most infernal lie that man's tongue could utter, or type could print. That my God, the infinitely good and holy God, was the predestinator, and creator of multitudes of harlots, whoremongers, thieves, murderers, liars, to let them grow up, and to live and lust and die, and then glorify Himself by torturing them in eternal hell fire. Horrible! Blasphemous! I tell you that all the divines that ever hatched a cocatrice egg could never make me swallow that.

Write it between your eyes and never forget it. The Good Shepherd who came from heaven, and gave His life, will seek, and seek, and seek, and save, and save, and save, until He has brought all men back to God. This is the work of the Redeemer and the
redeemed. I desire to make this perfectly clear, because it is necessary to do so. When Jesus came He sought for sinners, wherever satan had gone. He sent His disciples into the world to seek even farther for them. He seeks for sinners still. And He shall seek for them throughout ages yet unborn. The Good Shepherd shall seek them until He finds them. If He didn't, He wouldn't be the Good Shepherd! He will seek them on earth and in hell. "Whither shall I go from Thy presence?" the Psalmist asks. That question is unanswered and unanswerable. It has stood upon the page of scripture for three thousand years, and no one yet of all the myriads that have read it has been able to devise a reply. Heaven says, Not here. Hell says, Not here. It is not among angels, or demons, or the lost, or in the vast silent spaces of eternity. There is no creature anywhere not manifest to His sight. He who made vultures, able from immense heights to discern the least morsel on the desert floor, has eyes better than they. Then David says, 'If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there!' Someone once said, "I did, and He was!" Thanks be to God that He will seek His lost ones through all the Universe — through all the Earths and all the Hells until He has found and saved them all. He must seek until He finds.

"Where are you going, Shepherd?
To find My sheep.
How far will you go?
As far as My sheep.
How far may that be?
To the World's end
How long will you seek it?
Until I find it.
When you find it, will it come to you?
No, it will flee from Me.
Where will it go then?
To the rocks and the sand.
When will it stop?
When it can run no more.
What will you do then?
Carry it home.

Friends, you will never get away from Jesus. Jesus will follow you everywhere and demand your heart's surrender. I am so glad for a Gospel that is coextensive with, and greater than, the devil's work in spirit, soul, and body. I am so glad for a Gospel that is not limited to this age, but reaches out to all ages. I am so glad that this is not the last age, there are yet ages to come, and then that glorious age of ages, the dispensation of the fullness of times. In the dispensation of the fullness of times, the immutable Word of God has declared, God will gather all things into Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth, even in Him (Eph. 1:10). In that wonderful age of all ages every missing sheep will be accounted for as God gathers together in one the all things into Christ. I am so glad for a Gospel which tells me that God has made a way by which even His banished may return. I am so glad for a Gospel that is not limited to earth, but reaches into the depths of death and hell. I am so glad for a Gospel of Everlasting Hope, of Everlasting Expectation, and for the conviction and divine revelation that the miserable and the wicked shall at last be brought to repent of their sin, and to find their God and Father. I should not want to be an elder, or pastor, or leader, or teacher, of a people that would wish me to preach eternal damnation. I could not preach it, for it contradicts the plainest statements of scripture. It contradicts what I know of my Father's heart through personal relationship
with Him. And beyond this, I could not preach it, for high in the heavens sitting upon the Milky Way is the blazing Sign of AURIGA, THE GREAT AND TENDER SHEPHERD, who throughout all ages of time and the vast endessnesses of infinity will seek and save until the storm of judgment is ended and all men and all creatures in all realms are safe in His loving arms. Hallelujah! What a Shepherd! 
The third of the Decans (minor constellations) in the house of Taurus is AURIGA — THE GREAT SHEPHERD. He is seated upon the Milky Way, holding upon his left shoulder a she-goat, who has her paws around the neck of Auriga, The Great Shepherd. The goat is looking down in fear and apprehension at the terrible, raging, rampaging Bull. On his lap, and held by his left hand, Auriga supports two little kids, apparently new-born, and bleating, affrightened and trembling, but obviously safe and secure in the strong embrace of The Shepherd. The name Auriga is derived from a Hebrew root which means "a shepherd." Is not this the celestial portrayal of the Good and Great and Chief Shepherd gathering the Lambs in His arm, and carrying them through all the judgments, disciplines, purgings and processings of God — in His bosom? Is He not saying, "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd: He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa. 40:10-11).

THE SHEPHERD

In the Old Testament the God of Israel is designated as "The Shepherd of Israel," or Pastor and Leader of the nation. When our Lord Jesus Christ declared Himself to be "The Good Shepherd" the Jewish leaders knew that He was claiming to be Yahweh in-the-flesh. Although the hierarchy rejected His claim, the elect gladly accepted it. Those who followed Him, who heard His voice, and were fed and guided and taught by Him knew Him experientially as the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd.

Because God has a Shepherd's heart, He is greatly concerned about the "sheep of His pasture" and in this hour He is sending forth the Voice of the True Shepherd to lead His sheep back into the pastures of truth and righteousness. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not My flock; therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and. I will require My flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouth...for thus saith the Lord God; BEHOLD, I, EVEN I WILL BOTH SEARCH MY SHEEP, AND SEEK THEM OUT. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I WILL FEED MY FLOCK, AND I WILL, CAUSE
THEM TO LIE DOWN, saith the Lord God. I WILL SEEK THAT WHICH WAS LOST, AND BRING AGAIN THAT WHICH WAS DRIVEN AWAY, AND WILL BIND UP THAT WHICH WAS BROKEN, AND WILL STRENGTHEN THAT WHICH WAS SICK...I will feed them with judgment." (Eze. 34:6-16).

George Warnock has commented on this passage: "Notice with what emphasis of truth the Lord declares that HE ALONE is the True Shepherd, and that HE ALONE will take the responsibility for shepherding the Flock of God in His ways. 'I will, I will, I will....' is constantly repeated in this passage, and He has even confirmed His intention with an oath: 'As I live, saith the Lord...’ True, He will use men to fulfill His purposes, as He has always done...but when we understand that GOD ALONE is the True Shepherd of the sheep, then we will come to understand that true shepherds here in the earth are only true shepherds in as far as they walk in the ways of the True Shepherd, and speak the words of the True Shepherd, and do the works of the True Shepherd. They are not true shepherds in their own right, in virtue of some office that has been conferred upon them by God or by man.

"When Jesus came forth from the heart of God He was God's answer to the needs of the scattered sheep of God...the One that the prophets spoke about, who would come to gather together the scattered flocks of God's pasture, and cause them to lie down in quiet resting-places. He had the heart of the Shepherd- God, and therefore as He looked upon the multitudes who thronged about Him to hear His Word and to be healed of their infirmities, He had compassion upon them, for they were 'as sheep not having a shepherd.' They were nevertheless God's sheep...and Jesus knew that all whom the Father had given Him would come to Him and hear His voice. They would not follow the stranger. The "stranger" tried many times to get a following, and for a while there may have been a certain amount of perplexity, but the voice didn't sound quite right. Jesus said, 'A stranger they will not follow.' For Jesus came forth from the heart of God to gather unto Himself the sheep whom God had given Him, and to take them back into the very heart of God, where there would be ONE fold, and ONE Shepherd. It seemed almost impossible...for even in that day there were sects and divisions amongst God's people. There were scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, and Zealots. All wanted to be heard, and all called for a following, but the true sheep did not hear them. Jesus also told the sheep whom He had gathered that He had many other sheep that did not belong to their fold...but that He would bring them also, so that there would be ONE fold, and ONE Shepherd" — end quote.

Originally the New Testament Church was filled with truth and reality and spiritual power. The book of Acts gives an account of those glorious days. Unnumbered multitudes of men and women have experienced a supernatural encounter with God since that wonderful day more than 1900 years ago when the first one hundred and twenty disciples were assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Suddenly a sound was heard like the rushing of a mighty wind coming straight down from the sky, and flaming tongues of divine fire crowned the heads of those humble saints gathered there. This little band of believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, was ushered into the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power of the Kingdom of God as Christ the Lord returned to them in mighty Spirit, to indwell their believing hearts and reign upon the throne of their yielded lives. How they sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of their souls and reechoed among the battlements of celestial realms! With what power, signs, and wonders did they bear witness to the living presence of the Christ! God through them began to shake the entire world. The Word of God, anointed by
the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed
the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early
Christians that they had turned the world upside down! — so powerful was their message
and spirit. In spite of persecution it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the
midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the
waters cover the sea. Day after day, month after month, year after year the celestial
wonder continued, thousands upon thousands came to drink at the ever-flowing fountain
of life, and it looked for a time as though all the kingdoms of men would be broken down,
and the whole world would come marching to Zion.

But, alas! the Church had progressed only a few years into the dispensation of the Spirit
when the flesh began to rear its ugly head and men began to add carnal means and
methods to the pure flow of HIS LIFE. I do not believe there is any way to explain,
imagine, or understand the many ways the carnal mind works. Even before the apostles
had passed from this life, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and
many people were wearing the Babylonish garment. They were instituting rules and
regulations, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and
ordinances, elevating human government, becoming disciples of Paul, of Apollos, of
Cephas, and of many others. The babble had begun and a whole multitude of fleshly
administrations was making its appearance upon the body of Christ. Before too many
years had passed men began to set themselves up as "lords" (today it is called "pastor," 
"shepherd," etc.) over God's people in place of the Holy Spirit. Instead of conquering by
the power of the Spirit and by Truth, men began to add their ideas and their methods.
Soon the glory and power and the presence of God in the morning time Church began to
be eclipsed, degraded and debased by the idolatrous inventions of carnal minded men.
The saints no longer moved by the power and glory of the indwelling Spirit, but became
subservient to the rulership, dominion and lordship of their leaders who claimed that they
alone knew the mind of the Lord, understood the word of God and possessed the wisdom
of God. That which had once been beautiful and glorious became unsightly, illshapen,
deformed, uncomely, disfigured, hideous, monstrous, and loathsome. As these false
shepherds ministered among the people of God the Spirit of Christ fled from their midst
and the pure vision and experience of CHRIST LIVING AND SHEPHERDING IN HIS
BODY was lost to them.

In both the Old and New Testament the word for "shepherd" and "pastor" is the same
word in Hebrew and Greek. A pastor is simply a shepherd, and a shepherd is a pastor,
both naturally and spiritually. 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 un-
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 and non-existent in the early church. It is an un-scriptural and extra-
biblical term. There was no one single man in the whole 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 record 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 THE PASTOR of the flock, THE SHEPHERD 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. And those groups who have plural ministry, but one among them is designated "the senior pastor," "head-elder," or some other such title, usurp even more blasphemously the position of our Lord Jesus Christ, since these terms are the spiritual equivalent of "Chief Shepherd". 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 IS THE PASTOR. I may be "a pastor," but never "THE pastor." The saints were taught that if anyone 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!" Should the inquirer pursue the point 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 is actually an abomination in the sight of God! And should any who read these lines doubt what I say about the absence of the ministry of "the pastor" from the New Testament church, I invite him or her to look up the term in Strong's Concordance.

An article which has anonymously come to my desk elaborates most beautifully upon this significant point. "It will require a considerable perversion of scripture to justify any concept of 'the pastor'. Have you ever observed how the writers of the Epistles greet the various churches to whom they address themselves? For example, 'Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle...to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.' This much from the first chapter of Romans. It should be observed that Paul makes no reference nor greeting to 'the pastor' or to 'pastors' in Rome. This omission is significant, to say the least. Had there been a 'pastor' in Rome, Paul's failure to recognize him would be inexcusable if considered in the light of present-day custom in our churches. No one of acceptable deportment in our times would think of addressing a local church without first addressing himself to 'the pastor' thereof. We cannot suppose that Paul made a breach of courtesy, so, we assume that there was no 'pastor' in Rome. Again, 'Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth.' This much from the first chapter of First Corinthians. Once more. Paul un-gratiates himself with 'the pastor' at Corinth, by completely ignoring him. Paul's spiritual stature among the churches was not sufficient to warrant his intentional or unintentional oversight of any 'pastor' at Corinth. There was at Corinth no pastor such as we have today. It is in this chapter that Paul
speaks against Diotrophes' spirit — 'everyone saith, I am of Paul; and I am of Apollos; and I am of Cephas...is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you?' It is not at all stigmatic in our day to say 'I go to Pastor So- and- so's church,' and 'pastors' invite this sort of thinking by being known as 'the pastor' of such- and- such a church. But it was not so in the beginning.

"It will come as a surprise to many of our readers that the word 'pastor' occurs but once in the entire New Testament. The word 'pastor' does not occur once in the entire book of Acts, that record of the founding of the first Christian churches. Only in Eph. 4:11 does it appear (and then in the plural). 'And He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.' Does not this one single mention of this word in the entire New Testament seem all out of proportion to the position of 'the pastor' as known in our times? The word 'pastor' means 'shepherd or feeder.' This same Greek word which in Eph. 4:11 is translated 'pastor' is elsewhere in the New Testament translated 'shepherd' seventeen times. Now, that this word which is but once translated 'pastor' should be used only eighteen times in the entire New Testament is indeed significant, in view of the popular usage it is given today. I have heard pastors refer to themselves as 'the pastor' almost as many times in just one sermon! It is quite a big word in our churches and in our thinking, but not so in the scripture. And it is time we did some serious thinking about this. It is just possible that on this point we have demonstrated again that that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God.

"It is difficult to make a study of the pastor without taking into account also the present false, carnal, unscriptural structure of our present-day 'churches.' The church and the pastor of our day go hand in hand, and if someone asks 'how can you run a modern church without a pastor?' the answer is simple — you can't! You cannot run a modern church without a pastor any more than you can have a church (in the New Testament sense) with a pastor. Let us here observe something basic. 'Christ is the head of the church' (Eph. 5:23). This does not mean that Christ is only nominal head of the church, but that He is the actual and functioning head of the church. 'For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church' (Eph. 5:23). Christ is resident with the church. Where two or three meet, there He is in very fact. He is there to feed, to comfort, to admonish, to manage. This thing is real, it is not just imagination, not just fancy. Christ's people are given to understand that they are to have the presence of the Lord Himself among them. That the average church does not even begin to understand this is obvious by the position that they accord 'the pastor' and also by the resulting ignorance that prevails among the 'laity' concerning spiritual things in general. In order for Christ to be head of the church, the usual democratic machinery would have to be abandoned in favor of a direct spiritual control by the Lord Himself, a thing which our pastors, boards, committees, synods, hierarchies, cannot understand. It is amazing that we continue to try and make the old lifeless machinery produce life among us!" — end quote.

THE UNDERSHEPHERDS

My beloved, if ever you hope to reign with Christ YOU MUST BECOME SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORITY OF GOD, THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL. And I'm not talking about coming to El Paso and submitting to my ministry, or to any other man, or group of men. It is amazing how "man" conscious even many who have received the call to sonship are! They are looking for a man, a ministry, that can bring them into the Kingdom of God and into eternal life. There IS such a man, my friend — His name is Jesus Christ. Certainly we must walk in all humility with our brethren, "submitting ourselves one to another in the
fear of God" (Eph. 5:21). But true SONSHIP SUBMISSION is SUBMISSION TO THE FATHER THROUGH THE HEADSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST, for God has "put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). "And He is the Head of the body...who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things HE might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). How tragic that there are so many in this hour who are "not holding the Head, from whom all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

There are multitudes across the land who loudly profess to have received the call to sonship who, rather than submitting themselves UNDER THE MIGHTY HAND OF GOD, submit their walk with God into the hands of others who persuade them that they are more capable than themselves to watch for their souls. The land is filled with men calling themselves apostles, elders, teachers, shepherds, etc., who desire to lord it over a flock or other men's lives, telling others what they can or cannot do, esteeming themselves spiritual enough to discern for everyone else what the will of the Lord is, though they bear no credentials other than their own word that they possess such authority. Some claim that they alone have the words of life, they among all God's prophets have the true, deeper, spiritual, mystical revelation that will lead the sons to perfection and immortality. Not discerning the Lord's body, and elevating their word and their ministry above all the Lord's brethren, they draw disciples after themselves. But I tell you the truth and I lie not when I say that no man can minister to you that which he himself does not possess. If a man tells you that he possesses the secret and the truth by which you can save your life and enter into physical immortality, yet he himself has neither stopped nor reversed the aging process, only a fool would commit their lives into his hands. Ah — there is ONE, precious friend of mine, who HAS STOPPED THE AGING PROCESS, WHO HAS CONQUERED DEATH, WHO IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE, and this One holds the Key, He knows the Secret, He Himself IS THE Truth, and I must tell you today that HE, AND HE ALONE, HAS THE WORDS OF LIFE! Yes, those words are ministered through His many brethren. Certainly there are many precious under-shepherds, true ministries HE has set in the body, humble examples to the flock, with a flow of HIS LIFE, bearing the true Word of the Lord for this hour, a source of encouragement, confirmation, and strength unto all to whom they are sent, and we praise God for them. All such true ministries bear one signal mark of distinction: they do not draw followers after themselves, they POINT ALL MEN TO THE LORD; they do not ask you to blindly submit to them, or follow them to the exclusion of the other ministries in this present truth, but they present you unto HIM WHO IS THE HEAD OVER ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH.

I speak the truth when I say that the greatest need in this hour is for the people of God to begin to KNOW THE LORD FOR THEMSELVES. Let all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship begin to seek God, and walk with God, and know God, and hear from God, and submit to Him in all His ways, and to His will and to His word, and GOD HIMSELF will be YOUR FATHER and you will sup with HIM and He with you. Ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit, thrust yourself in utter abandonment upon His love and care, and before you realize it you will find yourself digging deep in the storehouse of God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge and sitting with Him at His banqueting table. He will spread a table before you in the presence of your enemies, He will lead you through green pastures; He will reveal to you fountains of living water flowing from within; He will cause you to rest beside cool, still streams; and HE, the Great Shepherd of the sheep will abide with you and your cup will overflow with the unspeakable riches of His grace and the wonder of His glorious and eternal reality.
How many are submitted to men but not to God! How many will travel or move thousands of miles across the land to receive from man, but have never discovered the well within which springs up into eternal life! Their obsession with "a man" reveals their own inner desolation. If you would keep the position of order in God’s house of sons you must remember that "Christ is a Son OVER HIS OWN HOUSE; whose house we are" (Heb. 3:6). He is the Head, He is the Good Shepherd, and the Great Shepherd, and the Chief Shepherd, He is the Lord, He is the forerunner, He is the firstborn who has entered in for us and opened up the way. I can assure you, dear ones, that to the degree that you KNOW HIM in intimacy of fellowship and vital union, and submit to Him in all His will, ways, and dealings, you will know His authority in your life and be strengthened to reign with Him and He will be able to reign through you in all things! It is not enough to know how God would have us think, act, and be as sons of God. There must be submission to Him, with daily inworkings of His nature, mind and power. When we obey men our authority comes from men. When we obey God the authority comes from God. And when we obey God — we REIGN!

Our Lord Jesus Christ is THE SHEPHERD and THE PASTOR. It is also true that He has under-shepherds who assist in the care of the flock. An under-shepherd of the Chief Shepherd is merely a slave of God going about the business assigned him by the Master. There is a wonderful lesson Jesus taught in Luke 17:7-10 wherein He says, "But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

When Jesus speaks of the role of a servant in this passage He uses the Greek word POIMAINO which means "to act as a shepherd." God does not approve of pastors who conceive of their role as giving them the right to push the sheep around! And even more importantly, it is not the business of the under-shepherds to lead the flock! Only one shepherd can lead. Only one shepherd is The Shepherd. The Shepherd leads the flock. The under-shepherds merely flank the sides and bring up the rear in order to make sure that all the flock FOLLOWS THE SHEPHERD. It is not God's will for any one person, pastor or pope, to rule or lead a group of people: but neither is it His will for any number of persons to rule or lead a group! In other words what is worse than a one-man ministry, is a many-man ministry. We have made this mistake so often. We say we believe in plural ministry, but in so doing we create a monster by making the ministry many-headed, instead of Christ being the one Head over all. A true spiritual ministry will never seek to draw people to himself, but rather to Christ. There are many movements in the earth today stressing "divine order" and "authority" and "submission," and one of the tests of what they teach is whether the people are being released to draw their life and substance from the Christ within or not. Many leaders and movements seek to bind people to their group and lead their followers to believe that they are the choice, select group God has chosen to complete His work in the earth, manifest sonship, and bring the sons into immortality and incorruption. Unless you are joined to them and submit to their ministry you just can't make it in! When someone leaves the group or that leader, they are made to feel as if they are missing the purpose of God, have left the body of Christ, and have repudiated the High Calling of God. You must be spiritually wise to discern the spirit of
any group or individual that usurps the headship of Jesus Christ by the in-dwelling Spirit over His people.

Truly, the most faithful under-shepherd is not the Great Shepherd of the sheep. The brightest reflection of His beauty that is seen upon a servant, is not the revelation of Himself. Those who are closest to the Lord, who know Him best, and are more deeply conformed to His image, can only direct the searching soul to the Lord. They can never satisfy the hunger of the heart that is going out after Him. How we praise God for all the help we have received through every chosen vessel that He has used to draw us on toward Him, and into a deeper relation to Himself. With what gratitude to God, do we remember those whom He has used to point out to us a nearer approach to our glorious Lord. How tenderly do we look back upon every faithful servant and child of His, who brought us new light, who stirred within us a deeper hunger for God, who opened to us an understanding of His great plan and purpose in us, who provoked us to holy jealousy and emulation through their godly lives. How we praise God for those who warned and instructed us through the exhortation and admonition that they gave in the hour of need, or in times of weakness and immaturity. How our hunger for Reality, and abandonment to God's will and desire to follow Him all the way to Mount Zion, have been increased as we have seen that mysterious light which shines upon the faces of those who have soared with Him into the heavenly heights. While we thank God for every instrument He uses in our lives, how little one or all of these precious ones can be, compared with our Beloved, if in any way they take His place and draw us to themselves rather than to Himself. We must esteem every servant and instrument of God "exceeding highly in love for their work's sake," but we must never permit them to usurp the place of the Good and Great and Chief Shepherd in our lives and affections. Therefore the elect of God in this hour have no desire for an under-shepherd to lead them; and when they do not yield to them, they appear as though they were a stranger. But that is not it at all — it is that the Lord Himself is becoming ALL to us!

Oh, let us once for all grasp this one great fundamental truth. Christ's church is not an organization, but an organism, a body, a living reality. He, and He alone, is the Head. But when man builds an organization, or a movement, or an assembly of which he himself is the head, and when he begins to legislate and pass church laws, and formulate creeds, and institute rituals, he is merely manifesting that both the system and he himself are spurious. Of course there are Christians in these organizations: let us not lose sight of that fact. And let us not lose sight of the fact that many of the founders of these organizations were honest and sincere Christians. Yet they were ignorantly sincere. The whole trend of organization is to lead away from Christ the Head of the organism, away from the Christ within each member as the way, the truth, the life, the wisdom, the knowledge, and the righteousness of God, and it induces men to look to man, the head of the organization or movement.

THE HIRELING

It is time for the elect of God to sit up and take notice. The true sheep or the true fold are those sons of God who love to be led by God's Spirit. The Great and Good Shepherd, Jesus, tells us, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn. 10:11-
A "hireling" is simply one who has been "hired." Someone has well written: "We say that the 'pastor' is 'trained and authorized' in view of the fact that in just about all churches 'the pastor' must be a seminary graduate and must be ordained by a body of men acceptable to the local church. An untrained and unauthorized man would not be acceptable in the average church. We say that the 'pastor' is 'employed' in view of the fact that he came to the local group after the offer of and acceptance of a certain consideration of monies, or, somewhere along the line it was determined that he would receive for his services a certain amount of money called a 'salary.' We therefore consider him 'employed.' We say he is an 'outsider' with the express purpose of implying that for all practical purposes that is just what he is. The group is at any time free to replace the 'pastor' or apply for his replacement, depending upon the type of political structure of the group. And the 'pastor' is free at any time, upon reasonable notice, to pack up and leave. We say that 'the pastor' is 'hired' to perform the function of 'management' over the group, and to do the feeding (preaching and teaching), and this function of management is very piously called 'service.' A pastor says, 'I served such and such a church,' when the fact may more correctly be that he made them serve him" — end quote.

When and where was there a Catholic Priest or a Protestant Minister who was not "a hired servant"? The only exceptions have been the occasional simple and devout saint, taking it upon himself to obey the call of the Spirit and go forth by faith to do the work of the Kingdom of God. The Lord Jesus said in substance, "The hireling does not care for the sheep because they do not belong to him!" Consequently, this sad fact has ever held true ever since organized religion came into being: the hired priest or minister is told in seminary the precise theology he must set forth. And he — like hired men in other professions and trades — has had sufficient sense to do as told; otherwise he is OUT OF A JOB! As George Warnock has pointed out, "In this hour of comparative security and ease, there are thousands of hirelings ruling over the sheep. But let persecution come our way, or let some difficulty arise in the assembly that is apt to prove dangerous to the minister — and the hireling will flee because he is a hireling and careth not for the sheep. But the true shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep. The size of the congregation, the amount of money one is to receive, the kind of place a man will have to live in — these will not matter to the true shepherd. He will as readily preach to the ones and the twos, as to the hundreds and thousands."

Let all the saints of God thoroughly understand! There is but one Shepherd, and one fold, and the sheep know the Shepherd's voice, and follow Him, and He gives them eternal life. They are all led by the Spirit of God, and are the sons of God; and they have the Spirit of Christ, and they are His. And whether they live or die, or eat or drink, they are Christ's, for He died for them, and has purchased them with His blood: and therefore, they are not their own, but Christ's and so they are to glorify Him with their bodies, and souls, and spirits, which are His.

But in the world there is a multitude of shepherds, and they have their several flocks and folds; and the shepherds fall out with themselves, and with their flocks about victuals, clothes, days, times, laws, creeds and doctrines; and for a while one shepherd gets the flock, and for another while another shepherd gets the flock; and by these doings the flocks are almost plucked to pieces by the hireling shepherds, which leave the sheep in time of trouble, when they have gotten all the wool they can get off their backs, because the sheep were not their own. And thus the sheep are tossed up and down, and starved; and every shepherd shears the sheep, and plucks the wool off their backs. But Christ
lays down His life for His sheep, He pours out His life to them, and abides with them, and
dwells within them, in all their troubles, and persecutions, and sufferings, and
wanderings, He suffers and is persecuted in His flock of sheep, when the hireling fleeth
because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep, for they are none of his own. And
you may see as many flocks as there are in the world, there are so many hirelings
knowing them, and keeping them in the world, which the devil has made a wilderness,
and a desolation, among whom it is always winter to the elect: we that are taught of
Christ, and know His voice, and follow Him, Christ is to us the Good Shepherd, the Great
Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd. Ah, my beloved, cease in God's name from searching
for shepherds and pastors to lead you; cease, I say from looking for a man to lead you,
and learn the reality of truth in these words, "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd
giveth His life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:39). Learn that He is not only the Shepherd, but also
the door to the sheepfold (Jn. 10:2), by which the Shepherd enters that He might call all
His sheep by name and go before them that they should know no other voice but His (Jn.
10:3-6).

FALSE SHEPHERDS

We have heard much over the past two decades about having a "local group for a
covering," whatever that is supposed to mean. This so-called "truth" usually refers to a
pseudo-spiritual submission to men calling themselves elders, or shepherds, who desire
to lord it over a flock or other men's lives, and tell others what they can and cannot do.
They esteem themselves spiritual enough to discern for everybody else what the will of
the Lord is, though they themselves are missing the point entirely. My brother, my sister,
hearken to the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the
Lord, that take counsel, BUT NOT OF ME; and that cover with a covering, BUT NOT OF
MY SPIRIT, that they may add sin to sin" (Isa. 30:1).

COVERING! By many this term is used to mean that each believer, being a "dumb
sheep," needs the "covering" or protection of a group, or fold, presided over by men who
are "shepherds". Every one is in "submission" to someone higher in the pyramid, until the
whole structure becomes one vast hierarchy with just a few men or one man at the top.
Each "shepherd" of a local group is "in submission" to some other higher "shepherd" and
all these are ultimately submitted to an "apostle" somewhere in the world. Some rule
more strictly than others over their "dumb sheep," but in general the individual believer is
taught that he cannot trust his own ability to hear from the Lord, or understand the Word
of God, or order his own life, but must look to his earthly shepherd to hear from the Lord
for him. In many cases one dare not change jobs, move from one place to another,
marry, go on vacation, or make any other decision without checking it out with his
"shepherd" or the "elders." The counsel of the "shepherd" in many cases MUST be
followed! Women have often been told that they must always obey their husband's
wishes, even if he requires something illegal or immoral! Some are instructed as to how
much of their means to "give" to the "body."

In some assemblies if a prophecy is to be given, the one who has heard from the Spirit
Himself is required to gain permission from the 'pastor' or 'elder' or 'shepherd' in order to
prophesy. If permission is granted, that one is then required to leave his seat, march
down front, take the microphone, and then prophesy. By then I think that the Spirit's
message would be, "Quench not My Spirit and touch not My prophets." Such false
shepherds instruct God's people, "Submit to church government — NO MATTER WHAT!"
"Obey your leaders — even if they are wrong!" "Don't judge the ministry!" "God placed
the ministry over you. You don't second-guess their decisions. They are God inspired! Are YOU victim to this kind of "inspired teaching"? If so, danger is stalking your eternal life. Isn't it time you asked yourself, "What is behind such totalitarian rhetoric?" The tactic is simple. You are being intimidated. Through raw and robust fear tactics, you are SCARED INTO OBEDIENCE TO MEN — not to God. Your mind is being conditioned to accept — without thinking and without proof — everything such preachers say. You are being brainwashed to behave like spiritual zombies. The mind of Christ in you is being raped!

Now, not all who teach "the covering" are that extreme, but for many of them the half has not been told. There is a great emphasis on the term "covering" as being necessary for each member, for protection from harm and deception. If we do not have this "covering" of the local fellowship, or elders, or shepherds, then, we are told, we cannot discern the will of the Lord, cannot understand the Word of the Lord, will be overcome by our adversary, will fall into sin or delusion, or the present world system will destroy us. I am frankly appalled at the shallowness, gullibility, and lack of spiritual discernment and maturity among the people of God, for they give heed continually to the voice of such strangers, but the voice of the Good Shepherd they do not know. Why are the children of God so ready to blindly accept every subtle and plausible teaching that is thrust at them, without earnestly seeking the help of the blessed Spirit WHO ALONE HAS BEEN SENT TO GUIDE US INTO ALL TRUTH. Any preacher today who can come up with some fantastic notion can corral God's people under his authority, and the more fantastic the notion the more people run after it. I do not hesitate to tell you that I know of no greater deception that has entered in among the Lord's sheep during the past twenty years than the error of the "covering" teaching.

Where, I ask, WHERE DOES THE SCRIPTURE GIVE EVIDENCE THIS APPLICATION OF THE WORD "COVERING" IS LEGITIMATE? I know of no place! Where in the whole Bible, I ask, is the husband called a "covering" for his wife? Where in the entire Bible are elders called a "covering" for the church? In what place is the church spoken of as a "covering" for believers? Where is the chapter and verse to be found that refers to an apostle as a "covering" for other ministers? Where is the scripture that teaches that unless a traveling ministry is under the "covering" of some local assembly he is not to be received? WHERE DOES IT SAY IT! Ah, my friend, you may search long and hard, you may burn the midnight oil, you may read and study until your eyes are red and vision blurred, until you lapse into fitful sleep with Bible and reference books scattered on the desk before you; and I can assure you without fear of contradiction that your most diligent and persistent efforts shall prove fruitless and in vain! We are blind readers indeed if we do not readily see that the fact of the matter is that the "covering" doctrine in all of its ramifications is foreign to the Word of God! You will have to tear the Bible all to pieces if you teach such doctrine.

The time has come when people no longer endure sound doctrine but are turned to fables. Many false Christs and false prophets and spurious forms of religion are going forth into all the world. Some time ago a dear sister stopped to visit with us for a few hours, and during the course of our conversation she asked a most momentous question. She wanted to know what, in my opinion, is the greatest danger present among God's people in this hour. I could only reply that the greatest danger I perceive today is that of God's saints being BROUGHT INTO BONDAGE TO MEN. And I will tell you frankly that there are a thousand and one different schemes and distortions of truth and departures
from living reality being concocted by subtle, clever, conniving and power-hungry preachers to bring the saints into bondage to men.

"For at one time you were darkness itself, but now IN UNION with the Lord you are light itself. You must live like children of light" (Eph. 5:8, Williams translation). A dear brother has aptly written: "The word of emphasis right now surely must be upon the word 'UNION', for it is only by virtue of our union with Him that He in us is this light so vitally needed. And it seems that all the negative forces in the world today are arrayed against this union, so that we would turn away from Him for the allure of the world. But while they promise light and freedom, 'of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage' (II Pet. 2:19). So subtle are the devious ways of the adversary, that if you cannot be enticed into outright sin and forsaking of the way of truth, then the enemy would cause you to become so religious, working a spiritual pride, or a false humility, or perhaps the allure of one to be your shepherd, or covering, or spiritual mentor, just anything to keep you from that vital, personal UNION with Christ as your HEAD, so that in ONENESS WITH HIM you are led by His Spirit. If ever we live like children of light, it will be because of our UNION WITH HIM WHO IS LIGHT."

I feel to share further from another precious brother to whom the Lord has given great wisdom for this hour: "God is always faithful to send forth true ministries to bring His people into new ways in God, when the time comes for His people to enter in. And God is faithfully doing this today. That is why it is so important that the ministry, as well as the people, 'hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches...' lest the ministry on the one hand assume a place of carnal authority and leadership that has no relation to what God is doing today... and lest the people on the other hand submit to such authority under the false notion that it is the highway to the Kingdom of God. The ministry has amply fulfilled its purpose on earth if it succeeds in declaring HIM, speaking about HIM, and leading others INTO DIRECT UNION WITH HIM. And having fulfilled this divine objective they should be willing to just fade away', as it were, as Moses and Elijah faded away on the Mount of Transfiguration... that the people of God might 'HEAR HIM' and see 'JESUS ONLY'. Moses and Elijah have an important part to play... and the ministry that is sent forth from the throne as God's gift to the body of Christ has an important role to fulfill. But they are important for one purpose only, and that is TO BRING MEN INTO CLOSER UNION WITH CHRIST, WHERE THEY CAN HEAR HIS VOICE, AND SEE HIS FACE, AND HAVE PERSONAL AND INTIMATE COMMUNION WITH HIM WHO IS THE HEAD.

"As the government of Christ increases in the hearts of His elect, then the messengers of Christ must decrease. As the heart of a true son begins to develop and mature, then the servant (under-shepherd) must be quick and anxious to loosen the ties of allegiance that somehow may have come into being as he sought to lead God's sons into maturity, and encourage them to walk ALONE WITH GOD. Alone, I say, because no matter how many thousands there are who are walking with you and with God... your walk with God is intended to be very individual and unique. Ministry in the Holy Place must give way to sonship in the HOLIEST OF ALL, as Faith gives way to Hope, as Hope gives way to Love, as the Blade gives way to the Ear, as the Ear gives way to the Full Corn in the Ear, as bondage in Egypt gives way to a walk of discipline in the Wilderness, as the Wilderness gives way to Fruitfulness in the Land of Canaan. In other words, the ministry has fulfilled its purpose if it has been successful in bringing the people of God into direct, intimate union with the Lord!
"The purpose of all ministry that proceeds from the exalted Christ is to so minister the Truth that the sheep of God's pasture might come into direct, unhindered personal union with the Lord. They make disciples FOR CHRIST, BUT NONE FOR THEMSELVES. In still another analogy, God's ministers are gardeners: those who plant the seed, or those who water the growing plant, or those who reap the harvest. They must not meddle with the seed, or with the growing plant. GOD IS THE HUSBANDMAN, and He it is that giveth 'the increase.' So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; BUT GOD THAT GIVETH THE INCREASE!' (I Cor. 3:7)" — end quote.

Ah, yes, we do need a "covering"! The Spirit has revealed this over and over again in numerous ways, through types, and shadows, and forms, and inspired utterances through all His holy prophets since the day that Adam and Eve were clothed by the Lord God in Eden's lovely Garden. One cannot help but notice with what emphasis the Lord declares that HE ALONE is the true covering and the true coverer: "And I have put My words in thy mouth, and I HAVE COVERED THEE IN THE SHADOW OF MINE HAND, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art My people" (Isa. 51:16). "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord...for ME HATH CLOTHED ME WITH THE GARMENTS OF SALVATION, HE HATH COVERED ME WITH THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Isa. 61:10). "HE SHALL COVER THEE WITH HIS FEATHERS, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Ps. 91:4). When our Lord Jesus Christ came forth from the heart of God He stood in the temple and wept over Jerusalem as He reproached the people with these sorrowful words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mat. 23:37).

Oh, child of God, I pray that the truth of these things will grip your heart! Let every saint of God who treasures the bright hope of sonship RECOGNIZE THE LORD A-L-O-N-E AS THEIR COVERING!

Why, oh why, is it not possible for the Lord's people to see that any "covering" except THE LIFE OF THE LAMB is naught but withering fig-leaves which in due time fall away and fail to cover sufficiently, leaving the flesh exposed. To say that we need men, or pastors, or elders, or shepherds, or anyone at all other than the Lord Jesus Christ to "cover" us or "lead" us will surely bring spiritual stagnation, or worse, spiritual death. Nothing will avail but the ANOINTING OF LIFE which comes alone from the Holy Spirit within as we seek the Lord with all our hearts. After more than sixty years of ministry among Spirit-filled saints I testify to you that never, in all these years, have I witnessed a quickening flow of HIS LIFE, never have I seen saints being truly conformed to the image of Christ, never have I observed a people approaching spiritual maturity, never have I seen saints coming to KNOW GOD FOR THEMSELVES, and never have I beheld sons coming to glory in any group where MEN OR ELDERS RULE OVER GOD'S PEOPLE, OR BECOME A COVERING FOR THEM, OR SET THEMSELVES UP AS 'THE SHEPHERD' OR 'THE APOSTLE' OR 'THE ANOINTED MINISTRY' ORDAINED TO BRING GOD'S SONS INTO LIFE AND INTO THE KINGDOM. In every case they are only successful at bringing horrible bondage, delusion, and spiritual stagnation to the people of the Lord. These words may be difficult to receive, my friend, but they are the plain, simple, powerful truth.

Invariably, in the history of God's dealings, the Lord's people have grown weary in pursuing the full inheritance of God for themselves, and as the vision grows dim before their drowsy eyes they become impatient in spirit and are willing to turn their walk with
God into the hands of others whom they deem more capable than themselves to possess the land. This is what happened in the early days of Israel, after they had become settled in the land of their inheritance. God had been their Lord and King from the time He called them out of bondage, and drew them apart into a special relationship with Himself. But now in the time of Samuel, with many enemies about remaining to be subjected, and much development of the kingdom still before, they began to grow weary with it all, and desired a king, like the nations about them. How this grieved the heart of God! All along, and right from the beginning, their very existence as a nation was by reason of the fact that God longed for an inheritance of His own in a people that were separate from other people, and very much unlike the nations. He desired to lead them, protect them, feed them, teach them, rule over them, bringing them into union with Himself, to walk in His truth, in His ways, in His holiness, in His life, clothed upon with the indescribable majesty of HIMSELF — ONE WITH HIM in all things. "Make us a king!" they demanded of Samuel, "someone to go out before us, and to fight our battles for us, someone head and shoulders above us who can secure the victory for us." Pursuing the vision of God, and seeking out His will for our lives has become burdensome to many people. "Give us a leader," they clamor, "someone who will tell us what we are supposed to do, someone who will preach to us, study for us, pray for us, prophesy to us, find the will of God for us, and unfold the way into sonship in ten easy lessons!"

God will let them have it! If you want a covering other than the Christ within, if you want a shepherd other than the spirit of the Good and Great Shepherd within, God will let you have it. If you want men to rule over you, rather than learning to know God for yourself and walk with God in the Spirit, you will get it! There are many around who would just love to RULE YOU! There are many waiting in the wings to become your MENTOR, your PROPHET, your GURU, your LEADER! I can direct you to quite a number who would be delighted to become YOUR SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM - YOUR COVERING! " Jonestown" and "Waco" with all their horrible extreme of the dominating authority of man, should be warning examples to all Christians who give blind obedience to their leaders or who are looking for "a man" to be their spiritual authority, instead of looking to the CHRIST WITHIN as the hope of glory. And let me share a further word. Any counsel or advice or supposed "Word of the Lord" through man MUST BE CONFIRMED TO O-U-R H-E-A-R-T-S before we accept it! If someone — even one you revere as a prophet — tells you that God wants you to do this or that concerning an area wherein you (not that someone) have the RESPONSIBILITY for the action and the outcome, then politely listen, but do NOT do what they say. Wait for God to confirm the order through someone else and, more importantly, within your own heart and spirit. If there is no witness — no knowing within yourself — forget it!

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage... for, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:1,13). "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth IN YOU, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (I Jn. 2:26-27). Oh, yes! The adversary loves it if he can make us afraid to hear from God ourselves! Afraid to trust the CHRIST WITHIN! But, "My sheep hear My voice (not the voice of strangers or hirelings) and I know them, and they follow ME. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (Jn. 10:27-30). I rejoice with exceeding great joy and my soul shouts unending hallelujahs, for I have found THE
SHEPHERD! His name is Jesus Christ. He lives in me, speaks in me, leads in me. I tell you today that He alone is MY SHEPHERD. I shall never seek another.

I will close this message by sharing an anointed word from the pen of Sister Alma McClure. "Don't be deceived or intimidated by those who say you must have a 'spiritual covering' of MEN or WOMEN! Or an organization! We have the best covering there can be in our Lord. The arm of flesh will fail, whether it is called apostle, prophet, pastor, bishop, elder, ...or pope! Was everyone in the scriptures under the spiritual oversight of some man or group? Consider! Abraham heard God and obeyed Him. He had no other spiritual covering. Moses forsook Egypt and all of man's authority, and had his commission, and his step by step instructions from the Lord alone. God spoke to him, mouth to mouth. David's preparation for rulership began on the lonely hillsides, keeping his father's sheep, and playing his harp, communing with the God of heaven. Later, he received further preparation as he endured the lonely days in the dens and caves of the wilderness, with those who joined him there, as he fled from the persecution of King Saul, who sought his life. Joseph, betrayed by his brethren who hated him, had no earthly 'spiritual covering' of man, but learned by the processings of the Lord, and had his times of close communication with Him, as a slave, and as a prisoner of the king. Job's communication with God was direct, without man's 'covering'. In fact, the three 'friends' who tried to give him advice (and condemnation), were brought down in shame, as they were reproved by God, and had to accept prayer from Job, in order to be forgiven and accepted of God, for their words were not right. Enoch had no earthly 'covering', but walked with God, and found favor and acceptance with Him, and was not for God took him. Elijah walked alone with God, responsible only to HIM! God spoke to and dealt directly with Noah, who was obedient and found favor with God, while all others, aside from his family, were destroyed. Daniel and his three friends had no group as a 'covering'. They simply remained true to the Mighty One of Israel and heard from HIM. We could list a multitude of others, including Deborah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, etc., etc.

"In the New Testament, the outstanding example is the apostle Paul. Hear his testimony: 'The gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem (to the church leaders) to them who were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus' (Gal. 1:11-17).

"Beloved, God has a company now, called out of man's religious systems, who are separated UNTO HIMSELF, that He alone may lead them, and teach them, and process them, and use them for His glory, as Firstfruits, to minister love, mercy and deliverance to creation!" — end quote. To which I add a hearty "Amen!"
Chapter 41

Gemini- The Twins

On leaving the island of Melita, the apostle Paul took a ship of Alexandria whose Sign, we are told, was Castor and Pollux. "And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux" (Acts 28:11). Perhaps you have wondered just what the name of this ship means. It is a reference to the tenth Sign that we come to in our study on the Zodiac — the Sign of GEMINI. Gemini is the picture of two youthful twins seated side by side and at rest, with their feet placed upon the Milky Way. Their heads lean against each other. The one on the left has a club in his hand, but even the club is at repose, leaning against his shoulder. The other twin, on the right, has a harp in one hand and a bow and arrow in the other. Both the bow and arrow are in repose, the same as the figure who holds them. The picture portrays a readiness for warlike action, but at the same time a peaceful repose in the knowledge of a great victory either already gained or ready to be gained. It speaks of absolute confidence of victory, certainty of triumph in warfare, the successful conclusion of purpose or battle.

Gemini is a perfect illustration of the pagan perversion of the Gospel God originally set in the stars. Dr. Kennedy has written, "Here is a picture of those who have been mighty hunters or warriors, who now are seated in joyful repose. Their names in Latin were Castor and Pollux. The Greek names for them were Apollo and Hercules. Castor and Pollux are also the names of the two bright stars found in the heads of each of these two figures. In Grecian mythology, Apollo and Hercules, the twin sons of Jupiter, were great heroes and had accomplished great exploits. They had supposedly cleared the seas of pirates. That is no doubt one of the reasons the name of the ship Paul referred to in the book of Acts was Castor and Pollux, the Latin equivalent of Apollo and Hercules. These two were very important to seamen. In fact, their names gave rise to the then vulgar form of cursing or swearing, a practice carried over today in the exclamation, 'By Gemini,' or the more modern 'By Jimminy.' That epithet came from this particular sign and from these two heroes who had supposedly cleared the seas of pirates."

The twins of Gemini introduce us to the great law of duality that exists first of all in God Himself, and also in all of His ways and dealings in creation. All nature is a revealing of the Creator as Paul explains in Rom. 1:20, "For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity have been seen and made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made — His handiworks" (Amplified Bible). The universe unmistakably reveals the awesome fact that there is polarity in God. What exactly, is polarity? Webster defines it as "the condition of having magnetic poles, one positive and attracting, the other negative and repelling; the having of two contrary qualities, powers, etc., as both wrath and mercy." Polarity is something much more than simple duality or opposition. For to say that opposites are "polar" is to say much more than that they are far apart: it is to say that they are RELATED AND JOINED — that they are the terms, ends, or extremities of a SINGLE WHOLE. Polar opposites are therefore INSEPARABLE opposites, like the poles of the earth or of a magnet, or the ends of a stick or the faces of a coin. Though what lies
between the poles is more substantial than the poles themselves — nevertheless the three are undivided, constituting a single whole.

One fundamental law of the universe is that all things have their opposites. There can be no consciousness without opposites, and no means by which anything can be manifested except by the interaction of opposites — the one "swallowing" the other in "rhythmic balanced interchange." Each positive has its negative as its necessary reverse. Light and dark, sweet and bitter, hard and soft, good and evil, right through to the ultimate negative of the material realm in the positive and negative of electricity, and the electron and proton of the atom. This law of opposites takes its conscious form in us as persons. Sooner or later it must occur to each of us that we are in fact polarizations of the same forces we have detected throughout the universe. This positive and negative magnetic polarization is an intimate property of electrical phenomena. All matter, organic and inorganic, participates in and depends upon the flow of these energies which, as Einstein pointed out, are actually matter in motion. A battery, in order to be effective, must have a negative and a positive pole. Both poles of the battery must be operative in order for the battery to function. The negative, in itself, can do nothing. The positive, in itself, can do nothing. Both must be interrelated in order for the power and purpose of that battery to come into fulfillment. Let us remember that pleasure and pain are polar forces. When we demand a world without pain, we may be asking for the removal of pleasure as we know it. The same faculties that are capable of pain are capable of pleasure, and the Bible speaks of both as being functions in the nature of God. God was "pained" in His heart because of the wickedness of man, and Paul speaks of "godly sorrow." Pleasure, in fact, can never be truly known or appreciated apart from pain. In the natural world many pains are automatic danger-signals, without which we would mutilate or kill ourselves without knowing it. The burnt child suffers, indeed, but for the pain it would probably burn its fingers off. Reason itself would be a poor substitute for this sharp reminder.

Thus, the twins of Gemini speak to us of a duality in God that carries the sense of "fullness" and "unity" rather than that of "division." The accomplishment of both twins is needed to bring completion and perfection; they do not represent partition, incompletion, or opposition. The ancient names associated with Gemini reveal this principle. The old Coptic name for this Sign was Pi-Mahi, which means THE UNITED, as unified in fellowship or brotherhood. The Hebrew name for this constellation is Thaumim, meaning THE UNITED or JOINED TOGETHER. A derivative of this Hebrew word is used in connection with the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, where boards were "coupled together" (Ex. 26:24). It is also connected with the Thummim stone which the high priest wore, meaning "perfections," and by which, with the Urim stone, the will of Yahweh was ascertained by the high priest.

In the light of this principle of duality in unity let us consider a grand statement of infinite truth which fell from the lips of God's spokesman, Moses, more than thirty-five centuries ago: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is ONE LORD" (Deut. 6:4). For long centuries men have read this amazing declaration about God and have supposed it to be nothing more than a doctrinal statement of the fact that in all the universe there is only one Lord or one true and living God. That this passage may become clearer to our minds, scintillating in heaven's light like the ray which is broken into many prismatic hues, consider now the glorious things concealed in this mighty word of the Lord. The Lord our God is ONE. One, in the numerology of scripture, means UNITY, UNITED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. One is the primary number, denoting beginning or source. Unity being indivisible, and not made up of other numbers, is therefore independent of all
others, and is the source of all others. One means unity and unity comes from the word "unit," meaning a whole.

In reference to His substance, God is SPIRIT. In reference to His state of being, God is ONE. That which is ONE is that which is UNITED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. Oneness speaks of unity, harmony, singleness, concord, solidarity. God is ONE! The fact that there is ONE GOD must not be confused with the truth that GOD IS ONE. There is a great difference. God is truly one, undivided in Himself, or in His will and purpose. And surely HE alone is God! But this One God IS ONE. It is a great and blessed fact that God is ONE. He who is united, undivided and unfragmented in every aspect of His nature and state of being cannot be influenced, affected, moved, upset, frustrated, changed, altered, damaged, destroyed, made discordant, confused or set at variance in any way. The character of God is eternal, changeless, unaffected. The love, joy, peace, righteousness, wisdom, justice, power and will of God do not rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. Matters not what happens nor what men or devils say or do, the love of God, the purpose of God, the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, unaffected, without fluctuation. He is Yahweh — the SELF-EXISTENT ONE. He is ONE. No power in the universe can cause any deviation whatsoever in God's nature, will or action.

There can be no doubt that each aspect of God's being moves in perfect harmony and accord with every other part of His being. Here in the physical world there are contradictions in our value system because there are contradictions in moral philosophy, limited by finite and faltering human nature and reason. What is the ultimate contradiction in moral philosophy? In moral philosophy the ultimate contradiction is between justice and mercy. The judge, if he is a good judge, will be just. He will not let somebody get off, without paying their dues. Moral justice demands that evil be punished. Because if evil goes unpunished, then the judge is a participant in the crime, by letting it go unchecked. Justice is one side of the coin. The other side, the other value is mercy. Mercy says, "I want to forgive you, when you don't deserve it. And the more undeserving you are, the deeper my mercy runs." This is a contradiction. How can you possibly combine these two creatively? We speak of law and love, of truth and grace, of justice and mercy, and so long as sin does not exist there is no controversy between any of these. If there be no sin, law and love are never out of harmony with grace or each other; truth and grace go ever hand in hand; justice and mercy sing a common anthem. If the law be broken, what is love to do? If truth be violated, how can grace operate? In the presence of crime, how can justice and mercy meet? This is the problem of problems. It is not a problem as between God and man. It is not a problem as between God and angels. It is a problem between GOD AND HIMSELF.

Justice and mercy can only be harmonized by making them ONE. And this can be done only in the realm of the God who IS ONE. Every facet of God's nature is unified, so that His justice is not warring against His mercy, neither is His judgment set against His grace. Herein lies the mystery and the wonder of it all — there is no conflict in God, no contradiction! In God, and in God alone, we see the contradictions combined, and justice and mercy kiss each other. Christendom has spoken of God's justice being satisfied, as if He were an incorrigible tyrant that must somehow be appeased. They speak of eternal punishment as a self-evident result of God's eternal, unchanging nature of infinite justice. Apparently, according to this crude theory, one is to think of two parallel lines, divine mercy and divine justice, two divine properties, running close beside each other but diametrically opposed to one another, each in its own right, continuing on into infinity. Not only love, but also justice must run its full course, and thus justice and mercy are isolated.
from each other endlessly. In this view God is both INFINITELY JUST and INFINITELY MERCIFUL at the same time — but never the twain shall meet! This crude theory is responsible for the ridiculous doctrine of eternal life for some and eternal torture for others.

I am constrained by the Holy Spirit of God to cry out against such a blasphemous absurdity! Our God is not schizophrenic. He does not have a split personality. He is not both INFINITELY MERCIFUL and INFINITELY VINDICTIVE! The Lord our God is ONE, all attributes and powers of His Being are working together in perfect accord, each harmoniously synchronized in the same purpose and toward the same end, without any contradiction. In the scriptural view, HIS JUSTICE is linked inherently to HIS SALVATION. "There is no God else beside Me; a JUST God and a SAVIOUR; there is none beside Me" (Isa. 45:21). He is a SAVIOUR because He is also JUST. His righteous nature requires that He be our Saviour. He "knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust," and He knows right well that "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope" (Rom. 8:20).

Yes, HE WILL CORRECT US, and by this very correction make the necessary changes in us, and then He will bring us into the fullness of salvation. IN HIM "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness (justice) and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). These are never to be viewed as OPPONENTS to each other, they are gloriously WORKING TOGETHER to fulfill God's redemption in us. Where mercy alone cannot produce the needed change, God applies His judgment. And when judgment has accomplished its full work, "in wrath He remembers mercy" (Hab. 3:2). His wrath and His mercy COOPERATE one with the other, both designed to play their role in bringing man to one expected end: reconciliation to God and deliverance from sin and death. There is no conflict between the two — the objective of each is redemptive, not vindictive or destructive. If we have a concept where the judgment of God is pitted against His mercy, or where the justice of God becomes greater than His love, or where wrath triumphs over grace, then we have a distorted and wicked concept of God. We have not yet learned this one simple but sublime truth: The Lord our God is O- N- E!

I have never believed that by teaching the ultimate salvation of all men we were pitting one group of scriptures against another, or one aspect of God's nature against another, for it is my conviction that the solution can only be found in the HARMONIZATION of all the scriptures and all the characteristics within God Himself, not ignoring one while advancing the other. God's justice and His mercy, God's judgment and His salvation, must MEET TOGETHER AS CO-AGENTS IN GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PURPOSES, else there is eternal warfare and irreconcilable conflict between the two. I find all the judgments of God to be disciplinary and correctional rather than vindictive and final. Therein lies the harmonization of which I speak. According to the Word of God, God is at the same time the JUDGE OF ALL and the SAVIOUR OF ALL. He is not the Judge of some and the Saviour of some, but both Judge and Saviour of ALL! "Judge of all" must mean that He judges all; none escape. "Saviour of all" must mean that He saves all; none are left out. Within that one wonderful fact can be see the beautiful HARMONIZATION of the justice and the love of God — His judgment leading to repentance and a knowledge of His mercy. Praise His wonderful name! The judgments of God can never be rightly understood apart from His nature of love. If God's judgments spring not from His love then they come not from God at all, for God IS LOVE. What ought this to teach us about His judgments! The pen of inspiration wrote, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord LOVETH He
chasteneth, and scourageth every son whom He receiveth...for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:5-10). God doesn't go ground purposely punishing or vindictively torturing any of His creatures. But He does go about precise paths of bringing forth correction UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the prophet says, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Isa. 26:9). Thus God's judgments, whether upon saints, nations, or the wicked in general are all corrective in nature, accomplished by the motivation of His nature which is LOVE. Truly, the Lord our God is ONE!

Do you recall the story about the wind and the sun arguing over who was the stronger? They decided that whoever could take the coat off a man walking down the street was stronger. The wind tried first. It blew and howled furiously. Twice it knocked the man off his feet, but the coat did not come off. In fact, the harder the wind blew, the more the man buttoned up. Finally the wind gave up. Next was the sun's turn. It started to shine, and the man, glad with the change in weather, unbuttoned his coat. But the sun grew warmer still, till finally the man took off his coat. The sun won. One of the hidden morals of this story is that both the wind and the sun had the same objective — to take the coat off the man! While, in this case, warmth won out over violence, there was no conflict between the two. And so it is with God's judgments and His mercy. He will send what is needful to work the necessary changes in our lives and in all creation — but ALL THINGS are of God, and all things WORK TOGETHER for our good. The Lord our God is ONE!

The understanding of this great principle gives the answer to the all-important question, "Is God this, or is He that? Is God a God of wrath, or is He a God of mercy? Is He absolute love, or is He absolutely just?" The answer to such questions is simply that He is BOTH! God is not one OR the other. He is the perfect harmonization and balance of POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE. God has TWO HANDS! "The works of HIS HANDS are truth AND judgment" (Ps. 111:7). We will never understand God or His dealings aright until we grasp the truth that many experiences, values, qualities and powers which we have believed to be contrary and distinct are, after all, TWO ASPECTS OF THE SAME THING. God does not pit His judgment against His mercy, neither does He show ONLY MERCY to some and ONLY JUDGMENT to others. The sweet singer of Israel intoned these enlightening words: "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing!" (Ps. 101:1). The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the ministry of the Christ, declared of Him, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto TRUTH" (Isa. 42:3). Judgment unto truth — how unspeakably blessed! This kind of judgment can never be characterized as unrestrained, unappeasable, implacable, sadistic rage inflicting purposeless, merciless, unending vengeance upon mankind — but corrective, redemptive judgment to break the rebellion of men, and BRING THEM ALL INTO TRUTH AGAIN. As the apostle beautifully confirms, "I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for ALL MEN...for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who W-I-L-L HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:1-4). We do not minimize the workings of wrath, but we do rejoice in the beautiful balance and purpose between the work of God's LEFT HAND and that of His RIGHT HAND — both leading to righteousness. "For the Word of the Lord is right; and ALL His works are done in TRUTH. He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the GOODNESS of the Lord!" (Ps. 33:45).

The two hands of God are not the only example of the unified duality in God and His dealings. The same principle is clearly seen in Christ's divinity and humanity, in Christ the
Head and Christ the body, in the image of God as male and female, in the sons of God and the bride of Christ, in the Spirit and the Word, in the sons and daughters of God, etc. Beside these, there are many others! The Bible is full of these unified opposites. And all are represented in the heavens by Gemini, The Twins — who in unity and confidence secure the victory.

**THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD**

There is not a man on earth who is qualified to teach or speak God's Word until that Word has been quickened to him by the Spirit. And no word uttered by man will ever be effectual in the lives of the hearers until that word is energized to go forth as a Living Word. There is a tremendous value in words even in the natural realm. All words are either creative or destructive. All that happens everyday in the world is accomplished through the power invested in words. All the business and transactions of men and nations are carried on by the power of words. All the political and economic ideologies that have shaped movements and determined the course of history and the destiny of billions of people and races and empires have first issued as words which form their consciousness within the minds and wills of men, who then actively create out of them the external form and substance of them. The whole Communist empire, for instance, with all its legislative, judicial and military institutions and powers was inspired and produced by the power and out of the energy of words spoken or penned by a man by the name of Karl Marx. Words printed or written on paper are powerful enough to imprison or put to death a man or to release him. Words on paper are powerful enough to join a man and woman in marriage, or separate them by divorce. Mere words on paper are sufficient to make one exceedingly wealthy or to make one penniless, to start a war or to bring peace, to establish a kingdom or dissolve an empire. Everything works and moves by and through the power of words. All words spoken form some level of consciousness within man which in turn forms the world you live in. But none of these words produces life unless they are energized by the spirit of life from God. Many words gender death.

In scripture water is a symbol for both the Word and the Spirit (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 7:37-39). The mystery of God is not far-off in heaven somewhere. GOD IS THE WORD AND THE WORD IS GOD. Furthermore, THE WORD IS THE SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT IS THE WORD. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 6:63). Words are the most powerful things in creation. All things, visible and invisible, were created by God's Word. "And God said, Let there be..." (Gen. 1:3). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1.3). Let all men know that creation was not brought forth merely by the spoken word. The power of God's Word lies not in the act of speaking, but in the fact that it is a LIVING WORD. "For the Word of God is living and powerful" (Heb. 4:12). The Word is living because it is energized by the Spirit. "It is the spirit that quickeneth (makes alive), the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The Spirit was not created by the Word, rather, the Spirit quickens or gives life to the Word causing it to be a Living Word. Not all words are living words. The Spirit and the Word united are the Living Word. We are not born again by the spoken word — we are born again by the Word which is energized by the Spirit, the Word and the Word in union - the LIVING WORD. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Pet. 1:23). The spoken word is not Christ, and the scriptures are not the Living Word. The people of Israel had the scriptures from the very mouth of God and thought
that in that written word, in the mystery and magic of the word communicated in the
Hebrew characters, they had life. They were wrong. Dead wrong. The word received at
Sinai and through Moses (Torah) was THE MINISTRATION OF DEATH! There was no
life in it. "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter,
but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of
death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious...how shall not the ministration of the
spirit be rather glorious" (II Cor. 3:6-8). Consider how plainly and powerfully Jesus
rebuked the Jews who trusted in the mystery and magic within the written word
communicated to them in Hebrew characters. "And therefore did the Jews persecute
Jesus, and sought to slay Him...but Jesus answered them...search the scriptures; for in
them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not
come to Me, that ye might have life" (Jn. 5:15-6, 39-40). The scriptures if taken
mechanically or magically can lead us astray, for they are interpreted as a "system"
rather than in the illumination that the Spirit brings. Systems are carnal; revelation is
spiritual. Systematic interpretation of scriptures genders a dead word; the quickening
of the Spirit brings life. The Living Word is the LIVING CHRIST!

Christ is the perfect speech of God. When the invisible and unknowable God desired to
reveal Himself and communicate Himself to mankind, He placed the substance of Himself
in His Word, and made that Word flesh, and caused that Word made flesh to dwell
among men and speak as God to men. Christ the Word contains the pure essence and
power of Life. The words of Christ will form the consciousness and sense of HIS BEING
WITHIN and His world so that you may live in it forever. The presence of Christ places us
in a position to hear the voice of God. This is the voice we want to hear, not just any
voice, but the voice of the Living Spirit. I have witnessed many men speak and preach
the word with great persuasion and nothing happened. There is no magic" or "mystical
power" in the words of the scriptures. The only power they have is that they testify of
CHRIST THE LIVING WORD, they point to HIM WHO IS THE LIFE. One can preach
great sermons and die! But when men are ministered the DYNAMIC REALITY OF THE
LIVING WORD transformation takes place. The same Living Word that by its almighty
power brought creation into existence was made flesh and dwelt among us. The Word
was not made an alphabet. The Word was not made a book. The Word was not made a
teaching or a doctrine. The Word was made flesh, divine substance in human form, the
Son of God. And that same Word is being made flesh — divine substance in human form
— within us today! The same Word that conquered sin and death in the person of Jesus
Christ is being raised up in you and me in these days. Hallelujah!

He in whom the Word is made flesh becomes the Word. He who becomes the Word
speaks the words of God. He speaks both by what he is and by what he says. Words are
not mere sounds or symbols, but are the sheaths or cases of spiritual life, and on this
ground we at once see the force of the Lord’s declaration, "the words that I speak unto
you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 3:63). "Whosoever is born of God doth not
commit sin: for HIS SEED (the Word) remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is
born of God" (I Jn. 3:9). The inherent nature of the life expressed is that which is
contained in the SEED. While we know that THE WORD is the seed, the word "seed"
here is the Greek word SPERMA, that LIFE-GERM that is sown into us by His Spirit. HIS
"WORD" is that life-force that brings forth after His own kind. "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. 55:8-1). Now, to what is God comparing His Word? To the rain and 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. God's Word will come down in power from the high realm of His Spirit, falling upon this lower realm of the flesh. God's Word, or the Lord Jesus Christ, the Logos, the Living Word of God, will come as the former and the latter rain unto His earth, or His people. 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. Just as the rain and snow accomplish their purpose in the earth with unfailing certainty, so shall God's Word, His emanation, His anointing, His Christ not return unto Him void, but it SHALL ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSE. There is a people in the earth in this hour that is letting that LIVING WORD rain down from above, and the seed of the New Creation is being raised up in them.

In a message recently received from Bro. Carl Armstrong he shares the following penetrating insight into the mystery of this truth of which I now write. "There is a story about a sea port that had very treacherous, rocky reefs at various places in the entrance to the harbor. It seemed that just when commerce would begin to flourish, there would be a terrible shipwreck and the harbor trade would drastically fall. The seamen and merchants of the harbor knew that something had to be done. So, they erected two lighthouses, one at the very mouth of the harbor, and the other further back on the land. These lighthouses were very strategically placed, so that when a ship at sea saw one light, rather than two lights, they knew that they were lined up to come into the harbor in the channel of safe passage. If they saw two lights, they were not lined up correctly. In like manner — if we are weighing a decision in the balance and the word (our understanding) seems to be saying one thing and the spirit (the still small voice) another, then we know to continue to look until our perceptions of the Spirit and the Word agree. Because the Spirit and the Word agree and are given to us by the Father that we might have guidance in our decisions. It was through the interaction of the Word and Spirit that the worlds were created. The worlds were framed by that alphabet of the spoken word...filled in by the Spirit. 'And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left' (Isa. 30:21). Thus, our seeing and hearing shall be increased and we shall be balanced to walk in that perfect balance of word and spirit. If we turn too much to the right or toward the left, we will be corrected by our just balance which becomes a delight to the Lord" — end quote. The Spirit and the Word are not antagonists — they work together in perfect harmony as the twins of Gemini to secure the victory in our lives!

THE TWO SIDES OF LOVE

There is a theme about which every son must have a clear understanding if he is to walk in the Father's dealings with full assurance. It is the fact of the dual aspect of God's nature and His workings — the two sides of love — God's love. And in order to make this clear, perhaps we should share an illustration we heard some years ago from the lips of another, in which he described a most terrifying scene. "It was late at night in a suburban area of one of our great cities in America. A child lay restless in her bed. A man, with a very severe and stern countenance, stealthily entered her bedroom and softly approached her bed. The moment the little girl saw him, a terrified expression came over her face, and she began to scream. Her mother rushed into the room and went over to her. And the trembling child threw her arms about her. The man withdrew to the
telephone, called someone, who was evidently an accomplice, and in whispers made some sort of arrangement. Hastily the man re-entered the room, tore the child from the mother's arms, and rushed out to a waiting car. The child was sobbing, and he attempted to stifle her cries. He drove madly down street after street until he finally pulled up before a large, sinister and foreboding building. All was quiet, the building was partially dark, but there was one room upstairs ablaze with light. The child was hurriedly taken inside, up to the lighted room, and put into the hands of the man with whom the conversation had been held over the telephone in the hallway. In turn, the child was handed over to another accomplice — this time a woman — and these two took her into an inner room. The man who had brought her was left outside in the hallway. Inside the room the man suddenly plunged a sharp knife into the vitals of that little child, and she lay as if she were dead.

"Your reaction at this point may be, 'I certainly hope they will catch the criminal who abducted the little girl and is responsible for such a hideous crime.' However, I have not described to you the depraved and degraded action of a sick mind. I have not taken a chapter out of the life of a man in cell 2455, death row. I have not related to you the sordid and sadistic crime of a psychopathic criminal. On the contrary, I have described to you a tender act of love. In fact, I can think of no more sincere demonstration of love! You see, that little girl had awakened in the night with severe abdominal pain. She had been subject to such attacks. It was her father who rushed into the room. He had talked to the specialist about it, and when he saw the suffering of his little daughter, he went to the telephone, called the family physician, and arranged to meet him at the hospital. He had rushed his little girl down to the hospital and had handed her over to the family physician. The doctor had taken her to the operating room and performed emergency surgery. Through it all, every move and every act of that father was of tender love, anxious care, and wise deliberation. I have described to you the dark side of love — but love, nevertheless.

"The father loved the child just as much on that dark night when he took her to the hospital and delivered her to the surgeon's knife as he did the next week when he brought her flowers and candy. It was just as much a demonstration of deep affection when he delivered her into the hands of the surgeon as it was the next week when he brought her home and delivered her into the arms of her mother. My friend, love places the eternal security and permanent welfare of the object of love above any transitory or temporary comfort, or present pleasure. Love seeks the best interests of the beloved — at any cost!" — end quote.

We have met some brethren in this message of sonship who have exaggerated the bright side of the love of God out of all proportion to its other aspects. They have conceived of the idea that the God of this universe is a Person of all love and mercy. They do not want to think of Him as One who would punish individuals or nations. They do not want to think of Him as a God of judgment. They do not want to think of Him as a God of wrath. Now, just think of this for a moment: If He were such a Person, He would be a God without character. Our God is a God of holiness who hates sin. He is a God of justice, whose very nature demands that He must punish (correct) sin. It must be quite convenient, and soothing to one's conscience, to have a God who will always overlook sin, and who will never punish the sinner. But such a God could only exist in the figment of the imagination of a deluded soul. Such a God could never be a
reality, because we all know that sin is a reality; and a God who is righteous and just
would never eternally condone that which is so totally antagonistic to His nature. In order
for God's love and God's Kingdom to be fully manifest there must be corrective judgment
and remedial retribution against all that is evil in God's universe.

The kind of God we have revealed in the holy scriptures is a God of both mercy and
judgment — the two sides of love. He is not a nebulous nonentity of sentimentalism. He
is a God of character. We thank God today that He is a God of love and mercy — and
there would not be one of us alive today to breathe His fresh air, if it were not for His
amazing love toward us. But there is a purpose in judgment, and it is always a purpose of
love. There is a deep, clear purpose in everything God does. And His love for us, deep
and tender, is the fire burning under that purpose. The character of God must be kept
ever in mind. The leading trait of His character is expressed, not by the word "purity," nor
"righteousness," nor "justice," but by the word "love." Though if we knew the real meaning
of "love" we would find it includes these others, and more. The purpose in judgment is
two-fold. It is a purpose toward sin, to get rid of it. And God's attitude here is
uncompromising. No exceptions are ever noted. And there is a purpose toward men.
Now regarding the purpose toward men — it is disciplinary. The whole thought is to
change the man. It is love working, love for the man. As we have already pointed out, the
purpose is the same as the surgeon's. He thrusts in his keen-edged blade, not to destroy
life, but to save it. He is driving hard against the disease. The knife that cuts and hurts is
held steady by the kindly purpose in the heart.

Let each and every man and woman who treasures the beautiful hope of sonship to God
know that there is the DARK SIDE OF GOD'S LOVE! Ah, the Great Physician will put His
child on the operating table. He will use the surgeon's knife when He sees a tumor of
self-will or a deadly virus of carnality sapping our spiritual lives, or when He sees the
cancerous growth of sin. He does not hesitate to deal with us severely. We must learn
this fact early: He loves us just as much when He is subjecting us to surgery, as when He
sends His blessings and gifts and brings us into the sunshine of His glory. Precious friend
of mine, He loves us most when He is dealing severely with us, "for whom the Lord loveth
He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). "I am the true
vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He
taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth (prunes) it, that it may bring
forth more fruit" (Jn. 15:1-2). We must remember that the Father reaches into your life
and mine and prunes out that which is not fruitbearing — and it hurts! But, as some
Puritan divine said years ago, "The husbandman is never so close to the branch as when
he is trimming it." The Father is never more close to you, beloved, than when He is
reaching in and taking out of your heart and life those things that hinder the development
of HIS LIFE and the manifestation of HIS NATURE.

Consider now these profound words from the pen of one who has expressed some
illuminating thoughts concerning love: "Know you not that hate sprang out of love? If
there is no love, then neither can there be hatred, for hatred is the balance of power in a
scheme where sin and death are manifest. It is said of God that He hates but it is also
said that He is love. How can these two opposing statements be true? It is because HE
IS LOVE that He can hate! It is not said that God IS HATRED. Nay! For if that be true,
then hatred would be His nature, in which case He would not be Yahweh Elohim, but a
fiendish despot. Nevertheless, because God is love He can manifest this love in a
righteous hatred against all evil, that it might result again in pure love. And, let me add,
this righteous hatred IS the DARK SIDE OF LOVE!" Another has said, "In one sense,
love is the highest vibration, hatred is the lowest vibration. God, being all righteous, can move on the lower vibration without perversion, using His righteous hatred to turn evil once again into good. But man, being unrighteous, receives love, and by absorbing it into ‘self’, in turn manifests a perverted love. How we need to be ‘partakers of His holiness’, being made ALL RIGHTEOUS, then we will not pervert that which is pure, but we will be able to take that which has been perverted and restore it to purity once again.” Love and hatred are but the two sides of love — the Gemini twins — that unified duality within God that works to bring redemption, restoration, completion and perfection. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it!

THE TWO HANDS OF GOD

Almost all churches and most Christians are not aware of it, but for the most part we have made God to be a one-armed or one-handed Being. Of course we realize that God is spirit and has no body of material substance and consequently no arms or hands such as we have. But spirit is real, God is real, and the eyes of God are omnipresent spirit eyes, His universal ability to see by the Spirit, and the arms and hands of God are omnipresent spirit arms and hands, His universal ability to act, touch, and perform by the power of His Spirit. The thought of God having a right hand and a left hand should not be strange to us, although the preachers have so often presented God as a one-handed Being. In the scriptures we find the right hand of God mentioned a great many times, and the left hand of God is mentioned on a number of occasions. A great deal has been said as to the meaning of the right hand, but few have seemed to have any understanding or revelation of the significance of the left hand.

First, let us look at the meaning of these two words, right and left. The word "right" as used with "hand" is generally the Hebrew word yamiym meaning STRONGER, MORE DEXTEROUS. The word for "left" is smowl meaning DARK. From the meaning of these two words it is very easy to understand that God's right hand is His strength and dexterity, or His wonderful ability to do all things. The implication is that the right hand of God is the GOOD HAND of God, doing GOOD things. The Psalmist confirms this when he says, "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). Again, "The voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted" (Ps. 118:15-6). To which the prophet Isaiah adds his inspired testimony, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Isa. 41:10). In the Old Testament, whenever God is pictured as manifesting His power, it is done so with His right hand or arm. "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power" (Ex. 15:6). "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory" (Ps. 98:1). "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me; Thou shalt stretch forth Thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand shall save me" (Ps. 138:7). Numerous other Psalms express the same thought. In the New Testament, after His resurrection, Jesus was by the right hand of God exalted, and made to sit at His right hand (Acts 2:33-34; Heb. 1:3,13).

But, as we have noted, the left hand in the Old Testament means DARK and from this we can readily understand that it signifies the opposite — what we call bad or evil. The left hand of God represents the DARK SIDE OF GOD. This is the hand of God so little understood. The distinctive work of these two hands is graphically portrayed in the
wonderful parable Jesus told of the sheep and the goats. "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: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, When saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat...then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mat. 25:31-46).

There are many precious and important truths contained in this parable, but we must restrain ourselves from pursuing them at this time in order to deal briefly with two points. First, it is important to note that this separation of the sheep from the goats was brought about, not on the basis of whether one had accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, but solely on the basis of WORKS. Everything depended entirely upon what the sheep or goats had DONE or NOT DONE. There was nothing of faith or a spiritual experience connected with this separation. The sheep were set on God's RIGHT HAND because of the fact that they had done something — given meat and drink to the Lord's brethren, clothed them, visited them, and comforted them. And note — in the whole parable there are only three companies: the sheep, the goats, and the Lord 's brethren. The Lord's brethren are the body of Christ. This has nothing to do with winning souls, or visiting the people in the wards at the hospital, or giving food and clothing to the poor or to the derelicts on Skid Row. It is not a ministry to the lost or to humanity but a ministry unto the body of Christ, the Lord's brethren. It is not about what the saints do for others, but what the nations do in regard to the people of God. It is not individuals that are gathered at the right hand and the left hand of God, but all the nations. All these things the Lord said they had DONE TO HIM. But the sheep (good nations) confessed that they had never seen Him, so how could they have done these things to the Lord? He answered, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." All of this is a kind of ministry unto the Lord Himself, and it brought these nations of people into a separation unto the RIGHT HAND of God!

This meant an entrance into a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. This kingdom was not some far-off land of ivory palaces, golden streets, white night gowns, wings and harps, where there is nothing to do and all eternity to do it in. THIS IS A KINGDOM. And because it is a kingdom it denotes rulership and advancement of all kinds. It indicates the bringing of a great many people into a higher realm in the Spirit than they have ever known. It means the salvation of nations with a most favored
status in relation to the kingdom of God; it means WORK and RESPONSIBILITY and a place of ministry and authority to bless.

But the people of the nations who had never done all these things mentioned by the Lord were separated unto the LEFT HAND of God! They received no kingdom, no status in the order of God for the age to come. There were no rewards for work done or attainments reached. Rather, they were set on the dark side of God, they were put under a kingdom and under authority and they were placed in a process of fiery judgment to receive correction. There is much subtle truth in these words of Jesus: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." The word "punishment" is from the Greek KOLASIS which means simply that — punishment. But it comes from the root KOLAZO which sheds precious light upon the nature of the punishment. KOLAZO, according to Strong's Concordance, bears only two shades of meaning, namely, "to curtail" or "to chastise." To "curtail" means to restrain as a person is restrained in jail or a child is restrained when he is "grounded" for a week because of some disobedience. "Chastise" has one simple meaning according to Webster's New World Dictionary: "to punish in order to correct, usually by beating." It should be clear to any thoughtful mind that the subject here is not meaningless, sadistic, unending torture, but PURPOSEFUL CORRECTION. The Diaglott says, "Depart from Me, you cursed ones, into that aionian fire...and these shall go away into a cutting-off age lasting." The Bible in Modern English by Farrar Fenton reads, "And these He will dismiss into a long correction." Rotherham's New Testament says, "These shall go away into age-abiding correction." Young's Literal translation says, "And these shall go away to punishment age-during."

How sobering these meaningful words of truth: "And He shall set the sheep on the RIGHT HAND, but the goats on the LEFT. Then shall the King say unto them on His RIGHT HAND, Come, ye blessed of My Father...then shall He say also unto them on the LEFT HAND, Depart from Me, ye cursed!" But just what or who are these TWO HANDS OF GOD? The two hands of God represent two aspects of God's dealings, two ways in which He moves and acts to accomplish His purposes. We can readily see from the parable of the sheep and the goats that God deals through both POSITIVE and NEGATIVE forces. Beautiful truths come lighting like a covey of doves in my heart, begging to be expressed, but there is not room for them all in any message, so much truth will have to abide its time. In closing this article, however, I wish to point out that the right hand of God bespeaks of God moving and acting through POSITIVE FORCES, while the left hand of God denotes God moving and acting through NEGATIVE FORCES.

A key to this vital truth is found in the words of David in Ps. 111:7 wherein he states, "The works of HIS HANDS are verity and judgment." We have already mentioned that God is not a man, He possesses not body such as we have, for He is omnipresent spirit; but God has ordained the visible realm to serve as an allegory to convey the realities which pertain to the higher realm of the invisible. So for just a moment, consider God with two hands, one of verity, and one of judgment. The word "verity" is actually the Hebrew word for TRUTH. Thus we see with one hand He is bringing forth truth (living reality), and with the other hand of His judgment He is moving to bring us into harmony with truth. What beautiful co-ordination in all the works of His hands! Every time God initiates a new phase of His purpose, He then brings forth the measures needed to bring us into alignment with that purpose. If He can do this through POSITIVE forces He will, in the dealing of His right hand, but if corrective measures are needed He will stretch forth even His left hand and bring NEGATIVE forces into action to teach us the necessary lesson. How often we pray for God to stretch forth His right hand of VERITY, we are hungry for
blessing and truth and reality, and He graciously imparts, but it has been my experience that He does not make it a one-sided working, always piling up blessing upon blessing and revelation upon revelation until we are out of balance. In His love, yea, the dark side of love, He takes His other hand and graciously disciplines, corrects, forms, molds and shapes, until we become one with that truth, to His glory and praise. We will never understand God correctly until we see that His two hands are ONE — LOVE. Our language betrays the fact that the average person sees God as an antagonist. When high tides and strong winds shatter beach front homes, what do we call it? An act of GOD! True enough, but why don't we call a bumper crop or a surplus an act of God? The tendency to see (and fear) God in adversity as some kind of ogre is a symptom of the reasoning of the carnal mind and is as old as civilization. But the actual message of the Bible is just the opposite. Its main claim is that God utterly cherishes you. He is for you. God loves you. And if you look beyond your circumstances to God revealed in Christ, you will see solid evidence of just how deep and strong and true His love is and even now "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

In speaking of the corrective judgment brought upon Israel by Babylon, the prophet cried, "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand" (Jer. 51:7). God used Babylon as a NEGATIVE FORCE in HIS HAND and as HIS HAND to discipline His people. But the beloved John beheld quite another scene, "And He had in His RIGHT HAND seven stars...the seven stars are the messengers (ministries) of the seven churches" (Rev. 1:16-20). Again we see the working of His TWO HANDS. In the one hand is Babylon, a golden cup of fury and judgment, a vessel of wrath; and in the other hand we see seven stars, light bearers, positive ministries, vessels of mercy with a quickening word, through whom He shall reveal His truth and glory to all nations!

THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

Those elect saints who press forward toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus are becoming related to God in His right hand. "Therefore being by the RIGHT HAND of God exalted..." (Acts 2:33). This speaks of Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son, our Forerunner. He is exalted to the RIGHT HAND of God. He is the POSITIVE FORCE of God in the universe "who is gone into heaven (spiritual realm of government) and is on the RIGHT HAND of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (I Pet. 3:22). Contrary to popular theology, the right hand of God is NOT A PLACE. I know that many have an idea here of Christ, looking like the Jesus you see in pictures, sitting beside some kind of a throne, along side of another figure who is supposed to represent God. How unspeakably childish! The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent spirit is not a material or localized one, but bespeaks the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The RIGHT HAND of God is a REALM OF POWER AND AUTHORITY, A POSITION OF EMINENCE, A CONDITION AND STATE OF BEING. It is the assumption of the almighty power and universal dominion of the Father. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28:18). It is the dispensing of HIS POSITIVE ENERGY FORCE into His creation through Jesus Christ.

The Queen of England is on the throne of England, we say, yet we do not refer to the "royal bench", and as a matter of fact she seldom occupies it. When we say she is on the throne, we mean that she rules as the royal sovereign of England. The "right hand"
signifies the chief place, position of excellence or favor, next to the chief ruler. Historically, Prince Bismarck was exalted or seated at the right hand of power, by the German Emperor; and Joseph was the right hand of Pharaoh in the kingdom of Egypt — not literally, but after the customary figure of speech.

There is no greater prize than oneness with Christ. The inspired apostle exhorted the saints in Colosse, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the RIGHT HAND of God" (Col. 3:1). The message is clear — the elect of God are to SEEK THE THINGS OF CHRIST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. Seek the things of the right hand! What a word is that! Some of the greatest truths of the Word of God are the ones that lie hidden like pearls of great price, unnoticed by the careless but available to all who will search beneath the uninviting surface of the ground. What wonder and glory are to be discovered in these magnificent words of our Lord spoken so long ago in the hearing of John on Patmos' lonely isle: "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). Those who share His throne are God's RIGHT HAND MINISTRY. Paul Mueller has written of this company: "This company of the sons of God are called to be priests after the order of Melchizedek and they are to offer the sacrifice of their lives, to intercede for all mankind, so that they may eventually join the Lord in that grand benediction, the final blessing of creation's deliverance. The Psalmist pictures the corporate Christ as a COMPANY OF MEDIATORS, standing between mankind and the divine resources, when he says, 'I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers' (Ps. 89:25). In other words, the hands of the body of Christ are placed with the left hand in the great sea of mankind, and the right hand in the rich and abundant rivers of divine life (Eze. 47:1-9), ready to channel the abundant life of God from His river of life into the great sea of mankind, thereby bringing healing and restoration to all mankind. And when we realize that the corporate hands of the body of Christ link us to the multitudes of earth's needy as well as to the mighty and abundant RIVER OF DIVINE LIFE, we will then intercede for all mankind so that we might one day bless all creation in a glorious manifestation of the life of God" — end quote. What harmony, what glorious unity shall fill the universe as this company of kings and priests, a royal priesthood (the Gemini Twins!) flows together, to gather together into Christ all things, until God is indeed ALL-IN-ALL, everything in everyone everywhere!

How truly the whole creation waits and groans for the manifestation of the sons of God! How we ourselves do groan within ourselves! Does it seem that months turn into years and years pile up into decades and all things continue as they have been? Ah, my friends, I can tell you that our God shall move again! It is not another "revival" we seek, and it is not another revival that God shall give. He shall come, He shall move in and through His body, the enChristed ones, in the fullness of the power and glory and authority of which His coming at Pentecost was but the firstfruits! And then "the kingdom, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heavens SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom and ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY THEM. This was the end of the matter" (Dan. 7:27-28, Goodspeed). This company IS the manifestation of GOD'S RIGHT HAND OF BLESSING in the earth today, and this right hand shall do even much more valiantly as the sons of God press on in to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Those who dwell in this exalted realm of the right hand shall not only REIGN upon the earth, but they shall RAIN upon the dry, parched earth and all peoples and nations shall be watered and given life through the gracious
and bountiful outpouring of the RIGHT HAND OF GOD! Praise His wonderful name forever!
We continue in our study of the Sign of GEMINI — THE TWINS. Gemini is the picture of two youthful twins seated side by side and at rest, with their feet placed upon the Milky Way. Their heads lean against each other. The one on the left has a club in his hand, but even the club is at repose, leaning against his shoulder. The other twin, on the right, has a harp in one hand and a bow and arrow in the other. Both the bow and arrow are in repose, the same as the figure who holds them. The picture portrays a readiness for warlike action, but at the same time a peaceful repose in the certain knowledge of a great victory either already gained or ready to be gained. It speaks of absolute confidence of victory, certainty of triumph, the assurance of the successful conclusion of a purpose or warfare.

The twins of Gemini introduce us to the great law of duality that exists first of all in God Himself, as well as in all of His ways and dealings in creation. Both the Word of God and nature unmistakably reveal the awesome fact that there is polarity in God. What exactly is polarity? Webster defines it as "the condition of having magnetic poles, one positive and attracting, the other negative and repelling; the having of two contrary qualities, powers, etc., as both wrath and mercy." Polarity is something much more than simple duality or opposition. For to say that opposites are "polar" is to say much more than that they are far apart: it is to say that they are RELATED AND JOINED — that they are the terms, ends or extremities of a SINGLE WHOLE. Polar opposites are therefore INSEPARABLE opposites, like the poles of the earth or of a magnet, or the ends of a stick or the face of a coin. Though what lies between the poles is more substantial than the poles themselves — nevertheless the three are undivided, constituting a single whole. A battery, in order to be effective, must have a negative and a positive pole. Both poles of the battery must be operative in order for the battery to function. The negative, in itself, can do nothing. The positive, in itself, can do nothing. Both must be interrelated in order for the power and purpose of that battery to come into fulfillment. Thus, the twins of Gemini speak to us of a duality in God that carries the sense of "fullness" and "unity" rather than that of "division." The unified accomplishment of both twins is needed to bring completion and perfection; they do not represent partition, incompleteness, or opposition. There are manifold doubles throughout the scriptures which set forth this great principle of duality in unity. For example, there is Joshua and Caleb, two men strong in faith to inherit the promised land, two men representing the ONE MAN — the CORPORATE SON OF GOD.

Then there is the Decan called CANIS MINOR, meaning The Lesser Dog. But again, this is a modern picture. In the ancient Denderah Zodiac, it was depicted as a human figure with a hawk's head and was called Sebak. The brightest star is Procyon, meaning "the Redeemer." So here we have in these two hawk figures confirmation of the same thing which we had in the Sign of Gemini — pictures of the two aspects of the work of God's
Christ: the Prince, the One who comes to destroy the serpent, and the One who comes bringing redemption.

One of the Decans, or minor constellations, in the house of Gemini is CANIS MAJOR and another is CANIS MINOR. CANIS MAJOR means The Greater Dog. This constellation tells of the glorious Prince who will subdue the serpent and reign. Dr. Kennedy tells us, "In the Denderah Zodiac, the oldest planisphere, which was found on the roof of a temple in Egypt, Canis Major is called Apes, which means the head. He is pictured as a hawk, the natural enemy of the serpent, coming down upon it. The name of the star is Naz, meaning caused to come forth, coming swiftly down. It has on its head a pestle or mortar, reminding us of the fact that Christ is going to thoroughly crush the head of the enemy, as the hawk comes down upon the serpent. The brightest star in all the heavens is Sirius, The Prince and it is found in this constellation of Canis Major. It is a magnificent star which can be seen at night if stars are visible at all. The word Sirius comes from the word Sar or Seir, from which root we get the words 'Sire,' or 'Sir.' It means Prince. Isaiah tells us about the gift of the Son of God. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Christ is frequently referred to as the Prince of princes, or the Prince of the kings of the earth. He is the Sar or Seir, the Prince of all the earth. It is very interesting that when the names of this constellation (Naz — hawk) and its major star (Seir) are combined we get the words Naz-Seir. Jesus Christ is called the Naz-Seir-ene. Naz means 'sent or caused to come swiftly,' and Seir means 'Prince.' Naz-Seir means 'the sent Prince,' the One who is sent forth quickly, a Prince of all the earth who is to come into the world. And in this Naz-Seir, or Naz-Sirius, we are to see Him of whom Matthew said, 'He came and dwelled in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called NAZ-SEIR-ENE' (Mat. 2:23). It is interesting that Biblical scholars were at a loss to explain by what prophet or in what sacred prophecy it was said that Christ should be called a Nazarene. They had looked in vain in the Old Testament for some reference which would indicate just what that was referring to without finding it. So, though they have said, referring to the fact that He came from Nazareth that He would be a Nazarene, there is no prophecy of that in the Old Testament or any other ancient writings. Yet the prophecy that He would be the 'sent Prince' come into the world for us HAS BEEN IN THE SKY FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION!" — end quote. So here we see a picture of the Christ of God who comes to bring destruction to the serpent in the world.

One of the Decans, or minor constellations, in the house of Gemini is CANIS MAJOR and another is CANIS MINOR. CANIS MAJOR means The Greater Dog. This constellation tells of the glorious Prince who will subdue the serpent and reign. Dr. Kennedy tells us, "In the Denderah Zodiac, the oldest planisphere, which was found on the roof of a temple in Egypt, Canis Major is called Apes, which means the head. He is pictured as a hawk, the natural enemy of the serpent, coming down upon it. The name of the star is Naz, meaning caused to come forth, coming swiftly down. It has on its head a pestle or mortar, reminding us of the fact that Christ is going to thoroughly crush the head of the enemy, as the hawk comes down upon the serpent. The brightest star in all the heavens is Sirius, The Prince and it is found in this constellation of Canis Major. It is a magnificent star which can be seen at night if stars are visible at all. The word Sirius comes from the word Sar or Seir, from which root we get the words 'Sire,' or 'Sir.' It means Prince. Isaiah tells us about the gift of the Son of God. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Christ is frequently referred to as the Prince of princes, or the Prince of the kings of the earth. He is the Sar or Seir, the Prince of all the earth. It is very interesting that when the names of this constellation (Naz — hawk) and its major star (Seir) are combined we get the words Naz-Seir. Jesus Christ is called the Naz-Seir-ene. Naz means 'sent or caused to come swiftly,' and Seir means 'Prince.' Naz-Seir means 'the sent Prince,' the One who is sent forth quickly, a Prince of all the earth who is to come into the world. And in this Naz-Seir, or Naz-Sirius, we are to see Him of whom Matthew said, 'He came and dwelled in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called NAZ-SEIR-ENE' (Mat. 2:23). It is interesting that Biblical scholars were at a loss to explain by what prophet or in what sacred prophecy it was said that Christ should be called a Nazarene. They had looked in vain in the Old Testament for some reference which would indicate just what that was referring to without finding it. So, though they have said, referring to the fact that He came from Nazareth that He would be a Nazarene, there is no prophecy of that in the Old Testament or any other ancient writings. Yet the prophecy that He would be the 'sent Prince' come into the world for us HAS BEEN IN THE SKY FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION!" — end quote. So here we see a picture of the Christ of God who comes to bring destruction to the serpent in the world.

Then there is the Decan called CANIS MINOR, meaning The Lesser Dog. But again, this is a modern picture. In the ancient Denderah Zodiac, it was depicted as a human figure with a hawk’s head and was called Sebak. The brightest star is Procyon, meaning "The Redeemer." So here we have in these two hawk figures confirmation of the same thing which we had in the Sign of Gemini — pictures of the two aspects of the work of God’s Christ: the Prince, the One who comes to destroy the serpent, and the One who comes bringing redemption.

THE TWO HANDS OF GOD

This brings us to a most awesome and significant point. Ancient astronomical records also speak of the names of other stars in Canis Major which are no longer identifiable. One of these is an Arabic name, Alshira Alijemeniya, meaning PRINCE OF THE RIGHT HAND, and refers to its identity with the right-hand twin in Gemini, with which it is associated. There is a clear connection between the Sign of Gemini and these two attending constellations, CANIS MAJOR and CANIS MINOR. In Canis Minor there is also
a star whose Arabic name is Ashira Alshemeliya and means THE PRINCE OF THE LEFT HAND, and refers to its identity with the left-hand twin in Gemini, with which it is associated. The right hand and the left hand are thus the two twins of Gemini. This, my beloved, can be nothing else but a picture of THE TWO HANDS OF GOD!

In the previous Study of this subject we have noted that in the scriptures we find the right hand of God mentioned a great many times, and the left hand of God is mentioned on a number of occasions. The word "right" as used with "hand" is generally the Hebrew word "yamiym" meaning STRONGER, MORE DEXTEROUS. The word for "left" is "smowl" meaning DARK. From the meaning of these two words it is very easy to understand that God's right hand is His strength and dexterity, or His wonderful ability to do all things. The implication is that the right hand of God is the GOOD HAND of God, doing GOOD things. But the left hand in the Old Testament means DARK and from this we can readily understand that it signifies the opposite — what we call bad or evil. The left hand represents the DARK SIDE OF GOD. This is the hand of God so little understood. That there is both the bright side of God and the dark side of God, manifested through the works of His two hands, in blessing on the one hand and in judgment on the other, is strikingly illustrated in the extraordinary story found in I Kings chapter twenty-two. The wicked king Ahab is persuading the good king, Jehoshaphat to go to battle with him, and all the false prophets of Ahab have prophesied that they should go to battle, that the Lord will give them victory. But Jehoshaphat asks for a prophet of the Lord and Micaiah is brought with instructions to prophesy like the rest, but he refuses. Micaiah at first mocks Ahab, by prophesying in just that way, but Ahab knows that it is not right, and commands him to prophesy in the Word of the Lord.

So in verse nineteen Micaiah begins thus: "Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him ON HIS RIGHT HAND AND ON HIS LEFT. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. There came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth AND I WILL BE A LYING SPIRIT IN THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS. And He said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; GO FORTH AND DO SO." Now this is God's Word as He sought a way to cause Ahab to be defeated. Out of the heavenly realm came such a spirit, who made himself to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets with the consent and authority of God! He caused the prophets to prophesy falsely and bring about the fall of Ahab, even as he was given commandment of God. We do not always understand some of God's workings, but they are in the scriptures, and we cannot build a pathway around them, for ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine.

But does it not seem incredible that the Holy Spirit should take such care to record that all the spirits making up "the host of heaven" were standing at God's RIGHT HAND and His LEFT HAND, if this fact is not extremely pregnant with meaning? Beloved reader, ponder, if you will, this weighty consideration: From which of the two hands of God came the lying spirit which brought judgment to king Ahab? After years of reverent meditation upon this challenging question my heart is satisfied with this answer: The lying spirit came from the LEFT HAND of God — of course!

Many of the Lord's precious people have great difficulty in reconciling a God of LOVE with the atrocious accounts of His actions in the Old Testament which included various
plagues, famines, earthquakes, floods, massacres of women and children, genocide and indeed all the sordid and bloody episodes of violence and destruction that He imposed. This may come as a shock to some who read these lines, but GOD DID NOT CHANGE AT CALVARY. God has always had two hands, and in the Old Testament times, especially under the law, He revealed more prominently His left hand of judgment, whereas in the New Testament times, under the covenant of grace, He has revealed more strikingly His right hand of goodness and mercy. In Jesus Himself, however, there was not always the sweet, gentle, kindly attitude that most of us have come to appreciate and expect; for in His confrontations with the Pharisees, the Chief Priests, Elders, and teachers of the law, and when in anger He made a whip of small cords and drove the money changers out of the temple, overturning their tables, and pouring out their money...the LEFT HAND OF GOD becomes manifest!

You might get the impression, upon reading the multiplied judgments of God sent upon Israel and the nations in the Old Testament, that God hates His people and His creation. You would think that He is vindictive in His judgment; that He is cruel, brutal, and unfeeling as He moves forward against mankind. Perhaps the liberal, who some years ago made the statement that the God of the Old Testament is a big bully, had read only the first half of the story. I wish he had read all of it. He would have found that the God of the Old Testament is not a big bully, but that we are shown the DARK SIDE OF HIS LOVE. We have also noted that with His left hand God moves and acts through NEGATIVE FORCES such as satan, wicked men, false prophets, calamities, etc. to accomplish His purposes. It comes as a startling revelation to some that God uses the wicked, even such as Nebuchadnezzar and the king of heathen Assyria, to discipline and correct His people. They are HIS instruments in HIS hand, and they serve His purpose. "Behold...I have created the waster to destroy" (Isa. 54:16). For "the Lord made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4). "O Assyrian, the rod of MINE ANGER, and the staff in their hand is MINE INDIGNATION" (Isa. 10:5). The more we come to understand the SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD, the more we realize that HE ALONE controls the interplay of good and evil, and works all things after the counsel of His own will. We shall not rail against His instruments, but learn to submit to the disciplines until we are turned fully to Him, to cleave to Him with our whole heart and fulfill all His will.

There were times when Jesus seemed to be completely unyielding in His attitude toward men. Yet there are other times when we can hardly understand His willingness to show mercy. On the occasions when it would seem beyond our ability to forgive, Jesus shows a kindness that seems unlimited and beyond human comprehension. Perhaps the crowning example is His word from the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." How could a man in the painful agony of death forgive the fickle crowd which one day had hailed Him as Messiah and then turned on Him like a beast? It is because Jesus knew how to keep the balance between judgment and mercy. We need to be taught by His spirit how to believe in judgment and at the same time practice mercy.

It is during the discipline process that we are so likely to forget the love of God and misunderstand His judgments toward us. We will be inclined to think that, because God allows many failures, pressures, and misfortunes to befall us, He has forgotten us or turned against us. Christian friends will be at pains to tell us that our suffering is a sure sign of God's displeasure with our life. Nothing could be further from the truth! He has forgotten nothing, but while we in our childishness want nothing but His blessings, at the same time trying to build up and establish our own desires, plans, and programs, which
are fleshly, God's purpose is to LAY IT ALL WASTE, bring it to nought, and teach us HIS WAYS. The childish Christian wants to build up the natural, the visible, the audible, and just enjoy all the wonderful blessings of God forever. But God has purposed that we become PRINCES WITH GOD, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. This requires the development of divine wisdom, character, and power. Therefore in love He lays waste the immature and undisciplined ambitions within us.

The right kind of parents do not allow their children the privilege of doing whatever they want to do. They are not permitted to be "free moral agents", to make their own decisions and have their own way, until they have reached an age of maturity. Until they can make their own way, the parents must do it for them. The children may complain and cry and rebel a long time, but the proper parent holds them to their decision that is for their betterment. The parents know what is best for the children, although the children are unable to understand or appreciate it. Ah, we hear a lot about our being "free moral agents", but if you treasure the beautiful hope of sonship you will forget all about that for our heavenly Father makes the decisions for us, and although many of His children do a lot of fussing and crying, HE HOLDS US TO IT, and how thankful we should be that He does! WHEN WE HAVE BEEN TRIED WE SHALL COME FORTH AS GOLD.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," said the writer to the Hebrews. May I reverently add — Yea, but it is a more fearful thing not to fall into His hands! King David understood this quite well. At a time when David ruled in peace, when his kingdom stretched from the river Euphrates to the border of Egypt, and from the Great Sea on the west to the great desert of the east, David committed a grievous sin against the Lord. He gave orders to Joab, the commander of Israel's army, to send officers throughout all the tribes of Israel and count all the men who could go forth to battle. Now the Lord had expressly commanded that the soldiers in the army of Israel should not be numbered so that Israel might not trust in the arm of flesh, but in the power of God. Even Joab, the general, knew that it was not right to do this, and he said to David, "May the Lord God make His people an hundred times as great as they are; but are they not all the servants of my lord the king? Why does the king command this to be done? Surely it will bring sin upon the king and upon the people." But David was firm in his purpose, and Joab obeyed him, but not willingly. He sent men through all the twelve tribes to take the number of those in every city and town who were fit for war. They went throughout the land, until they had written down the number of eight hundred thousand men in ten of the tribes, and of nearly five hundred thousand men in the tribe of Judah, who could be called out for war.

But the numbering was never finished. It was left unfinished because God was angry with David and with the people on account of this sin. David saw that he had done wickedly, in ordering the count of the people. He prayed to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, I have sinned greatly in doing this. Now, O Lord, forgive this sin, for I have done foolishly." Then the Lord sent to David a prophet by the name of Gad. Gad came to David, and said to him, "Thus saith the Lord, You have sinned in this thing, and now you and your land must suffer for your sin. I will give you the choice of three troubles to come upon the land. Shall I send seven years of famine, in which there shall be no harvest? Or shall your enemies overcome you and win victories over you for three months? Or shall there be three days when pestilence shall fall upon the land, and the people shall die everywhere?" And David said to the prophet Gad, "This is a hard choice of judgments to come upon the land; but LET ME FALL INTO THE HAND OF THE LORD AND NOT INTO THE HANDS OF MEN; FOR GOD'S MERCIES ARE GREAT AND MANY." Then the Lord's angel of
death passed through the land, and in three days seventy thousand men died. And when the angel of the Lord stretched out His hand over the city of Jerusalem, the Lord had pity upon the people, and said, "It is enough; now hold back your hand, and cause no more of the people to die." Then the Lord opened David's eyes and he saw the angel standing on Mount Moriah, with a drawn sword in his hand, held out toward the city. Then David prayed and the Lord heard David's prayer, and took away the plague from the land.

A mystic from another century penned these inspiring words: "O God, Thou living God, let me fall into Thy hands; it is only in Thy hands that I can be perfectly safe. I know that to fall into Thy hands is indeed a fearful thing: I know that is the beginning of all my fears, for it is the beginning of all my responsibilities. In Thy hands I shall learn the awfulness of my spiritual being, in Thy hands I shall learn how little it has fulfilled its destiny. Nevertheless, it is in Thy hands alone that I would be; the fear that comes from contact with Thee is indeed the beginning of wisdom. There would be no penalty to me so great as to fall out of Thy hands; to be out of Thy hands is to be dead. There is a pain with Thee, which is not found without Thee, but it is the pain of love which is the pain of the life Divine. Translate me into that life. Lift me into union with Thine own Divine being. Raise me into fellowship with that power of Thy love which is the power of Thy suffering. Take me into Thy hands and hold me in Thy fear. Let me learn in Thy life how solemn is my own, let me see in Thy glory how poor is my own."

It should not seem strange that God, who made man in His image, should have both a bright side and a dark side, manifested through the works of His two hands, in blessing and glory on the one hand, and in discipline and judgment on the other. The right hand of God, as we have seen, bespeaks of God moving and acting through POSITIVE FORCES, while the left hand of God signifies God moving and acting through NEGATIVE FORCES. This reveals the beautiful balance in God's nature, as in all His works, and the whole creation is a revelation of this balance that exists first in the Creator Himself. There must be a balance. There must be the negative as well as the positive. That is but a natural law and we see it all around us.

In Prov. 25:16 we read, "Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it." In other words, for us to eat nothing but honey will make us sick. Too much of anything can become a curse, like flood when the blessed rain keeps on falling. There must be balance in all things. And as in the natural, so in the spiritual. And so it is with the TWO HANDS of God! Have we found the pleasures at the RIGHT HAND of God? Have we received His blessings, so lavishly bestowed? If so, eat just enough and let it be balanced with something from the LEFT HAND of God. Even if you think it is not good for you, accept it as from God, for we must not become sick from too much goodness from God. How can too much goodness sicken us? If God gave us only good things, we would never become strong. If Job had never known anything but God's blessing unto him, he would have continued to be so weak that God would always have had to enclose him in a hedge. But after God's LEFT HAND was through dealing with Job he was an entirely different man, a man who not only was perfect, but tried, tested, and proven; a man who had been in a great deal of adversity, sorrow, and loss, but now he knew the strength that comes with overcoming as well as the satisfaction that comes from God's blessing. Now God could bless him with twice as much as before — and with NO HEDGE!

There is a wonderful lesson in nature observable by the biophysical scientist. When one adjusts the lenses of his microscope to watch the individual cells of an organism, he sees
tremendous struggles going on within those cells with only particular successes and failures, victories and defeats, in what appears to be a ruthless "dog-eat-dog" battle. But when he changes the level of magnification to observe the organism as a whole, he sees that what was conflict at the lower level is harmony at the higher: that the very health and well being, the ongoing life of the organism is precisely the OUTCOME of this microscopic turmoil. Ah, my brother, my sister, when our consciousness is raised high enough in the spirit to see the WHOLE PICTURE, to SEE AS GOD SEES about all the circumstances and events that touch our lives, rather than dwelling upon the particular events themselves with their apparent negativeness, becoming irritated, worried, and upset by what is happening, we will see and know by the understanding HE GIVES that indeed, all these things ARE WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR GOOD, and the ongoing development of our spiritual life is precisely the OUTCOME of all the conflict. Praise His name!

THE HIDDEN HAND

In the New Testament the Greek word for "right" as used with "hand" means THAT WHICH USUALLY TAKES. That is, it is the one that reaches out to take and we can also know that it is the one that usually reaches out to give. It is the far more active hand of the two in the vast majority of people. There is a wonderful and meaningful statement made by Jesus in Mat. 6:3, often passed over unnoticed. Jesus said, "But when thou doest alms, let not thy LEFT hand know what thy RIGHT hand doeth." In other words, keep your LEFT HAND in the dark as to what your RIGHT HAND is doing! And remember, the right hand is the one that reaches out either to take or to give. Jesus said that the Pharisees and hypocrites gave their alms openly to BE SEEN OF MEN, and the joy of being seen WAS THEIR REWARD. Such people had their reward already and no further reward would be given them. Their left hand, as it were, had full knowledge as to what their right hand had done and their ego and self-righteousness were fully rewarded in the praise of men received.

But Jesus cautioned His disciples to not let their left hand have knowledge of what the right hand was doing. Their reward would come from God and not from men. Therefore their left hand, or their ego, self- nature with all its self-interests and self-love, would be kept in the dark, left unsatisfied and unfulfilled in the good that was being done. Thus the left hand could in no way deprive them of the far greater reward THE FATHER HAD FOR THEM for their deeds of compassion and love. In applying this principle to the actions of God's two hands, we find that satan, wicked men, and all the forces of the negative realm have absolutely NO UNDERSTANDING of what the right hand of God is doing. Those of the left hand cannot perceive or know the purposes or intentions of the right hand in doing what it does. With this in mind, what a world of truth opens to our understanding from these inspired words of the apostle Paul, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which NONE OF THE PRINCES OF THIS WORLD KNEW: FOR HAD THEY KNOWN IT, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CRUCIFIED THE LORD OF GLORY" (I Cor. 2:6-8). None of the princes of this world knew! They were the negative force in God's left hand moving against the Christ, that the purpose of God in giving His beloved Son for the redemption of the world might be fulfilled.
"Him being delivered BY THE DETERMINATE COUNSEL AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD, YE have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). Pilate said to Jesus, "Speakest Thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to release Thee?" Hear the answer of Jesus! "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were GIVEN THEE FROM ABOVE" (Jn. 19:10-11). For God to bring His redemptive and reconstructive plan into effect, there must be a balance, there must be a negative force opposing the positive power and force of God in Christ Jesus. There must be a Judas, chosen to bring all things to a head in the fullness of time when Jesus must be crucified. There must be a Pilate, given power from above, to take care of the legal side of all that happened on that dreadful night. There must be the soldiers selected to nail Jesus to the cross. There must be those who ridiculed Jesus, who scorned and mocked and cursed Him. Without a satan, without a Judas, without self-righteous and vindictive religious leaders, without a rebellious, hateful nation of Israel, there would never have been a blessed Redeemer DYING FOR US!

Yes, GOD was doing this thing, GOD was in control of each and every action, it was all the work of HIS HAND! But those He moved upon at His left hand moved in darkness and did not know anything of what the right hand was doing, they knew not who the Christ was, why He was here, or what He was doing or would do. Never did they dream, in their wildest imaginations, that He really was the Son of God, that He truly was the Lamb they were slaying for the sins of the world, that He actually would rise from the dead, that He would pour out the Holy Spirit in mighty wonder-working power and spread His Kingdom from pole to pole! They were doing what God had raised them up to do but they walked in darkness, they didn't KNOW! The left hand was at a great disadvantage. Today, as then, these evil forces do not even realize that it is the hand of God that is directing all of their actions. The forces of evil and the people under their control, have the false idea that they are directing their own steps and doing all things of themselves, and God allows them to think so! So we see them going their way boasting of all they are doing and believing themselves to be the masters of their own destiny, marking out their own pathway!

The right hand of God is the ANOINTED HAND of God, for Christ (The Anointed) sits AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. It is this hand of God, the Christ, Head and body, that reaches forth to all mankind bringing redemption, restoration, and blessing. How we praise God for HIS RIGHT HAND, HIS POSITIVE FORCE, and that it is the more active and the stronger of the two! While the left hand is kept in ignorance of what the right hand is doing, the right hand is not always ignorant of what the left hand is doing "lest satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11). "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children (sons) of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:4-5). When we realize we are in the light of God and know at least a little something of what is going on, then it is amusing, at times, to be able to watch the foolish moves being made by those on the left hand of God. Foolish, perhaps, but so necessary to God's plan! How we rejoice to be able to stand by in assurance and confidence, watching GOD at work, knowing that God is the one who is the author and finisher of all that happens in between. It is wonderful to be able to walk in at least a measure of light during all those times of testing, trial, proving and judgment.

There is a further and enlightening application of this truth which we would share briefly. In the Song of Solomon 2:6 the Shulamite maiden says of her Beloved, "His LEFT HAND is under my head, and His RIGHT HAND doth embrace me." The meaning is clear — the
left hand of God is under our head, it is hidden, unseen, the less visible working of God upon our lives, upholding and undertaking for us in all the ways and circumstances in which we do not see the hand of God. God has manifested Himself in history in the figure of the "left hand" — unseen and invisible, when men did not recognize Him. Elisha's servant (II Kings 6:13-17), as well as the prophet Habakkuk (Hab. 1:14), and many others, did not see the hidden hand of God, behind the head, away from the front of the eyes, working His plan and will. However, there are other times when the "right hand" of God works in an obvious fashion, before the eyes, in front of the face, performing the supernatural and the miracle right there for all to see. But keep in mind that if we had eyes in the back of our heads, so to speak, we could see both the right and left hand manifestations. We would see that God is there working all the time. And all those blessed ones who have the "eyes of their understanding enlightened "do see HIM IN ALL THINGS!

How often, in the midst of testing and trouble, we, like Peter, look at the billowing waves and behold not the Lord! When the blessings come pouring in and the glory waves sweep through our souls, we know it is the Lord and we acknowledge and bless Him. But when trouble surrounds us, when adversity comes, calamity strikes, and all hell breaks loose, we fail to see where God's hand can be in that! But, without that, we could not receive all He would give and do for us with His right hand. The right hand is the hand of His manifest grace and power, His inward love and joy, the smile of His approval with which He encourages and equips us. The left hand, under our head, holds us fast and secretly deals and works upon the clay of the earthen vessel in ways we understand not. The embracing of His right hand is so precious, as He lets His love fall upon us like dew, as He leads us into deeper revelations of Himself and of that which He has prepared for us. And we behold the King in His beauty as He perfects that which concerneth us and gets us ready to shine forth in His image.

While we rejoice in the embrace of God's right hand of love, let us not despise His left hand; let us yield to Him though He would use the knife upon us and pour the wine into the wound; for He will then pour in the oil and soothe us; He may wound, but He will heal us. Let us not forget, however, that He not only holds us fast and comforts us in trial, but He holds us fast in the fiery furnace, and on the swiftly moving wheel of His purifying and molding processes. How many times we would get out of His hands if He did not hold us fast when He puts us into the purifying furnace, out of which we would take ourselves if it were possible. It is His precious unseen left hand that holds us still as the dross is being consumed.

REIGNING AT THE RIGHT HAND

The scripture tells us that "there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the MAN Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). Seated at the right hand of God today is a MAN. God came down from heaven and invaded humanity, He took upon Himself the nature and the body of a man, so that when He went back to the throne, He would take humanity back to the throne. There is no mystery to it that God sits on the throne, He belongs there; but to think now that MAN is sitting on the throne of almighty and universal power! "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs...this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED..." (Acts 2:22, 32-33).
Some people have the impression that the New Testament Church was in a constant expectation to meet Jesus around every corner or to see Him appear during their gatherings, but that is not true. That happened only for forty days after His resurrection. Then one day He wanted them to know that they must not look for Him around corners or the next time they went fishing, so He took them up on a mountain, blessed them, and allowed them to see Him in that body one last time, not disappearing as He had done on many occasions, but ascending slowly up into heaven, surrounded by the Shekinah cloud of glory, caught up into life on a higher plane, raised up into transcendent glory, so that they knew, as Paul later wrote, that we have one mediator between God and man, the MAN Christ Jesus, yet a man ASCENDED and EXALTED, SITTING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. So we do not look for Him in any physical appearance for "henceforth (from now on) know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more "(II Cor. 5:16). But it is still a MAN at the right hand of God!

There is beautiful confirmation of this in Acts 7:55-56 where we read concerning Stephen, "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and JESUS STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. And said, Behold I see the heavens opened and the SON OF MAN standing on the right hand of God." The right hand of God, as we have previously pointed out, is the realm of ALL AUTHORITY, POWER, DOMINION, WISDOM, AND KNOWLEDGE. It is the realm of God's OMNIPOTENCE. It was rankest blasphemy in the minds of Stephen's persecutors for him to say that he saw JESUS, the SON OF MAN, standing at the RIGHT HAND of God. Such words were for him to seal his doom at the hands of the high priest and all the council. If Stephen had said he saw the SON OF GOD there, it would not have been so grievous, perhaps, but when we realize that it is the SON OF MAN seated in such a place, then it assumes proportions beyond the comprehension of mortal mind.

The right hand of God is not a geographical or astral PLACE. The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent Spirit is not a material one, but bespeaks of the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AND UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The RIGHT HAND of God is a realm of power and authority, a position of eminence, a condition and a state of being. It is the assumption of the almighty power and universal dominion of the Father. It is the dispensing of HIS POSITIVE ENERGY FORCE into His creation. Exalted to that high realm Jesus no longer walks in a limited physical body, for He now indwells the church, which is His body, the FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL (Eph. 1:22-23).

And, blessed be God! we now have a share in the REALM OF THE RIGHT HAND. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:13). Paul tells us in Eph. 2:5-6 that "when we were dead through our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with Him, and made us SIT TOGETHER WITH HIM IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES." This shows that as we come to know the resurrection life of Christ, we are also made to experience the ascension of Christ. We are chosen of God not only to be made alive from the dead and have God's life, but also to sit in the heavenlies as ascended men. He causes us to ascend with Him and sit with Him in the heavens — NOW! A truth so high and holy as this is absolutely meaningless to
those who contend that we have no life except that which is in the body — that when a saint dies he is dead like a dog without either being or consciousness. Such know not that they were dead but are now alive, that they have been raised into the heavenlies and given joint seating with Christ. Such should sorrow as the world sorrows, for they have no hope beyond physical existence. But ascension truly is the position of those who live in Christ Jesus the Lord! The position of ascension rests not only on the fact of Christ's ascension, but on the LIFE OF ASCENSION WE HAVE OBTAINED WITHIN US. The Christ who dwells in our hearts, and who has quickened our spirit by His Spirit, is THE ASCENDED CHRIST, and His life is ascended and heavenly, and is given from heaven, and is now our life. It is a life which reaches heaven. Therefore, once we obtain this life, we have fellowship with heaven and are joined to heaven and dwell in heaven. Although according to the conditions of the outer man we still live on earth, yet according to the INNER MAN we are already living in heaven. The situation is just like our Lord's during His time on earth. He said then that though He "descended from heaven" He was "still in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). This was due to the fact that His life was heavenly and one with heaven.

Man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God, is God's government in the Kingdom of God. When God created man in the beginning, He gave man authority to have dominion over all the creatures in the sea, in the air, and upon earth, representing in figure all realms from the lowest of the bottomless, to the highest of the heavens. At that time, man was submitting to God's authority; hence, God's authority was in him, and all things were made to submit to man. But once man rebelled against God, unwilling as he was to submit to God's authority, he then lost the authority of God. As a result, all the creation under man was no longer in submission to man's authority. Therefore, not only can sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, and death harm man today; even the snakes, wild beasts, mosquitoes, and fleas can bite and torment us! It was upon this very Edenic type, as reiterated by the prophet David in the eighth Psalm, that the writer of the book of Hebrews enlarged when by the Spirit he wrote, "For unto the angels hath He not put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou CROWNEST HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOUR, and didst set him OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS: Thou hast put A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S 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!" (Heb. 2:5-8).

You won't quite grasp that at first. It's too overwhelming! To be crowned means to be given KINGLY RULE. To be crowned with glory and honour is to be given such rule as Jesus Christ has NOW, and of that rule we read, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). We have already shown that MAN in God's image, MAN IN CHRIST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD is God's government in the Kingdom of God. Paul said it this way, "Who (Jesus) IS THE IMAGE of the invisible God...by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers...and ye are complete IN HIM WHICH IS THE HEAD OF A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER" (Col. 1:15-17; 2:9-10).
Our English Bible states that man was made "a little lower than the angels." The Greek and Hebrew texts, however, read a little differently — "Thou madest him for a little while lower than Elohim (God)." It denotes not our original state as being a little lower than Elohim, but a lowering into this gross and limited material realm, with the hope of return to that glory we had with the Father before the world was. This beautiful picture of an ancient departure from the Father's glory, followed ultimately by a blessed return, is nowhere set forth more graphically than in Jesus' beautiful Parable of the Prodigal Son. Norene Nicholls shared a precious word in this connection: "Now we come to Ps. 77:10, '...but I will remember the YEARS of the RIGHT HAND of the MOST HIGH.' This statement was prefaced by the psalmist telling about the overwhelming experiences, troubles, afflictions and castings off, but always there is the thought that he recalls the Father's mercies, and though the above statement is partly in italics showing it was supplied by the translators, the thought remains that he is remembering something from the past to encourage him in the present. In this case it is the YEARS OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MOST HIGH that is being recalled in the midst of the afflictions. The Hebrew word for 'years' literally means a FOLD, a DOUBLING, a CYCLE, a REVOLUTION. It does not necessarily mean a year of 365 days, but also it refers to greater periods of time, to cycles of His unfoldings, to revolutions of His power. This then could not simply mean the psalmist was recalling past days or years of his mere lifespan, but rather a calling to mind of something of greater proportion than that. This takes us back into the cycles of God's purposes prior to the earth or even prior to this little time we call the lifespan. This goes into antiquity when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy at the laying of the foundation of the earth. It is away back there when we consented to this lowering into a body of flesh, into this grueling experience under the powers of this present world system. Even then we said 'yes' to the Father's plan and came here with a volume inscribed within us telling us all that was past, present, and future. Back in the rolling cycles before the world was we foresaw all that was to be both in misery and then in consequential glory. Therefore, in the midst of our perplexities we remind ourselves of this and are encouraged. It is the YEARS (cycles) of the RIGHT HAND (the place of blessing and power of the MOST HIGH) that we remember. You may state that you do not remember it yet, but we have the assurance that we shall know all things, and this includes all past, present, and future. Revelation is but a remembering. It has been well said that KNOWING IS REMEMBERING, and the fullness of knowledge is the fullness of remembrance. Take courage, for the sons and the priests of the MOST HIGH shall fully know and remember all things!" — end quote.

All who in Christ come to God's image are destined to share that awesome dominion, seated together with Him, far above all principality and power. The reason so many people fail to attain to great heights in the Spirit is because they are unable to see God's purposes, and therefore they have no particular incentive to seek the great heights that are IN HIM. So many Christians are far too taken up with carnal ideas and childish notions about mansions in the skies and harps and white nightgowns and sitting on clouds eating pork chops with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in, to be able to see the true purposes of God at HIS RIGHT HAND. Simply speaking, the purpose of God is that we might reign with Him, and to reign is to exercise authority for God — to rule all things. Paul tells us that we are to seek those things which are ABOVE — WHERE CHRIST SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. This means that we are to SEEK THE THINGS OF THE RIGHT HAND! Reigning with Christ must become one of the great goals in the life of every man or woman who has received the call to sonship.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE RIGHT HAND
"Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power" (Ps. 15:6). While it is difficult for us to conceive of God becoming something more than He already is, and as to His nature there can never be any change, yet the Spirit reveals that the RIGHT HAND of God had not previously been all that it was when the children of Israel triumphantly marched dryshod through the Red Sea, for the prophet speaks of a day wherein the right hand of the Lord "is become glorious in power", denoting a process in the UNFOLDING of the power of His right hand in the midst of men. And, while the right hand of God is first and foremost the realm of God's almighty power and authority, His right hand became glorious in power when it was revealed in mighty signs and wonders through the person of the man Moses. Now there has been a wonderful enlargement in the revelation of God's right hand, for Jesus Christ has been exalted to the realm of the right hand, and there shall be a further enlargement, for the promise is sure, "To him that overcometh will I grant to SIT WITH ME IN MY THRONE, as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). Thus Jesus was able to say, "ALL POWER is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28:18), and again, "But YE shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). God's right hand is BECOMING A PEOPLE, the Christ, Head and body, a many-membered SON OF THE RIGHT HAND, and the manifestation of God in this RIGHT HAND COMPANY shall BECOME even more glorious in power as the appointed hour for the unveiling of the sons of God arrives. These shall not only declare His Word, but have authority and ability to see it established in the earth and in all realms. When the power of God arises in all fullness in His body of sons, and He is exalted in the people He has prepared, how unspeakably glorious and honorable He will be in the eyes of His creation!

"O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His RIGHT HAND and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory. The Lord hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hand: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity" (Ps. 98:1-3, 7-9). Think of it — His enemies submit, the nations are ready to worship Him, and sing to His name, the ends of the earth all shall turn to Him, because His right hand shall do marvelous things, and He shall make known His salvation to all!

Truly, beloved, this RIGHT HAND COMPANY will get Him the victory! There is no doubt about it — no devil, no wicked men, no hostile nations, no massive armies can stop this company from doing the things God has declared they will do, and because of their ministry, the nations will be joined to the Lord and sing His praise. As the work of restoration progresses, what harmony, what glorious unity shall fill the universe, as this order of KING-PRIESTS flows together, to gather together into Christ all things in one, till all has been set in array, and God is indeed ALL IN ALL.

How sweet shall be the influence of this RIGHT HAND COMPANY, the POSITIVE FORCE of God's energy, ministering His life, His love, His joy, His peace unto creation. How thankful we are not to be numbered among those called to the LEFT HAND, to walk in darkness, and be vessels of wrath. There is no harshness in the ministry of the right hand — oh yes, even the right hand "dashes the enemy in pieces" — but it is the destruction of the negative qualities that there might be LIFE. These bring correction MINISTERED IN LOVE leading all mankind to the Fountain of Living Water, feeding them
in green pastures, causing them to lie down and rest, and not be afraid. Ah, we would SEEK THE THINGS OF THE RIGHT HAND!
Chapter 43

Gemini - The Twins

(continued)

Gemini, like all the Signs of the Zodiac, has three Decans, or minor constellations, which surround it. The Decans belong to the Sign and their message is the Sign's message. The three Decans of Gemini are Lepus, Canis Major, and Canis Minor. The first Decan, Lepus, is the figure of a hare or rabbit, which is under the foot of Orion, whose foot is about to trample him. This, however, is a relatively modern picture. Going back to the picture of the ancient Zodiacs one sees that it is not a picture of a rabbit but, rather, a picture of a serpent. Here again we have a picture of the serpent being trodden under foot of Orion — another representation of God's Christ. Orion was the slayer of that lion that goes about "seeking whom he may devour." In his left hand he holds up the skin and head of a slain lion, and holds a mighty club in his right hand. But now we have another picture representing the Christ who slays the evil one. And so with His right foot, He is about to step upon — not the hare — but the serpent.

In previous messages on the Sign of Gemini we have shown how the Gemini Twins represent a united duality that exists in God and in all His ways and dealings with both creation and His people. The second Decan in the house of Gemini is CANIS MAJOR. CANIS MAJOR means The Greater Dog. This constellation tells of the glorious Prince who will subdue the serpent and reign. In the oldest Zodiacs Canis Major is not a dog but a hawk, swooping down upon the serpent, to destroy him. It has on its head a pestle or mortar, signifying that Christ thoroughly crushes the head of the serpent. So here we see a picture of Christ as the Prince who comes to bring destruction to the serpent nature within us. Then there is the Decan called CANIS MINOR, meaning The Lesser Dog. But again, this is a modern picture. In the ancient Zodiacs it was depicted as a human figure with a hawk's head. The brightest star in the man's body is Procyon, meaning The Redeemer or Redemption. So here we have in these two hawk figures the very same thing we have in the Sign of GEMINI — pictures of the two aspects of the work of Christ: the Prince who comes to destroy the serpent, and the One who comes bringing redemption to the people. These are clear representations of THE TWO HANDS OF GOD!

THE TWO HANDS OF GOD

That "all things are of God" is declared over and over again in the Bible. Did not the Lord say to Pharaoh, that wicked man of rebellion against all that was of God, "Even for this same purpose have I RAISED THEE UP, that I might show MY POWER in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth?" (Rom. 9:17). The infinite wisdom of God's mind cannot be ascertained by these carnal little heads of ours. We must banish our childish theology and our superstitious concepts of God and bring our minds into harmony with the mind of Christ. We must begin to peer through the mighty telescope of
divine wisdom as it looks through the vast universe of good and evil until heavenly light bursts with blazing brilliance upon our inquiring spirits and we see with crystal clear vision that God is in all things, and is responsible for all things, including all the so-called evil things as well as the good things. Is it not a fearful thing to say that evil is of God? There is nothing fearful about this view unless the TRUTH be fearful! I would not be surprised if some of the compatriots of the prophet Amos may have thought he was speaking blasphemy when by the Holy Spirit he said, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and THE LORD HATH NOT DONE IT?" (Am. 3:6). There are untold tens of millions of Christians who do not like to believe that A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S A-R-E O-F G-O-D — including evil. They much prefer to believe, as the harlot system has taught them, that God created good, and the devil created evil!

There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God, and a great work our Father has for us to do in the ages to come, and He is preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us. Can we not see that ALL THE NEGATIVE OPPOSING FORCES WE NOW ENCOUNTER are working together for our good — to develop the strength, character, wisdom, and power we must have? The chastening and judgments of God, too, are negative, though they do bring forth a positive result. The positive work of God from His right hand lies in the inner anointing, guidance, enlightening, etc., and in the precious outward ministries, those the Lord sets in the body for our exhortation, edification, and comfort. The scriptures speak much of these positive ministries, which are all wonderful, sweet, and of great importance in the eyes of God. However, there is the work of purging, pruning, discipline, dealing, and training which must be accomplished in each and every one of God's sons; therefore in the work of God there is an additional part, the negative, opposing forces, from the LEFT HAND OF GOD!

The positive work of God's RIGHT HAND is wrought directly by the Holy Spirit within or by the Spirit through His anointed agencies. The negative work of God's LEFT HAND is brought about by satan (the adversary) and his instruments, the whole negative realm of evil. All the people, things, and happenings used in the chastenings and judgments of God are of satan's manipulation. For example, if someone is opposing us for righteousness' sake and causing us trouble, this opposition or trouble is directly the work of satan — or the adversary. Again, the thief who steals our money, or the fire which burns down our house, is the work of the adversary. The word "satan" simply means ADVERSARY. Adversary means "one who opposes or fights against another; opponent; enemy." Satan is not a monster out of control, as multitudes of Christians imagine. Nor is he the adversary of God. God is OMNIPOTENT and has no adversary! But God has ordained an adversary in our experience for our development. If someone is obstinate, rebellious, and sins against God, and as a result becomes seriously ill, or suffers some loss or complication, this trouble is a work of satan — the adversary. Therefore, all the people, things, and happenings involved in the discipline and judgment of God are measured to us by God according to our need. But the one who is manipulating or acting upon us in order to harm us is satan. BUT — that which is acting BEHIND all the people, powers, things, circumstances, and events is the HAND OF GOD, CONTROLLING all the play and interplay till HIS PURPOSE IS ACCOMPLISHED and HIS NAME IS PRAISED! The purpose of our experiencing the disciplines of the Father is that we know the fullness of HIS LIFE. If there was only the discipline, but not the manifestation of His life, it would be meaningless. Thus, the two hands of God bring beautiful balance in the lives of all God's elect!
We see the left hand of God revealed in the life of Job. God had blessed this man with great wealth and a large family. He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses. His household was very great with many hired servants so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. The only reliable testimony we have of Job's true state of being is that spoken by the Lord Himself, for the testimony of satan, the testimony of Job's friends, and at times even the testimony of Job himself as he reasons in the crucible of testing, are not to be trusted. The all-wise God Himself declared that Job was a PERFECT AND UPRIGHT MAN, one that feared God and eschewed evil. And may I add — perfect yes, but UNTRIED, UNTESTED, and UNPROVEN, as Job himself admitted in the midst of his ordeal, declaring, "HE knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). His perfection remained to be fully proven, tested, and demonstrated.

Now, what does God do but deliberately hand over this perfect man into the hand of satan to do his worst upon him. It was because God desired to test Job that He brought forth "the smith to blow the coals upon the fire." Please note that it was not satan's idea to persecute poor old Job! Oh, no! It was God Himself who brought up the subject. There satan was, presenting himself before the Lord, appearing for duty, and God asked, "Where have you been," Satan replied, "Walking up and down in the earth" (no mention of Job at all). "Well, Satan," the Lord asked, "have you considered My servant Job? Have you noticed that he eschews evil, and fears God? Have you noticed that, Satan?" You can be assured, dear ones, that satan had noticed Job, but he wasn't doing anything to him. Satan responds, saying, "Hast Thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth THINE HAND now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face!" And the Lord said unto satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in THY POWER; only upon himself put not forth THINE HAND." Having received these orders, satan departed from the presence of the Lord. Hear it! "But put forth THINE HAND now." What was that that satan said? Did he ask permission to put forth his OWN HAND and touch Job? Not at all! He said, "THY hand," or "God, you put forth YOUR HAND and touch him." He is not even asking to be allowed to touch Job. Satan is initiating nothing in this exchange. But in response to God's question put to him, satan challenged God to stretch out HIS HAND, and that if HE touched Job and took away his blessing, Job would curse Him to His face! Then the Lord said to satan, "All that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth THINE HAND." Can we not see by this that satan was the NEGATIVE FORCE THROUGH WHICH God was moving upon Job, and is it not clear that this was the LEFT HAND of God as He was working with Job to bring him into yet a higher place than he had occupied hitherto? Furthermore, is it not true that the hand of satan stretched out against Job was also the hand of God? Though satan moved swiftly against Job, GOD WAS DOING THIS and His intention was to do Job good. This was not satan acting out his own little plan of intrigue and rebellion against God, but this was satan as the LEFT HAND OF GOD doing it!

In the second chapter of Job we find all this repeated. Again the sons of God have come before God to report on their activities, and again satan comes among them. Again Job is presented to satan by God as a perfect and upright man. And again satan suggests, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth THINE HAND now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse Thee to Thy face." And the Lord said unto satan, "Behold, he is in THINE HAND; but save his life." Job has already
suffered the sudden and catastrophic loss of his sons and daughters, his houses and lands, his cattle, sheep, camels and oxen. Now Job's body will be wracked with disease and tortured with pain, and he will lose his reputation before all men. His good works will be forgotten and he will become the object of ridicule from those who were formerly his friends.

I would now draw your reverent attention to the magnificent words which reveal Job's reaction to all this. "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die! But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the HAND OF GOD and shall we not receive evil? IN ALL THIS DID NOT JOB SIN WITH HIS LIPS" (Job 2:9-10). Notice! Job never did recognize any such person as satan in all his trouble. He recognized ONLY GOD in this and said that even as he had received good from the HAND OF GOD was it not logical that he should receive evil also FROM GOD? What faith! What marvelous understanding! Job actually attributes all this evil to the work of God. He doesn't even recognize satan as doing anything, no sitting on the ash heap moaning, "The old devil has been after me all week!" It will be an appalling shock to many precious people to learn that in ALL this Job did NOT SIN (miss the mark) with his lips! We have every right to conclude from this that Job was speaking the absolute truth when he attributed all this evil to God. He was, in fact, "right on!" What he had said was right in the sight of God. No place did the Lord rebuke Job for his words in any way. In fact, in the end of the experience God said that Job had spoken rightly of Him and ALL OTHERS HAD NOT.

Job has yet a further word on this to which we do well to take note. "Have pity upon me, O ye my friends: for THE HAND OF GOD HAS TOUCHED ME" (Job 19:21). The hand of whom? The hand of God! WHICH hand of God? Why, beloved, it was the LEFT HAND of God! Job knew that the hand of God had not been laid upon him for good, but for evil. Yet he recognized it as THE HAND OF GOD. Prior to this experience, Job had known nothing but the RIGHT HAND of God in goodness and blessing, in the anointing of God. There had been no adversity. There had been no adversary. There had been no testing. No severity. Now God has begun using His left hand in His dealing with Job, yet Job still recognizes it as God's hand. What wisdom and understanding! Would God that the Christians of our day possessed such understanding! The nominal church and its preachers and teachers try to make us believe that satan conspired to do all this to poor old Job by his own design. But it was God, my friend, and satan was merely the LEFT HAND of God, or the negative means God used. These people have no knowledge at all of what they are talking about. They know nothing of the ways and the workings of God. They are blind leaders of the blind. They have exalted satan to godhood, giving HIM the glory for all he does, and, indeed, in most things, they attribute more power to him and praise him more than they do God! Ignorantly these foolish ones talk about poor little God "trying" to do this and that, while the shrewder and smarter devil slips up on God's blind side and demolishes His whole work. "Rubbish!" saith the Lord.

The left hand of God is manifested through a people, those in the kingdom of darkness. The right hand of God is likewise revealed through a people, the sons of the Kingdom. Thank God! we are not called to be a part of the left hand company. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-2). "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). "The voice of
rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the RIGHT HAND of the Lord doeth valiantly, the RIGHT HAND of the Lord is exalted" (Ps. 118:15-16)

Although at this time there is humiliation and suffering, there is coming a time of exaltation, already experienced within. Although today it may seem as though not much is happening outwardly, yet there is a time approaching when GOD'S RIGHT HAND COMPANY shall step forth in the fullness of the power of His throne and there shall be a manifestation of the "greater works" Jesus spoke of. When on earth, the firstborn Son suffered reproach and finally death — but where is He now? Exalted to the RIGHT HAND of the Father, far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in that which is to come. He passed through a season of shame and reproach, but dwells now in a glory that can never fade. And there is a place with Him and for all who overcome, a place of glory and eminence and power at the right hand of God!

Yes, my beloved, God has TWO HANDS — the RIGHT and the LEFT. The only way we can ever know what is "right" and what is "left" is by becoming properly related to God, positioned in Him, to SEE AS HE SEES! Right and left is never determined in relation to us, from where we sit or how things appear to the natural mind, but only in relation to God, from where HE sits and how things are to HIM! "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on HIS RIGHT HAND and on HIS LEFT" (I Kings 22:19). "Therefore being by the RIGHT HAND OF GOD exalted...He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). "GOD...set HIM at His OWN RIGHT HAND in the heavenly places...and hath raised US UP TOGETHER, and made US SIT TOGETHER in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:20; 2:6). Ah, it is there IN CHRIST JESUS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD that we are positioned with God, to see as He sees, the things at His right hand becoming the things at our right hand and the things at His left hand are at our left hand. How can we know, in any circumstance or situation, just what is needed? Should God deal with His right hand of blessing, or His left hand of judgment? Should we rebuke the devil that the captive be set free, or remain silent in the knowledge that this one is, for a season, delivered unto satan for the destruction of the flesh? If we render a decision based on some stock set of "promises" in the Word, or on how things appear to us outwardly, apart from the mind of the Spirit, we will invariably take the wrong action! Then we will wonder why our commands in Jesus' name produce no results and our prayers go unanswered. The natural mind always has things reversed. You see, precious friend of mine, if you stand looking at God (as a spectator) His right hand will be at your left hand, and His left hand will be at your right hand. Right and left will become confused. Only in proper relationship to God, in union with Him, receiving the mind of Christ, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, can we comprehend God's purposes, our spirit saying Amen, and our actions flowing in harmony with what the Father is doing. It is only as we are SEATED WITH HIM AND IN HIM AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND that His right hand becomes our right hand and His left hand becomes our left hand. Only there can we discern and know as God knows what is left and what is right, and when and how to move therein. We must reign AT HIS RIGHT HAND!

Once we thoroughly understand the dual ministry of God's two hands we will thank Him for ALL THINGS He sends into our lives. We will thank Him for adversity — not just for blessing. And we will thank Him for every problem, every disappointment, every faithless friend, every heartache, every false accusation that has ever been made against us. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some
strange thing happened unto you..." (I Pet. 4:12). When God by revelation has made this very real to our hearts we will say, "Oh, God, I thank Thee for putting me on the operating table, for cutting out that which was hindering me." You and I are being trained and disciplined in order that in wisdom and righteousness and power and love we may reign with Christ at God's right hand.

What is your response to the dealings of God in your life? Are you angry and bitter at your circumstances, filled with resentment and rage? Are you inwardly shaking your fist at God, demanding, "Why does this happen to me?" Or are you broken and humble? What is your spirit? What is your attitude? What is your deepest sentiment? There is a verse in the Old Testament that beautifully clarifies these truths. "I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He hath bestowed on them according to His mercies, and according to the multitude of His loving kindnesses. For He said, Surely they are My people, children that will not lie: so He was their Saviour. In all THEIR AFFLICTION HE WAS AFFLICTED, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He remembered them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit: therefore HE WAS TURNED TO BE THEIR ENEMY, AND HE FOUGHT AGAINST THEM" (Isa. 63:7-10).

Everything that happened to Israel in the Old Testament happened for our example and learning (I Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4). When Israel rebelled against the Lord, He became their ENEMY! God becomes your enemy when you walk after the flesh, for the carnal mind is hostile toward God (Rom. 8:7). The Lord's people, then and now, rebel and grieve the Holy Spirit. Then God becomes your adversary — your satan! Whenever the believer frustrates the grace of God by being bull-headed in his conceit, or stubbornness, or pride, or bitterness, or resentment, God becomes his enemy. In that moment the LEFT HAND OF GOD becomes the adversary against that unholy attitude or action. And for our good, God will fight with us — to correct us. God will discipline and mold us as sons. This will produce the peaceable fruit of righteousness in us. To be carnally minded is death. God wants us to live! God will trouble us, pursue us, and put His sword at our throat until we break and learn that God's way is the best way! I know what is happening to you who are crying out in your spirit to be like the Lord: you are being processed and changed and trained and matured! One extreme in the land proclaims the great things, prosperity, healing, miracles and abundant life, bountiful blessings from God's right hand. The other tangent can only project the terrible things, doom, gloom, judgment, darkness, tribulation and the work of the cross, the dealings of God's left hand. But God has TWO HANDS and He works in a balanced way. We rejoice in the faith and goodness and prosperity from God's right hand; but we do not shrink from the chastenings and dealings from His left hand that will make these truths work themselves out in reality and practicality.

The carnal mind says, "I see no value or purpose to all this trouble and tribulation." The carnal mind is shrewd as a lawyer looking for a loophole. The carnal mind doesn't like it or want it. The mind of Christ, the spiritual mind of Rom. 8:1-6, knows that the servant is not above his Lord. The disciple is not above his Master who learned obedience by the things He suffered. God is preparing a people who cannot be moved or upset or frustrated by anything. The cry of His heart is for a people who can share His throne and shepherd the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27). We cannot afford the luxury of our personal feelings. WE HAVE NO "RIGHTS". If we do, we'll lose them under the dealings of God's left hand! Your testings will last as long as it takes to change your mind, attitude,
and actions. Can we walk around in the furnace without complaining? Can we sing and
dance in the fire? Can we shout praises in jail at midnight? The key to God's whole
program operating in your life is your spirit and attitude of response to HIS WILL in your
life. When your attitude and conduct become right, then the dealings of God's left hand
will cease.

How beautiful the knowledge that both of God's hands are WORKING TOGETHER to
produce in us the life and righteousness and glory of God. "Thy people also shall be all
righteous...the branch of My planting, the WORK OF MY H-A-N-D-S, that I may be
glorified" (Isa. 60:21). And how wonderful, too, the knowledge that God shall in due time
so deal with all mankind. How important that we enter into such intimate relationship and
vital union with God that we see all things AS HE SEES THEM. Some years ago I read a
sermon by a brother who gave this precious experience which, to me, wonderfully reflects
the purpose in the dealing of the two hands of God. The brother said, "On Mother's Day I
sat and listened to a fellow minister preach. It was a wonderful word, and while listening I
sat there and looked at the folk in a very relaxed sort of way. I saw a mother wearing a
lovely corsage sent to her by her son in the East. He is a prominent business man, high
up in government circles, but he is not a Christian. She is praying for him. She has asked
others to pray for him. She said to me one day with tears streaming down her cheeks,
Oh, Bro. ___ , I pray that God will save my boy. I pray that He will save him even if He
has to put him on a sick bed; EVEN IF HE HAS TO KILL HIM — I pray that He will save
him!' If the FBI heard her plotting like that, would they arrest her? No, sir! She loves her
boy! She loves him with all her heart, and if giving her own life would save that boy, she
would give it immediately" — end quote.

Even in judgment, dear ones, God is love! May all who are called to be KINGS AND
PRIESTS of God be possessed of such a divine love for the whole world! "For God so
loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (Jn. 3:16). God so loved that He
was willing to pay the very highest price to redeem all unto Himself. God gave His
blessed Son to be slain for us, and now He says to us, "I will save you and I will conform
you to My image and share with you My glory — even if I have to KILL you to do it!" "See
now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound,
and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand" (Deut. 32:39). Praise
God! this is how His righteous hands work, He kills only to make alive and wounds only to
heal. He kills only those things that should die and makes alive the things that should live.
What beautiful co-ordination in all the works of HIS HANDS!

THE SON OF THE RIGHT HAND

Just as there are twelve Signs of the heavens, so in scripture are there twelve sons of
Israel. "And he (Joseph) dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said,
Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and behold, the sun and the moon and the
eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and
his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed?
Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to
the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying" (Gen. 37:9-
11).

Norene Nicholls has written: "It is not the whole interpretation of this dream in which we
are interested at this time, but for the purpose of this study let it be pointed out that
Joseph saw his eleven brothers as eleven stars or constellations. If each of them was a
star and eleven stars represented the eleven brothers, then Joseph as a brother must have been the twelfth star or constellation. This immediately brings us face to face with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, each son of Israel represented by one sign of the Mazzaroth or the Zodiac. Furthermore, the promise to Abraham was that his seed would be as the stars of heaven which certainly corroborates this. Let me remind you that the stars are for SIGNS according to Genesis 1:14. This same word is used in Numbers 2:23, 'Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ENSIGN of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle shall they pitch. And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the STANDARD of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies...' Here the Hebrew word is translated as ENSIGN whereas in Gen. 1:14 it is translated as SIGNS. It simply means a sign of reality or even at times as a sign of things to come. In the wilderness Israel encamped and marched in a certain God ordained order with every individual camped under the ensign of his own particular tribe. An ensign was a pole on the top of which was a sign depicting that particular tribe. So it was and is that for each of the twelve tribes there were and are twelve ensigns — the twelve signs of the Zodiac. There is a Zodiacal sign for each tribe. We do know that the ensign of Judah was Leo, The Lion, and our Lord Jesus Christ is called, 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah.'

"BENJAMIN'S individual tribal sign is GEMINI, the sign of their particular ensign. The name GEMINI in Hebrew means doubled, for Gemini is known as THE TWINS, whom the Greeks called Apollo and Hercules but the Romans called Castor and Pollux. Thus it is we see Paul even sailed in a ship whose sign was Castor and Pollux. In considering that Gemini means the twins or doubled, it is easy to see how Benjamites do things not by ones but by twos. In other words, if a thing is good, Benjamin has a tendency to repeat it. Benjamin means SON OF MY RIGHT HAND which is a position of honor and power, as the right hand speaks of the strong hand. Christ Himself is seated at the right hand of God, showing His position of power and authority. The three associate constellations of Gemini bear out the picture of Benjamin even further. The first one is Lepus meaning the ENEMY TRODDEN DOWN. Benjamin will never cease until both feet (another double) are on the enemy and the enemy conquered. True spiritual Benjamites are warriors indeed, warriors in the spiritual battle against wicked spirits in the heavenlies. The second constellation associated with Gemini is Canis Major, and the third one is Canis Minor. As can be seen by the names, they are closely allied. Canis Major means a big dog or wolf whereas Canis Minor means a little dog or wolf. Again the doubling of Benjamin is recognized, discerned in this, for he has to deal with two wolves — a big one and a small one. This fits so beautifully with Jacob's dying prophecy to Benjamin: 'Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf...' (Gen. 49:27). If you look carefully, you will see that the word 'as' is in italics in the King James Bible, showing it was supplied by the translators who figured it made more sense that way. But leave out that little preposition and see what the real meaning is — BENJAMIN SHALL RAVIN A WOLF! It means just the opposite of what most of us think, for Benjamin doesn't ravin as a wolf, but rather he ravins the wolf itself. In Eze. 22:27 the false PRINCES or RULERS are referred to as wolves. In Hab. 1:8 the BABYLONIANS are called wolves. And Zeph. 3:3 states that the backslidden PRIESTS are as evening wolves. Furthermore, in Mat. 7:15 Jesus refers to 'ravening wolves' which literally means 'wolves of extortion'. Taking these scriptures together, it is easy to see that spiritual Babylon (confusion) is full of backslidden princes and priests who confuse and extort the people. Against such Benjamin arises in righteousness and will never cease until both the little wolves and the big wolves are ravined by him and defeated" —end quote.
The book of Judges is the account of Israel's history after they had been brought into the promised land and after Joshua and all the elders, whom God had brought up out of Egypt, died. There are several key events about this time in their history that speak powerfully to us about our walk in God and possessing our inheritance in Christ. You would suppose that, after all that God had done for the people of Israel, and after their own promises to serve Him faithfully, they would never turn to the idols which could not help or save their own people, the Canaanites. Yet, when Joshua was no longer living, and the men who knew Joshua had also died, the people began to forget Yahweh and to worship images of wood and stone. Then, too, you remember that the Canaanites had not been driven out of the land. They were there still, in their own cities and villages everywhere, and their idols were standing under the trees on many high places. So the Israelites saw idols all around them and people bowing down before them; while they themselves had no God that could be seen. The Tabernacle was far away from some parts of the land; and the people were so busy with their fields and their houses that few of them went up to worship.

And so it came to pass that the people began to neglect their own worship of the Lord their God and then to begin the worship of the idols around them. And from idol worship they sank lower still into wicked deeds. For this the Lord caused them to suffer. Their enemies came upon them from the lands around and became their masters; for when God left them, they were helpless. They were made poor, for these rulers who had conquered them robbed them of all their grain and grapes and olive oil. After a season of suffering the Israelites would remember what the Lord had done for them in other times. Then they would turn away from the idols and call upon God. And God would hear them and raise up some great man to lead them to freedom and to break the power of those who were ruling over them. This deliverer they would call "a judge", and under him they would serve the Lord and be successful once more. As long as the judge lived and ruled, the people followed the Lord. But when the judge died, they forgot God again and worshipped idols and fell under the power of their enemies as before, until God raised up another judge to deliver them. And this happened over and over again for two hundred years after Joshua died. Seven nations in turn ruled over Israel, and after each "oppression" a "deliverer" arose to set the people free.

One of the powers that ruled over Israel was the Moabites who came against them from the land east of the Dead Sea. Their king at this time was named Eglon, and he was very severe in his rule over the people of Israel. The record states, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord. And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees. So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years" (Judges 3:12-14). Again they cried to the Lord, and God called a man named Ehud, who belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, to deliver the people.

Eglon, the king of Moab, spiritually represents the power of the carnal mind. He gathered the children of Ammon and Amalek together and possessed the city of palm trees. Ammon was a son of Lot whose name means inbred. Amalek has always served as a symbol of the flesh. Eglon speaks of that which surrounds or encircles. Thus, this threefold league symbolizes the carnal mind and the flesh strengthening themselves to surround and possess that which only belongs to the Spirit Son. This bondage Israel suffered for eighteen years \((6 + 6 + 6)\) is like having the carnal mind and the flesh completely imprison your spiritual life within vain, restricting and extremely carnal
concepts. It is sad that among the Lord's people today the true purposes of God are rarely understood. The rich inheritance of sonship, of our spiritual kingship and priesthood, is hidden from the multitudes. The purpose of God to reconcile all things to Christ and deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption is ridiculed as being either heresy or a fairy tale. The manifestation of the sons of God to effect this glorious deliverance is not even comprehended — the spiritual minds of the people have become dull and frozen by dead doctrines and static creeds and carnal hopes about almost everything. There is no end to the childish ideas flowing through the churches — none bears any relation whatever to God's true plan and purpose in the earth.

There are so many deep and powerful mysteries hidden within these words of the Lord strengthening the hand of King Eglon. But they all point to the awesome power of the carnal mind and the flesh which captivate and imprison the true value of our inheritance in Christ, bringing the high things of the Spirit down to the carnal, natural, humanistic plane of consciousness. Instead of living out of the high realm of spiritual life and reality as new creation men who were dead but are now made alive and raised up and made to sit with Christ in the higher-than-all-heavens, King Eglon binds saints to the crude, unspiritual notion that immortality, incorruption and eternal life are experienced and known only in the body realm — thus, there is no spiritual consciousness of life apart from the flesh body; so, though the scriptures and the Holy Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we have been born from above and are the children of God possessing eternal life, King Eglon tells you that the new creation man, the inner man, the resurrected man, the quickened man, has no enduring substance or eternal reality and should your body die you have no life at all, you are just as dead and unconscious and non-existent as a dog lying on the highway! Rather than being caught up now to the throne of God in the power and glory of the spirit, King Eglon bids you wait for a future "rapture" when your body will go soaring through the air to some beautiful Isle of Somewhere to strum harps and wave palm branches on golden streets forevermore. In place of now supping with Christ in spirit and in truth, feeding from the divine substance of His Word and drinking from the living fountain of His eternal Spirit, King Eglon would have you eat wafers and drink wine or grape juice, imagining that in some mystical way that natural, perishable substance ministers spiritual reality into your life. I do not hesitate to tell you that such a practice is not one whit less superstitious and pagan than the customs of the heathen who bring offerings of food and drink to offer to their gods of wood and stone, supposing that in some magical way the gods are able to partake of it! The applications are endless — but I trust you get the message. King Eglon always takes the high and holy and spiritually real things of God and drags them down to a carnal, natural, physical, limited, earthly and mortal level of consciousness and experience.

Ehud, the Benjamite deliverer, was a left-handed man. In Judges 20:15-16 we find that there were 700 chosen men, Benjamites, who were left-handed men that could sling stones at a hair breadth and not miss. Why was Benjamin's left hand so anointed? When he was born, his father called him Benjamin, which means "son of my right hand." But since this son of Israel's right hand was left-handed, it was his left hand that grasped his father's right hand as they stood together, bringing right and left together, into union. Thus Benjamin, Ehud the deliverer, and the 700 left-handed Benjamite sling masters, were one and all LEFT HANDED SONS OF THE RIGHT HAND! What can it mean? It can only be understood in relation to the "double" we have already seen in the Sign of Gemini! The name EHUD means "united, union." In him the left hand and the right hand of God are UNITED AND JOINED in that perfect balance which can deal redemptively with all things. Ehud represents the divine wisdom, knowledge, understanding, authority,
power, grace and love that are being raised up in perfect balance within each son of God. He is a type of the many-membered man, the enChristed, the manifested sons of God in whom the power of the carnal mind and the flesh is dethroned and destroyed in every realm, and through whom perfect and complete deliverance shall be brought to creation. Historically, he is a type of Jesus, our Forerunner, who truly destroyed within Himself the king of flesh. In our present He is the agent and power of Christ's accomplishment of this same victory in the saints. In our future, he shows forth the long-awaited ministry to creation of those who have walked into the high realms of God's purpose hidden in Christ Jesus the Lord since the world began.

Let us now consider how Ehud gained the victory for Israel. Ehud came one day to visit King Eglon, who was ruling over the land. He said to the representatives of the king, "I have a present from my people to the king. Let me, I bid you, go into the palace and see him." They admitted Ehud into the palace, and he gave to the king a present; then he went out, but soon came back and said, "I have a message to the king that no one else can hear. Let me see the king alone. As he had just brought a present, they supposed that he was a friend to the king. Then, too, he had no sword on the side where men carried their swords. But, of course, Ehud was left-handed, and he carried on the other side a short, sharp, two-edged sword which he had especially made. The sword was out of sight under his garment on the side they did not anticipate. He went into the room where King Eglon was sitting alone, and he said, "I have a message from the Lord to you, and this is the message." And then he drew out his sword and drove it up to the handle into the king's body so suddenly that the king died without giving a sound. Ehud left the sword in the dead body of the king and went out quietly by the rear door. The servants of the king thought he was asleep in his room, and for a while did not go in to see why he was so still; but when they found him dead, Ehud was far away. Ehud blew a trumpet and called his people together, and led them against the Moabites. They were so helpless without their king that Ehud and his men easily drove them out of Israel and set the people free.

Ehud's two-edged sword with which he slew the king of the carnal mind represents the continuing development of Christ by His Word which is sharper than any two-edged sword. This is the Christ within who is THE WORD OF GOD. He is the LOGOS. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. 33:6). This is He who was in the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word" (Jn. 1:1). This is the Word that was God. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. This is He of whom it is written, "He sent His Word, and healed them." This is the Word that is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. In the book of Revelation He is represented as being armed with a sword, two-edged and sharp, passing out of His mouth, representing that His chief force lies in the action of His lips uttering words. His force is truth — truth expressed by His mouth in words. He goes forth to battle wielding only the weapons of truth. Christ comes not to avenge blood or slay in battle as other conquerors have done. His Words smite all who hear them. As someone has said, it will smite them with conviction, and bless them with conversion. The spirit which animates Him is the warrior spirit. His object is the conquest of the world. He has formed the resolution never to cease from His campaign until the whole world, a conquered realm, bows devotedly before Him as its rightful Lord and Master, and only true King.

As the Christ of God is a many-membered body, so is the sword that goes out of His mouth. The Word of God is spoken in the world today by the body of Christ on earth, and that Word flows forth as the sound of many waters. There are not to be two swords —
one out of the mouth of the Lord, and the other out of the mouths of His ministers. There is one sword, and it is HIS. And this sword does not come out of the mouths of only one or two of God's ministers, special ones who claim a higher revelation than all of God's prophets! Our quotation of scripture, our knowledge of the Bible, our study of ancient mysteries and teachings, and even our understanding of truth is not the sword of the Lord. The sword of the Lord is that Word which proceedeth only out of His mouth, and out of ours as we are MADE ONE IN HIM. The sword of the Lord bespeaks a purified people, holding forth the Word of Life in the power of the Holy Spirit, and how we praise God for this company!

This is not some carnal battle fought with carnal means, but the utterance of the Living Word of Truth which no man shall be able to disannul. Ah, how fleshly have been the swords by which the religious systems have conquered! In contradistinction, the Spirit of God is forming and fashioning a people, a glorious company, from whose lips flash forth that CLEAR WORD OF THE LORD which shall cause the traditions and unrighteousness of man to utterly come to nought. It was said of our Lord and elder brother, "Never man spake like this man" (Jn. 7:46). "What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? FOR WITH AUTHORITY commandeth HE even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him" (Mk. 1:27). "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" (Mat. 8:27). That which was manifest in Jesus Christ shall also be seen in His many-membered-brethren-company. There are preview glimpses of this even in God's servants in the Old Testament. With what boldness did Elijah the prophet pronounce unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, BUT ACCORDING TO MY WORD" (I Kings 17:1). The pure and powerful Word of God shall cause His servants to ride victoriously. Nought shall be able to stand before the two-edged sword of HEROD. How glorious shall be the advance of this mighty company!

Fear not, my beloved. Have hope. Believe in hope! It is God's good pleasure to yet renew the face of the earth. Surely all these things shall come to an end. Sin shall end. Strife shall end. Pride shall end. Lust shall end. War shall end. Misery shall end. Sickness shall end. Sorrow and suffering shall end. Crime and violence shall end. Ignorance shall end. Tyranny and oppression shall end. Evil shall end. Death shall end. All the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the tops of the mountains. All the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our God and His Christ. Then they shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy place. The rivers shall flow with His Life and the heavens shall drop down with the distilled dew of His Word. All the inhabitants of the world shall be without spot and blemish, loving one another, even as Jesus has loved us, for the lion nature shall lie down with the lamb nature. You, precious friend of mine, are called to be a part of the firstfruits of this victory, even if the total harvest has not yet come. You are to love your neighbor as yourself. You are to love your enemies and bless them that curse you and do good to them that hate you and stand as a priest on behalf of all creation. You are to wield the mighty sword of the Spirit. You are to eat abundantly and drink deeply of HIS incorruptible life and ride forth in majesty as the expression of God's Kingdom on earth. You are to utter His burning Word of authority, smiting the earth with the rod of His mouth. You are to speak judgment to all evil and life to all men everywhere. ARISE, EHUD, AND DELIVER THE PEOPLE!
Ehud hid his sword on his right side, the side of the spiritual mind or positive revelation of the Spirit. It was hidden in the mind of Christ. It was concealed within the spirit of hope and faith and understanding. After King Eglon had been slain, the servants of the king (flesh) did not know that their king was dead. While they waited around, Ehud (union) escaped and passed beyond their power. This tells me that while the world is waiting to see if Jesus really did conquer sin and death and hell, and while the church is waiting for a "rapture" to take them out of this world, there is a company of Left-Handed Sons of the Right Hand that is escaping the corruption that is in the world and moving spiritually beyond the limitations of the boundaries we have known, into the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ. It is one thing to make a sword and it is another to use it to slay King Eglon. Another way of saying this is, it is one thing to hear the word and revelation of God, and quite another dimension of experience to personally appropriate it and use its authority to make an end of the king of carnality and death in our lives. Everything begins to change when the Christ of God reveals Himself from within your very being, leading you into the truth and vision that will deliver you from the bondage of old Adam and all the corruption he is subjected to. Christ will grow up IN us and AS us into His full stature and triumph. This is sonship, this is salvation, this is our hope and the hope of the groaning creation, praise His wonderful name!

THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

The right hand of God is the ANOINTED HAND of God for CHRIST sits at the RIGHT HAND OF GOD, and CHRIST means THE ANOINTED. Paul tells us that we are to seek those things which are above — WHERE CHRIST SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. This means that we are to SEEK THE THINGS OF THE RIGHT HAND! Reigning with Christ must become one of the great goals in the life of every man or woman apprehended to sonship to God. What is the power of the right hand? Paul tells us something about it in Eph. 1:16-23. "...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, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, WHICH HE WROUGHT IN CHRIST, WHEN HE RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, AND SET HIM AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is HIS BODY, THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL."

We find in this passage that there is an exceeding greatness of power that is toward us. This is God's inheritance in the saints and it is rich in glory! We do not naturally know or realize just what this power is or just what it can do, so in these words Paul by the Spirit gives us a measure by which we can have a little idea of just what this power is and what it is able to do for us, in us, and through us. Let us see! The power that is directed to us is according to a power that God wrought in the Christ. It is that power by which God raised up the Christ from the dead and SET HIM AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND. By this power God set the Christ far above all principality, all power, all might, all dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world but in the ages to come. This power that God used for the raising up of the Christ has put all things under His feet and made Him to be the Head over all to the church. And the church, His many-membered body, is the FULL DEVELOPMENT OF GOD, as we read in the translation of the Diaglott.
The power of God that Paul describes is the rule by which is measured the power God has for all who will follow on to be filled with all the fullness of God. The power that God has for us is just the same in quality and character and quantity as is the power of God used for the raising up of the Christ and the placing of Him at the right hand. Therefore, be assured, beloved, that the power that God has toward us and for us will do for us JUST EXACTLY WHAT THAT POWER THAT GOD HAD FOR JESUS CHRIST DID FOR HIM. In other words, the power God has toward us will also RAISE US FROM THE DEAD AND SET US AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND. It will set us far above all principality, all power, all might, all dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this world or age but in the world and ages to come. It will put all things under our feet and give us dominion over all the works of God's hands, both earthly and heavenly, visible and invisible. This in no way detracts from the glory, authority, or preeminence of Jesus Christ. Rather, it is the FULFILLMENT OF HIS MINISTRY as HE moves in and through His many-membered body, the "many brethren" brought to His very own glory.

There are certain basic principles of the Kingdom of God that must be a part of the frame of mind and the experience of all who press forward into sonship to God. We must learn to think like God. We must begin to rule with Christ in this life. Too many saints are weak, frustrated, and defeated. May the dynamite of God's Spirit blow us all out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression, and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy, and triumph of His Kingdom. "...strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armour of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the empires, the forces that govern and control this dark world — the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Therefore put on the complete armour of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and, having fought to the end, TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD" (Eph. 6:10-14, Weymouth).

Once the believer embraces the truth that he is now seated with Christ at the right hand of God in the higher than all heavens, his heart will find rest and joy and confidence in the face of all situations and circumstances. The right hand of God is the place of omnipotent universal power and dominion — FAR ABOVE ALL THINGS! Such all-embracing majesty is far too vast for my feeble understanding, yet I know by the Spirit that the body of Christ is being formed and prepared for the explicit purpose of UNIVERSAL DOMINION. But how can a man rule over principalities and powers and empires and universes if he cannot rule his own spirit? "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). God is a God of principle. He does not do anything by chance. It is my deep conviction that what happens in your life and mine is a result of the use or abuse of the principles of the Kingdom of God. Learn this, beloved, and you will know one of the fundamental principles of reigning with Christ: OUR AUTHORITY IS OVER SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS F-I-R-S-T-L-Y I-N O-U-R-S-E-L-V-E-S!

Our first great battle is within ourselves. For if our dominion over our own spirit is to be perfect, then every thought, desire, and impulse must be brought into subjection to Christ. This discipline will be an attribute of the mind of Christ within, and when this is in effect, then we will be able to expel every mutineer, or every thought, attitude, and emotion which rises up against the knowledge of God. Our great training in throneship authority takes place in the bringing of our own selves into conformity to the Christ. We have got to look at and deal with ourselves first. Then as we are victorious overcomers in the different phases of our own lives, there comes a very real sense of victory and authority
over other powers, whatever they may be and wherever they may be found. It is a great
fact — deliver yourself of it first and then you will have complete AUTHORITY over the
same problem or spirit or power anywhere else! You will never have power over spiritual
wickedness in the high places of this world order and the cosmos, you will never be able
to deliver your brethren, or cities, or nations into the Kingdom of God until first every
wicked and rebellious spirit within your own nature has been subdued to the Spirit of the
Christ within.

Simply speaking, the purpose of God is that we might reign for Him and as Him, and to
reign is to exercise the authority of God — to rule all things. All who in Christ appropriate
the fullness of His life and glory and exaltation are destined to administer that awesome
dominion, seated together with Him at the right hand of God. This is the blueprint and
strategy for the triumph of His Kingdom in all realms, from the lowest hell to the highest
heaven. Ah, dear ones, we shall reign throughout the ages of the ages over all the
vastnesses of infinity until every enemy everywhere is conquered and Christ is all in all.
But we must begin to reign with Him here and N-O-W! You may be at the right hand of
God and yet not have walked out all the reality and potential and power and authority of
that realm. You must begin to walk out that reality right in that small and undistinguished
place where you are. The thing that limits and frustrates and troubles you most — right
where you are, in the nitty-gritty of everyday experience — is the place to start! Reign
with Him there! It may be an attitude, a habit, a weakness, an emotion, a lust, or the sin
which so easily besets — but it was not placed there by God to destroy you — it was
designed to be your STEPPING STONE TO THE THRONE!

Thank God! there is a RIGHT HAND COMPANY, those indwelt by THE SON OF THE
RIGHT HAND, daily growing and increasing in the nature, wisdom, and power of HIS
LORDSHIP. This company is the manifestation of GOD’S RIGHT HAND OF BLESSING
AND DOMINION in the earth today, and this right hand shall do even much more
valiantly as the sons of God press on in to the measure of the stature of the fullness of
Christ. This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign
with their Lord over all the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up and teaching
us to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies, gaining victory upon victory as we learn
what it is to reign. And the place which He has prepared for each one is not only a world
to come, and a Kingdom of light and love, but a place IN HIM, bone of His bone, flesh of
His flesh, spirit of His spirit, nature of His nature, mind of His mind, wisdom of His
wisdom, power of His power — LIFE OF HIS LIFE! Glory to His wonderful name!
Chapter 44
Cancer-The Crab

The eleventh of the twelve Signs to appear on the starry stage is that of CANCER — THE CRAB. In the midst of the Sign of Cancer is one of the brightest nebulous clusters in all of the heavens. This cluster of stars is called Praesepe, meaning The Multitude, The Offspring, The Innumerable Seed. The church is this vast heavenly multitude which has sprung from the faith of Abraham.

Long millenniums ago God told Abraham to look unto the heavens and if he could count the stars, so would be the number of his seed. It is important to understand that the divine plan of God in redemption begins with Abraham. Before Abraham, God dealt with several important individuals. But God did not deal with them in the light of His ultimate and eternal purpose, only in relation to the time in which they themselves lived. Abel was a righteous man and offered sacrifices in accord with the will of God, but he offered for himself alone. He was not specially chosen in relation to the ultimate and eternal purpose of God. Enoch, too, walked with God, but only in an individual walk. In Noah's day all mankind was living in the depths of corruption, but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and survived the deluge, but yet we do not find that he was chosen or called in relation to the ultimate and eternal purpose of God, but only in relation to the situation and need of his own day.

But it is when we come to Abraham that we encounter the first example of a man specially chosen of God with the future in mind — the eternal purpose of God in consideration. This is why we say that the divine plan of redemption begins to be worked out with Abraham. When Jesus came to confirm or ratify with His own blood the promises to the Fathers, it is not said that these were the promises to Able or Enoch or Noah, but the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And when Jesus came to confirm and ratify with His own blood the promises to the Fathers, it is not said that He took upon Him the seed of Adam — but "He took on Him the seed of ABRAHAM" (Heb. 2:16). He came not as Adam's "seed," but as Abraham's "seed." All the promises of God which embody the redemptive and eternal plan and purpose of God were made to two specially called and chosen people — Abraham and his "seed" (Gal. 3:16). So everything begins with Abraham; he is the starting point of everything in the redemptive and eternal purposes of God.

There is neither time nor space to examine the many facets and ramifications of God's promises to Abraham, but you can read of them in the book of Genesis and ask God for wisdom and understanding. He was to become "a great nation." He was to become "a multitude of nations." God said, "Kings shall come of thee." Abraham's posterity was to "spread abroad to the west, the east, the north, and the south." Abraham was not only to have a multiplicity of seed or offspring, but one particular "seed" through whom ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WOULD BE BLESSED. This singular seed "is Christ" and yet it is a corporate seed composed of many members — the sons of God (Gal. 3:16; I Cor. 12:12). When Abraham received these staggering promises, what did he do? He believed them! "...to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all; (as it
is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:16-21).

When Jesus Christ came to this world of the seed of Abraham, He came as a seed. Abraham was the seed from which sprang the millions of the house of Judah and the hundreds of millions of the house of Israel. But Paul, in unfolding this great mystery, fastens the hope of all creation not on Abraham himself, nor on the hundreds of millions of Judah and Israel, but on one particular seed, and that seed is CHRIST. This he does in Gal. 3:16 by saying, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which IS CHRIST." Therefore of all the vast multitudes as the dust of the earth, the sands of the sea, and the stars of heaven in number, the one seed of greatest importance, and the only seed which is made the heir of all the promises given to Abraham, is Jesus Christ.

It is a thing of magnificent wonder that our Lord is called the seed of Abraham! It seems a most singular thing that in that long ago Eden the Lord God told the serpent that the seed of the woman would bruise his head. Why did He not say that the man that should come from the woman would bruise the serpent's head? Why did He refer to that man as "her seed," the seed of the woman? It will be a great blessing to your heart to understand the vital truth that "seed" is not only the product of some other life before it, but seed is also that which reproduces itself and its kind many thousand fold from generation to generation. On a certain day some Greeks approached the disciples of Jesus with the request, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." This request was promptly carried to Jesus by Andrew and Philip, and our Lord gave this strange and very remarkable reply, "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). In this cryptic statement Jesus likened Himself to a seed, a grain of wheat, which was to fall into the ground and die. He would be sown as a seed into the earth and be raised again. Not only would He be raised in glorification, but in centuries yet to come this seed, which was Jesus Christ, would produce a vast harvest of many sons of God in His exact image and likeness. No seed is raised from the earth as just a singular seed, there is always an increase, the natural law of development being "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Only one seed was planted in the earth, and the Christ who came out of that Palestinian tomb was not the harvest — merely the blade breaking the ground. The multitude that will appear in the time of harvest will be the seed of the seed, the increase, the full corn in the ear, every one bearing the image and likeness of that Christ seed which was planted in death.

I am certain that our Lord's reply was a mystery to those men to whom He spoke. They made their earnest request, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," and He responded with His mysterious dissertation. We are not told whether Jesus ever consented to have these Greeks interview Him, but in answer to their request He gave the strange reply, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." His message to them was simply this: If they saw Jesus at that time they would see only one seed, one grain in the image of God — the man Christ Jesus. But
there would be more, much more to Christ than appeared to them that day! A whole universal field of ripened grain was to follow in His likeness, born of that original seed, imbued with the very same life, raised in the same resurrection, who would be the SONS OF GOD and THE CHRIST even as He is a Son of God and the Christ of God. The many sons would form ONE CHRIST, Head and body, each having the seed of life in himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham, appeared as the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). And you, my beloved, will understand a great mystery when you understand that ALL who are products of and partakers of the life of Him who is the seed of Abraham themselves become T-H-E S-E-E-D OF ABRAHAM.

Those in these last days whom God is giving, by His Spirit, understanding of the whole mystery of God in Christ that is in the scriptures, know that the whole mystery and purpose and plan of God in Christ is revealed in the family of Abraham, and in God's dealings with the family of Abraham, from Genesis through Revelation. This mystery begins in Genesis 12, where God called Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, and gave Abram a promise saying, "Leave your home, your country, and your father's house, and go into a new land that I will show you, and I will bless you, and make your name great, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Few of God's people today and not very many of God's ministry fully understand this promise that was given by God to Abraham. What God was really saying was that some day, yea, in these last days He would ultimately bring forth a perfect seed, a many-membered perfect seed, a descendant from the line of Abraham who would rule and reign and govern this earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring perfect blessing to all the families of the earth.

Now the apostle Paul, in the book of Galatians, tells us that when God gave this promise to Abraham, if He had said seeds, instead of seed, singular, then the promises of God to Abraham would be fulfilled to the Jews in the State of Israel, or in the great Israel nations of Europe and America, the natural descendants of Abraham according to the flesh. But the apostle tells us by the Spirit, that since God said seed, singular, and not seeds plural, then the seed that God was referring to which would bless all the families of the earth is THAT SEED WHICH IS CHRIST, and since we are the body of Christ, then we the body of Christ are that ultimate seed of Abraham that God promised in the long ago would come forth in the earth, and ultimately govern the earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring blessing to all the families of the earth. Therefore, the whole Bible from Genesis 12 through Revelation 12, is just the divine record of God progressively working in every generation through the family of Abraham to purify and perfect the line of Abraham, until ultimately in these last days He would bring forth from the line of Abraham a perfect seed, a many-membered perfect seed, who would govern this world, rule and reign in the earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring perfect blessing to all the families of the earth.

When once one's eyes are opened to this mystery in the scripture it is very easy to follow the lineage of Abraham, generation after generation, down through the ages, and see how God has been working in each generation to progressively purify the line of Abraham more and more, to ultimately bring forth that perfect seed. Therefore, when we follow the line of Abraham down through the scriptures we find that out of Abraham came Isaac; and Isaac was the seed in his generation. Then out of Isaac came Jacob; and Jacob was the seed in his generation. Then out of Jacob came twelve sons, a many-membered seed; and they were the seed of Abraham that God worked through in their generation. Then out of twelve sons came twelve tribes of Israel, and they were the seed that God
worked through in their generation. Out of them came twelve more tribes in the next generation, and they were the seed in their generation.

Finally, two thousand years ago, out of the twelve tribes came Jesus, and HE WAS THE SEED while He was here. Then Jesus, while He was here, purchased a bride with His own blood, the woman the Church (Eph. 2:22-32), and on the day of Pentecost His Spirit roared back into this Church which is His body (feminine), and this people were born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word (Christ) of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The first generation of spiritual Israel was born, and they were the seed of Abraham in their generation. The ministry of that generation planted into the spiritual womb of the Church the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, and the second generation of spiritual Israel was born, and they were the seed in their generation. Out of them came the third generation of the true Israel of God, and they were the seed in their generation. Finally, now, in these days, out of them has come us, the present generation of Israel, the seed of Abraham. We are the seed of Abraham that God is working through in our generation, and out of us is going to come a many-membered manchild who will grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ, be changed into the incorruptible, immortal, eternal nature of God, and become that perfect masculine seed through whom Christ will reign throughout the age and the ages of the Kingdom of God on earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring perfect blessing to all the families of the earth, even as God promised Abraham in that long ago.

All the wonderful promises of God made to Abraham were given to only two people — Abraham and his seed. That seed, according to Paul, is Christ. Then follows the enlightening proclamation: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:21). No wonder Paul cries out in the very next verse: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male or female: for YE ARE ALL ONE in Christ Jesus. And IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED, AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE" (Gal. 3:28-29).

We are still talking about the Sign of Cancer, The Crab — The Multitude, The Offspring, The Innumerable Seed. It is interesting to note that crabs are hard-shelled animals with roundish, flattened bodies and five pairs of legs, the front pair of which end in large claws. Most crabs live in the sea, some of them swimming with paddle-shaped legs. A few are found in fresh water, and some spend most of their lives on dry land. The land crabs of the West Indies are found even on top of high mountains, but they return to the sea once a year to breed. Thus, the crab is an animal born of the water, as the Church which is His body is "born of water and of the Spirit." Its many legs indicate multitudinous development and numerous members, as the family of God has multiplied exceedingly. The name CANCER comes from a Latin root meaning To Hold or Encircle, and the Greek equivalent is about the same. The term was chosen for the crab because of its ability to take hold of something and hold it firmly with its large claws. And so it is with the elect of God. Having, like Mary of Bethany, "chosen the good part," or, like the patriarchs, "embraced the promises," or, like the apostles, "lain hold of the hope set before us," they apprehend by faith the incorruptible and heavenly inheritance, and embrace the promise and hope of His glory with a grasp so firm and strong that it shall not be taken away.

Like the crab which lives in two elements — water and land — so the elect of God lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens. This is a great mystery which only the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God can unfold to our hearts in this hour. In that long ago beginning, at the dawn of our Creator's omniscient plan of the ages, "The Lord God
planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed" (Gen. 2:8). Memories of Eden, exquisite as dreams, weave their threads of light into the traditions of all peoples. There is not a nation under heaven which does not date the beginning of our race from some distant period of purity, peace, and concord with nature and with God. The hieroglyphics of Egypt, the clay tablets of Assyria, the Edda of Scandinavia, the legends of Tibet, and the bas-reliefs of Rome, tell the same story of primitive blessedness. All go to prove the truth of the statement that the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and put there the man whom He had formed.

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

Some years ago Gene Edwards shared a word of revelation with which I heartily concur. In the following paragraphs I will share as faithfully as I can the concepts he set forth. In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did a most incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched — entering into union with one another. The area where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before — not heavenly and not earthly — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time or space. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything upon this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.
Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there — just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm. He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. Out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being. That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being. All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a "breath of life" — the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's "breath of life" is not air — it is the Spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding — intelligence and wisdom! Only the light that God IS was more glorious than this exquisite creature — man in God's image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can't peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm — no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God's image. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by anything or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm. He is at home with who he is and who they are. He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth. He is the only creature which has ever been, is now, or ever shall be that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

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

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God — which City we are (Rev. 21:9-11; Isa. 60:2,14). "And I saw the
New Jerusalem ... having the glory of God: and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 21:10-11; 22:16).

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

Dr. Seiss wrote: "In the progress of the crab's development and growth it undergoes important changes. The most marked of these is the periodic throwing off of its old shells and the taking on of new ones. It has to shed its hard shell every so often, for the shell stops it from growing. In its earlier life these changes involve alterations of the whole form and shape of the animal." And so the body of Christ, in the process of its growth and development into the image of God again, passes from processing to processing, from change to change, and from glory to glory! God's purpose in redemption is not to just deliver us from the penalty of our sins, but to re-create us, to make a new creature of us, a new kind of man in the image of Him who created us. This marvelous change involves the whole man, spirit, soul, and body. Many seem to think that a spiritual body is not a LITERAL body. In other words, that it is not a REAL body, or not actually a body at all,
but a consciousness or a spirit. "Literal," says Webster, means real; not figurative or metaphorical. "There is a NATURAL BODY, and there is a SPIRITUAL BODY," saith the Lord. Does any one suppose the apostle here teaches that there is a "real" body, and there is a "figurative" or "metaphorical" body; and as we have borne the image of the "real," we shall also bear the image of the figurative? One would suppose they so read, from their exceeding blindness in not recognizing any but the animal body as the "true" body. These seem fearful lest, if the idea be entertained that Christ was resurrected in any other than an animal body, it will lead to the rejection of a LITERAL resurrection. We do reject the idea of saints being raised "a NATURAL body;" and if that is rejecting a LITERAL resurrection of the saints, we must plead guilty, and beg to be excused simply on the ground that the Almighty has said, "It is raised a SPIRITUAL BODY" (I Cor. 15:44).

Now will someone inform me why it is unscriptural, or fanatical to maintain that Jesus Christ has a SPIRITUAL body; and, as the saints are to be like Him, that they are raised spiritual bodies. I hear some talking about coming into immortality in their present body, living for a thousand years or forever in a body that eats, drinks, sleeps, drives, and goes to the bathroom. It will never happen. Because some seem to think that a spiritual body is not real, but is only a metaphorical body; and that nothing is real except it be "of the earth, earthy," is no reason why those who can discern spiritual things, which the natural man cannot, should remain in darkness. The realm of the spiritual is a realm which, to those who touch it, is ten thousand times more real than the natural world. Man has been excluded from this heavenly realm ever since that calamitous hour when he stretched forth his inquisitive hand to discover by his natural senses that which is good and that which is evil. On that unhappy day his eyes were closed to the celestial world to discover the physical and the natural and to be instructed in this barren realm of death. And yet that heavenly realm is as close to us today as it was then, the only difference being that our darkened vision cannot see it!

By His resurrection from the dead Jesus opened up to man again the spiritual-physical realm — the Land of the Interface. "The same day, at evening, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in their midst" (Jn. 20:19). "And after eight days, again His disciples were within, then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in their midst, and said, Peace be unto you" (Jn. 20:20). "And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight" (Lk. 24:31). Such language was never applied to the movements of Jesus before His crucifixion, and is used only in speaking of spiritual beings. The spiritual body of Jesus, and its clothing, which appeared suddenly while the doors were shut, did not go out the door, but simply disappeared or de-materialized into the same elements from which He had fashioned them but a few moments before. He vanished out of their sight, and was no longer seen of them on the physical plane, though doubtless He was still with them — invisibly present; and so also much of the time during those forty days. Jesus only demonstrated TWO BODIES WHILE HE WAS ON EARTH: the natural body and the spiritual body. There were no others. The first was a body of limitation that grew hungry, thirsty, weary, and died. The second was the body of the resurrection, a body of glory, unlimited, spiritual, supernatural. He never demonstrated a physical body that put on immortality but remained the same. Many brethren today are expecting PHYSICAL IMMORTALITY; they look in the mirror to see if the aging process has slowed or stopped; they count the wrinkles to determine whether there may be fewer today than before; they are expecting LIFE in an UNSPIRITUAL BODY! Again I say, It will never happen! No man can be physically immortal who has to either eat, drink, or sleep in order to sustain his life. No man is immortal as long as he can drown in water, burn in fire, be crushed under
the wheels of an eighteen-wheeler, have his head severed by sword, choke on a piece of meat, bleed from a cut, or be buried in the earth. Hear it! There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. Those are the only two choices you have, my friend.

It follows of necessity that man's being, under the curse of sin and death, because it is unsuited to the spiritual world, must be changed by the power of God. A bird would need a mighty change to be able to live under the water, or a fish to live in the air; but the Lord promises a much more striking change to those who are predestined to be manifested as the sons of God with power. Unknown millennia ago Job uttered an inspired statement as he sat among the dust and ashes of his desolation and affliction. "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thy hands" (Job 14:14-15). Never did Job utter a statement which bears out the absolute faithfulness of God to His creatures than in this passage. He says, So what? If a man comes to the point where he goes by way of the grave — shall he live again? Is that the end? And then he answers his own question. He made reference to an appointed time of waiting, through which we must pass until our change come. We will not be left in this "unfinished state." We will not be forgotten in this low realm of the earthy, this side of the Land of the Interface. There is much more work to be wrought in us before we are fully changed. But even physical death will not deny us that fulfillment, because sooner or later, He will call, and we will answer, because it is not dependent upon our state or condition, but upon His calling and purpose, and He has a desire to the work of His hands, the end is secure in the Faithful Creator's desire to finish the work of His hands; His desire is towards us and that is the guarantee of our full redemption.

Paul sets forth the majesty of that supernal glory that now appears like a beckoning beacon before the anointed vision of the sons of God: "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:49). We are to bear both — made one. He also explains exactly how this ineffable change is to take place within the elect. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18). "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour ...who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).

Literally Paul says that we are being metamorphosed into the image of the heavenly, and that God will metamorphose even our vile bodies. The Greek word METAMORPHOOS means simply "to change into another form." It comes from two words: META — which means "beyond," and MORPHE — meaning "form." "Beyond form" — or changed into another form. From this Greek root comes our English word "metamorphosis," which means to change from one form, shape, or substance to another. Our Lord through death and resurrection was changed or transformed — metamorphosed — from the lowly Jesus of Nazareth they had known to the glorified Christ of resurrection, ascension and exaltation. And this is just the word that is used with reference to the experience of believers who are to come into the same image of Christ Jesus. The metamorphosed body is not a body that looks like our present body infused with life while it continues to eat, drink, sleep, sweat, and do all the other things natural men do. IT IS A DIFFERENT KIND OF BODY, IN A DIFFERENT FORM. IT IS A SPIRITUAL BODY, FASHIONED LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY.
Metamorphosis is that change which takes place from within. We are not transformed by external forces acting upon us, but by the breaking forth of a new inner life from within, the very life of Jesus! Let us carefully consider the wonder of this thing, because it is certain that METAMORPHOSIS has already begun in us and will continue until the complete transformation has taken place. Too many of the Lord's people sit with folded hands, waiting for a change in some sweet bye and bye, when God's Word clearly shows that this process of change has already begun. This is what must take place in us: we must be changed from what we started out to be, into a creature vastly different in form and nature. But do not look first for the change in the outward. Look not at the skin tone, the wrinkles, physical strength, healing of the body, as signs of metamorphosis. The change begins within, in spirit and soul, in nature and character, in mind and understanding, in consciousness and manifestation.

There are certain times and seasons when God brings to life truths that have been allowed to lie in grave clothes for ages and dispensations. As a seed lies dormant in the winter months and then bursts into life in the warmth and rain of spring, so also has the truth of God been allowed to lie in death throughout the wintry night of our walk in Babylon's religious systems now at last to burst into a fruitful harvest in the spring of God's purpose to bring many sons to glory. There came a wonderful day when Christ came into our lives. "What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought, Since Jesus came into my heart," we sweetly sing. But did you ever wait in holy reverence for the Spirit to reveal the eternal truth of those words to your deepest heart? Oh yes, we received Him — as a saviour, as a thought, as an idea or an ideal, as a truth, as a presence, as an experience, as an ethereal kind of spirit, something vague and intangible dwelling by faith in our hearts. The Spirit of the Lord is quickening, however, that there is SUBSTANCE to that MAN within us. When the incorruptible life of the Christ conceived within us, we must realize that He was conceived within as the EMBRYO of a SPIRIT-BODY! Not just a spirit, but a SPIRIT-BODY! This is the Man who belongs to the Land of the Interface — where heaven and earth are merged and fused.

When Paul speaks, then, of being strengthened with might in the INNER MAN, he is speaking of SUBSTANCE within us. When Peter speaks of the HIDDEN MAN of the heart, he is speaking of GLORIFIED FLESH that has been born into the believer but is hidden beneath the veil of Adamic flesh. A MAN is not a spirit. A MAN is spirit, soul, and body. The first MAN was of the earth, earthy. The second MAN is the Lord from heaven. The first MAN was of the earth, embodied with the wind of heaven. The second MAN was from the heavenly realm, and took upon Him a body. It is this second MAN who has come into us in His life. Jesus never said, "Except you receive My Spirit, you have no life in you." Rather, He said, "Except ye eat the FLESH of the Son of man, and drink His BLOOD (spirit), ye have no life in you" (Jn. 6:53). As we feed that man within with the FLESH SUBSTANCE and the SPIRIT LIFE of the resurrected and glorified MAN, this infant spirit-man begins to grow and when he is fully formed he will burst forth from the cocoon of Adamic flesh and stand in splendor and majesty as a NEW CREATION MAN — body, soul, and spirit! This man will then live fully in the Land of the Interface.

All our lifetime we have been subject to the bondage of corruption and death which is rooted in the CARNAL MIND. Ah, "to be carnally minded IS DEATH" (Rom. 8:6). That is God's own definition of death, and according to inspiration death is IN THE MIND! "It's all in your mind," they say, and though it may be spoken in jest, it is a wondrous and divine truth, nonetheless. In the same chapter a truth is introduced showing that the transformation of the body begins with the renewing of the mind, for, says the apostle, "to
be spiritually minded IS LIFE..." (Rom. 8:6). Ah — life, also, is in the MIND! And he continues, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU" (Rom. 8:11).

If ever a reason was given for a change of mind, a change of thinking, a raising of consciousness, this must be it: "Be ye metamorphosed BY the renewing of your mind." It is the termination of our old way of thinking — of the carnal consciousness of sin and death — and the activation of a new way of thinking — the spiritual consciousness of LIFE IN CHRIST that brings the change, works the change, and completes the change until our transformation into the heavenly is consummated in spirit, soul, and body. Make no mistake about it! Paul declares forthrightly in Rom. 12:2 that this transformation, this change, this metamorphosis begins with the casting off of the corrupt and carnal mind which carries the mentality of sin, limitation, and death, and replacing it with the mind of Christ which is the mind of life and glory and virtue. We have heard a great deal about the corruptible putting on incorruption and the mortal putting on immortality. We have embraced many theories about how this would be accomplished, but in one majestic sweep of inspiration the apostle brushes aside all theories to tell us that we shall be transformed BY THE RENEWING OF THE MIND.

Mind means thought, intellect, reason, understanding, sense, thinking principle. Thought is thinking. The renewing of the mind means renovation, reconstitution, re-programing of our thought patterns and processes. It means a new mind-set. A new consciousness, awareness, reality. The old mind, carnal and human as it is, is always thinking thoughts of sin and death. It leaves us mortal, corruptible, and unchanged. The new mind is the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ is the intellect, the thought patterns, the thinking principles of Him who has conquered both sin and death and abides forever in the life and immortality of the Land of the Interface. The mind of Christ is a transforming mind! It renews not only the mind, but the body as well. Our minds, our THINKING must be raised from the level of the natural, carnal minds we were born with, and it must be spiritualized. This is not an instant change, it is not attained with one grand leap, but a continuous renewal as the voice of the Spirit unfolds within us the mind, thoughts, and outlook of God. These are thoughts of love, of righteousness, of life and light and power and incorruption and glory which transform into the image of God. If we wait in holy reverence in God's divine presence He will teach us how to think out of our divinity instead of our humanity.

Every life has a certain nature and consciousness. The higher the life, the loftier its nature and its consciousness. The law of a life belongs to the realm of its consciousness. For example, our youngest son, in his teen years, was a lover of hamsters. He had a hamster which from the time of its birth had never eaten anything but hamster food. One day he gave it an insect. Immediately, the hamster bit off the insect's head and then proceeded to eat it. Now this unique action of biting off the insect's head before eating it is a feature of the "instinct" of the animal. It is in his nature, a part of his consciousness. Though you breed countless generations of hamsters, and not one of them ever sees an insect, the moment you present one of those distant descendants with an insect he will promptly bite off its head and then eat it. He requires no training whatever. This is the LAW of its life — its innate nature and consciousness. It is programmed in its mind to think and act a certain way. Nature abounds with tens of thousands of examples of this law of life-consciousness in the marvelous life-forms God has created on this planet. The law of the physical life pertains to the order of consciousness. Everything is what it is
and acts as it acts out of CONSCIOUSNESS. Old Adam thinks and acts out of the consciousness of sin and death. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3).

The law of the spirit of life is the life of God Himself, which is the highest life; therefore it is the richest in consciousness. This life within us causes us to be full of divine consciousness, and this consciousness is the consciousness of DIVINE LIFE. The law of life within us is this consciousness. So — as we put off the carnal mind which is filled with the consciousness of limitation and death, and are renewed in our mind into the mind of Christ which is the consciousness of life, our spirit, soul, and body will become infused with not only the life of God, but also with the law of God's life — divine nature — and we will walk in righteousness rather than sin, and we will think thoughts of life instead of death.

As soon as we are regenerated, awakened to the life of God within, this law of life definitely causes us to have a certain consciousness. Our responsibility is to obey the sense of the law of life, thus thinking and acting out of the consciousness of life rather than death. In the beginning, the consciousness of this law of life may be comparatively weak and infrequent. Yet if we are willing to obey the first sense, though it be weak, the consciousness following will be stronger and stronger. We have to begin by submitting to this first weak consciousness and continue to submit. In this way the law of life can work within us unceasingly until it reaches every part of our whole being. Thus the life within us will be enabled to expand outward and increase in depth and height until corruption is swallowed up into life in every fiber of our being. The cry is ever, Thou mighty Christ, come forth in me! Few believe that the spiritual body can be put on here and now even as we stand upon our feet. Do you? Do you believe it is possible for you to be changed, transformed, metamorphosed in your whole man here in this life? "We shall not all sleep, but we SHALL ALL BE CHANGED," saith the Lord. Since you cannot by any natural process perform this for yourself, are you willing and ready to come under the deep secret law of letting the mind of Christ cancel out the carnal mind, of letting the law of life nullify the law of sin and death in the secret chambers of your consciousness?

Just as the crab is altered in its whole form and shape, and sheds its old shells and takes on new ones, so we, in the process of our growth and spiritual development, pass from dealing to dealing, revelation to revelation, consciousness to consciousness, experience to experience, victory to victory, putting off the old man with his deeds, putting on the new man which is renewed after the image of Him that created him, laying off this "body (consciousness) of death" in order to be "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." In like manner we put off the hard shells of former religious dogmas, forms, exercises, etc. The old religious outlook, the immature spiritual mentality, the limited understanding of yesterday is a shell which restricts our growth and prevents us from "going on to perfection." For this very reason the apostle exhorted the saints, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit" (Heb. 6:13). How we resist crawling out of those old shells! But these very changes are being mightily wrought out in us in this significant hour under the spiritual Sign of CANCER — THE CRAB!
URSA MINOR

The first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Cancer is URSA MINOR — THE LESSER BEAR. However, The Lesser Bear is not the ancient meaning of the constellation of URSA MINOR. No bear ever existed with such a long uplifted tail as is shown in modern atlases of the constellations! No traces of a bear are to be found in any of the ancient Zodics of Chaldea, Egypt, Persia or India. Rather, what we have is a SHEEPFOLD — the original meaning of Ursa Minor. It was the Greeks who changed it into a bear. The second Decan in the house of Cancer is URSA MAJOR and these two constellations refer to a little fold and a great fold. Far away in the depths of my spirit I receive the witness that the sons of God are the "little flock" while the church at large is the gathering together of all the people of God of all classes and companies, the "larger sheepfold" — URSA MAJOR.

The most important star in the whole heavens is also the major star in the constellation URSA MINOR, the company of the sons of God. It is called Al- Ruccaba which means "the turned" or "ridden on." It is known today as "Polaris" or the "Polar" or "North Star" and is the star upon which the entire heavens now seem to turn. This central star does not appear to revolve in a circle as does every other star. The North Star draws the attention of navigators and surveyors all over the northern hemisphere as a fixed point outside earth to establish direction and angle. This lustrous star can be none other than our Lord Jesus Christ who is Himself the brightest star in all the glorious constellation of God's sons, and the fixed point outside our earthiness from whence we derive our sense of direction and destiny in God. "And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE" (Col. 1:18). "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we ...speaking the truth in love, may grow up INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS, WHICH IS THE HEAD, EVEN CHRIST" (Eph. 4:13-15). "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that HE MIGHT BE THE FIRSTBORN AMONG MANY BRETHREN" (Rom. 8:29). "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make THE CAPTAIN OF THEIR SALVATION perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:9-10).

It is interesting to note that Polaris has not always been the North Star. In ancient times (approx. 6,000 years ago) when the constellations were first mapped, the Pole Star was not Polaris, but, rather, it was the star Draconis, the main star in Draco, the constellation of the Dragon. This is a fact fraught with deep meaning. At that time the Dragon, that ancient Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, deceived mankind and brought them into the fall, precipitated their banishment from the Land of the Interface, from whence they were driven into the lowlands of the earth, and from that time the Dragon became the Pole Star which marked the central gate, or hinge, or governing point of earth's motion. So it seemed that even as they looked up into the heavens, all of the heavens rotated around the Dragon. And yet the Dragon was in for a surprise! With the gradual procession of the equinoxes, that has changed— the Dragon Star is now far away from the Pole, while the Lesser Sheepfold, with its super-star, Polaris, has come into its place and the whole heavens now revolve around, and the earth receives its direction from, the mighty Christ of God! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!
The Pole Star, our Lord Jesus Christ, has been revealed from heaven. We are coming ever nearer to the long-awaited reign of URSA MINOR — the manifested sons of God. The whole creation for six thousand years has ceaselessly groaned for the manifestation of the sons of God. That blessed manifestation has been long in coming, but it will surely come. The heavens declare it! God's immutable word proclaims it! And the prophets of God across the land and around the world in this significant hour bear blessed witness to the imminence of this wonderful event. Once in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die for the world, and when the fullness of time comes once more, nothing will hinder the manifestation of the sons of God. The Lord Himself will bring them forth in the manner so vividly described in Revelation, chapter twelve. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brought forth a manchild, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Rev. 12:1-2,5).

It is my conviction that the key to this symbol of the birth of the manchild is to be found in the sixty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, which is the original source from which the figures are derived. Jerusalem is there represented as a woman in travail, who is delivered of a manchild (Isa. 66:7-8). "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." As the manchild, or the children of Zion, in the prophecy, signify the faithful in the land, or in Jerusalem, so the manchild born of the woman in Revelation denotes the faithful disciples of Christ who overcome all things to grow up into the fullness of Jesus Christ. As Israel brought forth the faithful remnant who was the salvation of the nation, so shall the church bring forth the sons of God to deliver not only their mother, but all creation. The true church is personified as the persecuted parent of a persecuted offspring; she gives birth to a manchild, but a manchild who is also a government. This manchild is destined to "rule the nations with a rod of iron, and is caught up unto God, and to His throne." These are statements which seem to many only applicable to the Son of God Himself; but they are in truth affirmed in the book of Revelation to be the privilege and reward of every elect saint called to sonship: "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne" (Rev. 3:21).

Nothing is dearer to the heart of God than sonship. Father has on hand a work greater than His original creation — He is bringing many sons to glory. The way may be rugged and tedious; but its end is glory. And it is the way along which our Father is bringing us; for, since we believe on the Son, we have the right to call ourselves sons (Jn. 1:12). And there are many of us. Many sons, though only one Son. We do not go solitary along the narrow way. We are but part of a multitude, a vast company. The glory of which we now speak, and into which Jesus has entered, is not for Him alone, but for us also. "Many sons" are to be His joint-heirs; reigning with Him on His throne, sharing His unsearchable riches and His everlasting reign.

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." I myself have stood in awe and amazement before the incredible beauty and majesty of the statue now in a Museum in Florence. 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.

No truer words have been penned by the hand of scribe or prophet than the following words from Douglas Wilson. "We do not know the full potential and power of what we have within us. Someone says, 'But I do know, and it is the Christ in me.' Yet again I say that we do not know. We do not know the Christ. We know that the seed of His life is planted within us, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS COMING FORTH. Some of us know a bit of sensation within us now and then, but we have yet to come to a full revelation of the Christ in us, THE HOPE OF GLORY. This is the birth that will yet take place and it will happen as surely as there is a God who is in all authority. When this birth takes place, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HIDE IT. For many days Mary could hide the fact that she was pregnant or with child, but there came a day WHEN IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO HIDE IT. It was possible for Egypt to hide for years the fact that it was pregnant with a growing child of God, but there came a day when Egypt could hide it no longer. We read in the book of Acts that when the time of the promise drew near, THE PEOPLE GREW AND MULTIPLIED IN EGYPT. When life began to come to the child, Egypt was uncomfortable, and the child was uncomfortable, and in consequence of this there was a great struggle until the birth was accomplished and Israel, the son, was delivered.

"Do not wonder at the struggle the world is passing through. Do not wonder about the struggle that is going on within your own self. God is preparing now to bring this great manchild to the birth. And we shall see it. Mary could have gone on for seven or eight months saying, 'I do not believe I am with child. I do not believe I am pregnant.' She could have declared herself with such words right up to the last minute, BUT THE BIRTH TOOK PLACE AS GOD HAD PLANNED. God's people all over the world can cry, 'We do not believe it. We do not believe it. It cannot be true.' BUT IT WILL COME TO PASS. We still have a sovereign God. Israel was God's son, born out of Egypt. Jesus was God's Son born out of Mary. This next man is the son of God born out of God Himself. We have seen that there are at least seven great revelations of God. The first was Adam. The second was the ark of Noah. The third was the tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness. The fourth was the temple of Solomon. The fifth was Jesus Christ. The sixth was the church and the seventh is the combination of God and man. This is by far the greatest. God and man as one creature, or THE NEW CREATION. This is what is even now coming to the birth. Jesus was God's pattern and we are all to be like the pattern that God first showed forth. We will be like the pattern in nature and character, but we will be given our own works to do.

"When this is brought forth, we will then see that God was keeping the world busy as He was preparing to bring to pass this birth that would bring forth a royal priesthood to
administer God's Kingdom to creation. This is the man in God's image presented in the very first chapter of Genesis. This is the great corporate man possessing the life of God Himself. It will be the consternation of the orthodox preachers and teachers of the Bible. This is the thing to be seeking God about in this hour. This is no day in which to be promulgating doctrines and creeds and religious activities, or to carry on business as usual, for the time is upon us in which God will bring onto the stage of history HIS SONS” — end quote.

The realm of sonship is the realm of the interface — the shimmering Garden of Eden, the glorious City of God. It is the dimension where God and man become one, where heaven and earth overlap, where eternity and time are joined, where the invisible and the visible merge, where the spiritual and the physical are interfaced. The outer life of the sons of God — their external form and visible ministry — are likened to the trunk and branches of a tree. It is, so to speak, an upside-down tree whose visible exterior is seen in the earth realm, but whose invisible roots come from heaven. The Land of the Interface must be understood by the "ascending roots" of the sons of God!
Chapter 45
Cancer-The Crab
(continued)

The first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Cancer is URSA MINOR — THE LESSER BEAR. However, The Lesser Bear is not the ancient meaning of the constellation URSA MINOR. No bear ever existed with such a long uplifted tail as is shown in modern atlases of the constellations! No traces of a bear are to be found in the ancient Zodiacs of Chaldea, Egypt, Persia or India. Rather, what we have is a SHEEPFOLD — the original meaning of Ursa Minor. It was the Greeks who changed it into a bear. The second Decan in the house of Cancer is URSA MAJOR and these two constellations refer to a little fold and a great fold. In the depths of my spirit I receive the witness that the sons of God are the 'little flock or fold," and the church at large is the "great sheepfold" (Ursa Major) composed of the people of God of all classes, companies and realms in God. We are drawing ever nearer to the long- awaited reign of URSA MINOR — the manifested sons of God. The whole creation for six thousand years has ceaselessly groaned for the manifestation of the sons of God. That blessed manifestation has been long in coming, but it will surely come. The heavens declare it! God's immutable Word proclaims it! And the prophets of God across the land and around the world in this significant hour bear blessed witness to the imminence of this wonderful event.

All who have ears to hear must hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The Spirit is saying today that He is preparing a people, He is preparing a body, He is preparing sons who shall be conformed to the image of His Son, who shall be partakers of the divine nature, who shall have the mind of Christ, who shall be brought to glory and who then shall become the very express image of the Father. These shall become the very brightness of the Father's glory and the very express image of the Father's person. Even as the first Son, who went into the ground and died as a grain of wheat to produce other sons in His likeness, bearing His image — He was the brightness of the Father's glory and the very express image of the Father's person — and God sent Him to be the Saviour of the world. God is now preparing sons, God is now preparing a body for that first Son, we are the body of the first son, the body of Christ. We are the body of the Christ and in and through these sons, when all have grown up into His fullness, His salvation shall be manifested unto the ends of the earth. The Lord is saying unto His people in this day: "For this cause have I raised thee up and sent thee to be a light unto the nations, and thou shalt be My salvation to the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6; Acts 13:47).

God is not talking to babies today. God is not talking to spiritual children today. Spiritual children have a little knowledge that puffs them up. Spiritual children fight among each other. "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas." Spiritual children pride themselves — who shall be the greatest. Spiritual children want to know which side of the throne they will be sitting on, "What am I going to get out of all this." Spiritual children like to play adult, imagining that they possess much more than they actually have and that they have
attained a stature far beyond their experience. God is not sending children today, He is sending sons, whose only desire is that the Father may be glorified, that the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand, that the will of the Father may be done. What happens to us has no bearing on the situation. Christ says, "As My Father has sent Me, in this total commitment to His will, so that I desire only to reveal the Father, so I am sending you, in a total commitment to the Father's will, that the Father may be revealed in the multitude of sons." And let me assure you, precious friend of mine, if through one son in the Garden of Eden who disobeyed, the whole creation came into bondage and death because of disobedience, and if through one Son in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Calvary, God was able to provide a salvation through the shedding of His blood for all humanity, if God could bring such a revelation of Himself through one Son, a Son who was crucified and rejected, whom God raised again and set at His right hand — what will happen in these days, when through a multitude of sons who have been identified with Him, buried with Him in His death, raised again in the likeness of His resurrection, ascended with Him, seated with Him in the heavenly places, glorified with His glory, anointed with His Spirit, invested with His wisdom, nature and power — what is going to happen in all creation when many sons are revealed in the glory of God?

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! Who can articulate the wonder of 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 eloquent language; but it didn't come anywhere near the truth. The human mind is incapable of conjuring up a picture of what the omniscient 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 fulness; 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 the 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, strum a harp, flit about in a white night gown, and own a mansion over the hilltop or a cabin in the corner of gloryland.

The manifestation of the sons of God has not yet taken place. There are the "normal" workings of God — as if anything God does could be considered "normal"! But there are the on-going, day to day activities of the Holy Spirit — all of them supernatural happenings, but all of them that which we are accustomed to experiencing. The ongoing salvation of souls, the continual manifestation of gifts and ministries in the church, the healing of sick, answers to prayer, meeting of needs, changing of lives, the progressive
revelation of truth, the processings of God to conform us into the image of the Son. Then there are the "interventions" of God. The interventions of God are sudden happenings of God in which the course of human history is literally changed because God comes on the scene in an unexpected and accelerated fashion. The scriptures usually announce an intervention of God by using the word "suddenly."

In Lk. 2:13, of the birth of Jesus, we read, "...and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host.." The annunciation of the Incarnation was a divine intervention. Here's a great one: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 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 there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each 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 2:14). There in that upper room, united in their faith in Christ and in their holy mood of expectancy, these humble disciples received their marching orders and were empowered to carry them out. They had had a long period of teaching and preparation; they had spent many hours in prayer and holy waiting. The great day came for them on Pentecost, and they were ready to march. March they did, straight into the heart of the pagan world. The Holy Spirit guided them step by step. He told them where to go, what to say, what to do. He walked in them and worked with them, confirming their word with mighty signs, wonders, and miracles. Armed with the word of God, the love of God, and the power of God, they were unconquerable and turned the world upside down and changed the course of history!

Then there was poor Saul of Tarsus, who ran headlong into a blinding suddenly: "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" (Acts 22:6). In Mal. 3:1 we read of another intervention of God - one reserved for our day: "And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple..." This is a divine intervention — when God suddenly comes to His elect in a manner different from, and infinitely more powerful and glorious than His normal workings throughout the past age. We stand today in an hour not unlike the days preceding the day of Pentecost. The next great Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, is about to "fully come." The Christ is among us in a fresh manifestation, there is a new message going forth, a declaration concerning the next step and phase of the Kingdom of God, there is a unique dealing of God, and a manifestation of ministry. The greater glory to come, the manifested sons of God upon the heavenly Mount Zion, the City foursquare coming down from God out of heaven, the tabernacle of God among men, the new order for the new age, will be birthed suddenly and sovereignly BY GOD HIMSELF when the fullness of time has arrived. Let no man deceive you! The Feast of Tabernacles has not yet begun. The revelation of it has come, the hope has been birthed, the preparations are in progress. But all who currently proclaim the Feast of Tabernacles are still walking in the old order of Pentecost with their church meetings, praise service, preaching, gifts of the spirit, etc. A new revelation has come, but not a new order. The Lord of glory will suddenly appear in His greater temple in the manifestation of incorruptible life and nature and immortal power and glory — with no carnal efforts or soulish works to produce it. In the fullness of time God will send forth His sons and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed before the face of all nations, tongues, tribes and peoples — by a sudden, powerful, sovereign move of God!

THE GROANING CREATION
The jubilation, gladness and joy that will take place at this ultimate Feast of Tabernacles is beyond our wildest expectation. The Christ body, the sons of God, will experience great joy at their change from mortal to immortal. And the creation will also express the ecstasy that will be theirs when they are released from 6,000 years of bondage and servitude. The songs of victory and glad tidings will be greater far than on that first glad occasion when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:7). "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:20-22).

"The whole creation groaneth..." The word "groaneth" signifies to sigh, to pray, to be moved with inward feeling. Creation is depicted as a slave in bondage, groaning in its captivity, crying out to be free. Today the world is full of broken hearts, the hospitals are crowded, the cemeteries are being filled, and all nature is groaning under its bondage to corruption and death. 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. Can we not hear the sigh and groan of nature in the meow of the cat, in the yelp of the dog, in the shriek of the captive, in the bleat of the sheep, in the lowing of the cattle, in the roar of the lion, in the hiss of the serpent, in the cry of the vulture, in the hoot of the owl, in the wash of the sea, in the rush of the storm, in the tremor of the earthquake, and in the exclamation of pain?

"The bondage of corruption." The word "bondage" means more than being bound, it means servitude, slavery; and "corruption" signifies ruin, decay, death, to perish. The servitude of decay resulting in death conveys the meaning. The latter word is rendered "perish" in Col. 2:22; and the former comes from a word which means to serve as a slave and is rendered "serving" in Tit. 3:3. Creation is said to be longing with "earnest expectation." Those longings which are implanted by God will surely be met by Him. It is a fact in nature that God never puts an intuition within, without meeting it without. Therefore while creation is in bondage it is not in despair, for an earnest expectation throbs through it and makes it to be like one who is looking out with intense longing for someone who is expected. The Greek word rendered "expectation" is made up from apo-kara- dokia. Apo signifies from, or from afar. Kara means the head, and dokia means to wait for, or to look with intense expectation. This compound word at once suggests a striking figure, namely, one whose head is raised, and who is looking out on the distant horizon with intensity on the countenance, and longing in the eyes, as one expecting to receive something from another.

The whole creation is joining with us in unutterable groans and birth pangs, earnestly looking forward to its release with ours, out into full and free and eternal inheritance. EVERY CREATED THING is waiting, looking anxiously and with a kind of universal travail — waiting for what? A great manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit? More missionaries? More Bibles and gospel tracts? Greater evangelistic crusades? Another televangelist? Or are they waiting for the combined efforts of all churches to get together in an all-out assault against sin, sickness, and evil? Are they travelling for another preacher, another ministry, another revival, or, even another "sonship" convention? NO, NO, A THOUSAND TIMES NO! Creation is not waiting for any of these things to take place. The whole of creation, without exception, is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God which is that FULL SONSHIP, THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR BODIES.
It is full and complete and eternal victory over sin, sorrow, limitation, sickness and death. It is the life and glory of the Father fully revealed in a people.

Paul Mueller has written: "The principal purpose which is uppermost in the mind of the Father at this time is the growth and coming to maturity of His chosen remnant. Every other purpose under heaven is secondary to this greater purpose during this exceptional time. Therefore, it is essential that all who are members of this Christ body, the sons of God, should concentrate on their own spiritual maturity. Strive not to do the religious works of man, but seek rather for the fulness of Christ in your own heart and life. There is no other purpose under heaven that can equal this grand and holy purpose of the Father. Put away all the desires and appetites of the world and of the flesh, and seek only to please the Lord. And if you really care for the masses of the world who know not God and His wonderful grace and mercy, then you will seek for His fulness in your life. If you have really heard the groans of a creation that is suffering under the burden of sin and shame, you will cease all your religious activity, which is really only the works of the flesh, and will follow hard after the Lord. Let us seek to please God as Enoch did, and we will witness a glorious manifestation of His life that will set every captive free. God, in His great wisdom, has linked all of creation's needs and travails with the glorious transformation of the bodies of the sons of God into bodies like unto Christ's body. And it is quite possible that when this glorious transformation does occur, the stones, the trees, shrubs, and grass of the field, as well as all animal life, will lift their voices in praise to Him who has fulfilled His word and satisfied the inherent hope within every created thing" — end quote.

The story is told of a little boy who couldn't play outside because it was raining. His father, who was trying to take an afternoon nap on the sofa, became annoyed. "Go to the other room, son; Daddy wants to sleep. Find something in there to play with." "Like what?" "Anything," snapped the father. "There isn't anything," replied the lad. Grabbing the newspaper, the man tore out a page with a large map of the world printed on it. With the scissors he cut it into dozens of odd-shaped pieces like a puzzle. "There, see if you can put it together, and don't bother me till you're done." The father settled down on the sofa thinking his problem was solved, but ten minutes later there was a tug on his shirt. "How did you do it?" he asked. "Easy," said his son. "A man's picture was on the back, and when I got the man together right, the world was right." Ah, yes — when God gets HIS MAN put together in the fullness of Christ all the problems of the world will simply fall into place! Let us not expend our energies trying to get the world straightened out and ordered aright in this hour. Let us give ourselves to apprehending that for which Jesus Christ has apprehended us — to grow up unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then the whole creation will fall into place. Let us not sell creation short!

If Alexander the Great could march his armies across the earth and conquer the whole civilized world before he was thirty-three years old; if Hitler could change the world for evil; if the Communists could march forth to enslave one-third of the world's population, weaving a hundred million into the vortex of communism each year — it is not presumptuous to believe that the sons of God, armed with the immortal life and glory of Christ, can turn all nations to God, deliver the whole creation from the tyranny of sin and death, and bring the Kingdom of God to pass under the whole heaven, from pole to pole and sea to sea in power and glory. As Ray Prinzing has written: "What glory, what wonder awaits the revelation of that true character and quality which HE is producing in His new creation species. Resurrection life shall burst forth, Babylon's shame and
corruption shall be ended. Holiness is to be personified in a people. Religious racketeers will come to nought. Light will dissipate the darkness. No more will there be wells without water, and falling stars that fade into the darkness. HIS SONS will be a revelation of such character and quality as to satisfy all that men have waited for" — end quote.

THE MINISTRY OF THE SONS OF GOD

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 matured body, anointed with 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 Luther, a St. Patrick, a Wesley, a Whitefield, a Finney, a Moody, a Billy Sunday, 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 transcendental 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.

The church order has been an order ordained of God for this age when the Lord's purpose was to bring men to Christ by "the foolishness of preaching" (I Cor. 1:21). We rejoiced to see many gathered together to hear the anointed messages of preaching and to be saved and blessed by that means. That has been God's method for this age of the formation of His body. But to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption GOD HAS A MORE PERFECT WAY! The old order of meetings, of an hour of singing and worship, of clapping and dancing, of the manifestation of the gifts, followed by the foolishness of preaching, will never deliver creation. This has all been good, and is still good for saints growing up into Christ. Let no man say that we are opposed to it! But it is not sonship ministry. The Pattern Son was never "meeting oriented." Meetings "happened" but they were not called, announced, planned or organized. Jesus never announced that He would be speaking or ministering in the temple, or at Peter's house, or in the upper room, or at the Coliseum. No date was set for a meeting on a certain day to commence at 7:30 P.M. There was no place and no time. All was entirely spontaneous. Jesus ministered at all times and in all places. He taught and healed in the streets. He ministered in the homes. He ministered in the places of business. He taught by the sea. He ministered in the fields. He spoke to multitudes in the mountains. He proclaimed the Word of the Kingdom in the temple. He ministered to one person alone. He ministered to ten people. He ministered to crowds of many thousands. It made no difference. Buildings, dates, and order of meeting were all completely irrelevant to His sonship ministry. He ministered wherever He was, day or night. He ministered to whomever the Father sent Him — one person or a thousand mattered not. He never congregated a people and set up a "meeting." He never organized a "crusade." He never rented an auditorium. He never advertised — He didn't need to! He never started His meetings with a "praise service." Peter never led the singing. James never made the announcements. John never received the collection. There was absolutely no "meeting" mentality in the life of the firstborn Son of God. God was God in Jesus at all times, in all places, to all people, in a perfectly
natural expression. And, my beloved, JESUS IS THE PATTERN OF SONSHIP — not Paul, or Peter, or the apostles, or the Church Fathers.

When the sons of God are manifested, instead of announcing a meeting, rather than inviting people to a building, in place of opening the service with prayer and the singing of hymns and choruses, the transformed saints will appear amidst many on the streets, in the business establishments, in the restaurants, on speeding trains and flying airplanes, on the highways and in the byways, or in a shopping mall. The appearing will be supernatural, the spoken word will be with power and demonstration of the Spirit, the secrets of men's hearts will be revealed, and all needs met then and there. Imagine the wonders of the mighty moving of the Spirit of God as He is outpoured upon ALL FLESH! Instead of a church meeting or organized crusade, or a revival campaign, the Spirit of the Lord will move upon an entire body of people wherever they may be and the whole group will be converted without a "building," without a "song service," or any of the trappings of church-age "meetings." It may be difficult for some to understand, but that new manifestation of God in His sons will transcend a million times any glory we have witnessed in the past. God will do more in one minute by His Spirit than a man has been able to do in an entire lifetime of ministry. In times past the Lord worked and moved in the thirty and sixty-fold degree, but in the days before us He will move in a hundred-fold manifestation of power and glory. And all of this will be the result of our growth into sonship! It will be the manifestation of the fullness of His life within us. Multitudes will then find the peace, joy, deliverance and salvation of Christ, and will embrace the fullness of His Kingdom and dominion. When the sons are manifested, I believe the Spirit will then echo the words of Winston Churchill, "Never have so MANY owed so MUCH to so FEW!"

When God roars out of His Zion Company in the fullness of His life and glory and presence, the old drunk will rise up out of his drunken stupor and know that there is a God upon the throne. All will know, kings and presidents and prime ministers and members of congress and parliament and rich men and mighty men everywhere will be made to know that there is ONE to whom they all owe their allegiance. The church has not yet started on world evangelization. This has been the age of "calling out a people for His name," not saving the world. Now God is laying a ground work and processing, preparing, equipping and empowering His people for the coming invasion of all the world. He must do something unprecedented for us first so that we will be ready. We don't have all we need for this work, but God is quickening us for it. We still put too much dependence in money, methods, and materials, but God wants us to move out of that old order into His new realm of fullness. It is my deep conviction that the sonship ministry will be something like this. The word came to Phillip in Samaria to go down into the desert and meet the Ethiopian eunuch. Phillip didn't say, "Lord, I haven't got a helicopter, how can I get down there? Give me time to mail out a newsletter to my partners and raise the money for the trip. How am I going to find one man in all that desert, and anyway, Lord, I've got a big revival going here in Samaria." Phillip did not argue with the Lord at all, but obeyed the voice of the Spirit and went immediately. You see, he had no program to perpetuate. God transported him by the Spirit to the desert and pointed out the chariot and commanded, "Go join yourself to that chariot." Phillip had to run and outrun the horses to get into the chariot. When God was through with him, the Spirit took him up and he was "found" at a place called Azotus.

Do not doubt for one moment, precious friend of mine, that when God wants any of His sons in any place, He will put them there. God need pay no attention to iron or bamboo curtains, or boundaries between nations. He need not take into consideration
immigration, consulates or custom houses. I am talking about the miracle working power of God to be manifested when the sons of God arise as King-Priests after the order of Melchizedek. We really know little of the Melchizedek order. We are not yet equipped, but God is working! We have yet to see a pure, unadulterated moving of the Spirit with everyone moving on the plane of incorruption, doing just what the Father wants them to do, but we are going to. It must come in this hour. Today, before a great evangelist gets to town, his advance agent comes and takes care of the advertising and makes all the preparations so that everyone knows that "Rev. So and So" is coming. The auditorium is rented, the crusade organized, they get all the altar workers lined up and teach them a few scriptures and train them for the BIG MEETING. But even Billy Graham has been quoted as saying that with all these vast crowds and all that goes with it, "We haven't yet had revival." Ah, this is one work the Holy Spirit desires to do — to be the ADVANCE AGENT for God's ministries! HE will prepare the way for us. No better means of advertising can be found than that of the Spirit. When God begins to spread everywhere what He is doing, whole cities and entire nations will know, and His fame will spread far and near and men will flock to receive from God. Not one dime of money will need be spent on buildings, stadiums, staff or advertising.

I emphasize again that the scripture declares that the Spirit shall be poured out upon ALL FLESH. In the cities, on the plains, in the jungle paths, in the deserts, in all the dwelling places of men the Spirit shall flow. In the time of which I speak God will not leave one place on the earth where the adversary can rally his forces. If God did not cover the seas with His Spirit, and move upon all flesh upon the seas, the adversary would have a place to rally his forces. If God did not pour His Spirit out and flood the desert, the adversary would have a place for recruiting his followers. But, thank God! the glory of the Lord shall cover the the earth as the waters cover the sea. God will have this time, this day to do His mysterious work in all the earth and all the kindreds of the earth shall turn unto the Lord. All nations and all peoples will come and bow down before Him. The saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom (government) and possess the Kingdom and reign forever and ever. Hallelujah!

Again I would share blessed words of insight and revelation from the anointed pen of Paul Mueller. "Imagine ourselves freed from the need to scrounge for money to buy food, clothing, housing, and all our earthly needs. Imagine a people who are transported from one place to another by the Spirit without using any of man's inventions. Imagine a people whose minds receive and whose lives express fully the mind of Christ, unhindered and unfettered by earthly, carnal desires, ambitions and needs. Imagine a people who speak with one mind, the mind of Christ, and who minister only the things of the Spirit, and that which is of the Kingdom of God. Imagine a people who have graduated to the highest realm of spiritual activity, who function in the one-hundred-fold realm exclusively and always. This people will never revert to the flesh or the things of it. They have been delivered of the carnal nature that binds us to the flesh realm. They will never do anything for personal gratification. Their sole objective is to do Father's will and promote the Kingdom of God. They never consider any other way but the way of the Spirit. They never minister from the thirty-fold or sixty-fold realms, for the power that has held them in bondage to the lower realms has been destroyed in their lives. They function from the Spirit realm of true Life, and with the authority of His Name. Think on these things, beloved, and you will then comprehend what your life will be like when God's purposes for this 'day' have been fulfilled. And all who are apprehended of the Father to rule and reign with Christ as sons will have no desire to cling to the old, dead church order of the past after thinking on these things with wisdom. Firstfruits must be set free first! Firstfruit
saints shall be the first to make the transition, and we will do so in the victory of Christ as we surrender to the workings of His Spirit within. But we will not make this transition by clinging to the old church order of the past. The Lord is establishing a higher order which is the new order of the Kingdom of God. This is new wine! New wine can only be contained in new wine skins! Therefore, we repent of the old wine skin of the past order and surrender our lives to Him. Then He will make us into new wine skins, ready to receive the new wine of His Spirit to be poured out to the multitudes" — end quote.

There was a little boy who came home from Sunday School. His Mom said, "What did you learn in Sunday School today?" The little boy answered, "Oh, we learned about Moses." "Oh? And what did you learn about Moses?" He answered, "Mom, if I told you, you wouldn't believe me." "Well, try me," she responded. So the little boy began. "Well, Moses was in a terrible situation. He had all of these soldiers coming at him on chariots and he was pinned at the Red Sea. So he prayed to God, and suddenly, all these tractors came rolling along and workmen and steel crews appeared, and within half an hour, they built a bridge that spanned the Red Sea. Then Moses and the Israelites walked across it safely, to the other side." His mother looked suspiciously at him and said, "Son, I don't believe you learned that in Sunday School today." To which the little boy muttered, "Mom, if I told you the TRUTH, you really wouldn't believe it!" And I do not hesitate to say that when we speak the truth of the glory and power of manifested sonship it is impossible for the carnal mind to comprehend it or the religious mind to accept it. Because men cannot see or believe the purposes of God in sonship, or the power and triumph of the Kingdom of God, they have spun fanciful and ridiculous tales of a rapture for the saints and eternal damnation for the billions of earth's inhabitants. But be it known unto all who read these lines that the impact Jesus made on the world of His day and the environment in which He lived sent such shock waves throughout the universe that twenty centuries later the effects and effectiveness of His ministry is still felt by multitudes throughout the world. If only one Son of God can so impact society and change the course of history — how stupendous would be the impact of 144,000 in His likeness! Yes, it shall be, praise His name!

Many years ago an aged prophet of God shared the vision God gave him of this ministry. "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 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, so that they could cause everything to cease, and every eye to be fixed upon them, until their message had been delivered. I saw them walk upon the water; I saw the terror in the faces of the wicked, at the sound of their voices. I saw the professing Christians fall down in true repentance, calling 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 time when God will be manifested in His sons and daughters, while my body was back there in a bed alongside my wife. Sometimes the scenes would make me weep, I would sob, my body shaking
with pain and agony; then another scene would cause me to laugh with holy laughter. 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 was healed. Every one was made perfectly whole, the blind, the lame, and even those who had been lunatic from birth. Sister Britain (this was a cousin of brother Bill Britton) got no sleep that night, and finally, when it was near daylight, she asked me why I didn't get up and write it. I did try, but could not hold my hands on the key-board of the typewriter. Some unseen force held them aloft over my head. I walked the floor and wept, and begged the Lord to let me write some of the visions I had seen. Finally 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 it 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 that one message would cause all men to lose confidence in me! Those were my thoughts. At last, with tears streaming, I said, 'I'm going to publish it, regardless of the cost. I know it's true! I know it is going to come to pass, and if all men turn against me for it, I'm going to publish it anyway!' And so we did. We waited anxiously to hear the reaction of the people. To our surprise, it thrilled their hearts. THEY BELIEVED IT! They still believe it! Immediately we were besieged with orders for many copies of it to pass out to others. Our limited production facilities could not handle it, so God gave us new, bigger equipment" — end quote.

I am deeply impressed to share here the testimony of Sis. Lura Grubb, a friend of ours from many years ago — one of the most remarkable testimonies I have known in my lifetime. The following is transcribed from a message she delivered to a Convention some years ago, along with other materials. "I believe that my restoration to life in 1932, was a sign of a sort of LIFE into which God plans to bring His sons for manifestation in the end time. I was a Baptist girl when God healed me and raised me from the dead. After three years of serious health crises I was seized with horrible convulsions which continued for six days. Again my family doctor consulted with the surgeon from Marks, Mississippi. His verdict was grave this time as before. There was no hope for complete recovery. There was little possibility of sustained life. He said that I was in too serious a condition to be removed to the hospital, that I would not live to get five miles. I was to remain where I was. And if I should recover enough to undergo an operation, he would perform it, and perhaps relieve the condition partially.

"The family physician returned early the following morning. He was not sure that he would find me alive. He found me in the continuous convulsions and unconscious, just as I had been for the past six days. Again he examined my uncontrollable body. With a note of hesitancy in his voice, he said to mother, 'Mrs. White, I hate to have to tell you this, but Lura is dying now. We have done all we know to do. I will call in any specialist you suggest, but it will do no good. We have done all that medical science has to offer in a case like this. Lura is dying, and if you have any messages to send to relatives, you should send them immediately. These convulsions will continue until she passes away. She may die in the next one, but she might last until midnight. But she is dying and cannot pull through the night. With your consent, I can inject a fatal sedative into her vein which will stop the convulsions, and she will die a peaceful death. If not, she will continue to have convulsions, and die in just as pathetic a condition as she is in at present.'
"Mother consented for the injection to be given. Her compassion could not endure the thoughts of my dying in such a pitiful state. The doctor prepared the medicine and administered it to my body. It was too late. I was too far gone already. My circulation was so poor by that time, that it circulated no further around the injection than a spot the size of a quarter. The doctor shook his head, and told mother to make me as comfortable as possible. Mother looked up to that tall man of medical skill, and with a spark of faith still flickering in her soul, said, ‘But doctor, can't God?’ That fearful tone called forth all the sympathy within the kindly soul of that good man. He looked her straight in the eye, and encouraged, ‘If anything is done now, it will be from a Higher Power than medical science.’

"That evening, the godly, white-haired, Holiness Baptist evangelist came to the house. He had been coming to see me and to encourage mother every day. This was the last day of the revival at the church, but not in mother's heart. That last visit was a lighthouse in a storm for my mother who had prayed and fasted without sleep nor rest for six days and nights. She remained close beside my bed those six days and nights of convulsions. That day he told mother that he had had a revelation while in prayer that morning, and that God showed him that her daughter would live and 'be a shining light for Jesus.' The veil of sorrow enshrouding her despairing soul was parted by that message of hope. Her faith revived, and she took another tenacious hold upon God and fortified herself against the doubting taunts of Satan. The convulsions continued until midnight — the crisis hour, beyond which the doctor predicted that I could not live. Everyone was tense as thirteen strong men and women held my convulsive form on the bed and waited for the final hour to strike and the curtain to fall.

"The fatal hour struck — it was midnight. I became conscious for the first time in six days and nights. But the consciousness was not earthly. I was yet unaware of the things transpiring about my bed in the darkened room. I had become fully conscious of the heavenly. I beheld a great shaft of light, more brilliant than the noonday sun, stream to me directly from heaven. A blinding radiance, very large in diameter, circumscribed the beam of glittering glory which terminated at my bed. The bed seemed afire with its brightness. I will not recount all my experiences during the time I was dead, in which I saw the Lord Jesus and was commissioned to come back to earth because the Lord had a work for me to do. Down — down — down I drifted until I reached the small frame farmhouse in which lay my lifeless physical form. Then, suddenly, the corpse sat up — the miracle took place! The miracle was not the result of any personal knowledge I had of healing, to say nothing of being raised from the dead. My humble, farm-woman, mother was a Methodist, that fasted six days and nights and prayed for my healing, and finally my resurrection from the dead. I was pronounced dead, and preparations for my funeral were already underway. My mother would not submit to death, even as she stared it in the face of her dead daughter.

"Sometimes I think that we Kingdom people do an injustice to our testimony by so readily submitting to death. We do not contend for the faith of the Son of God. I believe that there is a vast area that we are failing to march into and possess, of the Kingdom provisions. We proclaim Kingdom, but God expects us to have more than revelation. We are called upon to go beyond revelation to manifestation. We are tempted to dwell on a platform of revelation. Revelation is wonderful, but it will never amount to much until it is translated into manifestation. The manifestation of the sons of God is what groaning creation is waiting for, and not just revelation of some mystic character. Some have thought it to be some special revelation for which groaning creation is waiting, but this is not the case.
They wait for a manifestation. They want deliverance from their bondage to corruption. We also groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies.

"Now this redemption of the body is interesting. Before we ever heard that there be a Holy Ghost, my mother prayed for my restoration to life in 1932 in Mississippi. Before she committed me to God like Abraham did Isaac, God spoke to her, 'Will you give her to Me if I restore her to life?' When He got her commitment, He said to her, 'Get up, I have heard your prayer. See what I have done.' When He instructed her to come to my room and look again into my cold, dead face, she obeyed in faith, believing, without any hesitation. She believed God. I tell you, our faith must go beyond what we are expressing today. She had to go in obedience to the Word of God, and look at me with no life in me, until she saw me begin to breathe and open my eyes. That obedience was her faith in action. For twelve days and nights after God raised me from the dead, I walked in a resurrected body. It was not a glorified body. It was still mortal, not glorified, but resurrected. When you begin to talk about these resurrections and these proofs of Life, people immediately say that we are talking about glorification. No. The Spirit by the pen of Paul in Romans 8 tells us that, 'If that same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He shall also make alive your mortal body' - not glorified body. We shall not need quickening when we receive our body of glory like unto His glorious body. A resurrected body and a glorified body are two different things.

"The same power which raised Jesus from the dead raised me from the dead. I was also miraculously healed of multiple afflictions instantly and restored to life after the spirit departed my body. We really do not need long, drawn out healing services. We just need God to come on the scene. As I looked into the face of Jesus, I was instantly healed. I never became hungry, sleepy nor tired for twelve days and nights after I was healed and restored to life. When my feet touched the floor, a supernatural phenomenon occurred. I felt myself being raised to my tiptoes, and my arms being raised heavenward. The power of God enveloped my body, and I felt so light I hardly had my feet on the floor. Many times during the twelve days and nights that followed, I would unconsciously grab the furniture to hold myself down to the floor. I can describe it as none other than the resurrection power of God — the power that restored my spirit to the body — the power that raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. When my hands were down, it was by force. My feet would rest flat on the floor only by force. My natural position those days was on tiptoes and hands upraised. When I forced myself to an arms-down, flat-footed position, I was unable to take a step. This supernatural sign convinced the newspaper photographers and reporters. This was at the conclusion of three years of illness and six days of convulsions and lockjaw. After the miracle, I ministered to thousands of people who came from all over the country, having seen the news story in all the major press service papers in August of 1932. It reached as far as the Shanghai, China newspapers. One hundred fifty three of the largest city newspapers of America carried a full page story in the Sunday Magazine Section of this miracle God performed in Mississippi.

"The thing that is so wonderful to me is the fact that God performed this miracle. We must point the groaning creation to God. He is the miracle worker. In all these years I have enjoyed life and strength from God to preach the Gospel of Divine Life to forty-nine nations. During those twelve days and nights I saw all types of healing and miracles. I did not know how to pray for the sick. As the Spirit led me to touch sick ones who were brought, God performed the miracles, not I. God wants to show forth His glory and ability. God is not looking for people who have excessive knowledge and understand mystical truths. He is looking for a people who are committed that He can fill with Himself and
manifest Himself through to the world. He is looking for people who will yield, people who will obey Him, a people who have faith and will allow Him to just flow through them. The vessel is not the important thing. It is God who must perform His work and express His power. Only through committed vessels can this be done. God chose a cotton picking girl in Mississippi, who had no formal knowledge and education to perform this miracle through. He is doing what He will in this hour and manifesting His glory through 'the base things of the world' as the apostle Paul declared. 'Not many mighty, not many noble,' respond. God can take nobodies who are submitted to His will and reveal Himself through them to the world. People of low degree are going to make up His Joel's Army Company in this endtime hour.

"During those twelve days and nights, I would sense my spirit leaving my body, and being present in other locations. For example, I found myself in one car of skeptics coming to the farm house where I was ministering to the sick. I heard their conversations. When the auto drove up some time later, I informed them of what they discussed on the way. They recognized that it was a phenomenon of God. They were made believers by the supernatural manifestation of God in the event. Many times I was transferred out of my body while I stood praying for the sick and was conscious of that which was transpiring many miles away. Many were made believers by this miracle manifestation.

"God is going to have a manifestation of Himself in this endtime. I can take no credit for having been raised from the dead. But I do expect to be 'alive and remaining' and see it all through to the climax of this church age. The Bible says that it is appointed unto man once to die — I have met my appointment and do not expect to set another appointment with death. Some may mark me as heretic, fanatic, or off-brand doctrinally. But it is still true. From the day I was raised from the dead, I started declaring the generation that would never have to die to be the one in which we are now living. I believe that my generation is being offered this victory over death. And I believe I happen to be one of the 'living and remaining' ones unto the coming of the Lord. Death holds no fear for me. But God is ordaining this thing for this generation. We will never be able to convince mankind just by preaching. We will have to begin demonstrating the presence of the supernatural God in manifestation. It must take the Spirit of God to draw men unto Him. The scripture declares that 'it is unto Shiloh (Christ) that the gathering of the people shall be.' It was not an unlearned, unimportant, cotton picking girl unto whom was the gathering of the people in 1932. It was unto GOD who performed the miracle in this life which could take no credit for it.

"I believe the full manifestation of God into earth is closer than we can believe. We know that God is going to have a company in which to make this revelation of Himself. He did so with me, one who knew nothing about miracles. He is going to show that the power is of God and not of man. It is unto Christ that the Father purposes to draw mankind. Although I knew nothing about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, God manifested each one of them through me at that time. It was not my doing. Our heavenly Father is bringing a company of believers to the place of commitment to Himself that He can manifest Himself in a way in which no man will receive the glory. It must be a company of sons who are dead to self, filled with Christ, manifesting God life and God power only. It must be a manifestation of God in His many-membered body of sons. God is going to begin to speak through his sons. And when the dead hear the voice of the Son through the sons they shall live! That is the thing that will bring the dead out of their graves. That is the thing that will loose the captives. The son company will not consist of just one select group of believers. No preacher or church has a corner on God! It will be
the qualified ones from all of God’s groups of believers. The dead shall hear the voice of God through His sons, and they shall live. This must be the company who will submit to God, step out in faith and believe what God has promised. We have preached this for many years. But unless we start manifesting it, we shall not participate in it. We have to believe that God is ready to do it, and it does not depend upon our abilities. It depends on Him. It is time for His sons to rise up and possess their possessions" — end quote.

ARGO - THE SHIP

The third and final Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Cancer is ARGO. Argo presents the figure of a large ship. Argo means The Ship. Here we have a picture of pilgrims safe at last in harbor. In this ship, the sails are rolled up. It is not a ship in the midst of a journey, but it is a ship which has completed its journey and is now at rest in a safe harbor. Ah — Christ is our ship! And the Father is our safe harbor at home! We are brought at the end into that peaceful harbor and haven of rest, by the glory and power of our great Redeemer and Captain, Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (Jn. 14:6). All we are mariners, spiritual voyagers. Each and every son of God is a navigator on the sea of life. And the voyage upon which we all embarked had its origin in God. When we came into this world of sin and death we were thrust out upon a tempestuous sea, there to maneuver our tiny bark to another shore. Winds, tides, and currents swept us out to sea, and carried us on. We were lost and hopeless until we discovered the Captain of our bark. We eventually must land on that other shore. There is no alternative. Day by day we are being swept on, ever nearer to journey's end. There is one safe and commodious harbor. How happy is the man who knows that Christ is his ship, and the bosom of the Father is the harbor! Jesus came into the world that through death and resurrection He might bring us to God (I Pet. 3:18). It is in Him that we have access to the Father.

Paul's favorite expression for man's union with Christ is surely the phrase "in Christ." One hundred and sixty-four times it appears in Paul's writings. He creates a symphony of language out of it. The Lord Jesus in the last night with His disciples used this word more than once. "In that day" — when the Spirit had been poured out — "ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me." And then follows "Abide in Me; he that abideth in Me beareth much fruit." "If ye abide in Me, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." But the child of God cannot appropriate these promises unless he first prayerfully accepts the word: in Christ. Paul expresses the same thought in Romans. "We are buried with Christ." "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." And in Ephesians: "God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ; hath chosen us in Him; hath made us accepted in the Beloved; in Him we have redemption." And in Colossians: "In Him dwelleth all the fullness; we are perfect in Christ Jesus; Walk ye in Him; Ye are complete in Him."

Precious phrase! sweeter than honey to our soul, we would adore the Holy Spirit for revealing such a wonder to those elect ones called to sonship. The word translated "complete" is used by Demosthenes in describing a ship fully manned — and truly our ship is well manned by her Captain who Himself steers the vessel, and brings all safe to their desired haven. His glorious life is the dwelling place of all sufficiency for in Him dwelleth all the fullness.

While Christ is our ship bringing us to God, Argo pictures a ship in which the sails are rolled up. It is not a ship in the midst of a journey, but it is a ship which has completed its
journey and is now at rest in a safe harbor. The pilgrims are safe at last in the harbor. At home in the bosom of the Father! Returned from whence we came! But returned with what wisdom and riches and glory accrued by experience along the way! As Carl Schwing has written: "So lovely is the place of our dwelling. It is high and holy... it is beyond compare. It far exceeds the dreamings of heaven. It is unknown, unseen and untouched by all that is less than spirit. Spirit has no depths, nor heights... no time or limitations. The universe is but a path that leads to it... even infinity is but its threshold. This is the place where all things were planned. It is the substance of all matter, the source of fire and light... it is the birthplace of love and wisdom... it is the heart of the Eternal One. Here, in the 'secret chamber' of His Being, is our dwelling place... it is here that He shares the secrets, the mysteries and the purposes of the ages. It is here that we partake of His mind, His abilities and His attributes: and it is here we become the dwelling place of all the creations and all the ages yet to come. Should it seem strange that like Father, like sons? Can religion forbid God to give us the mind that was in Christ Jesus? Can the clutter and chatter of a dead order keep us from a life in the Spirit? The Spirit is showing us things to come... do not cling to things that are past. God is not going to 'revive' a lifeless Christianity. 'Come out of her My people' is a call of the past... the message of 'Israel' only wearies the spirit. The Father makes all things new; a new age, a new order and a new gospel. The seed of the Church, the seed of Israel and the seed of the Gospel of the Ages is in the SONS... and, as you know, the Sons are in Christ Jesus.

"I do not write of a vision or a dream, I write of that which our spirits have moaned for, have longed for, sensed, and now reach out for. I do not write of someday, rather of our place in Him today. I do not write of somewhere... it is not a place far off... it is all around us, brothers. Seek it and you will find it... knock and it will open to you... enter and you will possess it! In this holy place all of Adam's race and all of God's creation will hear these purifying words of love and grace: 'Be ye reconciled to God.' It is in this holy place that death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire which burns forever, ages without end, within the depths of our Father's glory. It is in this holy place that the sons shall return all things to their Rightful Owner; and it is in this holy place that the Age of Fullness shall begin. Praise the Lord!

"This is truly the glorious Sonrise of a New Day. All that dwell in the heavenlies behold the glory of the Morning Son as He shines from the faces of His younger brothers. Even now His transforming rays burn deep within us, awakening the 'new creature' and calling him forth to 'Resurrection Life'. One by one He calls us, each in his order, each in his time. If we be in a grave, in the flesh or in a steeple-house, means little... when the voice of the Living God is heard, our spirits rise and 'go out to meet Him.' Things visible mean less than nothing. Death shall not hold its prey... and the stronghold of Babylon, like a great rock, is cast into the sea of oblivion. There are regions far beyond the knowledge of man, even beyond the knowledge of sons. Regions reserved by the Father for the dawning of an Infinite Age... regions that exist on the other side of the Great White Throne... regions to be given to the Lamb and His Bride... an Eden for the Spirit's race... sons and daughters born of God's Christ..." — end quote.
Chapter 46
Leo-The Lion

We come now to the twelfth and final Sign in our study of the Zodiac — God's Bible in the sky. The last Sign is LEO — THE LION. Kenneth Fleming has well said in his book GOD'S VOICE IN THE STARS: "The great drama of the universe started with the sign of Virgo, and in Leo we reach the last scene of the last act. In the Zodiac we have come full circle, for the tail of the Lion touches the head of Virgo, the correct place to start and end in the interpretation of the twelve signs. This fact was, we believe, the chief purpose of the great Sphinx of Egypt, which was the head of a woman and the tail of a lion. We have pointed out previously that the beginning point of prophecy in the first book of the Bible concerns the woman and her Seed, which would destroy the seed of the serpent. The sign of Virgo clearly showed this. The ending point in Biblical prophecy, in the last book of Scripture, describes the Seed of the woman as 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah...who has prevailed' (Rev. 5:5). Thus the start and finish of the Zodiac coincide with the start and finish of the prophetic story of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Word of God" — end quote.

How glorious it is to see that in the night sky this picture is portrayed for all the world to see — the old, old story which is ever new; that story which is wondrously portrayed, not only in the Zodiacal figures and in their names, but even in the intricacies of the detailed names of all the ancient stars in these constellations. These are pictures that go back beyond the recorded history of men to the very God who flung the stars from His fingertips... who sprinkled them across the sky... who numbered and named them all... and who painted for us in the galleries of the dome of the heavens, the glorious plan of God for the ages. How wondrous He is! I am well aware that when we embarked on this unknown journey through the Zodiac almost four years ago, many were skeptical of any involvement with the Signs of the heavens — for all they had heard of them were the perversions of the carnal mind and pagan religion, namely, astrology. I do not hesitate to tell you that the vast majority of astrologers and those who adhere to astrology have changed the truth of God into a lie and worship and serve the creation more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 1:25). The carnal mind is the great deceiver who has deceived people into trusting in the Sign rather than the thing God has signified by the Sign — the revelation of Jesus Christ. But after examining all the Signs under the searchlight of the scriptures and divine wisdom, can there be any doubt in our minds but that God intended the constellations to bear a message?

As you examine the drawings of the ancient star charts, and observe how each and every scene corresponds precisely with all the major themes of scripture and God's great plan of the ages, can you doubt that the original purpose was to proclaim the ultimate triumph of the Son of God in the conflict of the ages? As you read the ancient names of the stars, beginning with Virgo, the Virgin, and learn of "the Seed" and "the Branch" revealed in these names, and compare scripture with scripture where these names are found, are you not convinced that the very names of the stars in the Signs of the Zodiac preach the Gospel? As you behold the strong man restraining the serpent while crushing the perverse scorpion, are you not transported right into the heart of God's wonderful plan of
redemption? Either these remarkable Signs from antiquity were designed by the wisdom and purpose of our great Creator and Redeemer — or they are the most colossal and astounding coincidence in the universe! Surely the child of God must stand in awe before the sovereign and almighty Father who has declared the history of creation and redemption in the stars along the path of the sun before He ever placed man upon this planet! Ours is not a Creator who has had to solve His problems with man or satan moment by moment, as though He were caught by surprise. No! Ours is a God who is omniscient and omnipotent and who reigneth, despite worldly evidences to the contrary. He planned it all, ordained it all, and has declared the end from the beginning, and ordered it so, and nowhere in all the reaches of infinity is this more beautifully illustrated than in the SIGNS OF THE HEAVENS!

LEO - THE LION

The name of this constellation, Leo, The Lion, means virtually the same, whether you look at it in Arabic, Hebrew, Coptic, or Syriac. It means He that rends, that tears asunder. The lion is a noble, majestic and kingly creature, strong and courageous, fearing nothing, and so fierce and powerful that no other animal can stand before him. Mankind from the dawn of history was impressed by what he saw and knew of this awesome and terrible beast and so awarded it the title of “king of beasts.” Dr. Seiss has described the lion: “It scarcely has an equal in physical strength, which is further combined with extraordinary quickness and agility. Ordained to feed on flesh, it is fitted for the work of capture and destruction, and is supplied with the most powerful physical machinery conceivable for the purpose. It can easily kill and drag away a buffalo, and it can crush the skull of a horse or break the backbone of an ox with one stroke of its paw. Its claws can cut four inches in depth at a single grasp. It has great ivory teeth capable of crunching a bullock's bones. The fall of its fore paw in striking is estimated to be equal to twenty-five pounds in weight, whilst it is able to handle itself with all the nimbleness of a cat, to whose family the lion belongs. The possession of such powers, with its instincts for blood, renders this animal wonderfully daring, bold, and self-confident, and the great terror of men and beasts in the vicinity of its haunts. When the lion is assailed and thoroughly aroused, and lifts himself up in proud contemplation of his foes, though banded in troops around him, his composed, majestic, and defiant mien is described as noble and magnificent beyond conception; whilst the terribleness of his growl and the thunder of his roar contribute to make the picture almost superhumanly impressive” — end quote.

And this is the image we are called to contemplate in John's vision describing the character and majesty of Christ in connection with the loosing of the seals of the scroll and the clearing of our earth from all enemies and usurpers: "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Rev. 5:5). It is the king of beasts in the jungle who typically represents the King of kings in His triumph over all things. The book of Revelation contains the revelation of the majestic inheritance of God, which seemed to have been forfeited by the sin of man forever and which is sealed up and withheld from man throughout the ages. Stacy Wood has said of this: "The word 'sealed' in this passage is from a Greek word that in one of its meanings corresponds to our English word 'foreclosure.' Thus, the phrase 'sealed with seven seals' may be rendered 'foreclosed with seven insignias.' This book was bought, then sealed up or foreclosed upon, and set up on a shelf. It is my conviction that this book is us — mankind. We were foreclosed on by our forefather — Adam. Adam sold humanity for nothing. He brought us to naught. We were 'sealed up,' living without the knowledge of, or
relationship to, the God who visits us in the Garden. Being sealed, John looks and wonders that there is no one in heaven or earth that can break the foreclosure — no one who can break the seals and look into the book. The prophet begins to weep. He is sad that no one can get into the reality of what life is. The next scene reveals an angel, a messenger, a word out of the heavens that addresses the prophet John, proclaiming that there is One. Weep no more! There is a Lamb in the midst of the throne, and this Lamb is a Lion, and HE is worthy to break the seals, HE is worthy to reverse the foreclosure, HE is worthy to redeem or buy back that which was foreclosed upon, HE is worthy to open the book, HE is worthy to pierce into and reveal the true value of man’s life! The seven seals represent the fullness of the foreclosure upon us, and God is breaking every area of this foreclosure upon our lives. He is dealing either with that which is negative in our life that has prevented us from seeing the Christ, or the Christ being seen in us — Or He is dealing and accentuating the positive of the Christ-life within that we may become free to follow, express and reveal HIM" — end quote.

The One who is able to accomplish so mighty a work within us is the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH. And the Lion of the tribe of Judah is CHRIST THE KING! When the dying Jacob blessed his sons, he prophesied to his son Judah that he would be a lion, whom his brethren should praise, whose hand should be in the neck of his enemies, and before whom his brethren should bow down (Gen. 49:8-8). What he spoke to Judah indicated the warlike and victorious energy which was afterward demonstrated in that tribe. In Judah's illustrious descendant, David, the lion — nature was strikingly exhibited, and his boast in the Lord was, "I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again until they were consumed. I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet. For Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me. I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets" (Ps. 18:37-42). While David penned these inspired words out of his own experience, they are also a messianic prophecy looking forward to a still mightier King "who sprang out of Judah" as David’s lineal descendant and heir, who at once is David's Lord and David's son, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root and the offspring of David. The Lion is a Lamb — for He conquers not by brute force but by the power of His poured out life. The wonder of it is that THIS LION- LAMB IS WITHIN US! The worthy One is within! When you begin laying hold upon the worthy One within you, the One within you begins unsealing the book within. Out of that unsealing comes the triumph of the Christ in every dimension of our lives. He makes war against every false and fleshly thing that there might be the revelation of Jesus Christ in us. There will be the expression of what is true in us (the Christ within) coming forth into manifestation in our outer realm. It is not a nature that ignores the corruption of our outer man — it is a nature that is capable of dealing with the corruption of that outer man that the Spirit be revealed. Oh that our eyes might be opened to behold HIM! HE is the most powerful, terrible, courageous, bold, daring, self-confident, composed and majestic Lion of all! HE is worthy to open the book, to fulfill in Himself all the requirements, and now to fulfill IN US all the reality of our redemption. In absolute power and strength He shall reign until every enemy in us is destroyed and the Christ is fully and forever formed in us, formed from the inner to the outer — the image of God.

THE KING
We first meet Jesus the Saviour as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. But at length He takes on the character of the Lion within us to tear away the flesh of our carnal nature and crush every bone of our resistance to the rule of His Kingdom of righteousness. The Lamb is our Saviour — the Lion is our King! Kingship is the highest, and most respected and powerful position in a kingdom. In ancient times the king was supreme and his word was law. Life and death were in the words of a king. Kings are not in great demand these days. In most of our western countries, kings no longer rule. We've fought for democracy — government of the people, by the people, and for the people, as Abraham Lincoln said. Yet we're not really free or truly happy. Now we talk of creeping socialism. The nasty kings of the past have turned into the nasty "big governments" of today. Thus it is almost surprising when we hear the Bible say that true joy and blessing is found, not in democracy, but with a King in charge!

The kings have had their day, it is said, but there is one King whose day is shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. "Behold, thy King cometh," the Old Testament declares (Zech. 9:9). Time and again in the Word of God we find prophecies of a glorious and universal Kingdom ruled by a great and eternal King. So well was this understood in the time of Christ that even John the Baptist, after introducing our Lord to His public ministry, asked, "Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?" (Lk. 7:19). The promised King did appear, but His own people wouldn't receive Him. One of the most profound and awe-inspiring statements of all scripture was penned by the apostle John: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (Jn. 1:11-12). Isaiah paints a picture of people from all over the world coming together like tidal waves of water. And where are they flowing? Right up to heaven and the throne of the Lord God. "Teach us your ways! Give us your laws! Reign over us!" they cry. These people have learned that when they rule their own lives, they end up with a world full of hatred, violence, sin, perversion, strife and death. Only when they get off their little thrones and let the great King of the universe reign is there peace and joy and righteousness.

As we now move out of the "church age" on into the "kingdom age" God must purge, purify, and update our conversation. Vocabulary is perhaps the most odious garbage we bring with us from the old order into the new. We have all obtained along the way of our walk in God a religious vocabulary. As God moves us from glory to glory and realm to realm we find again and again in our speech antiquated words and terms that were never godly, spiritual, or biblical in the first place. Ever since we have awakened to come out of religious Babylon we have labored under false concepts of God and a phony vocabulary by which we continue to speak the language of Babylon. But, praise God, by the spirit of wisdom and revelation God is giving us a whole new terminology that corresponds to the truth of His Kingdom and the reality of His Life in this new day. It is a new vocabulary — the language of the Kingdom of God.

Today we hear much about the need for "revival." Preachers sometimes say that they went to a certain church and "preached a revival." Multitudes of believers are praying and interceding for revival. Some teach that there is yet to be a great world-wide revival in the last days. But I do not hesitate to tell you that when I hear someone say, "Lord, send a revival," my spirit cringes within me. Hearing that is like eating little green apples. "Lord, send a revival!" we plead. Indeed — revive what? If God energized what we have now we would merely have the biggest and most powerful BABYLON that ever existed! Every revival in history has eventually produced another monstrous form of Babylon. What do you mean "revive" this? Let us not labor under the delusion that somehow God is about
to refresh, revive, restore, quicken, and refashion the old ecclesiastical structures so that
the new thing He is doing can be accommodated in some old wine-skin that has been
rejuvenated with "kingdom" oil. Oh, no! God is not in the business of either reviving,
blessing, restoring or remodeling Babylon — He is calling His sheep that are scattered in
the mountains, calling His elect ones by name, and there is a response. A new sense of
hearing is coming to those called to sonship and a new day arises from their hearts —
not the old cry, "Lord, send a revival," but the cry of this day has become, "Thy Kingdom
come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven!" I can assure you, and I believe that I
have the Spirit of God when I say it, that there will never be another revival. The day of
revival, like the days of kings, has passed away. The next thing on the agenda is not
another revival — it is the manifestation of the sons of God. It is the manifestation of the
Kingdom of God in power and glory. God is about to shake the world, and the desire of all
nations shall come. Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in this day as the peoples of
all the earth are swept into the Kingdom of God. This is not revival — this is the
KINGDOM OF GOD!

The following words from the pen of George Warnock are truly words of wisdom and
revelation. "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. All kingdoms recognize this,
and any division that appears in a kingdom is certainly cause for immediate alarm; and I
think this has much to do with the fear that seems to be mounting higher and higher in
the ecclesiastical realms... that some of God's people are getting to be just a little too free.
The fact is that God has been bringing division into the midst of the kingdoms since the
day kingdoms began... for the simple reason that God has an 'everlasting kingdom' in
mind, and any kingdom that does not give way to the everlasting kingdom is doomed to
failure. It is not difficult to recognize this when it concerns the kingdoms of this world, but
as Christians we find it difficult at times to recognize that God often brings divisions into
the ranks of the ecclesiastical kingdoms. They are not called kingdoms, of course... we
use different names, more religious names... like Pentecostal, Baptist, Presbyterian,
Lutheran, Episcopalian... and we just stop here for lack of space and time. But God has
one Kingdom in mind, even 'The Kingdom of His dear Son.' The heirs of this Kingdom
have for the most part been scattered throughout the other kingdoms... but God's plan is
for 'one fold, and one Shepherd.' This is what the ministries are for... to gather together
the scattered sheep of God" — end quote.

In praying for revival we develop a revivalistic mentality which contradicts the purposes
of God for this Day. When one examines revivals historically, he finds that when you live in
the revival mentality you are like a person who gets "high" on a drug — you soon need
another "fix". Revivals throughout history are recurrent activity — activity that returns from
time to time. Revivals are those kinds of divine intervention which bring about awakening,
followed by spiritual declension and apostasy. It is a vicious, never-ending cycle. Awake,
Refreshed, sluggish. Refreshed, sluggish. Filled, empty. Filled, empty. Revivals are
oscillating in nature, swinging back and forth between two extremes. Furthermore,
revivals are occasional and variable. They occur now and then. In and out, up and down,
here and there, now and then, back and forth, awake and asleep — do you feel yourself
getting motion sickness? In the 1800's there was a revival called "The Great Awakening.
As someone has pointed out, unfortunately it was followed by "The Great Asleepening."
We don't need another Great Awakening so that we can have another Great Asleepening
so that we can have another Great Awakening... What the world needs in this hour is not
another revival. No revival has brought the ultimate triumph of God's Kingdom. No revival
has brought the universal defeat of sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death. No revival

293
has brought an end to war, strife, hatred, corruption, fear, tyranny, pain, hunger, or any of
the other problems and curses that blight mankind. Our prayer should be, "Lord, don't
send another revival!" Our prayer should be as our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom
come!" I am not a revivalist. I am a Kingdomite! I am a son of the Kingdom, an announcer
of the Kingdom, a proclaimer of the Kingdom, an ambassador of the Kingdom of God. A
Kingdomite is the opposite of a revivalist. Instead of advocating and praying for a move of
God that returns from time to time, the Kingdom Ambassador views the presence and
rule of God as perpetual, constant, progressive — never vacillating and never
retrogressing. Our God is abiding and progressing from glory to glory, from realm to
realm, from age to age — not sleeping and awaking. The Kingdom sons are builders who
build a place for God to inhabit permanently — not a resort for Him to visit occasionally. I
want to be a builder! Jesus said, "We will come and make our abode with him." What
God desires in this hour is a place to stay, a temple to dwell in, a throne to sit upon, a
nature to be formed in, a Kingdom to rule from.

The focus of the New Testament is upon Christ and His Kingdom — not revivals. You
don't read about revivals in any of the writings of the apostles. The word revival does not
appear in the dictionary of Kingdom terminology. So far as New Testament economy is
concerned, revival is an unscriptural and extra-biblical concept. You won't find the idea
anywhere! Jesus didn't promise revivals. The apostles never taught or exhorted or gave
any instructions about revivals. Amazing, isn't it, how much of the language of Babylon
we still speak over here on Kingdom territory! When John the Baptist announced the
Messiah's approach two thousand years ago, every thing concurred to give weight to his
testimony. Guided by the signs of the times, and by the chronological predictions of the
prophets, expectation was everywhere awake for the first sound of Messiah's footsteps.
From all parts of the country they flocked to the man of God, who cried alone in the
wilderness, "Repent ye! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; prepare ye the way of the
Lord; make His paths straight." With profound and breathless attention the motley group
listened to the exciting tidings; and harsh as were his words, rougher though some of his
speeches were than the camel hair garment which he wore, they gladly received them
and were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Presently the Lord Himself
appears upon the stage; and John the Baptist, having dutifully fulfilled his role as the
herald of the Messiah, retired and was little more heard of. Thus heralded, the Lord's
ministry opened with every advantage; and vast crowds followed Him, as they had John,
"trusting that it was HE who was to redeem Israel — saving them from their enemies, and
from the hand of all that hated them."

Israel was looking for the Messiah to come and deliver them from ROME! They looked for
Him to come with the glamour and pomp and power of an earthly Potentate, with the
flashing of swords and the snapping heels of His army, to deliver them from their
enemies and from the hands of all who oppressed them. They wanted a glorious, wealthy
kingdom with prestige and honor for themselves. The prophets had plainly declared that
a Deliverer would come out of Zion. There could be no mistake about that, but their
unregenerate hearts did not understand that the first work of the great Redeemer would
be to deliver them from the curse of their sins and to transform their wicked hearts by the
washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which deliverance could
only be accomplished by the shedding of His precious blood and the renewing of the Holy
Ghost within them. What value would it have been had the Saviour come only to deliver
them from the power and authority of Rome if there was to be no change in their hearts?
God's Word is full of accounts of His mighty acts of deliverance on their behalf, but no
sooner were they delivered from their enemies than they utterly corrupted themselves and forsook the Lord.

The corruption of the human heart is incredible beyond words to express and it would have been completely useless had the Lord sent His Son to be the deliverer of His people from enemies without while leaving the enemies within unchallenged and undestroyed. The men of Israel could have believed in Jesus as their Saviour from the Romans. As their Saviour from their carnal hearts and fleshly natures they could not believe in Him, for they loved their sins. The King of heaven came to offer them a share in His Kingdom; but they were not poor in spirit, and the Kingdom of Heaven was not for them. Gladly would they have inherited the earth; but they were not meek, and the earth was for the humble children of the perfect Father. The whole problem with Israel as a nation in the days of Christ was that they were unconverted. There was no birth from above. There was no new heart and no new spirit placed within by which men are transformed into new creatures and conformed into the image of God. They wanted the Christ to come and rule from without over their outward enemies, but they had no desire for Him to march triumphantly into their inner life to deliver them from the kings of corruption and idolatry that ruled upon the throne of their hearts. They wanted deliverance from ROME, but were uninterested in the cleansing of their OWN DOMAIN.

The same crowd is all about us today. They want deliverance from the government, from persecution, from communism, from the antichrist, from the tribulation, from problems and troubles, from taxation, from crime and violence, from vast political conspiracies they imagine are steadily pushing the world into a nightmare of godlessness and tyranny. But I do not hesitate to tell you that none of these are the problem. The most powerful kings that rule in the world today are those that rule between your ears and between your rib-cage — and it is only as the Kingdom of God takes its rightful place in our inner lives, that these kings are subdued and brought to naught. In the soul-realm we have the dominant king of self-will, which has usurped control and ridden roughshod over the ways of God. There are religious kings of static creeds and dogmas, traditions and commandments of men. There are kings of passion bringing the dominion of the flesh. Emotions which usurp unholy sway over people. There are kings of ruling thoughts and imaginations which exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. But, praise God! there is a King who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the prophetic symbol of righteous conquest and dominion. I have heard the patter of the paws of the Lion of the tribe of Judah stalking through the corridors of my soul as He has marched into my land conquering and to conquer, bringing all into submission to Him.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass it pointed forth to a time when the presence of the King and His Lordship would be conveyed into our midst by the Spirit. There is something that is radically missing from most Christian's lives, and from most Churches, and that is a true sense of His Lordship. We sing, "He is Lord," but we have no conception of the full weight and significance of that word — He is Lord. If you want to know what He does in the city, what He comes there for, then meditate deeply upon the joyful and impressive shout of the multitude on that long ago day. "Hosanna: blessed is the KING OF ISRAEL that cometh in the name of the Lord!" There is no way to hear the message of the King and the principles that put that message into operation in the home, in the church, on the job, at school — there is no way to hear that message — and remain the same. There is no way you can come into contact with the King and not change! It is my deep conviction that His presence and His power and His ministry and
His authority is being set in the midst of His elect, under His dealing hand, within that blessed company that has received the call to sonship.

Most people are Christians because they want to go to heaven and escape hell. If all the preachers one day called a press conference and announced to the church world, "We have discovered that there is no heaven or hell," how many would stay in the church after that? How many would any longer abstain from worldliness and fleshly lusts? Most of the people would ask, "Why are we coming then?" They were coming for heaven, not because JESUS IS LORD AND EVERYBODY MUST SUBMIT TO HIM. And why is He Lord? Because all His ways are righteous (right) altogether. In the hour in which we live the vast majority of Christians are more miserable than most other people in the world. They are only enduring this life in order to eventually get to heaven where they imagine they will spend the next billion trillion years or so singing, strumming harps, and dancing. I am quite sure that if such people would admit the truth, they would admit that even a thousand years of singing, shouting, playing harp music while dancing about in white robes would become very boring, to say the least. The fact is — most of these people can't endure five hours in a meeting even if the glory is falling all around! Most of them start examining their watches about noon on Sunday morning and their minds have already escaped to the upcoming dinner or the Sunday afternoon ball game on T.V! The problem is that their theology leaves them with nothing constructive to do and all eternity to do it in! They know nothing about the KINGDOM OF GOD. A kingdom denotes rulership and advancement of all kinds. It means WORK and RESPONSIBILITY and a place of ministry and authority to bless.

Christ is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord our God is the King, and His Kingdom rules over ALL. And praise His name, He is even now bringing forth in the earth a KINGDOM PEOPLE — the firstfruits of His redemption — who are discovering His Lordship over all of their lives. When all hell assails us, when the power of death all around crowds in upon us, when the pressures of this world would frustrate and vex and suffocate us, when our own passions and emotions and self-will would drown us in a sea of carnality and ungodliness, then HE STANDS UP WITHIN AS KING — in Kingly authority. When the world, and our own flesh, would tear us apart and smash our lives and our hope of sonship upon the rocks, HE IS THERE, the still small Voice, the deep inner Consciousness that all is well; that He, the Lord of glory is with us still, and all is secure in His loving hands, for He ordained our path and made provision for the hour. He is Himself the provision, the indwelling Christ, the anointing, the authority inherent in the spirit moving in our lives. Thank God, in every situation and circumstance of life HE IS PRESENT TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS unto Himself, thus reigning as King over our domain. As surely as we are God's Israel, so certain is it that He is enthroned within our hearts upon the throne of His father David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. Blessed be the KING! It is HE that is revealed in the Sign of LEO, THE LION!

On August 10, 1945, the surrender of Japan brought World War II to an end. After an atomic bomb was dropped on each of the Japanese industrial cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan had had enough. The nation sued for peace through the Swiss government, stating that the terms of the Potsdam ultimatum would be acceptable if Japan's political structure could be preserved. On August 11, the United States transmitted a reply stating: "From the moment of surrender the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, who shall take such steps as he deems proper to
effectuate the surrender terms." On August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito of Japan made a
dramatic broadcast, announcing the surrender to his people. It was unconditional
surrender subject to the victor's dictates. Unconditional surrender — a complete
capitulation signaling the end of hostilities, a total release of all rights, claims and
privileges. It was this type of surrender that concluded the greatest war in human history.
And, precious friend of mine, it is exactly this type of surrender that God demands of
each and every subject of His Kingdom! Do you realize what God requires of us?
Complete capitulation — the end of all our hostilities toward God's authority and way of
life — total release of all rights and claims to our former, self-serving ways and carnal
ambitions — absolute acceptance of all God's terms. However, instead of captivity and
an uncertain future, which result from surrender in human wars, our surrender to God
produces life and blessing and glory forevermore! And not only that — but a place of
authority and power with Him in His Kingdom over all!

The story is told of a king who was famous for His abhorrence of waste — so it was quite
surprising when he came into the room where his aides were assembled carrying a
breathtakingly beautiful pearl in his hand. Showing it to the first of his aides, he asked,
"What do you think this pearl is worth?" "Oh, many trunks full of gold, your majesty," he
replied. The king said, "Smash it." "It would be an insult to the king to destroy such a
beautiful pearl," replied the aide. The king turned to a second man and showed him the
pearl. "How much do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked. "One cannot put a price tag
on such a beautiful pearl as this," replied the second man. "Smash it," said the king.
"Such senseless destruction is unthinkable," replied the aide. The king turned to a third
man. He was a humble laborer who, in return for a kindness he had shown the king, had
been invited to live in the palace. "What do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked the
man. "More than all the gold I have ever seen in my entire life," he replied. "Smash it," said the king.
Without a moment's hesitation, this man took the pearl to where there were
two large rocks and in an instant, reduced the pearl to a thimbleful of useless dust. "The
man is mad," cried the others in the room. Holding up his hand to quiet the murmurs, the
laborer said: "Which is of greater value; a beautiful pearl or obedience to the king's
command?" The king responded by elevating the aide to be his right-hand minister with
authority over all his treasuries, possessions and estates — subservient to no one but the
king himself. This, my beloved, is the obedience of sonship! Such obedience is the
stepping-stone to the throne!

Jesus Christ our Lord is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. There are some whom
I have heard from time to time speak of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and soon- coming King
— as if to deny by this that the Christ has any Kingdom at all at the present time. Such
ignorant statements always leave me cold. What could be farther from the teachings of
God's Word, which teaches that Christ already rules and reigns over His Kingdom and
that we are already citizens of that Kingdom? We are told in Colossians that He "hath
translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." Already it has taken place, already we
are in that Kingdom, already Christ has a Kingdom and is its King. The word "kingdom"
comes from the two terms "king" and "dominion" — king's dominion. It exists wherever
the dominion of the Christ rules and holds sway over the hearts of men. Christ is the
great King right now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing
absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation
of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible. He shall yet arise in power and
glory and majesty in His completed and perfected body — the manifested sons of God —
and reveal Himself as the great conquering King, bringing deliverance to the whole
creation, reconciling all unto Himself, and then shall all know the glory of His Kingdom as
every tongue confesses and every knee bows and all in that day declare that JESUS
CHRIST IS LORD — Yahweh of hosts, the Lord of glory, the King of the universe!

When the Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered
them, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation..." That is, the Kingdom of God
does not come with outward show, with external pomp, being outwardly observed by all,
"neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within
you" (Lk. 17:20-21), or as the Diaglott gives it, "God's Royal Majesty is among you." The
wonderful and rich truth the Lord presented here is that "the Kingdom of God is within
you." He was telling us that the King is among His people, or more personally and
intimately, Jesus was revealing, "THE KING IS WITHIN YOU, and if anyone says to you,
Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not" (Mat. 24:33). He then states that false prophets
and false Christs should arise, and we have seen this come to pass in our day as others
have seen it in their day. False prophets and false anointed ones will attempt to tell us
that Christ may be here or there, or that He is coming in 1988 or 1998; but we know they
are deluded, for Christ, the King, IS WITHIN US.

KINGS AND PRIESTS

Do not for one moment suppose that because we sometimes speak of the Kingdom age
that we mean by that that there is no Kingdom of God on earth until some future day. The
Kingdom is a glorious, present, and eternal reality and has been since Jesus brought it
into the earth by the authority of His Spirit. It is a wonderful fact that during this present
age God is forming His body of King-Priests to reign with Him in His Kingdom. There are
two errors among the Lord's people respecting the Kingdom. One error says that the
Kingdom is still future — it is coming, but not here today. The second error says that
since the Kingdom is here, a present reality, all things will continue the same generation
after generation, age after age, the Kingdom and the world will continue to co-exist, with
those who are quickened and enlightened walking in the Kingdom, and the world
continuing to abide in darkness and bondage to sin and death. The truth is that since the
Kingdom has come and is here — it must ever progress and expand until it consumes
(takes into itself) ALL OTHER KINGDOMS. Some contend that there will never be the
ultimate triumph of Christ's Kingdom over all — but that is not the revelation of God's
Word. HIS KINGDOM WILL CONSUME ALL OTHER KINGDOMS, HE MUST PUT
DOWN ALL RULE AND ALL AUTHORITY, HE MUST PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS
FEET, HE MUST GATHER ALL THINGS TOGETHER IN ONE INTO CHRIST, AND
GOD MUST BECOME ALL IN ALL. That, my friend, is the testimony of scripture! God
has a plan of "ages" in which to accomplish His grand purpose. There is this age, the age
to come, and the ages to come all set forth in the scriptures. This age is for the
development of the church which is His body. In the glorious age that lies before us the
Kingdom shall be extended and expanded beyond the church — over all nations until the
scripture is fulfilled, "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain
(kingdom) of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains
(kingdoms), and it shall be exalted above the hills (smaller kingdoms); and people shall
flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the
mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His
ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the
Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations
afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning
hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. For all the peoples do now walk in the name of their god, but shall walk in the name of Yahwey our Elohim for ever and ever" (Zech. 4:15).

In that day there shall be no more godless, atheistic nations; no more pagan nations whose people bow before false gods; no more radical, Christ-hating Islamic nations; no more affluent, pleasure-mad, crime-ridden, self-seeking nations who have forgotten God; for the word is sure: "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. 72:11). Again, "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. 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). "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:27-28). "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" (Rev. 2:26-27).

It is a great mystery, but it is a grand fact of truth nevertheless that Christ first reigns IN us that He may consequently reign THROUGH us. "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mat. 25:34). "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (I Cor. 6:9-10). "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD..." (I Cor. 15:50).

The word "kingdom" indicates the richness of the heritage of the saints. It is no petty estate, no happy corner in obscurity. I heard a good man say he should be content with a cabin in the corner of gloryland or a spot just inside the gate. I shall not be! The Lord says we shall inherit a KINGDOM. We could not be satisfied to inherit less, because less than that would not suit our character. "He hath made us kings and priests unto God" (Rev. 5:10) and we must reign for ever and ever, or be as wretched as deposed monarchs. A king without a kingdom is an unhappy and unfulfilled man. If I were a poor servant, a servant's quarters would be a boon, for it would correspond with my condition and degree; but if I am made a son of God, and heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus; if I am made a priest and a king, I must have a kingdom, or I shall not have attained to a position equal to my nature. He who makes us kings gives unto us a Kingdom to fit the nature which He hath bestowed upon us.

Beloved, do strive after, more and more, that which the Spirit of God will give you, a Kingly Heart; do not be among those who are satisfied with the miserable nature of ordinary humanity or the childish hopes of the babes in Christ who throng to the churches which are merely nurseries for the birthing, care and educating of babes and which then stifle and threaten to suffocate the life out of these little ones with their own static creeds, lifeless traditions, and infantile programs. They eagerly look for mansions and harps and golden streets and wings and white nightgowns in that glory world above, unable to comprehend that such glittering diadems are only nursery toys to God's true kings; the
true riches are ETERNAL SPIRITUAL REALITIES; the true treasury wealth looks down upon the stars. Do not sell yourself short, ye sons of the Most High! Get a kingly heart — ask the King of kings to give it to you, and beg of Him a royal spirit. Act royally on earth towards your Lord, and for His sake towards all men. Go about the world not as mean men in spirit and action, nor yet in false humility as paupers and beggars, but as kings and priests of a race superior to the dirt-scrappers who are on their knees, crawling in the mud after fleeting earthly riches and transitory worldly fame. What incredible loss shall be suffered by those who imagine that financial prosperity in this life is the sign of great faith, blessing, and spirituality!

What Christendom in general cannot comprehend is that the Christ does not rule alone but through a many-membered body. Man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God, is God's government in the Kingdom of God. I have met men who professed that they had no desire, no ambition whatever to rule and reign with Christ. It is enough, say they, to know that we are saved by grace and shall make heaven at last. In fact, I have been greatly criticized and abused by some for my hope of inheriting the Kingdom of God and sitting with Christ upon the throne of universal dominion. In the eyes of these accusers I am vain, conceited, self-righteous, presumptuous, heretical and power-mad, suffering delusions of grandeur because I cherish the beautiful hope of sonship and rulership in the Kingdom of God. But I do not hesitate to tell you that Christ Himself has graciously bidden us to overcome and share with Him in His authority over the nations and all things. He would both be King IN US and exercise His regal power THROUGH US. "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). Such reward to His faithful followers is merely the tangible expression of the approval of God, and we may no more deny Him the pleasure of expressing that approval than we may renounce it once it is conferred. HE WHO DESPISES A THRONE DESPISES HIM WHO CONFERS THE THRONE. It was one of our Lord's rebukes to the Pharisees — "The glory that cometh only from God YE SEEK NOT" (Jn. 4:44).

As one has written, "God is exceedingly rich. He is like a successful business man who has an enormous amount of capital. God has a business in this universe, and His vast wealth is His capital. We do not realize how many billions, countless billions, He has. All of this capital is simply HIMSELF, and with it He intends to 'manufacture' HIMSELF in mass production. God HIMSELF is the Businessman, the Capital, and the Product. His intention is to dispense Himself to many people in mass production. Therefore, God requires such a divine arrangement, a divine management, a divine dispensation in order to bring Himself into humanity." Praise His name! As His kings and priests upon His throne the elect sons of God are the governmental arrangement by which and through which God dispenses Himself into His creation. What an opportunity to change things! What an occasion to bless and heal and lift and transform the world! It would be a crime against humanity, my beloved brethren, to carelessly neglect and thus despise, as Esau despised his birthright, the position of responsibility and opportunity to bless and restore creation proffered to us by the illustrious King of kings and Lord of lords! It would be a mean and despicable crime against humanity to settle for a cabin in the corner of gloryland!

"Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for THY POSSESSION," says the Messianic Psalm. Christ conquered, and He is conquering, and He is to conquer. I claim this earth for God, for He made it. I claim this earth for God, for the earth is the Lord's. The sea is his, and He made it. His
hands formed the dry land. His power pushed up every mountain, and His fingers
scooped out every valley. By His wisdom all things were established. I claim everything
that comes out of the bowels of the earth for God, for "the earth is the Lord's and the
fullness thereof" and "all the gold and the silver is His." I claim every man in El Paso, and
in Miami, and in New York and in Hong Kong, and in Beijing, and in Moscow, and in
Baghdad and in the whole wide world for God, for "The earth is the Lord's, and the
fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" and "it is He that hath made us,
and not we ourselves." I am not willing to wickedly cede even one thing or one person to
the devil, as do some, for the Christ came to reconcile all things and He is the Saviour of
all men.

I proclaim to you, as the minister of God, that the body of Christ is here in this world for
the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Our destiny is something more than being a
little group of people waiting to die and go to heaven. The body of the Christ IS the
Kingdom of God in this world and its King-Priests must reign until all things are under His
feet. I can never be satisfied, the heart of God can never be satisfied, until I see the
Kingdom of God in every heart, the Kingdom of God in the home (how the nations need
this!), the Kingdom of God in the workshop, the Kingdom of God between employers and
employees, the Kingdom of God governing the civic affairs of the city and county, the
Kingdom of God in the government of the state, the Kingdom of God ruling in every
nation and every land. I proclaim the Kingdom of God, and I tell you that God has sent
salvation not primarily to save us from hell, but to save us from the kingdom of men, and
of devils. The rule of men will never meet the needs of men. The rule of men will never
please God. The rule of men will never deliver the world from hate and war and sin and
death. And the great truth is that Christ came to be the Saviour of the world! The foolish
statement that you so often quote: "That government of the people is to be by the people
and for the people" is a fallacy that must be destroyed. The government of the people is
NOT to be by the people — that is just the problem — the people are wicked at heart!
The government of the people is to be BY GOD and FOR GOD. Not by the people and
for the people, but government of the people by the great God who made them, and
came and died for them, and they are to live for Him. The government of God is not an
external government of laws and bureaucracies and armies and guns, but the internal
rule of His Spirit as He sits enthroned upon the throne of men's hearts. Transformed into
the image of Christ, indwelt by the mind of Christ, filled with the attributes of Christ, men
need NO EXTERNAL FORCE to manipulate, control, direct, or govern them. "The
Kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:21).

Because all the earth is His God is raising up a Kingly Priesthood to reign in mighty spirit
power and authority over the earth, not to be little human dictators, or an external
kingdom of laws and systems headquartered in Jerusalem or Washington, but with an
outflow of life and light and love, touching God with one hand, and humanity with the
other, bringing the two together, that God may indwell men by His Spirit and live and rule
in them in power and glory. The kingly nature in us is not to dominate over men's lives,
but to deal with and break the power of selfhood and rebellion and sin and the devil that
men may be reconciled to God. Kings have power and authority, priests reconcile in
mercy and love. But once the reconciliation has taken place, and Christ is enthroned, we
deliver men up to God, even the Father, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. That is the
principle of the Kingdom. We rule only to subdue men to God — then GOD RULES IN
THEM. He rules first THROUGH US, that He may rule finally IN THEM. The
manifestation of the sons of God for which all creation is in travail is nothing more nor
less than the full manifestation of God's fully developed and empowered body of KING-
PRIESTS AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. In this age the Holy Spirit is forming and equipping that body. In the next age that body shall be given power and authority over all nations and all things. In the ages yet to come the Kingdom shall be expanded from realm to realm, from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, for of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.

God is not setting up His throne in us, just to make us kings. But He is establishing His throne in us — "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God" — He is making us kings in order that He shall now be able to appear and manifest Himself in the midst of the kings as THE KING OF ALL THE KINGS. The world will never know Him as the King of kings until there are kings among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as King of kings. The world will never know Him as Lord of lords, until there are lords among whom He can stand and reveal Himself as THE LORD OF ALL THE LORDS. Why is God bringing many sons to glory? That in the midst of all Jesus Christ might appear as the pre-eminent One, THE SON among the sons. As long as we remain children, He cannot appear as the Son in the midst of children. How are you going to have a Son that is preeminent among a group of babies? That is no preeminence at all, that gives Him no honor. You cannot say, "He is the first-begotten, the first-born among many babies!" He must be first among equals. That is what "King of kings" and "Lord of lords" means. As God brings us into maturity, and brings many sons to glory, He appears as the pre-eminent One, as the first-born among MANY BRETHREN. Why does God want us to grow up into the fullness of sonship? So that the Son of God can be revealed in all His glory, wisdom, virtue, and power in and through the sons. Do not think you will be puffed up in pride or use the power for your self-interest when you become a king. That is what the childish ministries in the gift-realm do today. We need to know that we can never conquer with Christ until we have been conquered by Him. We will never reign with Christ until we are REIGNED OVER BY HIM! I want to tell you that that is a life-changing concept, yet, some who read these lines have never even begun to touch the hem of its garment. Our Captain, our King, has WON the victory! He has conquered sin! He has conquered death! He has conquered hell! And, praise God, He is conquering US! And now, we partake of His victory.

"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. 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 heaven, 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, reigning in life, undefeated and victorious, conquerors in all things, rejoicing in His throne in our hearts, then we welcome the King of kings in the midst of the kings.

"Who shall stand when He appeareth?" I tell you in truth that it is those who have been MADE ONE IN HIM in that in which He is appearing. Those are able to stand tall with Him when HE appears. 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 people? Because He is the Lord and the 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 THE LORDS! If we are not lords, He cannot come as Lord of lords. He is not Lord of slaves. He is Lord of lords. As long as we remain down on some spiritual plane below this calling, even though He is greater than we, He has to condescend and limit His manifestation in and through us to the level we are on. What condescension! To what a level He condescends every Sunday as He appears in the churches, to confirm His Word in the spiritual baby food fed the people, and to appear in the midst of candles and altars and choirs and robes and man-made orders — and there He meets and touches and blesses men on that level. Don't say He is not there! for He is. He appears in the midst of WHAT WE ARE IN HIM. He comes as El Shaddai, the breastied One, bearing the milk of the Word in the midst of all the babes in Christ. And that is the only form He can appear to those on that level. They never behold the King in all of His beauty. But as the Church of the Firstborn rises into the heavenlies to occupy the place God has ordained for it, in the place of glory, then Christ can be revealed in greater glory, in greater majesty, and in greater might.

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 the 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. Among the saved He appears as Saviour. Have you not noticed that the only manifestation of the Christ through saved people is salvation? Go to any church on any corner where all the people have experienced of Christ is the gift of salvation, forgiveness of sins, and what will they be preaching and ministering? Why, salvation, of course! And how does the Christ appear there in the midst? As Saviour! And as nothing more. But go among people who have found Him as Healer, and in what form does He appear in the midst? Why, as the Healer! Among those baptized in the Spirit, He appears as the Anointed and the Anointer, the baptizer in the Holy Ghost, and His anointings are manifest in power and glory.

If He must appear as Saviour, He must appear among 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 comes as Lord, He must be Lord among other lords. If He comes as King, He must be King among other kings. If He is going to be revealed as God, He must be revealed among the gods (Ps. 82:2,6). And if ever creation is to see and know Him as the great High Priest of the heavens, He must be revealed among the priests. "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 a priestly nature, are able to stand with Him. HE is the Head of the body — the body of the Priest, the Judge, the Lord and the King. Hallelujah to LEO, THE LION — THE KING OF GLORY!
Chapter 47
Leo-The Lion
(continued)

In the previous chapter we plumbed the depths and scaled the heights of revelation in the
glorious Sign of LEO, THE LION — the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who is none other than
our blessed Lord Jesus the Christ. In this Study we reach the last scene of the final act in
GOD’S BIBLE IN THE SKY. We now draw to a conclusion these meditations on the
great drama of the ages which started with Virgo, the Virgin, and comes full circle in Leo,
the Lion — to pass on to other vital truths the Spirit is speaking to the elect of God in this
significant hour.

No doubt whatever exists about the meaning of Leo. In this Sign we see for the fourth
time the symbolism of the Christ in triumph crushing the head of the serpent. It was seen
in the Sign of Scorpio, where Ophiuchus the mighty man holds his foot over the head of
the Scorpion, the deadly enemy, about to crush him. Again the triumphant victor,
Hercules, was seen, crushing with his foot, the head of the terrible dragon, Draco.
Further, in the Sign of Taurus, we noted Orion the great hunter with his foot on the head
of Lepus, the enemy. Now, finally, the truth is repeated in this last Sign, Leo. Leo brings
the whole story to completion by showing the final end of the adversary. The almighty
Christ of God has come within us as life and wisdom and strength and victory to tear
away the flesh of our carnal mind and nature and crush every bone of our resistance to
His Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Christ is Leo the Lion!
Christ is the mighty King! Christ shall triumph within! And Christ shall triumph
everywhere in all realms unto the endless vastnesses of infinity forevermore! Praise His
wonderful name!

It is another mystery, but it is a grand fact of truth nevertheless, that Christ first reigns IN
us that He may consequently reign THROUGH us. "Then shall the King say unto them
on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM prepared
for you from the foundation of the world" (Mat. 25:34). "Know ye not that the unrighteous
shall not INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor
idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor
thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall INHERIT THE
KINGDOM OF GOD" (I Cor. 6:9-10). "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood
cannot INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.... (I Cor. 15:50).

I have met men who professed that they had no desire, no ambition whatever, to rule and
reign with Christ. It is enough, say they, to know that we are saved by grace and shall
make heaven at last. In fact, I have been greatly criticized by some for my hope of
inheriting the Kingdom of God and sitting with Christ on the throne of universal dominion.
In the eyes of these accusers I am vain, conceited, self righteous, presumptuous,
heretical and power-mad because I cherish the beautiful hope of sonship and rulership in
the Kingdom of God. But I do not hesitate to tell you that Christ Himself has graciously
bidden us to overcome and share with Him His authority over the nations and all things. He would both be King IN US and exercise His regal power THROUGH US. "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). Such reward to His faithful followers is merely the tangible expression of the approval of God, and we may no more deny Him the pleasure of expressing that approval than we may renounce it once it is conferred. HE WHO DESPISES A THRONE DESPISES HIM WHO CONFERS THE THRONE. It was one of our Lord's rebukes to the Pharisees - "The glory that cometh only from God YE SEEK NOT" (Jn. 4:44). The Spirit of the Lord has been speaking to my heart. He is urging me to become a true partaker of the HEAVENLY CALLING.

It is a wonderful truth that Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and you will understand a great mystery when the Spirit makes it real to you that we are the body of Christ — therefore, we are the body of Leo the Lion, we are the body of the all-victorious King of glory! For those who are growing up into the image, stature, and fullness of Christ, the Sign of Leo is the classroom in which we have special opportunity to learn to live as kings and priests in the government of God. Every child of God called to sonship is now in school. We may feel that we graduated from school long ago, but that is a mistake; we hadn't even started to school at that time. When you received the call to sonship and went out in the world on your own, you really, then, started to school. When God drew you out of the Babylonian religious system and separated you unto Himself you may have felt you "graduated" into a new realm — and you certainly did. You graduated from kindergarten! And immediately you were enrolled in the first grade of God's SCHOOL OF SONSHIP. In this school there is only one course taught, and that is the course of overcoming, which is the hardest course to master and finish known in any curriculum in the world today. This matter of disciplining one's thoughts, desires, emotions, habits; of training one's spirit and soul and body to function on the level of the mind, nature, wisdom and power of Christ is of the greatest importance and spells the difference between success and failure in the Kingdom of God. To finish this course marks the difference between being in the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus, or remaining a babe in Christ, a nominal citizen in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The reason so many people fail to attain to great heights in the Spirit is because they are unable to see God's purpose, and therefore they have no particular incentive to seek the great heights that are in Him. So many Christians are far too taken up with carnal ideas and childish notions about mansions and harps and sitting on clouds eating pork chops with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in, to be able to grasp the great realities of the Kingdom of God! There are certain basic principles of the Kingdom that must be a part of the mind-set and experience of all who press forward into sonship to God. We must learn to think like God. We must begin to RULE WITH CHRIST IN THIS LIFE. Too many saints are weak, frustrated and defeated. May the dynamite of God's Spirit blow us all out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy, and triumph of His Kingdom. "Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armour of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world — the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Wherefore put on the complete armour of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and having fought to the end, TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD" (Eph. 6:10 -14, Weymouth).
We are called to reign with Christ from the highest heaven. Such all-embracing majesty is far too vast for my feeble understanding, yet I know by the Spirit that the body of Christ is in practical preparation for the explicit purpose of UNIVERSAL DOMINION. But how can a man rule over principalities and powers and worlds and universes if he is unable to rule his own spirit? "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). The awful betrayal, trial, mockery, beating, and crucifixion of Jesus is the most shining example. It is difficult to imagine any humiliation more bitter than that. It is the worst indignity that anyone can be called upon to endure. Few have ever had to bear it. Never was dishonor less deserved, never was dishonor more bravely borne. Through that fierce and heated hour our Lord bore Himself with quiet dignity. Others were convulsed with uncontrolled passion, He alone was calm and self-possessed. His victory over Himself was greater than His victory over His enemies. In such experiences of provocation, truly, "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city." God is a God of principle. He does not do anything by chance. It is my deep conviction that what happens in your life and mine is a result of the use or abuse of the principles of the Kingdom of God. Learn this, beloved, and you will know one of the fundamental principles of reigning with Christ: OUR AUTHORITY IS OVER SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS FIRSTLY IN OURSELVES! "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them..." (Rev. 2:26-27). "To him that overcometh will I grant (consequentially) to sit with Me in My throne" (Rev. 3:21).

As I have pointed out many times before, the journey to the throne of the universe begins in that small and undistinguished place where you are. The Kingdom of God is within you. The enChristed who are to reign with Christ first from sea to sea, then from planet to planet, and finally from universe to universe, are being prepared. Think not in your heart, precious friend of mine, that you may pass your life here careless, indifferent to the dealings of God, suddenly to awake one fine morning to find yourself sitting with Christ governing the galaxies, because such a thing will not be. Begin today to MAKE WAY FOR THE KING! This present time it but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies. And the place which He is preparing for each one is not only a world to come, and a Kingdom of Life and Light, but a place IN HIM, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, mind of His mind, nature of His nature, life of His life!

Years ago an IBM junior executive made a mistake that cost the company several million dollars. IBM's founder, Thomas J. Watson Sr., summoned him into his office. Assuming the worst, the sullied young executive said, "I guess you want my resignation?" Mr. Watson replied, "You can't be serious. We've just spent millions of dollars educating you!" God is the founder of the most important enterprise of all — the Kingdom of God. God is now in the process of hiring, educating, and developing His management team. He is training us to become powerful rulers in that Kingdom in the day when He initiates the next phase of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. How much has God already spent on your training and education? God has made a supreme investment in us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Without that price, none of us could even enter into the Kingdom of God much less attain the high-ranking positions God has waiting for those who overcame - who graduate from His school. But God doesn't stop there. He invests in us daily through His guidance and processings, and through the continuous gracious outpourings and deep and vital dealings of His Spirit.
In a very real sense, God owns us. The apostle Paul reminds us, “For ye were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's” (I Cor. 6:20). The great King of this Kingdom expects to see a profit for all His time, effort and sacrifice. God, of course, is not interested in making money. He already owns everything. God is in the business of developing His family — sons with character. If those of us who are called now succeed in qualifying for positions of rulership, we will in turn be able to help millions of others become citizens of the Kingdom. To put it in business terms, our future profit to the Kingdom of God will more than make up for any of our present losses — if we stay with the organization and apply the new lessons! Saints, like the junior executive at IBM, are capable of making costly mistakes. Have you ever felt that God has given up on you? Do you feel like you are wasting His time? Sometimes our mistakes are very costly to us, too! Have you ever felt that the cost is too high, and that you are wasting your time? Let's see what God says: "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

God will never give up on us. He is investing in us with every intention of making a profit and expanding His Kingdom. Our all-wise Father sees our potential. He knows our capacity to grow and develop. He is keener at discerning it than we are. He is also well aware of our weaknesses, and is ready to help. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," said Paul (Phil. 4:13). The children of God make a lot of mistakes, for children are children. Our ability to learn from our mistakes is part of what God uses to build character in us. In the book of Revelation, we read that it is the overcomers - those who don't leave God's school or resign from His purposes — who ultimately are given power in His Kingdom. "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every one according to his work" (Rev. 22:12). "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (Lk. 12:48). Have you made costly mistakes? Have you been stumbling and seemingly wasting God's time? Don't resign! Don't drop out of God's school! His investment in you is too great! He will see you through! Graduation day is coming! The positions in His authority and glory are waiting! Learn the lessons that will help you to better serve in the Kingdom of God. If you do, great heavenly wealth and power and opportunity lie ahead for you in the age and in the ages to come. Through you creation will be lifted, redeemed, restored to life and liberty and glory - and that's where the real profit begins!

Let us learn our lessons well — and let us never presume that we have attained to something in God that we have not yet qualified for. And let us never grasp after a place or position the Father has not conferred upon us. There is no need to DECLARE OUR SONSHIP - the Father Himself declares His sons: "This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. This is My son, hear ye Him." Some today have grown weary of waiting for the manifestation God has promised, so they have "watered-down" the hope and settled for a lesser reality, and are declaring themselves sons of the Kingdom on a lower plane than God has called us to. Some have settled for a 'revival’ realm and now speak disparagingly of what they term "classic sonship". These anxious souls just can't wait for the Father's appointed time. The place that God has called us to will be in His time, not ours. "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father" (Gal. 4:1-2). The story is told of a fifteen year old boy who stole his father's car keys. The father's plan was to give the keys to his son a year later. The boy, however, thought that he had all the attributes necessary to drive the car. The father knew better; he
understood the law, insurance liability, driving skills, and such like. As a result, the court will not let the boy drive a car until he is twenty-one. Let us earnestly seek wisdom from above to avoid such a costly error of SELF-MANIFESTATION!

It is my deep conviction that the time appointed of the Father for the manifestation of the sons of God is nigh at hand. The King is coming. Hallelujah! Sons of God shout it loud and clear! Let the earth know her redemption draweth nigh. The Deliverer is coming, the whole Christ-body is being prepared, and the time is at hand. In ancient times when a great monarch was entering a city, a herald always went before him, blowing a trumpet and shouting, "The king is coming!" This was to prepare the people for the entrance of the king so they would give him the proper welcome, and pay him homage. Two millenniums ago John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord by bringing the people to repentance so they would be ready to receive the Lord. The voice of one crying in the wilderness was the trumpet call announcing the arrival of Israel's King. But He did not come as their King in the manner they expected. He came first as their Saviour. He is now coming as the KING. Before the Lord went about the towns and villages of Israel, He sent His disciples to preach the gospel of the Kingdom and to prepare the people for His coming. First He sent the twelve, and then the seventy. In like manner, there is an advance company now being prepared to herald the coming of the King; to prepare His way before Him and to make His paths straight. The royal heralds are going forth blowing their trumpets, proclaiming the message of the Kingdom in the power of the Spirit, preparing the people for the appearing of the KING in a vast company of the sons of God — the King in the midst of the kings! This is the day of Leo, the Lion. What a glorious and mighty victory lies before us!

HYDRA — THE SERPENT DESTROYED

In the beginning of our study of the Zodiac we noted that all the Signs of the heavens portray a progressive unfolding of truth that was hidden, like the bud of a flower, in the ancient promise God gave in Eden: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). We have seen the different stages of this conflict presented to us under the various Signs. For example, in the beginning of the story, Virgo, the Virgin, is seen bringing forth the Seed, who is going to be engaged in the redemption of mankind, represented in Libra, the Scales. Then immediately we see the conflict beginning and the price to be paid as Scorpio — the first picture of that ancient serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan — stings the mighty man Orphiuchus in the heel, but is crushed beneath the right heel of this mighty man. Again, we see the Devil portrayed as a serpent, struggling and wriggling in the hands of Orphiuchus, reaching up to try and take the crown away from God and those who inherit the Kingdom. We then see satan represented as Cetus, the Sea Monster, who was seeking after Pisces, the Fishes, representing the people of God, as he attempts to destroy them. This scene is symbolically described in chapter twelve of Revelation: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, which is called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the manchild. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,
which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:9, 12-17)

Again we have seen Satan in the head and skin of the lion that was destroyed by Orion, who holds in his hand the dead carcass of the lion, who goes about seeking whom he may devour. Finally, he is represented here by Hydra — the Great Serpent, who covers so much of the sky. But now in the final scene of the last act, the Serpent is triply destroyed (1) by the feet of Leo, the Lion (2) by the outpouring of the Cup of wrath (3) and by the devouring fowls of the air, depicted by Corvus, the Raven.

The first Decan, or minor constellation, in the house of Leo is HYDRA — THE GREAT SERPENT. Hydra is the largest separate constellation in the sky, stretching more than 100 degrees across the sky below the constellations of Cancer, Leo, and Virgo, and outside the ecliptic (path of the sun). Hydra is the figure of a snake, a massive snake. The name Hydra symbolically means The Abhorred. Hydra is the symbol of the evil one who has at last reached his end — for his head is beneath the feet of Leo, the Lion. The conquering Lion pounces on him, and this marks the end of the reign of sin and death. As one has written: "The great Serpent was first seen at the center of the ecliptic. One of the stars in Draco, the dragon, was originally the Pole Star located at the very center. And that is where Satan was after he had insinuated his way into the Garden of Eden and had cast his slime across the path of the history of man, deceiving and destroying mankind, and bringing all of the world into subjection to his vile will. He was at the center of all things; the Prince of this earth, the Prince and Power of the air. But now we see that Satan is cast out. He is outside the great circle of the ecliptic. He is about to be finally destroyed by the Christ and cast out into utter and final darkness."

Now it was in the midst of the Garden that man first encountered the ancient Serpent. It's not news to any of us that we are in the midst of a war between two kingdoms: the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Neither is it news to us that WE are the battleground! More particularly, the major focal point of the battle is our mind. There the battle rages at its greatest intensity, because the war is a struggle for our hearts and loyalties — the very souls and lives and beings of men. The simple but dreadful fact is — the Serpent dwells within us. It is that force within us that opposes the ways of God in our lives and tries to keep us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

This brings us to the curse laid upon the Serpent in that long ago beginning: "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:14). These terms are symbolic and spiritual. This is not speaking of a literal snake dangling from a tree limb in some historic Paradise. This is a symbol, and the great Deceiver, Satan, that ancient Serpent, the Devil, has to eat dust! He was cursed to this low realm of eating dust because that is exactly what he was doing when he tempted mother Eve. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground and bore the image of the earthy — and as such became the rightful food for the Serpent. The Serpent — the negative spirit realm — now finds its base of operation and fulfillment of its nature, desires, activities, and purposes IN AND THROUGH MANKIND — the dust realm. By the very nature of things, when the Serpent eats, he seeks to satisfy his appetite and gratify his desires. Today, as in Eden, the sphere of Satan's activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of earth — the carnal nature. Whenever we live in the earthly life of Adam, we are earthly and also on earth and fall into the sphere of Satan's activity, becoming the object of his devouring, drawn deeper and deeper into that negative realm.
The very fact that the Serpent is now to crawl upon his belly reveals that there was a descending from one realm to another, and man, with the Serpent in him, now grovels in the dust, trapped in the humiliating quagmire of trouble, pain, sorrow, sin, sickness, limitation, fear, and death. Moving upon his belly limits the sphere of the Serpent's activity, now he can only creep along the ground, lowered into the dust realm, confined to the lowlands of the earthly and material, restricted to expression through the man of dust. Truly he is "the S-P-I-R-I-T that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). Because of this remarkable curse you will find Satan operative in NO OTHER REALM in God's vast universe! Satan is one with man, the energy force of human nature, the spirit of the carnal mind, slithering about in the lowest realms of man's earthiness, in the crooked thoughts, perverted desires, depraved emotions, in the illusions and delusions of the outer world of appearances, and in all the corrupt motions of the flesh.

I want to tell you where everything is — everything is right there where you are — WITHIN YOU. Everything! On the positive side — God is in you, Christ is in you your hope of glory, the word of Christ dwells in your heart by faith, your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, the glory of God has come upon you and is arising upon you from within, the wonderful mind of Christ is in your mind and the Kingdom of God is within you. On the negative side — the spirit of antichrist is in you, the man of sin sits in the temple of God which is your body, the beast rages in the ravenous emotions of your soul, the image of the beast is seen in you by your outer actions, the nature of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters (peoples) is in you, and that ancient Serpent, the Devil, and Satan, is within you, the spirit that now worketh IN the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2).

Men dream of a devil — a hideous and obscene monster in human form; a short, skinny elf in a red body suit, with impish face, horns, pointed ears, a spade beard, thin mustache, having a long forked tail and a pitchfork in his hand. If you ask one thousand church-going professing Christians to describe for you, the Devil, would not all of them describe him in the fashion portrayed above? Or would they describe him to you as a snake? Millions of professing Christians suppose they would recognize the Devil instantly. But would they, really? I do not hesitate to tell you that the Devil of Christianity is a myth.

Jesus, on many occasions, drew the analogy of men as serpents — devils. In my mind when Jesus uttered the following parabolic phrase, He was revealing one of the most important and foundational truths of all times. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mat. 23:25,33). John the Baptist used the same terminology. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducces come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee the wrath to come?" (Mat. 3:7). Various translations render this passage: "Ye generation of vipers," "Ye off-spring of vipers," "Ye brood of snakes," "Ye serpent's brood," etc. You see, Christ and John were well aware of who and what and where the Enemy was and ever shall be.

As in Christ's day, so today, the churches are, indeed, full of devils! And they have no more desire to go to the cross than Peter did. Well does this enemy of God, enthroned in the human heart, this adversary of redemption and of all mankind, know that, in the blessed hour when the "I" is crucified, all his power and all his authority and sway in that life is broken forever. His appetite is denied, his desires are rejected, his base of
operation is destroyed, and his work is abolished in every life that has become identified with Christ in the cross. Once a man has embraced fully the cross of Christ and Self has become forever dead with Him, then it is with him even as the firstborn Son in triumph declared: "I will not talk with you much more, for the prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me, there is nothing in Me that belongs to him, he has no power over Me" (Jn. 14:30, Amplified). Satan has no power at all when SELF is gone. Then he has no more power in your life or mine than he had in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. How unspeakably wonderful the hour for any man when Satan shall find nothing in him upon which he can feed or lay hold, nothing upon which he can satisfy his evil desires or his corrupt nature, nothing that responds to him or corresponds to him. When Self is crucified with Christ the lust of the flesh is mortified, the lust of the eyes is dead, and the pride of life is nailed to the cross. The man of dust exists no more and from then on it is NOT I, BUT CHRIST!

The natural mind is the mind channeling the condition of the human heart. It is not the same mind that understands how to drive your car, prepare a meal, or lusts after someone of the opposite sex, that also understands the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. Not at all! The promise is sure: "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 (spiritually unresponsive) heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a (soft, pliable, responsive) 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). The new creation of which the Spirit speaks is blest not only with a new heart and a new spirit but with a NEW MIND as well. For, Paul says, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? But WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST" (I Cor. 2:16). There is by regeneration within ourselves, beyond the realm of our conscious knowledge, a divine life, the child of God's Spirit, ever unwearied, ever growing and maturing, to gain control of our whole being, and transform us into the image of God.

There is still a fierce battle raging between these two hearts, these two spirits, these two minds, these two conditions, these two natures. This is the conflict so graphically portrayed by the Signs in GOD'S BIBLE IN THE SKY! Praise God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Head and body, that blessed company of the sons of God, is disabling the Serpent, crushing the head of the Scorpion, and placing his foot determinedly upon the Dragon's head. Today, although the Kingdom of God has not yet outwardly triumphed upon this earth in all realms, although God has not yet gained a sphere wherein He can express the authority of His life in a full way, nevertheless there is a place, a small sphere, thank the Lord, where there exists the condition of God's reign, which thereby manifests God's glory, wisdom, love and power. That is the body of Christ! Today the Spirit-filled and Spirit-led members of Christ's body are the expression of God's reigning here on earth. What God desires today is to perfect and expand and intensify His reigning sphere within His people and through His people. It is through the body of Christ, the sons of God, that God binds Satan and destroys his power of sin and death in men. It is through the sons of God that life, yea, incorruptible life, and blessing shall be ministered so that all the families of the earth shall be blessed and made to live unto God. Thus His name will be honored in the whole earth, His Kingdom come, and His glorious will done. This is the commission of God's sons — God's MIGHTY LION! This is the grand conclusion of the ages-long conflict — consummated in the triumph of Leo!

In his book THE GOSPEL IN THE STARS Dr. Seiss sums it up in these descriptive words: "During these six thousand years...this subtle and snaky spirit has managed to
worm himself into everything that goes to make up human life, corrupting and debasing it to his own base ends, seating himself in all the centers of influence and power, making himself the very king and god of this world. From all these places he must be dislodged, his dominion broken, his works destroyed, and he and all his effectually rooted out and put down, before the heavenly Kingdom can come in its consummation. In other words, the whole empire and influence of the Serpent must be rent to atoms, worked clean out of the realm of humanity, and so crushed as never to be able to lift up its head again. Toward this end all the dispensations and gifts of God, from the first promise of Adam until now, have been directed. Toward this end all the works and administrations of Christ to this present are framed. To this end He comes in power and great glory as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to 'put down all rule and all authority and power,' and to trample 'all enemies beneath His feet.' And here, in the first Decan of Leo, is the grand picture of that consummation. Here is Hydra, that old Serpent, whose length stretches one-third the way around the whole sphere, completely expelled from the places into which he had obtruded, fleeing now for his life, and the great Lion, with claws and jaws extended, bounding in terrific fury and seizing the foul monster's neck" — end quote.

CRATER — THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

The second Decan in this final Sign is CRATER — THE CUP. Of this Decan Kenneth Flemming wrote: "As a constellation, Crater is small and faint, so much so that the popular modern astronomer, Patrick Moore, writes that it is surprising to find that it is one of the original groups. The answer to this is that the forty-eight original constellations were not selected for their brilliance or size, nor were they chosen to divide up the sky, but rather they were chosen for what they depicted as signs. That is an important part of the story of the prophetic signs in the sky. Crater lies below the hind feet of Leo and seems to be resting on the body of the snake, Hydra. Indeed, the two stars at the bottom of the cup are also part of the body of the snake, making the two inseparable. In classical times the Greeks supposed that Crater was the cup of the wine-god, Bacchus; it was therefore associated with joy and gladness (revelry). In truth the very opposite is the case. Instead of Crater being a cup of joy, it is the cup of God's indignation (Rev. 14:10). It is the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath (Rev. 16:19). It is the final and dreadful cup of wrath, reserved for the devil and his angels" — end quote.

The Psalmist Asaph wrote by inspiration: "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them" (Ps. 75:8). David, the sweet singer of Israel, also testified: "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps. 11:6). John the Revelator has unmistakably identified for us the precise fulfillment of the prophecies concerning God's Cup of Indignation: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation..." (Rev. 14:9-10). "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath" (Rev. 16:19). "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled up to her double" (Rev. 18:4-6).
Of this "Cup of Indignation" against Mystery Babylon Dr. Seiss wrote, "And lo! here, as the second Decan of Leo, we have the very picture of that Cup, broad, deep, full to the brim, and placed directly on the body of this writhing Serpent! Nay, the same is sunk into his very substance, for the same stars which mark the bottom of the Cup are part of the body of the accursed monster, so that the curse is fastened down on him and in him as an element of his being! Dreadful beyond all thought is the picture John gives of this Cup of unmingled wrath, but not a whit more dreadful than the picture of it in which the primeval prophets have thus inscribed upon the stars" -end quote.

The Cup of God's indignation and wrath is poured out without measure upon the RELIGIOUS SERPENT— KINGDOM OF MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, the great whore that sits upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with her defiled wine. Women in prophecy are churches. In Rev. 12:1 we find the true church of Christ described as a woman. In Rev. 14:4 we find that the virgins who follow the Lamb were not defiled with women: that is, man-made churches which are merely counterfeits of the one and only true church. And in Revelation 17 we have introduced "the great whore" which in verse five is said to be the "mother" of harlots. A mother must have offspring. This mother has "harlot" offspring. She is the "mother" of "harlots," which is but another way of expressing the fact that she has many daughters who have followed her in the ways of harlotry. And while "Babylon" is first and foremost a spirit and condition within the human heart, it also finds its expression in the outer world of visible manifestation. Ah, men's actions and activities are but outward manifestations of an inward state of being. And outwardly the Roman church identifies herself as the perfect fulfillment of this prophecy by proclaiming herself to be "the mother of all churches." The daughters are harlots because they partake of the same nature as their mother, the "great whore." All, both mother and daughters, are harlots fundamentally because they are man-made institutions, whose husband is human instead of Divine. The Christ of God is the one and only lawful husband of the one and only church, the organism known as His body. But apostasy persists in substituting in place of this God-designed organism, an organization patterned after worldly institutions, chartered with the State, riding upon the back of the scarlet colored beast. All members of the organization are therefore prostituting unlawfully with their human head, who is usurping the place which belongs to Christ alone.

Under Old Testament economy God alone was King of the church and nation until Israel demanded a human king in order to be like the nations about her. Before the time of these human kings, the government was a theocracy in the truest sense: that is, the government of the state was by the immediate direction of God Himself. Great was the condescension of God to thus honor the nation by becoming its political Sovereign, performing all the functions of an earthly monarch, and receiving the customary homage paid to a temporal king. Great was the dignity lent to the nation by the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth dwelling with them first in a tabernacle, afterwards in a splendid palace, there having His table, His altar, and His ministers. Great was His condescension to tolerate their displays of external splendor and pomp, to go forth with and command the army in war, to legislate, to execute laws, and to do all things that pertain to the office of an earthly sovereign. And yet Israel was not satisfied. They wished to have another to rule over them, a human king, as the nations about them had. God granted them their desire.
But Israel "forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, and with abominations provoked they Him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not" (Deut. 32:15-17). "I have spread out My hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoked Me to anger continually to My face" (Isa. 65:2-3). God was very lenient with them; but justice demanded judgment. Therefore, since Israel would not be in submission to God as their King, He decreed that throughout the term of HIS INDIGNATION they would, as a consequence of their folly, be made to serve the kings of their enemies. They were conquered and enslaved in turn by the kings of Babylon, Persia, Assyria, Greece and Rome. The year A.D. 70 saw Israel die as a nation. From henceforth, until the end of the indignation, she was to be but a church, and that, in humiliation and disgrace, a slave in the lands of her enemies. This order prevailed unbroken for almost three centuries when, upon the raising of Christianity to be the national religion of Rome in A.D. 324, Constantine thus began to unite church and state again during a period when God had decreed that they should be separate.

Under New Testament economy the Christ of God was to be the one and only Head of His church. But the Emperor of Rome and the bishops of the church were for prostituting this church and causing her to commit fornication with the kings and governments of the earth, in that she began to be joined with them as she ought only to have been joined with Him. God has only one church, not one thousand and one. We nowhere in the Word read of "Christ and His churches." No, no! It is always Christ and His "church." Of course this one church is of necessity divided up into many separate assemblies for the purpose of meeting together for worship, fellowship, and ministry, and these separate assemblies are called in the Word the "churches of God" and the "churches of Christ" (I Cor. 11:16; I Thes. 2:14); but the Holy Spirit gave the world but one body, one faith, one creed (Eph. 4:45), with the Christ of God the sole legislator. The many bodies, and many faiths, and many creeds, and many legislators, and many names, and many headquarters, and many structures of the present day, constitute nothing more than spiritual prostitution, they are harlots one and all, who are living apart from their one and only lawful Husband and in love with and joined out of wedlock to another.

The Roman church is the mother of all, because all are modeled after her false system. And not only are these Protestant daughters modeled after their mother as to elementary form and nature, but all, from the church of England right on down to the youngest Charismatic organization, are propagating, in varying degrees, the doctrines of their mother while, like their mother, they profess to dispense the Word of God, pure and unadulterated. They baptize like their mother, they take Communion as the members of the Roman church receive the Eucharist, they proclaim eternal damnation in hell-fire far the vast billions who have lived and died on earth without Christ, they celebrate the pagan holidays, Easter and Christmas, and keep other religious days just as does their mother. Time and space forbid a detailed discourse on all the harlot ways in which the harlot daughters follow their harlot mother. We are not unmindful that a merciful and compassionate God has used all these, even the mother, in the salvation of souls and in bringing blessings to humanity. But there is a higher walk, an undefiled way, to which all must submit who would know the full blessings and favor and glory of their sovereign Lord, and who would walk before Him acceptably and know the joy of the ultimate in accomplishment in His Kingdom. He still commands, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).
Well did George Hawtin write: "In these dread days it is of ever increasing importance that the elect should separate themselves from the Babylon of the church system. This confused harlot, drunken with the blood of saints, rich and increased with goods and having need of nothing, adorned with gold and silver and costly array, lounging in plush pews and entertained by elegant choirs, eloquent orators and super-star entertainers is the greatest deceiver and false Christ in the world. If we are to be received as sons of God, our first command and obligation is to sever all relationship with her. The effect of revelation and newly discovered truth nourishing in the heart of the believer is often lost to him, simply because he will not separate from this harlot system and come out from among them and be separate. How, you ask, can a system that is so attractive from without be so evil within? Do you not know that harlots are always unclean, no matter how beautifully they bedeck themselves? Go their way at your peril and the same rotting disease that curses them will soon be devouring you also. The promise of sonship is only to those who come out from among them. 'Be separate,' Paul says, 'and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty' (II Cor. 6:17). Such challenging promises are not to those cushioned believers who delight themselves in plush churches and interesting programs, who keep the program afloat with gymnasiums, food, fun, and fellowship, and a hundred other fleshly notions. This promise flings down the gauntlet, challenging saints to heed the voice of Christ: 'Come out! Be separate! Touch not the unclean thing!' To all such the promise is sure, 'I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters.'

"Beware of what men say in these evil days. Remember that Jesus warned us that there would be false prophets. False prophets are always saying, saying, but beware of what they say. Do men ask, 'Where are these false prophets'? Don't look for them on the street or in the desert. The church system is full of them. You will find them standing in the pulpits Sunday and week day. They are highly thought of and highly paid. They are as sure they are right as were the prophets of Baal. They are also positive that the solitary Elijahs are wrong. As evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, these prophets with their false gospel add to all manner of delinquency. Consequently the world sinks deeper and deeper into sin and, while it sinks, these men imagine that we are in the midst of a world-wide revival. We are, but it is not a revival of faith in Christ; it is rather a revival of the very sins that caused Sodom to be devoured with unquenchable fire and that brought the flood on the world of the ungodly in the days of Noah. Let no man deceive you, for that day shall not come except there be a falling away first.' That falling away is here now. It is everywhere. It is in the government, in the palace, in the courts of law. It is in the universities and colleges. It is in the homes, on the streets, and worst of all it is in the church system. It is in the pew and in the pulpit. It is in the hearts of the populace. The man of sin, the antichrist, is very evident in the world, but few see him or recognize him" - end quote.

The above word, however, is incomplete without this wise counsel from Ray Prinzing: "There is more than just being 'called out' however, and that is a going on to be built into HIS HOUSE, gathered unto Him. Called out bespeaks of a process of leaving realms behind, to go on. Yet once this temple is built, it says 'they go no more out', so it speaks of an arrival, entering into a state of being in permanent victory and age-abiding life. The TEMPLE is a dimension which goes beyond just being 'called out', i.e. the church. It bespeaks of gathering up all the called out, and unifying them together into a harmonious building wherein HE SHALL DWELL FOR EVER. There is a real processing that must take place before the called out becomes the temple. Once we have obeyed the calling
out, then out of us needs to be purged all the ways and spirit of the thing from which we were called out, and it is one thing to come out of Babylon, and another thing to have Babylon taken out of us. Indeed, it requires a long and arduous processing, a death to the old, a stripping away of every facet of the old, until IN CHRIST, ALL THINGS BECOME NEW" - end quote.

Crater — the Cup, is the Cup of God's righteous judgment against the serpent system of Mystery Babylon the Great. Every word of prophecy will come true just as it has been written. What dreadful thoughts and feelings are awakened in the soul by the very sound of the words Mystery Babylon! They are terrible words. They bring before us at once, that vast mass of professed Christians who call themselves "the Church," but are not. Mystery Babylon is a dark and dreadful anomaly. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is not "Israel, nor the Gentiles, nor the Church of God." It is a corrupt mysterious mixture, a spiritual malformation, a hideous mutation, the masterpiece of Satan, the corrupter of the truth of God, the destroyer of the souls of men, a trap, a snare, a stumbling block by which men are made two-fold more the children of hell than before. It is the corruption of the very best thing — the body of Christ — and therefore the most vile of corruptions. It is that thing which Satan has made of professing Christianity. It is worse by far than Judaism; worse by far than the darkest of pagan religions; because it has higher light and richer privileges, makes the very highest profession, and occupies the very loftiest seat. It is without doubt that awful apostasy for which is reserved the very heaviest judgments of God — the most bitter dregs in the Cup of His righteous wrath. If the words penned by John on Patmos, which I have quoted earlier, do not say this, then I have no understanding or comprehension of language. I doubt if one Christian in ten thousand has anything like an adequate sense of the true character and inevitable doom of that system together with all the teachings, rituals, traditions, holy days, programs, promotions, and religious exercises which surround them. If they had it would solemnize their minds and hearts, and cause them to sense the urgent need to flee at once out of Babylon's clutches, and stand apart in holy separation, from Babylon's ways, that they might escape such awful judgment as is about to be executed, for "strong is the Lord that judgeth her."

Hear the Word of the Lord, ye that dwell in Babylon! "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven..." (Jer. 51:6-9). Volumes could be written on this passage — how we have tried to heal the systems of Babylon by reformation or revival, pouring out our life to correct its religious confusion, to quicken its ministries, to change its emphasis, to reform its institutions, to infuse life into its forms and traditions. But she cannot be healed, therefore the call comes out loud and clear, "forsake her," lest ye become partakers of her plagues. Now the hour is upon us, and she shall SUDDENLY fall, saith the Lord. The religious peddlers and hucksters (merchants) of the earth shall weep, and they shall howl, they shall frantically try to revive her, but her days are numbered and great shall be the fall thereof.

In the symbology of scripture Jerusalem is the capital city of God's Kingdom, and will reign over that Kingdom for ever and ever: Babylon is the capital city of the kingdom of
Babylon, which kingdom shall soon pass away. The mount Zion is the chief eminence, the highest pinnacle attainable in grace in Jerusalem: Babylon was founded upon seven mountains of shame. The true church is a woman crowned with twelve stars of divine government, with the moon, all that pertains to the night under her feet: the false church is also a woman, with her own name and shame written on her forehead. The Head or Husband of the true woman, God's church, is the Christ: the head or husband of the false is her paramours the kings of the earth, and the numerous ecclesiastical "heads" from "pope" to "pastor". The true brings forth children unto God: the false her harlot brood. The city of God, the New Jerusalem, is to be the habitation of God for evermore: the city of Babylon becomes heaps, the habitation of bitterns and owls, the cage of every foul spirit, "and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 14:23; 34:11-17).

How precious is the truth expressed by George Warnock: "There are a lot of songs and a lot of teaching today about the new thing that God is doing and the new wine that God is bringing forth to His people. But what about the new wine-skins for the new wine? 'And no man putteth new wine into old bottles (wine-skins); else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish' (Lk. 5:37). However, it is not too difficult to discern in the midst of the joy and rejoicing of the new thing that God is doing a desperate attempt to keep the old wine-skins from bursting at the seams. Wine...Renewal...Restoration...Revival... all of this in old wine-skins. No wonder there is an attempt to strengthen the seams, and to patch the cracks in the old structures, and a warning to the sheep to follow their shepherds...because if something is not done about it, it would appear that the whole thing might crack wide open, and the new wine may be lost. Jesus has already warned us what would happen if we try to renew the old forms with the new Life of the Spirit. It can only be for a short season...the old forms will just disintegrate, and the wine is lost...

"What, then, are we going to do about it? The same thing, I would suggest, that we did before God began bringing forth the new wine. Recognize that the old forms are no longer adequate, and seek God earnestly for the new provision and the new way that He has in mind for His people. When God does a 'new thing' in the earth it is really a progressive unveiling of what He had in mind from the beginning, but it is something NEW in manifestation in the earth. We always have those that resist anything 'new'. They say God never does anything 'new' that He hasn't done before. True, we have the seed of everything that God would ever bring forth away back in time...even as far back as the Genesis. But in the outworking of His purposes there are constantly new horizons, new workings, new temples, new forms and structures, new workings of His Spirit as He leads His people out of bondage and into the fullness of New Creation Life. 'Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth' (Isa. 42:9-10)" - end quote.

**CORVUS — THE RAVEN**

Finally, we came to the third and last Decan in the house of Leo, the final figure in the great gallery and portraiture of the heavens, known as CORVUS — THE RAVEN. The raven is a scavenger bird of prey. Ravens are powerful birds, often up to two feet in length, with a massive, three-inch beak that tears flesh from dead and dying animals on which they feed. The raven that Noah released from the ark did not return because there was much dead flesh on which to feed. What a picture! Here, in the pictorial Sign of the
heavens, we have the same thing. Here is Corvus, the Raven, the bird of punishment and final destruction. He doesn't kill his prey — he consumes and forever removes from the earth that which has been slain. He is God's "mop up" crew. His is the final act. And in this constellation we see Corvus grasping the body of Hydra, the Serpent, with its feet and tearing him with his beak. Not only is the head of the adversary crushed, but he is finally defeated in all realms, torn to pieces and devoured. This is already a glorious and eternal reality within all those blessed ones who have experienced the triumph of the Christ within. For these THERE IS NO DEVIL ANYMORE. But there shall yet be a fulfillment in all realms, and thus shall the inspired words of the apostle be fulfilled, "Behold, I make all things new. Write: for these wards are true and faithful. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4-5).

Here, now, these Studies on the Signs of the heavens must break off — abruptly. There is so much more that might have been said, and so much more still which I do not know enough to say. I cannot do better in closing this series than to quote the true and eloquent wards of Dr. Seiss regarding Corvus — the final act in the grand drama of God's great redemptive and reconstructive program. "Blessed consummation! How should we look and pray for it, as Jesus has directed where He tells us to say, Thy Kingdom come - Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven!' Well might one of England's great poets cry: 'Come forth out of Thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth! Put on the visible robes of Thy imperial Majesty! Take up the unlimited sceptre which Thy almighty Father hath bequeathed Thee! For now the voice of Thy bride calls Thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed.' How cheering the hope, amidst the clash of conflicting beliefs, the strife of words, the din of war, the shouts of false joy, the yells of idolatry, the sneers of unbelief, the agonies of a dying race, and the groans of a whole creation travailing in pain together in consequence of the Serpent's malignity, that a period is coming when eternal death shall be that Serpent's portion; when peace and order and heavenliness shall stretch their bright wings over the happy sons of men; when rivers of joy proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb shall water all this vale of tears; when cherubim to cherubim shall cry, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory' when myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands of angels round about the throne shall join in the acclaim of 'Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain, to receive the Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Might, and Honor, and Glory, and Blessing' and when every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and upon the sea, and all things in them, shall sing, 'To Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be the Blessing and the Honor, and the Glory, and the Dominion, for the ages of the ages!'

"Yet such is our hope, given us as an anchor for our souls, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil, and linking us even now to those solid shores of the world to come. We have it in the written word of prophets and apostles, and the same is certified to us by these everlasting stars in their ceaseless journeyings around the pathway of the circling year. God be thanked for such a hope! God be thanked for the full and wide-sounding testimony to its certainty! God be thanked that it has come to us, and that ours is the privilege of taking it to our souls in the confidence and comfort that it shall be fulfilled!"
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).