

# ***KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES***

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

## ***THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE***

**By J. Preston Eby**

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# *Chapter 1*

## *The Book of The Life of the Lamb*

On that far away Patmos, in august symbol and awesome sign, John the Revelator in spirit beheld "the dead, small and great stand before God; and the BOOKS were opened: and ANOTHER BOOK was opened, which is the BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books" (Rev. 20:12). From our infancy we have all been accustomed to hear about the Lamb's book of Life, but how many of us know where the idea came from, and exactly what it stands for? Is it not possible that some of us have an inadequate and even a perverted notion as to the proper interpretation of the metaphor? I feel that there is some danger of missing the true and full import of a grand and inspiring reality by ignorance of the original conditions out of which it sprung. It is my purpose in this writing to set forth as clearly as I can, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, what those conditions were. Then let us see whether our use of this scriptural language is worthy of the theme. After that let us reapply its message to our own lives.

Like many of the sweetest passages in the New Testament, the inspiration of this one is derived from the Old. References to the Book of Life are to be found in various parts of the Hebrew scriptures. In the second book of the Bible, Exodus, we read how the children of Israel had sinned grievously. While Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving instructions from God, the Israelites made a golden calf and began to worship it. When Moses returned, he was shocked at what he saw. He knew God would be well within both His holiness and His justice to wipe out the entire sinful nation! But Moses begged God to forgive Israel: "Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, Oh, these people have sinned a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin – but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written" (Ex. 32:31-32). Moses boldly approached the Lord God, asking to have his own name blotted out of God's "book" if God would not forgive Israel their sin of

idolatry! The Bible alludes to this "book" – the Book of Life – on only a few occasions. But the Book of Life does exist, and it is vitally important to every son of God! Having one's name in the Book of Life is so important that Moses used this as a kind of bargaining point with God for Israel. What is this book? Why would the all-knowing God need it? Is it like some spiritual computer system, containing the names of God's people? Is your name now written in it? How can you know? And if your name is there, what is the risk of it actually being blotted out, as Moses asked for his name to be if God would not forgive Israel?

Why the Book of Life? God is a God of order and structure. He gives us physical figures and patterns for things that are to be found in the spiritual or heavenly realm (Heb. 9:9,23). These types help us understand God and the wonder of His great plan and purpose. This leads us to what God's Book of Life is. First, understand that the phrase book of life cannot simply refer to the Bible. Revelation 22:19 shows that these two books are separate: "If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life." Obviously, all of the people who will be born into the family of God do not have their names written in the Bible. There must be another, separate book – the Book of Life. Many ancient societies kept extensive genealogical records and registered citizens for different purposes (Neh. 7:5,64; 12:22-23). In the same way, the fact that God has a Book of Life shows that God is aware of all His creation, particularly those people with whom He is specially working. Paul wrote that the believers in Philippi should "help these women and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life" (Phil. 4:3). "For our citizenship is in heaven," he explained (Phil. 3:20). You can be sure these saints were encouraged by this acknowledgment.

A preacher from the 19th century penned these instructive words: "Those Israelites who returned from the Babylonian captivity were enrolled by families in a great book kept for that purpose. The names in this roll were supposed to constitute the new Israel, the nation which was henceforth a spiritual community, a church and a kingdom in one. To this nation was committed the task of rebuilding the sacred city of Jerusalem, and reinstating the ancient worship of God on Mt. Zion.

Babylon, with its heathenism and oppression, had been left behind; the kingdom of liberty and holiness lay before. God had wrought a mighty deliverance for His people. In order to realize the jubilation with which this event was hailed you must imagine yourself to be one of the long procession of Jewish exiles making their way back across the Syrian desert to the little spot they called home. For many weary years they had been afflicted in the cruel city of the plains; they were now free to go back to the land of their fathers and their holy city, Jerusalem. 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'

"But, when they got home, these people were disgusted by the paganism and poor moral quality of their kinsmen whom they found already there, people who had escaped being carried away to Babylon. This was the reason why they were so particular about the book of names. They refused to worship with or include in their fellowship those who had intermixed with foreign peoples, and degraded the service of God by heathen rites. They therefore became very strict about the qualifications for citizenship in the new Jerusalem which they had now to build. Only those whose names were on the roll as being qualified by character, training, and descent for membership in the new kingdom were admitted to the altar, or allowed to dwell within the walls. How far these rigorous regulations were actually enforced we do not know, but while the enthusiasm of the restoration lasted, they were no doubt observed to a considerable degree.

"But this ideal of a City of God and a Book of Life was never forgotten, and it supplied a good deal of the imagery of primitive Christianity, particularly the book of Revelation. Henceforth Babylon became a synonym for the spirit of the world, and the Book of Life a metaphor to signify those who were included in the Church of Jesus. Now here is a rather difficult thing for us to grasp – primitive Christianity believed in a state of existence which could be both earth and heaven. This is what to us seems so puzzling. We cannot imagine heaven and earth becoming one, but they could and did. Thus the beloved apostle John says: "I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." A close examination of all that follows shows clearly

that in this view heaven and earth now become merged into each other, and there was no longer to be any talk of a material and a spiritual, a hither and a yonder. To describe his vision he finds himself compelled to use the old familiar language about the Holy City and the Book of Life. We have seen where he got it, but we see also that he idealizes it. The Book of Life is no longer the roll of those who came back from Babylon and were found worthy of citizenship in the reconstituted kingdom of Judah; it is the number of those who belong to Jesus in earth and heaven" – end quote.

We have entertained such carnal notions when we come to the book of Revelation. The book of revelation is a book of revealing – and we are in an hour of revealing. The Holy Spirit must teach us the very first principles of this book – it is a book given by signs. "He sent and sign-i-fied it unto us..." (Rev. 1:1). The Lord communicated it unto us in the form of signs and symbols, that is what the Greek word means, and no symbol is ever to be taken in its literal form. We must pass the signs in order to get to the language of the Spirit. It is significantly wonderful that the Lion of the tribe of Judah is not a four-legged lion, nor is the Lamb in the midst of the throne a four-legged lamb! The Lamb has seven horns – not literal horns, of course – for the horns are mere figures representing the seven-fold spirit of power and life which emanates from the mind and nature of the Lamb. I am sure my readers understand the simple truth that the various beasts in the Revelation are not literal beasts, the cities are not literal cities, nor is the great harlot a solitary physical prostitute. One and all are but symbols and figures of deep spiritual realities, positive or negative, as the case may be. May I reverently inject another thought? The "dead" who "stand" before God and are "judged" out of the "books" are not the physically dead in the outward cemeteries, nor are the books such as you have in your library. If they were, the underlying principle of the book's symbology would collapse. If the "Lamb" who opens the "book" in chapter five is not a four-legged lamb, it should not be difficult for anyone to understand that the "book" is not a two-covered book! And if that "book" is one of the Revelation's wonderful symbols, does it not follow that the "books" in chapter twenty are likewise word-pictures in the form of symbols? The religious

commentaries that have been written on this book will avail you nothing, for they have been written as an attempt of the natural mind to decipher the meanings of the symbols rather than discovering the language of the Spirit and understanding out of the realm of the Spirit.

I don't know what you see in your mind's eye when you think of the Lamb's book of life. I know what I saw for many years. A scene was set in heaven. There was a great court lighted by the glory of God. In this court were massive marble tables, somewhat larger than the table pictured in the scenes of Jesus and His disciples at the Last Supper. At these tables were seated a host of clerical angels, resplendent in white. Upon the tables were massive books, not unlike record books you find in the office of the County Clerk at the Court House. Each angel had an inkhorn and a quill and was busily engaged in the business of writing names in the ledgers. Every time someone on earth received Jesus as Saviour their name was entered in the ledger. I imagined that more than fifty years ago, when as a young child, I came to the saving-knowledge of Jesus Christ, one of these mighty angels removed his quill from the inkhorn and meticulously inscribed in the book my name – JOHN PRESTON EBY. What joy flooded my soul in the contemplation of my very own name written in heaven in the Lamb's Book of Life! However, in my early walk with God, it also seemed to me an easy matter to have one's name blotted out of that blessed Book. I was raised with a strict "pentecostal" and "holiness" mentality – and there was no security in our relationship with God. According to our tradition one could be saved by faith one moment and lost and doomed for hell the next moment by disobedience. You could be lost eternally simply by going to bed at night with unconfessed sin in your life. If you thought an evil thought, or committed some sinful act, and should die in the night before it was confessed and made right – you would "bust hell wide open." I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, that such an absurd and unscriptural concept IS HELL! But because of my struggles with youthful temptations and the flesh life, I was quite certain that God had appointed one particular angel exclusively to my case, and he was engaged in nothing else but writing my name in, and blotting it out again from the Book of Life!

## **THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB**

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the names of blasphemy. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:1,8). According to the Emphatic Diaglott the correct rendering of the latter part of this passage is: "The Book of the Life of the Lamb." Now, what is meant by this term – THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB? The wise man said, "...of the making of many books there is no end..." (Eccl. 12:12). The book stores are filled to overflowing today with all types of books dealing with every aspect of earthly life. Even in the church world there are books setting forth every kind of viewpoint relating to God, the Bible, doctrine, Christian experience, and church order. However the subject material of most of these books largely contains a message of religious tradition and spiritual death. But God is also producing a book – a book containing a message of life. For the past two millenniums God, by His Holy Spirit, has been writing portions of this Book in the minds and hearts of His people.

There is a branch of literature known as biography. Biographies are the histories of individual lives, an account of a person's life, written or told by another. If the author of the book is the person about whom it is written it is called an autobiography – the story of one's own life written by oneself. The Book of Life is called "The Book of The Life of The Lamb." If I were to give you a book entitled THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, you would understand at once that it is a biography or an autobiography of the life of the first president of the United States, George Washington. That book should contain everything you always wanted to know about George Washington! Each and every detail of his life would be there: where he was born, who his parents were, where he was raised, the schools he attended, the girls he dated, who he married, how he became general of the army, and finally president of our great nation. In the same way, THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB is the autobiography of God's Lamb, the record of who He is, what He is like, and what He does. Everything you always wanted to know about the Son of God is contained in this

wonderful Book of the Life of the Lamb! It is not a literal book, of course, for the sons and daughters of the Most High are the LIVING RECORD AND REVELATION of the life of the indwelling Lamb. It was to the apostle Paul that the revelation was given that the Book of Life, the Book of the Lamb, the Book of the Son of God is a people. "Forasmuch as YOU are manifestly declared to be THE EPISTLE OF CHRIST ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. Who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (II Cor. 3:3,6).

Throughout the march of the ages men and women have recorded an innumerable multitude of life-stories of the mighty ones who have trodden this earth and influenced the events of history and the destinies of men, movements, nations and empires. Each and all of those biographies were meaningful to someone, often to many, but never in all the history of the world was a life lived out before the universe of mankind that was so overwhelmingly important, so all-embracing, so transcendental in its nature and so far-reaching in its results as the life of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in His earthly life and ministry, in His death, resurrection and ascension IS THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THIS GLORIOUS BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB!

This beautiful truth has been ably elucidated in a splendid article by Terry and Tykie Crisp, a portion of which I quote: "The first chapter of the Gospel of John opens by saying, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God...in Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines into darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not...AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT AMONG US (Jn. 1:1-14). By revelation of the Spirit, John declared that the Word of God was made manifest for all the world to read. Within this glorious Word was Life; Life with the potential of illuminating and enlightening the darkened, death-filled realm of men. This Word, Holy Record of the Life of God, was not written upon stone, papyrus, or golden parchment; but the Word was MADE FLESH TO DWELL AMONG MEN! Unlike any other book in the world,

this 'Book' was alive and the name of this 'Book' was JESUS! 'Wherefore when He comes into the world, He says, Sacrifice and offerings you would not, but a body you have prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come (IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME,) to do Your will, O God' (Heb. 10:7).

"For thirty long years, this glorious Book was being written. During this time, He was virtually unrecognized for what He was! 'He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not' (Jn. 1:10). Though He was 'prepared before the face of all people' (Lk. 2:31), no one could 'open the Book', so to speak, and 'read' into His life. Contrary to the old adage, 'You can tell a book by its cover', He was a different story altogether! Even those closest to Him had absolutely no idea what was going on inside of Him! He remained in obscurity, from the curious gaze of men, until the appointed time of the Father. He was God's great enigma to mankind! Line upon line, and precept upon precept, He increased in wisdom and stature, 'waxing strong in spirit, and filled with wisdom' (Lk. 2:40,52). Through the common, day-to-day experiences of life, He was steadily learning obedience, and was being made perfect through the things He suffered. There was not a single temptation faced by man in which He in some way was not tested; not an area that went untouched. He was 'in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin' (Heb. 4:15). He was challenged and confronted, in one form or another, with every issue that would face mankind. Every trial, every test, and every temptation He faced simply served to complete another chapter in the 'Book'; for as He overcame them, the lesson was then recorded in His spirit, and sealed. Unbeknown to the world around Him, He was being prepared for the Throne.

"To give unwavering evidence of Father's wise judgment in sealing the Christ, and to prove that the 'writing' was unquestionably finished, that nothing could be added to, and nothing had been left out, He immediately and intentionally placed His 'Book of Life' into the hands of His greatest critic, to be 'proof-read' for the next forty days and nights! Praise God! You can bet that the ancient accuser did everything in his power to find fault with this 'Holy Scroll' – to find perhaps a 'sentence' that expressed the will of flesh; maybe a thought that was

inconsistent with the general theme of divine purpose; or at least a 'punctuation mark' that was 'out of place' with the mind of God; but the final analysis was GOD THROUGH AND THROUGH! He was, in the truest sense, a WALKING BIBLE, right down to the last jot and tittle! Every answer Christ gave to the tempter's tests began with 'It is written....' His replies left the cynical old 'side-winder' speechless. There was no denying that God was the Author, and He was the Finisher of this blessed Volume! It could well be said that from cover to cover, 'In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. 2:9).

"Following this examination in the wilderness, the 'Book of Life' was offered to the public. We read where He went forth 'in the power of the Spirit' (Lk. 4:14); and soon thereafter, returned to His home town in Nazareth. As His custom was, He entered into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day. But something very significant happened that day; something directly connected with our story. As He stood up to read, there was delivered unto Him the book of Isaiah. Luke 4:17 says, '...and WHEN HE HAD OPENED THE BOOK, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord...and He began to say unto them, THIS DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN YOUR EARS!' What a timely event! For even as He OPENED THE BOOK of Isaiah in the sight of the people, THE 'BOOK OF LIFE' WAS BEING OPENED BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES! He was the living fulfillment of all He had declared! From that day forward, the 'seals' were 'loosed' and there was a manifestation of life that freely flowed from this OPEN BOOK, bringing deliverance and restoration to the groaning creation around Him. Every problem, every trouble, and every crisis known to man was covered in this heavenly Record. What ever the need, there was a 'chapter' devoted to it! HE HAD, AND WAS, AND IS THE ANSWER!" – end quote.

Ah, Jesus never carried a copy of the Old Testament when He taught the multitudes. I have in my library many Bibles including the Literal Bible, the Comparative Bible, the Analytical Bible, the

Emphasized Bible and the Amplified Bible. But Jesus Himself is the EXEMPLIFIED BIBLE! He is the PERSONIFIED BIBLE! He is the true picture of His Father, the Living Word of His Father. He is the full and complete revelation of His Father. He is the full and abundant Life of His Father unto all who believe in Him. It is the Life of the Lamb. And Jesus in His humanity was the first chapter of this marvelous Book of the Life of the Lamb. And now the Lamb of God living out His Life in us is the completion of the Book! Through that blessed company conformed to His image the world shall now, at last, read "the rest of the story"!

Again I would share some blessed insights from the nineteenth-century sermons of R. J. Campbell. "Now what do we think about the Lamb's Book of Life today? Well, I will tell you what it is not. It is not a list of those whom God has agreed to admit to heaven because they firmly believe that someone else has done all that was necessary to get them there. It is God's roll of honor. It is the glorious company of those who have suffered with Christ. It includes all whose lives have been willingly and cheerfully offered on the altar of love. The very phrase 'the Lamb's Book of Life' is a declaration of this, and distinguishes it from every other list of names that was ever written. Those whose names are in the Book of Life are life-givers. They are the servants of Jesus, working in the spirit of Jesus to minister more abundant life to the world. They are believers, it is true; for no work worth doing has ever yet been done apart from the dynamic of faith. But they are not merely believers in the conventional sense; they are living sacrifices, filling up the measure that is behind of the sufferings of Christ in the service of creation. When we speak of the Lamb's Book of Life we must never forget this. It is not merely the roll of those who have escaped something; it is the designation of those who have achieved something. No mere pious acceptance of the redeeming work of Christ; no comfortable acquiescence in the belief that He has given everything, and you have only to take, will qualify you for a place in the Book of Life. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is still being slain on the altar of human hearts, and wherever that divine sacrifice is offered new power and hope stream into this dark and sorrowful world.

"You may be feeling that this explanation of the Lamb's Book of Life is not so sweet and beautiful as the one to which you have been accustomed, and which you greatly value. You may be feeling that this explanation of the Lamb's Book of Life is not so sweet and beautiful as the one upon which you have been taught to dwell, and which has been such a blessing to you in your spiritual life. You may be saying to yourself, 'I do not like this. I want to owe everything. I do not want to think anything else, nor can I readily believe that my place in that Book of Life has anything to do with my self-sacrifice, or anything else but the love of Jesus.' We have got to see that the sacrifice of Jesus is no use unless it makes us like Jesus. It has to be repeated in us. As Paul has it, we have to become willing to be delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the Life of Jesus may become manifest in us. There is no salvation that is not this, and the gratitude and reverence that we really owe to Jesus are gratitude and reverence for having made this possible. THE LIFE HAS GOT TO BE MANIFESTED IN US! I put it to you again: which is worthier of Jesus, to believe that He has got us into heaven – a heaven from which all others are shut out – or to rejoice that He has shown us wherein true life consists? I do not care three straws whether I go to heaven or not – using the word for the moment in its conventional sense. But I do rejoice and thank God for that great Master and Redeemer of mankind who has shown me at an unspeakable cost what it is to live out His life among men. I wish I could live it, but I am frail and earthly, whereas He was divinely strong, and the light of God shone in all He said and did. And yet, no sooner have I realized this than my heart rises in loving thanks to Him once more for the assurance that human weakness and imperfection can and shall be transformed into divine strength and holiness by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God" – end quote.

How pitiful that the people of earth for the most part have never read this beautiful epistle of Christ, this glorious BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB. They have poured over the books of religion, the books of man's theology, the books of hypocrisy, the books of fleshly wisdom, forms of godliness, dead doctrines, static creeds, empty rituals and ceremonies, and man-made rules and regulations. But precious few have ever seen THE

BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB! Oh! What a wonderful gospel shall fill the earth beneath and the celestial realms above when God opens His holy Book of Life! The Book of Life is that blessed company of the sons of God, elect, chosen and transformed into the image of Christ throughout the ages. This Book is being carefully written word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, page by page, and chapter by chapter in the nitty-gritty of our daily experience with God until the full revelation of the Christ shall be set forth therein. Time's clock is striking the hour and the time is drawing wonderfully nigh for the manifestation of the sons of God, the opening of God's Book of Life People, and what a manifestation it shall be! All creation from time immemorial has groaned and travailed for the manifestation of God's sons, to deliver creation at last from the bondage of corruption.

God has a MESSAGE for the world – the revelation of Jesus Christ! This message is being written in flaming words of glory upon the pages of the lives and hearts and minds of men and women who are dying to that impudent and death-dealing devil of self, in order to walk and live by the spirit of HIS LIFE. I am terribly at a loss of words to express the glory of God's BOOK OF LIFE COMPANY, but I can assure you that once it is fully ready, prepared and published it shall become the world's "best seller" throughout the ages to come! As the pen is mightier than the sword, so this Book, above any that has ever been written by the finger of man, shall alter the course of history, and the dark covering that has been cast over the minds and hearts of the people for ages and dispensations will be completely destroyed by the flood of transforming light and wisdom and knowledge and glory and power shining forth from the living pages of God's eternal and incorruptible BOOK OF LIFE!

## **HOW THE BOOK IS WRITTEN**

I want to help you grasp why you are here – you are being prepared to reveal the invisible God to the visible creation. God created all things in all the unbounded universe and the last, crowning work of creation was the bringing forth of man into the world. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion" (Gen. 1:26). No man has

seen God at any time. He is the immortal, the invisible God. He is the eternal mystery. No material substance is able to penetrate Him. Thoughts tumble into confusion, whenever they wish to approach His nature. He is the shaper who has no shape. He is the former who has no form. He is the speaker who has no audible voice. His incomprehensibility lies in His shapelessness. In His shaping lies His revelation. Man in God's image is the shaping of God, giving God form, that His nature can be expressed on the physical and visible plane. Man in God's image was the government of God established over all things in the heavens and in the earth. And the government of God over the material creation, including all life forms, was the image of God in man. Thus man was the connecting link between the invisible and unknowable God and the visible creation. Man as God's image was the revelation of the invisible God to the visible world. Jesus Christ, the last Adam, is the express image of God's person and in Him you are the image of God, the government of God, the revelation of God, the Book of the Life of the Lamb to be known and read of all men and every creature everywhere.

You are not just anybody. You came out from God. There is a strange and wonderful statement in Hebrews 10:7. "Lo, I come (in the VOLUME OF THE BOOK it is written of me) to do Your will, O God." These words are attributed to Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. This is, however, a quotation from Psalm 40:7. Therefore, the "volume of the book" referred to was written before the Psalms. The five books of Moses were written before any others, except, perhaps, the book of Job; and in these earliest books of the Bible Moses pled for God to have mercy upon the children of Israel, "and if not, blot me out of YOUR BOOK which You have written" (Ex. 32:32). These words speak of a Book written by God Himself which was older than Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers or Deuteronomy. God wrote the law of His life in His Christ (Head and body) long before the Bible was written! The scripture indicates that the revelation Jesus was sent to bring to pass on earth was fully recorded in the "Volume of the Book" long before Jesus ever started to walk out His script in the earth realm. The nature of God written in the Christ, the Logos, the Word, which was in the beginning with God, was the heavenly reality of that Book of Life that would be written and

opened on earth. Each elect member of the Christ body has a ministry to fulfill which was fully recorded in the "Volume of the Book" a long, long time ago. In that long ago your spirit rejoiced in celestial realms with your heavenly Father. Obviously you did not exist there in your present physical form in that time when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). And yet you were there – in spirit – because you are a son of God. Locked within the mind of the spirit within you is the secret knowledge of that primordial time and all that transpired there in the counsels of God, but the outer mind of soul and body remembers nothing of that realm, for these are formed in and of the earth. We can identify with the prophet David when he said by the Spirit, "Your eyes did see my substance (embryo), yet being imperfect; and IN YOUR BOOK ALL MY MEMBERS WERE WRITTEN, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 39:16). Unfathomable mysteries lie locked up within these enigmatic words; but it is clear that all you were to be in the earth realm was written, encoded, programmed in your spirit before the foundation of the world. Before there was a physical embryo of Jeremiah in his mother's womb, there was a spirit Jeremiah that God knew. "Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you" (Jer. 1:5). I believe the same thing is true about every member in God's great family of sons and daughters, for He is the Father of the family both in heaven and in earth; you have a great past and a marvelous future! You came from God. You were with God in spirit when all the sons of God shouted for joy at the announcement of God's great plan – His election in man. You have no remembrance of it in your conscious mind, but sometimes you know things that you have no way of knowing. In those times our dull mind receives the signal from the eternal knowing within beyond the powers of the brain, and we know that we know though there is no physical evidence for our knowing. When our spirit was quickened by His Spirit that hidden inner life began to fructify and we were quickened to that world from whence we came. There is a spiritual knowing without any mental input. As soul and body are brought under the influence and rule of the spirit within the message of the Book of Life, the Volume of the Book, is transcribed from the spirit onto the fleshy

tables of the heart of the outer man. The Book of Life from heaven is thus published in an earth-edition capable of being seen and known and read of all men.

Your calling, the reason Christ quickened you, was to make you consciously a part of Himself, to bring you into a calling unto glory, to a place where God by His Spirit could express Himself through you, so that you could bring the revelation of God into the earth. Your life and everything that is happening to you is designed to train you for a royal position in God. The only reason God sent you here from the realm of Spirit, lowered into the bondage of corruption, was to process you that in your visible, physical, material form you might become the image of God, the revelation of the invisible God to the material world. As one brother said, "God didn't send you here to make you happy, although joy is certainly a fruit of His Spirit. But Jesus didn't come to tickle you and make you happy – that's what you do with babies – you tickle them to get them to laugh. When you do this you are saying, Listen, little one, there is no way I can intelligently communicate with you, there is no way we can have conversation, so just let me make you laugh. If you are still wanting God to thrill you, excite you, fill you with Pentecostal exuberance and Charismatic effervescence, and make you laugh you are demonstrating the fact that you still have no ability to think or act in the Kingdom of God." You are being groomed to occupy a position in God. There is a people in this hour that is being raised – raised how? – not out of the cemetery, but out of the grave of the carnal mind (for to be carnally minded is death), out of the grave of soulish consciousness, out of the grave of sin, weakness, limitation, fear, and frustration, raised up into the place where they can become the manifestation of the total personality of God in a physical body upon this earth. This is what Jesus Christ came into this earth to reveal. He came forth "the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person" (Heb. 3:1). And we note that this word "person" is actually the Greek word HUPOSTASIS meaning the substance, or the substratum, what lies under. All the life and inner nature of the Divine was expressed through our Lord Jesus Christ, all of God's mind, will, emotion, attitude, desire, nature, character, wisdom, knowledge, power, authority and glory. It is as though the Divine

was clothed in a garment and you must unbutton it to see the reality that lies beneath. And yet there is no need to unbutton it for the glory erupts, it breaks through, it emanates and radiates through the outer form. This is the glory of sonship. This is the opening of the Book of the Life of the Lamb that His life may be seen and known and read of all men.

## **THE LAW WRITTEN WITHIN**

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be my people. In that He says, A new covenant, He has made the first old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:10,13).

Herein is an arrangement that will work – the old covenant was written and engraven in stone and the people were unable to keep it. Israel began well, accepted the covenant, and promised obedience. But there was no power to continue, to fulfill it; no power to conquer temptation, or overcome the evil heart; to remain faithful. Just as the old covenant was the law written and engraven in stone, and one could hold high this stone tablet and say, "Here is the covenant of our God," so the new covenant is the law of God inscribed in the minds and hearts of a people – not merely a law, but that law inscribed in a people – so that you can point to that people and say, "There is the covenant of our God!" The people with the law of God in their heart IS THE COVENANT, THE BOOK OF GOD'S LAW OF LIFE. I heard of a man who collects presidential signatures. The autographs are valuable, some of them priceless – not because of the ink or paper that was used but because of the person who wrote them. These presidential signatures are all appropriately framed and hung with dignity and honor. God has made a covenant with mankind that has been written by His finger and signed in blood. This is not a mere document but an agreement – signed in our Lord's own blood. His blood is His life and it is His life formed in His people which constitutes His signature with His blood. YOU ARE THE COVENANT. Never forget that!

We speak of "signing on the dotted line" and there's something awesome about it. Watch a head of government sign a bill into law; watch a bride and groom sign a marriage license; watch an executive sign a 100-million-dollar contract – each time you will notice the solemnity, the weightiness, the finality. When I sign on the dotted line, that's it. The hospital may now proceed with my surgery; the army has me for four years; my spouse is now endowed with all my earthly wealth; I will pay \$800 a month for the house. They've got it in writing. God has graciously allowed His covenant with man to be put into writing and signed with His signature – within a people. That is an awesome thing for God to do, for now His covenant can be known and read by all men. In the integrity of His holy heart He is bound to keep all His word, fulfill all His purpose, develop all His life, display all His wisdom, nature and glory in and through this people who are His covenant written upon the fleshy tables of their hearts. Now He can be held to His word, for He has invested His signature onto the document. But that's exactly what He intends: that His word be viewed as final, permanent, binding, and therefore reliable and trustworthy. What hope and faith this should inspire in our hearts!

The Lamb's Book of Life, God's New Covenant – seek it not in the starry skies, nor in the sweet bye and bye – seek it in a life transformed. This is His monument – not in cold stone, not in chiseled marble, not in plaques of bronze, not in ancient parchments, not in weighty documents, but given by the very finger of God upon human hearts and in human lives. Here is the covenant that will last when time is obsolete, when the sands of the ages have run out, when the elements have melted with fervent heat. Andrew Murray once asked, What does it mean to have a law in the heart? It means this: to have the knowledge and the will and the nature and the power of God inspired into us. For example, when I speak of an acorn, how do I know it will grow up into a mighty oak tree that may stand for a hundred years? Because the law of the oak tree has been written in the heart of the acorn. The acorn may be small, and the oak tree may be spreading its branches for a hundred years to come, but it was in the acorn. Even so with Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant, the One on whom I can depend to make the covenant

true. Christ Jesus is to see that the Spirit of the Lord God shall be and live in me, rule in me, conquer in me, and work out all His blessed purposes in me. Christ, the High Priest, is Mediator of the Covenant for this blessing too – a life that lives out the law written in the heart. And may I add – as the Lord Jesus is the surety for us of the covenant, so we in Him are the surety for the rest of creation.

Ray Prinzing wrote, "'Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that reads it' (Hab. 2:2). What is the table upon which He is writing? 'For this is the covenant that I will make...I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts' (Heb. 8:10). The vision is not being written out with pen and ink. We praise God for the writing ministries that He is using in this hour, confirming from heart to heart of that which He is speaking within. But the reality of the vision is not being written with pen and ink, but by the Spirit of God into the tables of our heart and mind. We can send forth printed messages that speak of the vision, but the vision itself is that which God is uncovering and engraving in your own being until you BECOME THE MESSAGE. A living message, having become that which was written within" – end quote.

Paul Mueller has shared some precious insights into this wonderful Book of God, which I am constrained to share at this point. He writes: "There is a wonderful truth that is about to break in upon the minds and hearts of the Lord's elect, and that is the blessed truth that it is God's intention to write His complete word upon the tables of our hearts. The entire scripture, including the Gospel of Christ and the inspired word of truth divinely ordained for our growth unto perfection, the manifestation of the sons of God, and the propagation and administration of the kingdom of God, is all to be written upon the tables of our hearts. The fact is, the Bible as we now know it will one day become obsolete for us. The blessed book that we carry around, study and sometimes memorize, is to be imparted into our lives so that we are truly 'epistles...known and read of all men.' This is not to downgrade the Bible or to denigrate its effectiveness, authority, and inspiration. The book we call the Bible is, for the most part, the inspired word of God, and we are truly and deeply grateful for all it means to us. However, our respect for the Bible will not alter

the great truth that it is God's intention that we become His living word. Every truth that has been given by the Spirit will eventually become a part of our lives, so that we will not need to turn to chapter and verse for guidance and truth, but rather, that truth will be written and engraved upon our lives so that we do by nature all the truth the Bible contains to the glory of God.

"Paul wrote to the Corinthians, setting forth this truth, 'You are those who are openly shown to be a letter which exhibits Christ, this letter having been ministered (written) by us, not having been written with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets that are human hearts' (II Cor. 3:3, Wuest). OH TO BE A LETTER WHICH EXHIBITS CHRIST! That is the real intent and purpose of the dual function of the Word and the Spirit. And when we have put on the garment of the fullness of Christ, we will have become an epistle which exhibits Him. We should then understand and know that God is daily writing His truth upon our hearts, and He will continue to write upon our lives until we become all that the written word contains. It is also a great truth to know that the law of God, once written upon tables of stone, is now being written upon the tables of our hearts. The same finger of God that wrote the stone tablets is now writing upon the fleshly tables of our hearts. This is the new covenant, the covenant of the New Testament. The great distinction between the Old testament and the New is that the law which was written on stone tablets, and which could not be kept by unregenerate man, is now being written upon our hearts SO that by the power of the indwelling Christ, we are thus enabled to fulfill all the law because we have a new nature, the very nature of Christ.

"The laws and covenants of God were not intended to be repeated on the pages of the book we call the New Testament. The old covenant clearly states that the next time the Lord writes His laws and covenant, it would be upon the hearts of His elect and chosen ones. The highest fulfillment of anything is to become that which it contains and reveals. When we have become the promised living epistles, manifesting the very Life of Christ, we shall then be able ministers of the new covenant. Then the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Mic. 4:2). It will not be the dead letter read from the

pages of a book, but the living, anointed truth of God coming forth from lives that have been transformed by the power of that word. Many nations shall then desire to come up to the house of the Lord, where dwells those living epistles. Then shall they learn the ways of the Lord from kings and priests who express the experiences of the Spirit. Then, many peoples and nations shall walk in the paths of the Lord, for they will have witnessed the grand fulfillment of the new covenant within an anointed and holy people.

"When we have become fully processed and are ready to rule and reign with Christ, we will then become in the fullest sense possible epistles of Christ, 'known and read of all men.' Each kingdom ruler will be like streams of water in a dry place, and like the shade of a great rock in a wearisome land. The presence of Christ will flow out of their lives like streams of water gushing from an overflowing fountain. The glory, power, and life of the Spirit will be so manifest that all who had ears but could not hear will then hear and understand the truth of God clearly. Eyes that once were blinded to revelation and reality will be opened by the power of the Spirit that is flowing out of the elect. The minds of those lacking true judgment and the ability to apprehend will then be able to comprehend fully God's abundant, redemptive love for them, as well as all His living truth. Then the tongue of the stammering will be quick to speak plainly. The multitudes will receive the anointed message of Life coming from those living epistles" – end quote.

Hallelujah, what a day! As the Father opens His Book of Life, He is actually sending forth His creative Word in a positive, triumphant outflowing which will not cease until every mountain has been made low and every valley has been filled, till every man and every creature and every order in every realm of heaven and earth has been purged and transformed and filled full and every heart beats in unison with the heart of God. As this ministry of Life advances every mind shall be brought into harmony with the divine wisdom and eternal purpose, and the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and every creature shall know the triumph of His Life within until all death is swallowed up into HIS VICTORY and

God becomes All-in-all, everything to everyone, the indwelling and controlling factor of life. May God hasten it and perform it. Amen!

## *Chapter 2*

# *The Book of Life Written In the Heart*

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in THE BOOK OF LIFE OF THE LAMB slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear" (Rev. 13:1, 8-9).

We have entertained such carnal notions when we come to the book of Revelation. The Holy Spirit must teach us the very first principle of this book – the book of Revelation is a book of symbols – and no symbol is ever to be taken in its literal form. It is significantly wonderful that the Lion of the tribe of Judah is not a four-legged lion, nor is the Lamb in the midst of the throne a four-legged lamb! The Lamb has seven horns – not literal horns, of course – for the horns are mere figures representing the seven-fold spirit of power and life which emanates from the mind and nature of the Lamb. I am sure my readers understand the simple truth that the various beasts in the Revelation are not literal beasts, the sea out of which they rise is not an actual ocean, the cities are not literal cities, nor is the great harlot a single female prostitute. One and all are but symbols and figures of deep spiritual realities, positive or negative, as the case may be. May I reverently inject another thought? The "dead" who "stand" before God and are "judged" out of the "books" are not the physically dead in the outward cemeteries, nor are the books such as you have in your library. If they were the physically dead standing up to be judged out of literal books the basic principle of the Revelation's symbology would be violated. If the "Lamb" who opens the "book" in chapter five is not a four-legged lamb, it should not be difficult for anyone to understand that the book is not a two-covered book! And if that "book" is one of Revelation's

wonderful symbols, does it not follow that the "books" in chapter twenty are likewise word-pictures in the form of symbols?

According to the Emphatic Diaglott the correct rendering of the words "the book of life of the Lamb" is "the book of the life of the Lamb." If I were to give you a book entitled THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, you would understand at once that it is a biography or an autobiography of the life of the first president of the United States, George Washington. That book should contain everything you always wanted to know about George Washington! Every detail of his life would be there: when he was born, who his parents were, where he was raised, the schools he attended, the girls he dated, who he married, how he became general of the army, and finally president of our great nation. In the same way, THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB is the autobiography of God's Lamb, the record of who He is, what He is like, and what He does. Everything you ever wanted to know about the Son of God is contained in this wonderful book of the life of the Lamb! It is not a literal book, of course, for the sons and daughters of the Most High are the LIVING RECORD AND REVELATION of the life of the indwelling Lamb. It was to the apostle Paul that the revelation was given that the book of life, the book of the Lamb, the book of the Son of God is A PEOPLE. "Forasmuch as Y-O-U are manifestly declared to be THE EPISTLE OF CHRIST ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. Who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (II Cor. 3:3,6).

Paul asked the Corinthians, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" (II Cor. 3:1). He refers to ministers who had arrived in Corinth bearing letters of recommendation to them from the churches in Judea. The false teachers at Corinth had been originally introduced there by commendatory letters from abroad. These were letters of introduction, and were common among the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews, as they are now. They were usually given to persons who were about to travel. So these

teachers came to Corinth with letters of recommendation from other churches; and when leaving that city obtained similar letters from the Corinthians to other churches. The 13th canon of the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) ordained that "clergymen coming to a city where they were unknown, should not be allowed to officiate without letters commendatory from their own bishop." The history (Acts 18:27) confirms the existence of the custom here alluded to in the Epistle: "When Apollos was disposed to pass into Achaia (Corinth) the brethren (of Ephesus) wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him." This was about two years before Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, and is probably one of the instances to which Paul refers, as many at Corinth boasted of their being followers of Apollos (I Cor. 1:12).

But Paul says that he needs no such external recommendation to anyone for "YOU are our epistle (letter), written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (II Cor. 3:2). His testimonial was the saints themselves. This he says was written on his heart. It was not a cold letter of recommendation, but the living proof of his ministry and the authority, power and life of the Christ who sent him. "Forasmuch as Y-O-U are manifestly declared to be the EPISTLE OF CHRIST ministered (written) by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." There is not so powerful a letter or sermon in the world, as a transformed life. The proof of Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God is not the Bible – it is the lives of those in whom He lives and walks and talks. The lives of God's redeemed people are the only spiritual books the world reads. The nature and character of God revealed in us is the form of language God uses to speak to creation. When God writes on the fleshy tables of our heart the very essence of His love, His mercy, His goodness, His wisdom, His power – His letter to mankind is written so legibly that it can be "read by all men." It is not written with ink, by traces drawn on lifeless substance, and in lines that easily fade, or that can be read by only one or a few persons at a time. Every trace of the Spirit's influence on the heart indelibly inscribes within our character the Word of the living God – God's message, God's revelation, God's life – truly it is THE BOOK OF THE LIFE OF THE LAMB! Ah, no hand but that of God can reach the heart, and inscribe

His truth there. It is not a dead letter, it will not molder or decay, for it is the incorruptible Word of God that lives and abides forever. Though worms should destroy this body, it will abide to other ages, to other worlds, and will stand in the day of judgment as God's Book of Life opened for all to read. It is the influence that shall be seen and felt throughout vast ages yet unborn until God becomes All-in-all, everything to everyone, everywhere.

## **THE BOOK OF LIFE WRITTEN IN THE HEART**

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people...in that He says, A new covenant, He has made the first old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:10,13).

Herein is an arrangement that will work – the old covenant was written and engraven in stone and the people were unable to keep it. Israel began well, accepted the covenant, and promised obedience. But there was no power to continue, to fulfill it; no power to conquer temptation, or overcome the evil heart; to remain faithful. Just as the old covenant was the law written and engraven in stone, and one could hold high the stone tablets and say, "Here is the covenant of our God," so the new covenant is the law of God inscribed in the minds and hearts of a people – not merely a law, but that law inscribed in a people – so that you can point to that people and say, "There is the covenant of God!" The people with the law in their heart IS THE COVENANT, THE BOOK OF GOD'S LAW OF LIFE.

The contrast is between the law written and engraven in stones and the law written in men's hearts. What do we mean by God's LAW? Do we mean the Ten Commandments? Do we mean the 613 laws given by God to Moses for His people Israel? Are these laws God's idea of developing such strict and unbelievable standards, that He knows we can't possibly fulfill? Are they God's attempt to inflict a world-wide guilt trip? Is God a stern, implacable, self-righteous old man sitting in the sky who doesn't want us to have any fun? Is this what God's law is all about? If you go outside on a clear night and look up, you can hardly help

being impressed – even overwhelmed – by the magnificence and order of the universe. The words of the Psalmist spring unbidden to your lips and ring in your heart: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." For whether you look into the sky with a telescope or into the minutest particle of matter with a microscope, you see basic laws of nature at work. Perhaps that is why the Psalmist went on quickly to talk about the laws of God. Here's what he said: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether" (Ps. 19:7-9). Now there you have such words as law, commandment, testimony, statutes and judgments." They all mean basically the same thing; the repetition gives emphasis and shades of meaning. Law is basic. Actually the word law means that which is "laid," or "fixed." So here the Psalmist recognized that there are basic principles, written into the very structure of the universe.

The emphasis is upon the enlightening, correcting, cleansing, liberating effect of coming into proper relationship with those principles which are "laid" or "fixed." The laws of God are not passed by a congress or parliament. They are simply there; they are laid or fixed. A simple story I read once will illustrate: A little boy and his father were sitting under an apple tree when an apple fell and hit the boy on the head. Having an inquiring mind, he asked his father, "What made that apple fall?" His father answered, "The law of gravity, Son." And the little fellow, still rubbing his head, inquired, "What did apples do before that law was passed?" Some laws are not "passed" by human beings. They are established within the very order of things. They are immutable. The laws of nature do not change. The law of gravity cannot be broken. It can be superceded, but not broken. A boulder balanced at the edge of a cliff will fall if given a push. We know it won't go floating off into space, because the physical law of gravity always operates the same way when an object is allowed to fall. The principle and power within the law is laid and fixed. That's what makes it a law.

The law of God is given to reveal to us the nature of God Himself. I will use one illustration from the Ten Commandments to make the point. When God says, "You shall not commit adultery," He is not trying to prevent us from having a good time. He is telling us something about Himself – how He is. The only eternal, unchangeable, immutable, invariable, unalterable, firm, fixed, sound, solid, balanced, dependable, reliable, steady, steadfast, and trustworthy thing in the whole universe is – GOD! "You shall not commit adultery" – it means that GOD HIMSELF is committed, reliable, true, dependable, faithful and trustworthy. He keeps His commitments. He keeps His covenant. He honors His word. He is faithful in all His involvements. He will not cheat on you, lie to you, deceive you, forsake you or fail you. He loves you and will take care of you, cherish you, nurture you, protect you, and cleave to you. THAT IS HOW HE IS! He is love, He is good, He is faithful, and His nature is laid, fixed, unchanging. He is not adulterous, with a roving eye and a lying, cheating heart. When you understand the nature of one who is not adulterous in thought, desire or action, you understand something about the character of God. And that is how He want us, His sons, to be! His law reveals His nature. And when His law is written in our heart, His nature – how He is – is inscribed upon the tablets (genetic code) of our inner life.

There would never be a broken home, a heartbroken wife or husband, or deserted and destitute children if the nature of God was written in all men's hearts. There would be no bigotry, no hatred, no crime, no war, no evil or trouble anywhere on earth if the nature of God was written on all men's hearts giving them a heart in the likeness of His own and a mind as the mind of Christ. From the redeemed and transformed heart the law (nature) of God flows forth as a river of life. We still have those among us who thunder the letter of the law from Sinai's mount – but all such will change their tune if ever they stand with the Lamb of God at Calvary's hill, for there they find God removing His law from the external tables of stone to write them upon the fleshy tables of the hearts of new born men, who no longer keep the law because they cringe in fear, but because the spirit of that law has become their nature, the law of life within them. Can you imagine the United States Government passing one massive law

that says, "WE FORBID ANYMORE CRIME OF ANY KIND" – and it worked! Impossible. Laws are on the outside; you read them; you think about them; and if you have any morality at all, you even try to obey them, at least when anyone is looking who might report, expose, or punish you if you do not. Edicts of man are issued, but they cannot be imparted. You talk them, but few walk them. So laws cannot change the inner man; nor can the best of men follow the totality of any laws laid down in his behalf. That is why there is such torment and slavery under the law, for we have become aware now of what God defines as sin, yet we struggle with it nonetheless. But when the law is written in the heart no longer do men try to love God contrary to nature, but now, because they possess the nature of God, love flows like a river from the heart.

Herein lies the important significance of the great truth Jesus proclaimed when He said, "The kingdom of God comes not with observation (outward show): neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:20-21). There are still those among us who imagine that Jesus Christ is coming back to earth with literal armies to ENFORCE LAW AND ORDER. But should the Lord come to establish His Kingdom by force it could only result in a world full of immense prisons and unprecedented numbers of executions. It would demand a tyranny surpassing that of either Hitler or Stalin. It is my deep conviction that social issues, economic issues, and political issues can be dealt with adequately only at the level of individual conversion. When the firstborn Son of God came into the world to reveal the salvation of God and the kingdom of God, He did not engage directly in social welfare work, or attack directly the social structure of the existing society. Instead He gave Himself to the task of converting, remaking, transforming, and training of twelve apparently unimportant men. These men, filled with the Holy Spirit of wisdom, holiness, and power went forth converting, remaking and transforming the lives of countless multitudes of men and women in every nation under heaven. As the sons of God destined to bring deliverance to the whole creation, dare we follow in the footsteps of HIS holy wisdom? The heart of any social, economic or political problem lies in the heart of individual men and women. New social

structures and systems, new laws, new judicial systems, new political systems, new economic systems, can never solve the problem so long as the heart of man remains selfish. Only when men pass over by conversion from self-centeredness to God-centeredness can the Kingdom of God become a living reality on earth. All of our external problems – race, nationalism, war, crime, poverty, oppression, sickness, death – all of these are but the external symptoms of an internal, deep-seated disease – the sin of self-centeredness. The only strategy that will be victorious in the warfare against social and other problems is an offensive directed not against a nation, or a system, but against the human heart! The point of attack is the state of being of man himself. The objective of attack is the conversion and transformation of man with the law of God written in his heart. What incredible wisdom Jesus revealed that day when He declared the principle of the Kingdom – "Behold, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS W-I-T-H-I-N YOU!"

On far-away Patmos John the Revelator penned the record of his vision: "And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals" (Rev. 5:1). John saw the book that is written within. He saw that new covenant that God would make with the house of Israel. That's what he saw. He perceived in spirit that which is being written within. He beheld the realm of the spirit. He saw where you find the performance of the new covenant – not in your own strength, not in your fleshly ability, not in your natural way, but by the Life within. He discovered that we would become living epistles, not of the letter, the outward, but of the spirit, the inward, because there is Life. The reason the "word" of God has bound and killed more people spiritually than it has helped is because it has been legislated outwardly. Men make godliness a law rather than a life. "God said!" they thunder from their pulpits high upon the craggy pinnacle of Mount Sinai, and then lay an outward rule and observance upon the people. To people who have been through the trauma of a divorce they advise: "You can never be remarried; God says, I hate adultery, and you can only please God by remaining single the rest of your life." They kill people with the letter of the Word, not seeing the spirit, the compassion of God, the love of God, the heart of God. People

have been forced to go to the world to find some judgment because they couldn't find it in the church. They have been compelled to go to the counselors of the world to find some understanding because the preachers had no grace, no mercy and no wisdom from the Lord. Christian ministers of the grace of God LEGISLATING THE LAW! What an enigma! What a travesty! "But the Bible says!" you contend. You hypocrites! You don't even know what the Bible says! You know the letter that kills! You have never perused the pages of the blessed Book of the Life of the Lamb – the spirit that gives life! The New Testament is not that black, leather-bound book we call the Bible. The New Testament, the true Bible, the Living Epistle of Christ is the law of His life written upon the fleshy tables of the heart.

Ray Prinzing shared the following story which clearly illustrates the truth I now write. "A certain woman who had been raised under the bondage of the law of 'you shall and you shall not' of a certain group, rebelled against it all and went her own way, and eventually became a slave to drink. In due time her past 'church acquaintances' came to her with more of their 'you shall not' to see if they could turn her away from her alcoholism. She already knew the futility of trying to quit in herself, and said to them, 'When God writes on my heart, you shall not drink, then I will not drink.' Not long thereafter, GRACE sovereignly came to her, HE WROTE IT UPON HER HEART, and she was immediately delivered from alcohol. Christendom would impose their standard from without, HE WRITES IT WITHIN, AND IMPARTS THE ABILITY TO LIVE IT OUT! That is GRACE!"

There is a precise divine process for accomplishing the law of God within. It is not unlike the way by which habits and character are formed in the natural life. Think about it. Much of what we do in our everyday lives is a matter of habit. Without habits we could not function – or perhaps even survive. Habits enable us to perform an incredible number of actions without significant conscious thought or effort – like tying our shoes, buttoning a shirt, riding a bike, walking, running, drinking, etc. A habit is an acquired pattern of acting, thinking, or feeling – a way of behaving that has become routine. Habits are learned, but they become a "second nature." Don't confuse these learned patterns

with the inborn, inherent and involuntary responses such as breathing, sweating, digesting or shivering. A habit starts to form when we respond to something – physically, mentally, or emotionally – several times. As we respond a record is made of each action we take in response to certain stimuli, neural circuits and pathways in the marvelous human brain and nervous system are found and a pattern starts to occur. At last the memory is able to trigger an automatic response, thought or feeling to a specific stimuli. What we call human personality is to a large extent a composition of thousands of individual and specific habit traits.

I might illustrate our experience in this matter in this way. All parents know the difficulty they have in teaching their children. You usually find that you have to instruct them many times before they begin to act according to your instruction. For instance, when they come home from school there is a trail of articles between the door and the kitchen cabinet where they go to get something to eat. It is their books, lunch box, mittens and coat. Mother has to instruct them to put their things away and not leave them laying around. She may have to tell them many times and hopefully eventually her law is put into their minds. That is the first step. It must be put into the mind. The second step is manifest when that which is put into the mind is able to trigger an automatic response in action – so that the thing is done without any significant thought, effort, or undue attention. What was put into the mind now becomes a nature – it is written in the heart! Is not this a clear picture of how the new covenant is established within – how the Lamb's Book of Life is written? "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."

In the same way God has to act toward us in order to "put" His law into our mind and "write" them upon our heart. This sequence is vitally important. God first "puts" His law into our mind – then He "writes" His law in our heart. Permit me to illustrate this truth with one further account. When I was a small boy Mama said to me, "Preston, brush your teeth." But Preston didn't want to brush his teeth. He didn't like having to expend the time and effort necessary to have clean teeth and fresh breath.

After a few minutes Mama would ask, "Preston, have you brushed your teeth?" "No, Mama." "Go brush your teeth!" So Preston brushed his teeth. But the next morning the scene was repeated. "Preston, brush your teeth." "Preston, have you brushed your teeth?" "No, Mama." "Go brush your teeth!" This procedure continued for some weeks – then a strange thing happened. One fine morning Preston crawled out of bed and for the first time in his life remembered that he should brush his teeth. He understood that if he procrastinated, eventually Mama would see to it that it was done anyhow; So, Preston reasoned, why not just go ahead and do it? For the first time I actually brushed my teeth without being told. At this point Mama had succeeded in getting the idea of brushing my teeth PUT INTO MY MIND. I still didn't especially want to do it, but I knew it must be done. It was necessary to make a special effort to do it, but it was firmly established in my mind. And little by little what had been put into my mind became a habit – a nature. Today I don't even think about brushing my teeth. I don't have to write a note in order to remember. I am almost fanatic about it. I brush my teeth when I get up in the morning, after every meal, and before retiring at night. I am uncomfortable if for some reason I don't get to brush my teeth. You see, it is now a nature with me! It is "written" in my heart. And that is exactly how the law of God is inscribed in the heart. God sends His Word to us. The Word may come by teaching, preaching, prophecy, reading, studying the scriptures, or by direct revelation of the Holy Spirit. It is beyond the mind being merely activated to enjoy an intellectual concept of truth, and to appreciate doctrine. It is understanding from a higher plane. The Word of God comes by the illumination of the Spirit. It comes as the command of God in our spiritual mind. We may hear it as a still small Voice within, or as thunder out of the heavens – but eventually it evokes in us obedience. As we hasten to obey, and continue walking in the Spirit, that Word which God "put" in our mind becomes formed as an inward nature – "written" in the heart. It is not merely the heart feeling the impulses and the power of His Word, but it is the heart being fashioned and molded into the divine image. There is a complete transformation, a complete change, a divine metamorphosis, out of the natural into the spiritual, out of the soulish and into the divine. This is conversion! In this wonderful way God puts His

law into our minds and writes it in our hearts! Here's how it works both on the natural plane and the spiritual:

Plant a word in the mind, and you will reap an act.

Plant the act and you will reap a habit.

Plant a habit and you will reap a character.

Plant a character and you will reap a nature.

Plant a nature and you will reap a destiny.

It all begins with the mind. "I will put my laws into their minds." That is why the emphasis of the Holy Spirit in this hour is upon the way you think. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. 2:5-6). Someone says, "That was alright for Jesus, but you can't say that you are equal with God." I agree with you – there was a time when I wouldn't have dared to. But I have discovered something. First of all I have discovered how the Lord Jesus could think that way. He said, "The words that I speak, they are the words my Father has given me." In order to be a father you must start something. Fathers are starters, originators, instigators, initiators. Fathers are begetters. Fathers give life. When Jesus said, "God is my Father," He revealed that the words He spoke and the works He did were only the birthing of that which the Father started in His mind. If the words and works of God had not been put into His mind they would never have been written in His heart. If the words and works of the Father had not first been written in Jesus' heart, there would have been no revelation of God through Him. For Jesus, as for us, there is the same procedure. The Spirit of God in Jesus spoke a word of Spirit to His mind – "You art My Son." And Jesus allowed His mind to think it at the level it was spoken to Him. And the mind, being a womb, female, soul, received the seed and it germinated and sprang forth within as a nature. So He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. In other words, as the offspring of God, His Son, He gave Himself to growing up into all the fullness of His Father, conformed to His image, the express image of His person. That is what sonship is! It is the image and expression and revelation of the fullness of God unto creation.

Great is the mystery and the wonder of it, but the apostle Paul explains in I Cor. 6:17 that "He that is joined to the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT." When the Spirit of God came in and quickened your human spirit, His Spirit and your spirit became ONE. One spirit – just as when a man is joined to a harlot they become one flesh – one humanity, male and female, Adam. There is no difference! Bible translators have found it very difficult to decide whether "spirit" in some passages refers to the Holy Spirit or the spirit of man. The reason for this difficulty lies in the fact that in the believer the Holy Spirit and the human spirit are joined together as ONE SPIRIT! We are one spirit with the Lord. It is like joining hydrogen and oxygen to make water. When you look at the water or drink the water you cannot tell what is hydrogen and what is oxygen. In their combination they have formed a new substance – water. In the water the two are one. In like manner, such a united spirit makes it difficult for anyone to say whether this is the Holy Spirit or the human spirit. The two are compounded as one. We may say it is the Holy Spirit, and yet we can also say it is the human spirit. Sometimes we make a beverage by mixing two kinds of juices – apple and cranberry. After it is mixed it is difficult by taste to tell what kind of juice it is. Is it apple or cranberry? We would have to call it apple-cranberry. In the realm of the spirit it is wonderful to see that the two spirits, the Holy Spirit joined with our spirit, ARE ONE SPIRIT.

Ah – Christ is in us, but where within us is He? In what part? It is abundantly clear – Christ today is in our spirit. We should not be so vague, like many who say, "Oh, the Lord is in you and the Lord is in me." The last verse of II Timothy 4 definitely states that Christ is in our spirit. "The Lord be with your spirit." The preposition "with" is from the Greek SUN which denotes "union." The Lord is in union with our spirit! There is a mighty working taking place within God's people – no more to have that duality – our spirit, His Spirit, but to be so fully merged into one with Him that HIS Spirit is mine, and my spirit, quickened by His Spirit, is swallowed up into His. "There is ONE SPIRIT" (Eph. 4:4), says the apostle. That one spirit is neither the Holy Spirit nor our spirit – it is His Spirit joined to our spirit, the ONE SPIRIT of God in His sons and daughters. And whenever you move by the spirit, that

is God moving. Whenever you speak out of the spirit, that is God speaking. Whenever you act by the spirit, that is God acting. It is not merely God moving, speaking, and acting through you – it is God moving, speaking and acting as you. It is you moving, speaking and acting as God! And it is the Spirit of God in you that is now speaking to your mind, saying, "You are My son." The import of that word is now germinating in your mind. You are letting that precious mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

"By His own will begat He us with the word of truth." HE is the great and eternal God, we are His children, His offspring, the ones who have been spawned out of the loins of His omnipotence. God is now putting the reality of what is true in Himself into our minds. As we walk it out, this glorious and eternal reality of God will be written in our hearts, impressed into us as the nature of our being. Was not this great and eternal purpose burning in the heart of the apostle Paul when he cried out, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). When the reality of Christ is fully put into our minds and written in our heart there will be the revelation of the full personality of God. You will know and express Him fully, not after a Catholic mentality, not after a Baptist mentality, not in a Pentecostal mentality, but in pure GOD CONSCIOUSNESS. You will no longer know Him in creed or doctrine, in ceremony or ordinance, in gifts and experiences, you will not know Him through anything or anyone outside of yourself. You will know HIM personally, intimately, fully.

When God's law, His nature and state of Being, is written in our heart, to express God becomes as easy as, alas! it is difficult now. In the divine nature it is as easy to go with the stream of His life, as it has been for the carnal mind to go against it. In the divine nature doing the will of God is as easy as breathing, digesting food, or sleeping. Don't you wish doing righteousness was as easy as doing wrong? Wouldn't it be wonderful if being sweet and kind and gentle were as easy as flying off the handle and saying things that offend, which we later regret? How we desire pure thoughts and holy attitudes to come as easily for us as lust, resentment, spitefulness and a critical spirit! If only love was as natural and effortless as animosity and hatred! Ah, my

beloved, when the law of the Lord is fully inscribed in our heart all the attributes of God flow like a river of life from our innermost being – for we are doing what comes naturally! "Naturally" means "nature-ally", for to PERFORM OUT OF A NATURE is what "natur-ally" signifies. The heart possesses the center of the will of man. I'm sure you have heard the expression, "I just do not have the HEART to do that." What that one means is, "I just do not have the WILL to do that." The will of the soul is too weak to think, speak, or act like God. But when the law of God is written in the heart, the will of God in the heart becomes the central force that drives the outward expression, as it is written, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Eze. 36:26-27).

A dear brother has aptly written, "God wants people who are motivated by desire so that when something is worked into them, it will be a natural desire for them to do it. Jesus did not have to walk along the road and keep muttering to Himself, 'You shall not, you shall not.' He did not need to, for He delighted to do the Father's will. He did not need the law. Sons of God do not need the law because 'Christ is become the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.' The carnal external law kept telling us 'to do' and 'not to do' and we kept doing what we did not want to do; then the law was right there to bring us condemnation. In Christ it is entirely different." Andrew Murray beautifully expressed it thus: "The power of the new covenant is to convert the external law into an inner life, to put it so in the heart that it shall be its inmost life, so that, as naturally as the heart wills and lives and acts on earth, it shall will and live and do what God commands. Why does an acorn so spontaneously grow up into an oak? Because the law of the oak is written in the heart of the acorn. The life of every creature on earth acts with delight in accordance with the law of its Creator, that is, its inner nature. God and His holiness, Christ and His Holy Spirit, if they belong to us, must be as near to us, as essentially within us, as truly inherent in our own life, as our own thinking, willing and feeling. And so God promises that He will put His law in our

minds and write it in our hearts, in such a way that it shall be our inner nature, our very life, and we shall act according to it as naturally as we think or live. Yes, He will do it! So that we can say, even as His firstborn Son did, "Your law is within my heart; I delight to do Your will, O God."

As God puts His law of life in our mind and writes the life of the Lamb upon the scroll of our heart, we are transformed from glory to glory. The process is natural, progressive and dynamic, as Lyn Gitchel has explained: "Consider for a moment, what life is, and what it does. The moment of the beginning of life is when that seed meets the receptor that will join with it to bring it to birth. From that moment on the LIFE-force that is resident there forms GROWTH cells around itself, ever expanding itself until it becomes a body. In time the same LIFE-force brings forth that body that it has built around itself by those growth cells, into an environment in which IT CAN MAINTAIN A LIFE WITHIN ITSELF; this is known as birth. Birth is simply a stage of the development of life. That same LIFE-force will then go on forming growth cells around itself and developing until it is able to support itself without dependency upon another. This is known as maturity. Thus, this whole LIFE process is one of forming growth around itself and reaching beyond itself to maturity.

"The LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE is just the same. It constantly builds new and greater spiritual growth around itself, constantly working towards the end of bringing you to a place where that lifewithin you is able to support itself without dependency upon the environment, or others. This, in the spiritual realm too, is called maturity. Maturity is the aim of LIFE. LIFE always keeps growth forming around itself. LIFE is always reaching out for something to expand itself. This is true of the natural body, and of the soul realm of thought, feelings and senses. And, of course, it is always true of our spiritual experiences, which are from plateau to plateau of growth in Christ. LIFE is wholeness; a growth into self-existence. Contained within LIFE is the ability to grow, expand, and bring maturity" – end quote.

In closing I would share precious gems from the ready pen of Ray Prinzing. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand

before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire' (Rev. 20:12,15). God is bringing forth His WORD COMPANY, perfecting and maturing those who are to be an expression of His Word, His logos people. They are His offspring, for 'of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures' (James 1:18). Born of His will, His thought, His purpose, His living Word. The nature of this OFFSPRING is the nature of the Word, for, these are they who were once contained in the Word in the beginning. We are persuaded that God has a company, A PEOPLE WHOSE NAMES WERE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. They are a predestinated people, laid hold of by the grace of God for a specific purpose of becoming His firstfruits channel through which shall flow quickening streams of divine life to conquer death, and bring new life to all His creation.

"AND ANOTHER BOOK SHALL BE OPENED, THE BOOK OF LIFE! There will be books that are opened out of which men shall be judged 'by what they have done, their whole way of feeling and acting, their aims and endeavors, in accordance with what was recorded in the books' (Rev. 20:12, Amplified). And whatever purging and purifying is needed, whatever correctional processings must need be applied, they shall be, for righteousness must be established. But it reads on, THERE IS ANOTHER BOOK THAT SHALL BE OPENED, it is 'another book' that has our hearts rejoicing, for it is the BOOK OF LIFE. It is a ministry of righteousness, not condemnation. It is an outflow of love, and love, being non-coercive, sets no standards of man-made doctrines and traditions, but moves in the glorious freedom of the 'perfect law of liberty' in that free flowing of His life. Jesus walked, and talked, and dined with the publicans and sinners, because His love reached out to embrace all men. They received Him because He received them. He met them right where they were, without condemnation. 'For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved' (Jn. 3:17).

"It is not God's purpose to 'rapture' His people away to some little Isle to shine together for each other. It is His plan to place His LIGHTS in those darkened corners that it might dissipate the darkness and the whole thereof become light. This ministry of LIGHT, radiating as from an OPEN BOOK, shall bring penetrating insight, not just looking on the outward appearance, judging the exterior, but looking upon and revealing the cause, the core of self, correction is made. The light reveals, not for the sake of condemnation, but that the true facts and condition being known, there can be a restoration into righteousness, for the light dissipates the darkness, therefore there is healing in its process. The BOOK OF LIFE awaits all the action of the judgments of God to balance them with hope, victory, and a complete restoration of all that is fallen. The 'books' are opened first, and men are judged; then the 'another book,' the 'book of life' is opened – the revelation of His life follows the judgment! Herein is the calling of God that rests upon His apprehended ones today, 'That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world; HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE...' (Phil. 2:15-16).

"Shining lights! An open book! HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE! This brings us to Psalm 119:130, 'The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple.' This word 'entrance' used here is literally the Hebrew word meaning THE OPENING. When the book is opened, the message within the book shall also be opened, and it shall flow out to give light to those who sit in darkness.

"The vision has been 'unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray : and he says, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray you do: and he says, I am not learned' (Isa. 29:11-12). The unlearned, the undisciplined, cannot tell you the message of LIFE, for they are unlearned, untaught in the way. But those who are being processed, taught by the Spirit, disciplined under His rod, these cannot as yet fully declare the message either, for IT IS SEALED UP WITHIN THEM. But when this 'ANOTHER BOOK' is brought forth, and OPENED, the message which has

been sealed up within our deep shall be released, and it will flow out a river of LIFE. Seems so often now when we try to share, we speak in the riddles and parables, and it remains a mystery to those who hear. But in that day there shall be an OPENING OF YOUR WORDS, they will come forth in clarity and bring understanding, and thus bring light to those who have long remained in shadows and darkness. It will be HIS WORD coming forth, and the opening of His Word gives light. There is a holding forth of the Word of Life that shall answer the cry and deep inner frustrations of groaning creation. To be able to say with confident clarity, 'This is the way, walk in it.' Praise God!

"I have sworn my Myself, the WORD is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear' (Isa. 45:23). When the Father opens His BOOK OF LIFE COMPANY, it is the sending forth of the WORD of His mouth, in a positive, triumphant ministry that shall not cease until every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that HE IS LORD. This is not a confession produced by coercion, for 'no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit' (I Cor. 12:3). Therefore this confession is the result of that ministration when 'I shall pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh' (Joel 2:28). 'And all flesh shall see the salvation of God' (Lk. 3:6). 'He sent His Word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions' (Ps. 107:20). 'And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire' (Rev. 20:15). Those who are drawn to Christ now, and are being purged and purified now, have their names written in that book of life, and have no fear of the severity of the fires to come. 'Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after' (I Tim. 5:24). Confessing our need of Him now, exposed to, and receiving the light now, takes care of the judgment. Refusing to receive the light, our sins will follow us on to that day when the light comes to us, and then the judgments until every part has been taken care of with His purgings.

"Furthermore, Paul taught, 'YOU are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men...manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God...' (II Cor. 3:2-3). Paul realized that

those who received the WORD OF LIFE through him, were literally engraved upon his heart – their names were written in him, and in the day that the book was opened, he would testify that they had received the message with gladness, and walked therein. Consider: Wherever the sphere of your influence reaches, and the Spirit flowing through you quickens those upon whom your light does shine, those receiving the light are inscribed in your heart by the Spirit, in the bond of fellowship of His love. Those who resist the light that presently comes to them through you, do not have their names written within your heart, and therefore they will have to pass through the fire, for its corrective work to be wrought in them, and then they, too, shall find themselves BY LOVE enfolded into your bosom, to be nourished with the Christ-life abiding in you, as one in the body of Christ. 'For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish (suffer loss, ruin)' (II Cor. 2:15). THROUGH HIM we may indeed become a book of life, holding forth the Word of Life to all men.

The Father is preparing by His own will  
A disciplined people, whom He can fill  
With the glory of His presence, His 'I Am,'  
Ascending Zion's mountain with the Lamb.  
His Book of Life becoming, filled with grace,  
Holding forth the Word of Life, to embrace  
The whole of this creation until the light  
Has illumined every man. No more night.

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that reads it' (Hab. 2:2). What a beautiful illustration – the vision was to be written upon tables, tablets, like our placards (which were hung up in public places), being written in large and bold characters; or, if we were to use a present day vernacular, EASILY READ CUE CARD, so legible that it may be read while running. The Amplified gives, 'may be able to read easily and quickly as he hastens by.' We pray that God would so clarify the VISION of His truth to our heart, and help us to become such a LIVING DECLARATION that when people see us they will recognize the truth – and quickly turn to HIM who is our Head – our Source and Supply. Amen!

"But what does it say? THE WORD is near you, EVEN IN THY MOUTH, and IN YOUR HEART: that is, the WORD OF FAITH...' (Rom. 10:8). His truth, quickened within us, to become a part of the very fiber of our being, as the message and the messenger become one – thus shall the message be made PLAIN. This, in contradistinction to much that we see today – where one message is being preached from the pulpit, but a different message is being lived out in their every day life. That makes for confusion! What is in our mouth and heart, and lived out each day, will become a clear message for others to read – living epistles known and read of all men..." – end quote.

# *Chapter 3*

## *The Judgment Day*

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns...and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear" (Rev. 13:1,8-9).

The revelation of Jesus Christ – that's what the book of Revelation is all about. It tells you of the revelation of HIM. All the beasts, all the seven heads and ten horns, the blood flowing to the horses bridles, the battle of Armageddon, the pouring out of the vials, the breaking of the seals, the blast of the trumpets – all that is written in this book is nothing more and nothing less than the unveiling, the uncovering, the revelation of Jesus Christ in this Day of the Lord. This revelation has been taking place throughout the church age, but we have now come to that time to which all the ages have been converging – the dispensation of the fullness of times. It is my deep conviction that we are standing at the consummation of the age, the completion of all things that pertain to the church age. All the sages and all the prophets have prophesied of this grace and this glory that should come unto us.

According to the Emphatic Diaglott the correct rendering of the words "the book of life of the Lamb" is "the book of the life of the Lamb." It is the autobiography of the Lamb of God, the revelation of who He is, what He is like, and what He does. Everything you always wanted to know about the Son of God is contained in this wonderful book of the life of the Lamb! It is not a literal book, of course, any more than the horns on the Lamb's head are literal horns, or any more than the Lamb Himself is a four-legged lamb covered with wool. We are touching spiritual realities fulfilled in and through a people – the body of the Christ.

Many years ago the Indian mystic, Sundar Singh, wrote, "When I was in Palestine last month I thought about many things and one thought that came to me was that our Lord did not write anything. It would have been a great thing if Jesus Christ would have written the Gospel Himself, but He did not write a single word, neither did He ask His disciples to write. He did not say to them, 'I am going to dictate, take down notes'. The writers in the Bible did not get inspiration by taking down notes but by living with the Word of Life. That is why our Lord did not ask His disciples to write anything. He says, 'My words are Spirit and they are Life'. It is easy to write words in book form but it is difficult to put the Spirit into words. His Life and Spirit can only be put into the hearts of people and not into the pages of books. Jesus Christ knew that He was going to work on the hearts and not merely through the pages of books. There have been a great many teachers who wrote their teachings for others because they were going to leave them, but Christ, who is also God, is not going to leave us. We have His great promise: 'I am with you always'. Afterwards the living witnesses who saw so many things were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Gospels, as they were eye-witnesses who had lived with Christ. The most important thing for us is that Jesus Christ lived in the hearts of His disciples and worked through them, and not only through them, for today He is working through the hearts of His people" – end quote.

Another has written: "Jesus Himself told the religious crowd of His day, 'Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me' (Jn. 5:39). The fundamentalists of His day were sure they understood the letter of the Word, but it only caused them to miss what God had really declared. There is a book within a book. John was exiled on the island of Patmos, he was caught up to partake of the realm of the Spirit in its fullest sense. He saw a book written within having seven seals (Rev. 5:1). The symbolism of this one verse alone, and the message it conveys, is too much for us to discuss at length in this article. However, John was brought into a place where he could see the intention of God written in the nature of a people. The number seven gives me the understanding that contained within this Book is the totality of God's character and the complete revelation of His will and purpose. As these seals

are loosed within God's people they will begin to experience and express the fullness of all that God is. There has never been an expression of God at this level in the earth at any time except in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. But now there is a people that has been sealed unto the day of redemption and when God begins to loose the seals there is going to be a many-membered expression of God at the same level of God's fullness. You will not know Him any longer through a glass darkly, or at a lower level of consciousness, or at the level of somebody else outside yourself. He won't be a cloudy image, ideal, philosophy, or doctrine. God has declared that they each shall know Me, from the least to the greatest."

This Book of the Lamb's Life tells a complete story. Each member of the Christ body is like a page or chapter in this blessed Book. Each one tells a portion of the story. Each contains only a measure of the revelation of God in His Christ, Head and body. The wonderful thing about it is, that while God revealed Himself in so many ways, in so many forms, through so many people down through the ages, He is now gathering together (compiling) the revelation that came forth and the experience of every one of them. It is all becoming focused in the glorious company of God's sons. The complete revelation of God is divided into hundreds and thousands, yea, millions of little pieces and fragments which were revealed through the lives of men and women by their experience of God on the earth. But now, in the end of the age, God is taking all the experience and wisdom and knowledge and power and grace and glory that men have received and is forming it in a company of sons and is about to stand this company up as the full and complete and total revelation of His personality in the earth. The experiences that Abraham had are ours. The experiences that Enoch had are ours. The experiences that David had have been made our very own. The experiences that Paul had are given unto God's people today. All the glory and gifts and power of the early church have been restored to the saints in our lifetime! I have witnessed this and have been a glad partaker of the reality. We have what Peter had. We have what the Church Fathers had. We have what Martin Luther and the reformers had. We have received all

that the holy apostles and prophets and kings and priests of distant ages and generations experienced in God. We are associated with every revelation, every experience, every anointing, every calling, every ministry, every manifestation that history has recorded. God's Book of the Life of the Lamb is rolling off the presses in this glorious Day and soon will be distributed in all its corporate glory for the whole world to read and consider.

## **THE JUDGMENT DAY**

"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

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 comes, for He comes 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 has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained, whereof He has 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 you 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).

Through the cunning of the adversary, both the world and the popular church have been robbed of the blessed assurances of the time when God's RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS break forth in the earth. Most people know that the Bible tells of a "judgment day," but the average person, believer or unbeliever, regards it only with a certain sense of fear and dread. Because of this fear there is, to them, no more unwelcome tidings than that the Lord is coming to JUDGE THE EARTH. Many tremble inwardly at the thought of God's judgments, and in this mind put them far from them, preferring not even to hear the subject mentioned. At various times in the past many people have become terror-stricken when some unusual event or terrible calamity has occurred, because they have supposed that the event signaled the finale for our planet with billions of people suddenly thrust into eternal damnation. They have absolutely no idea of the wonderful blessings in store for a sin-weary world under the glorious reign of the sons of God filled with all the nature, wisdom, grace, power and glory of God!

There are many who preach what they call the "end-time message" who capitalize on this emotion of fear: "Christ is coming to judge and YOU ARE NOT READY!" That message sounds like something exasperated mothers shout as they shake their disobedient children: "You just wait until your daddy comes home!" Many souls have been scared into the altars and have lived in dread of the end of the age and the coming of the Lord ever since. One day, they expect, they will suddenly be yanked up through the air, taken to that great woodshed in the sky, and given the spanking of their eternal life. The threat of the Lord appearing as Judge is somehow supposed to produce righteous living among the saints. Yeah, "JUST YOU WAIT UNTIL YOUR DADDY (Jesus) COMES HOME!"

Then there are those who seem to be consumed with teaching and preaching about the terrible conditions that mark the end of the age: war, famine, pestilence, lawlessness, immorality, the great tribulation, the antichrist, the mark of the beast, persecution

and trouble. Their main passion seems to be what the church system, the world bankers, the Jews, the Illuminati, the Russians, the politicians, and the wicked in general are doing in the world. Their whole life is absorbed in discussions about who is the antichrist, credit cards, Social Security numbers, bar-code marking systems, laser-tattooed identification numbers, conspiracies, wilderness hideouts, survival camps, and all sorts of carnal preparations for getting through the "great tribulation". Still others want to talk about the horrors of AIDS, the earthquakes, floods and storms that intensify from time to time, or some other manifestation of this dark hour. But I do not hesitate to tell you, beloved, that it is a total waste of time and effort and a misappropriation of spiritual energy to continually analyze the negative realm and curse the darkness. If we are really genuinely concerned about the darkness of this night, let us get up off our spiritual lazy bones and hasten to follow hard after the Lord. Pursue HIM with all your might! Let us repent of all our foolish preoccupation with the works of darkness and our fear of the night, which cannot triumph anyhow, and are already sentenced to destruction, and turn our eyes to the light of HIS glorious face. Christ is the ILLUMINATION OF THE NEW DAY. And only as we walk with Him can the curse and bondages of this present darkness be turned into the glad morning of peace, righteousness, and life we all long for. You add nothing to God's people when you glorify the darkness, but you become the hope of creation when you shine as His light!

Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a tool in His redemptive and restorative processes. Men make it the end. But judgment is always a means to an end – never THE END! No matter how an unbeliever is dealt with, whether he dies as a result of his sin, or by the direct judgment of God; whether he be cast into hell, or turned into the lake of fire – THIS IS NOT HIS END. All men will be raised up either into a resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:29), but for the latter THIS IS NOT THEIR END. All judgments are limited – confined to a day, or to the limitation of prescribed ages. "Because He has appointed A DAY, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained" (Acts 17:31). "And the smoke of their torment does go up to AGES OF AGES

(ages are in time, not eternity); and they have no rest DAY and NIGHT (time periods), who are bowing before the beast and his image..." (Rev. 14:11, Young's Literal ). The Concordant Literal New Testament reads, "And the fumes of their torment are ascending FOR THE EONS OF THE EONS. And they are having no rest DAY and NIGHT..." God's great goal lies BEYOND THE AGES, on the OTHER SIDE OF TIME AND JUDGMENTS, for "He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages (the end of all time periods and ages) to UNIFY A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S AND HEAD THEM UP AND CONSUMMATE THEM IN CHRIST" (Eph. 1:10, Amplified). GOD ALL IN ALL is the grand goal (I Cor. 15:27-28). God does not reach His goal during any of His judgmental or disciplinary measures wrought out in time. These only break and mold and prepare His creatures for it. Let us not confuse the process with the goal. The process involves JUDGMENT IN TIME. The goal is ALL THINGS GATHERED TOGETHER INTO CHRIST – in eternity.

The end of divine judgment – no matter its form, no matter its subject – is to bring the whole universe into harmony with His will, nature and glory. With what optimism did the holy prophets and apostles regard the coming of the Lord in judgment! Note the expectation in Isaiah's spirit as he announces: "Yea, in the way of Your judgments, O Lord, have we waited for Thee. With my soul have I desired You in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek You early: for when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world WILL LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Isa. 26:8-9). Here Isaiah assures us that the day when God's judgments are in the earth will be a most glorious and desirable day, a day in which the inhabitants of the world W-I-L-L LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS! How opposite to the idea entertained by many that when God's judgments come into the earth the inhabitants of the world will "get what they deserve" and be sent into oblivion or eternal damnation. If the desire of your heart is anything like the desire of my heart, this is a blessed thought and a wonderful assurance: the inhabitants of the world WILL LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS! How my ransomed soul yearns to behold the wonder of such a thing! Every time I scan the headlines of the morning paper I am seized with an

intense longing that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Oft times as I watch the evening newscast my spirit is mightily moved within to intercede earnestly that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. As I drive across our great land; as I walk the streets of our cities and towns, observing the condition of those about: neighbors, friends, relatives, strangers, the young and the old, my spirit groans with unutterable supplications that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness! What a marvelous provision of our all-wise and loving Father that, to this very end, He has ordained judgment to come forth in the earth. Bless His name!

It is my deep and considered conviction that just as the "coming" of the Lord is progressive – past, present, and future – so is the unfolding of the "judgment day" past, present, and future. The question follows – When did the judgment day begin? Jesus answered the question in the plainest of language. "For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn. 5:22). "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world" (Jn. 9:39). "N-O-W is the judgment of this world: N-O-W shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn. 12:31).

It is high time that the saints look into some of the things they have been taught. We have been told some funny stories. The preachers in the church systems love to speak loudly and preach long about what they term "the final judgment". This idea is on a par with Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. The fact is, the term "final judgment" never appears once within the pages of God's blessed Book! The word "final" never appears therein at all. It is a word that has been added to judgment and taught to the people as a divine revelation of an event that is supposed to transpire somewhere out in the future. The Word of God does not teach that there is a "final judgment day" at some future time. The pen of inspiration has blazoned with unmistakable clarity the truth: "Be also patient; establish your hearts: for the COMING OF THE LORD DRAWS NIGH. Grudge not against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned (judged): behold (look!), THE JUDGE STANDS BEFORE THE DOOR" (James 5:8-9). Oh, yes, the Judge IS HERE! even now standing before the door or your mind and heart. Some of the modern translations bring out the truth so beautifully: "Be patient, you also; establish your hearts,

because THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD HAS DRAWN NIGH; do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves shall not be judged. Look! THE JUDGE IS ALREADY STANDING AT THE VERY DOOR" (Young's Literal & Amplified).

The judgments of God are first and foremost not external, but internal; not future, but on-going. The Word of God, history, and our own experience shout aloud the truth that the soul's verdict is even now being written moment by moment, not by recording angels in heavenly books on some distant shore, but by each man himself on the fleshy tables of his own heart. The present life is to each of God's apprehended ones his "day of judgment" – his day of trial, testing, proving, chastening, his day of being brought by the processings of God to perfection in Christ. The apostle Peter's words are in harmony with this: "Judgment must begin at the house of God!" (1 Pet. 4:17). Let all men know that the hour has come when judgment must begin at the house of God. JUDGMENT BEGINNING AT THE HOUSE OF GOD! This does not imply a sudden visitation of catastrophes, calamities, and troubles, but it means there will be a concentration of divine instruction and discipline, as the Father purifies each individual, until He can gather to Himself a FIRSTFRUITS.

It should be plain to even a child that the judgment day began with the coming of the Judge. The Judge is within you because the Christ is within you! It takes no extraordinary intelligence nor any exceptional spirituality to figure that out. Let us stop putting the judgment day out beyond the cemetery and believe what God's Word really says about it. To all who wait for a judgment day in some future time or age I now say, as our blessed Lord has said, "N-O-W is the judgment of this world: N-O-W shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn. 12:31). According to Genesis 1:26 Adam is the prince (ruler) of this world – and is it not old Adam in you, precious friend of mine, and in every other man on the face of the earth that is now cast out by the Christ? Far too many Christians want to put it out at some final end, but either satan is being bound and chained in your life today or he will never be eradicated from this planet! NOW shall the prince of this world be cast out! Jesus accomplished it judicially upon the cross two thousand years ago, and is accomplishing it experientially within men's lives today by the power of His Holy

Spirit. It is happening now and shall continue to happen in God's progressive unfolding of His judgments through the ages until that wonderful consummation when God becomes ALL-IN-ALL!

What a judgment seat! What a Judge! What reality! Oh! what an unspeakably glorious and awe-inspiring scene John the beloved beheld as from his vantage point in the Spirit he saw "a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away; and there was found no place for them" (Rev. 20:11). Who is it that sits there? It is clearly the Lord Jesus Christ. The One who fills that throne is without doubt the Son of man. And how does He sit there? In and through His body, the saints, unto whom judgment is given (Dan. 7:22). A throne is a seat of authority. The throne is called "great" because of its vast magnitude, its awful sovereignty, and the majesty of the One who fills it. It is called "great" because it is a many-membered one. It is called "white" because of the absolute purity and righteousness of its Judge and His judgment. White denotes light – that which reveals. So we see a seat of authority and great majesty, power, purity and revelation.

Observe, the heaven, and the earth, fly from the face of Him that sits upon the throne! "From His face (intelligence, illumination) the earth and the heaven fled away." Consider the scene! In its symbology the "earth" is that earth which we are, the carnal, earthly nature of old Adam. "The first man is of the earth, earthy" (I Cor. 15:47). "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:49). "Heaven" means height, eminence, elevation, exaltation. God dwells in heaven, the invisible realm of Spirit that transcends this gross material realm. When you touch God by the spirit, you touch heaven. When you experience God in the spirit, you experience heaven. When you know God in the spirit, you know heaven. When God is revealed to you by the spirit, heaven is opened and you behold heavenly things. There are many heavens, for there are many realms, dimensions, and levels on which God can be touched, experienced and known in the spiritual world. Most saints have passed through several heavens in their UPWARD WALK of progressive spiritual experience. But Jesus is greater than them all, for He "ascended up FAR ABOVE A-L-L H-E-A-V-E-N-S" (Eph. 4:10). God is so

great in His fullness that even "the heaven of heavens (the super-heaven containing all other heavens) cannot contain Him!" (I Kings 8:27).

It is wonderful to know God in His heavens. Each heaven bespeaks of a sphere of life, a plane of relationship, a level of experience in God by the spirit. When the Lord unveils Himself to you on a higher plane, in deeper measures, in richer and fuller dimensions of His life and glory, and you experience Him in it, you ascend in Him to a higher heaven. But, thank God! there is a realm of HIS FULLNESS which lies above and beyond all heavens! When the Christ appears on His great white throne of judgment its effulgence exposes the darkness of the carnal mind, uncovers the deceitfulness of the wicked heart, revealing in stark reality the man of sin sitting in the temple of God "which you are." For us to become the sons of God, the image of God, this thing – self, carnality, and all that pertains to the fleshly nature – must be destroyed by the brightness of His coming, removed, taken out of the way. Blessed be God! Before the face of Him whose countenance is as the sun shining in its strength, none of the things of the flesh can stand, so they flee away, and no place is found for them! Our "earth" flees away from before the face of HIM who sits upon the throne!

Before the face of Him who sits upon the throne in the higher-than-all-heavens, the limitations of our present "in part" knowing of the Lord, every heaven of spiritual experience which is less than HIS FULLNESS, stands revealed as falling short of the image and glory of God. Before the majesty of His white throne, in the searching illumination of His eyes of flaming fire, none of our spiritual immaturity can stand, and all our heavens flee away, and no place is found for them! In the sovereignty and fullness of His throne there are no more "heavens", no more companies, groups, levels of servants, friends, bride, sons, prophets, apostles, pastors, kings or priests; no more Traditional Churches where the people know Him through sacraments, rituals and ceremonies; no more the Fundamentalist who knows Him as Saviour; no more the Pentecostal who knows Him as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit; no more the Faith people who know Him as Healer and Provider; no more the Deliverance people who know Him in gifts of the Spirit, signs and wonders; or still others who

follow on to know Him in deeper measures. High above the earth realm, and far beyond all the heavens of spiritual experience lies the GREAT WHITE THRONE – and the invitation is extended: "To him that overcomes 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). But you will never know Him in the power, glory, and all-surpassing eminence of His throneship, my beloved, until YOUR EARTH and YOUR HEAVENS have fled away, and you have put on the Lord Jesus Christ in the fullness of His divine nature, to manifest Him in all His wondrous beauty and majesty. Can you not see that this process is going on all the time, as we are changed progressively from glory to glory, moving inexorably toward the final goal – GOD ALL IN ALL!

When we come to this thought of the great white throne judgment we approach a subject upon which there has been a fathomless sea of misunderstanding and a world of carnal conjecture. The idea generally entertained is of Christ coming to earth, seated upon a dazzling throne, and He summons everyone in rank and file before Him, to be judged. Adam would stand there, with mother Eve, and look in wonder upon his offspring. It would be the first time in which he has ever had the opportunity of seeing all his children together. What a sight he would then behold – far stretching, covering all the globe which they inhabit, enough not only to people all earth's plains, but crown her hill-tops, and cover even the ways of the sea, so numberless must the human race be if all the generations that have ever lived, or shall ever live, shall at once "appear" before the great white throne judgment! Everyone from before the Flood, from the days of the Patriarchs, from the times of Moses, and the Judges, and David, and from the Babylonian kingdom, all the legions of Assyria, all the hosts of Persia, all the multitudes of the Greeks, all the vast armies and citizens of Rome, the barbarian, the Scythian, the bond, the free, men of every color and of every tongue – what a vast assemblage would be mustered, what a spectacle would be held! I do not hesitate to say that though good and holy men have conceived the foregoing picture, it is, nonetheless, a myth, a religious superstition, entirely out of harmony with the whole Biblical portrait of judgment. This distorted picture arises from a carnal

and too-literal interpretation of a few obscure verses of scripture which were supplied merely as symbols, to be understood by the spiritual mind and interpreted in wisdom and revelation from God.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God..." (Rev. 20:11). Let us consider for a moment the absurdity of the traditional notions espoused by the church systems relative to the judgment day. It is difficult to estimate the number of human beings who have inhabited this planet, there are almost six billions of souls alive today, and the estimates have ranged from 80 to 120 billion people who have lived and died since the dawn of history. The vast majority of these never knew God, never saw or read the scriptures, never trusted Jesus, never even belonged to a church. Let us suppose for a moment that there are 100 billion lost souls scattered over the past millenniums who are suddenly resurrected and the great white throne judgment begins. As in any court proceedings, there should be witnesses and arguments for and against each defendant, and the records (evidence) of all the actions and deeds of each person should be read by the heavenly Scribes who have faithfully recorded them. Suppose the judgment moved swiftly and each individual took up only ten minutes of the court's time (this should not seem an extraordinarily long period, if, as some contend, our whole lives are to be reviewed before our very eyes). It would take at least 1,902,580 (one million, nine hundred and two thousand, five hundred and eighty) YEARS for this awesome judgment to be completed! That's almost TWO THOUSAND MILLENNIUMS! As someone has said, "Wouldn't you hate to be the last one in line?"

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened" (Rev. 20:12). As I have pointed out repeatedly, the first key to understanding the book of Revelation is the fact that the book is, in its entirety, a book of symbols. Any other approach will leave you hopelessly lost in a sea of confusion, and muttering like a mad man about things utterly ridiculous. "I saw the dead, small and great," John declared. When Jesus came this world was spiritually a cemetery. ALL were dead! NONE were living! "To be carnally minded IS DEATH," is the Spirit's own graphic and accurate definition of what it means to be dead (Rom. 7:6). "And you has He

quicken who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). To the spiritually dead the apostle commands: "Awake you that sleeps and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light" (Eph. 5:14). Let us with pure minds and an understanding quickened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God consider these meaningful words: "And I saw the DEAD...stand before God." I saw the DEAD – S-T-A-N-D! And immediately the "books" were opened "and another book was opened, which is the book of life." Ah, the Book of Life – Living Ones! Men are judged out of the things written in the books. Every realm gives up their dead – whether it be the political realms, the scientific realms, the commercial realms, the intellectual realms, the religious realms – all the sea (multitudes of people, masses of humanity) and death and hell give up their dead. They give up all their unenlightenment, their errors, their darkness, superstition, ignorance, sin, sorrow, fear and death. All is yielded up to the penetrating power of HIS LIFE.

Heaven keeps a record of the deeds of men, and all the thoughts and emotions under which they act. Myriads of human beings have lived and died of whom the world knows nothing; but the lives they lived, the deeds they wrought, the thoughts and passions they indulged, still stand written where the memory of them cannot perish. Not a human being has ever breathed earth's atmosphere whose career is not traced at full length in the books God has ordained. Yes, O man! O woman! whoever you may be, your biography is written. An unerring hand has recorded every item, with every secret thing. There is not an ill thought, a mean act, a dirty transaction, a filthiness of speech, or a base feeling that ever found entertainment in your heart, but is there described in bold letters, by its true name.

Where is the record? and what are these "books" where the secrets of your heart are meticulously described? My words may come as a shock to some, but I do not hesitate to assert that they are naught but the BOOK OF YOUR OWN NATURE – THE GENETIC PATTERN OF YOUR VERY OWN B-E-I-N-G! In the sight of God you, and each and every man and woman on this planet, are a book; and indelibly inscribed within your mind and character is every thing that you are. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks" (Mat. 12:34). When your mouth

speaks, the message inscribed in your inner nature is exposed and read by all who hear. Every outer action is a word, a sentence, a paragraph, a page of your book – the book which you are – known and read by all men. And think not, O man, that should your earthly body be laid in a silent and motionless tomb, that the Almighty must then resort to some celestial scrolls wherein heavenly angels have faithfully recorded your every thought and deed. NO! All is accurately recorded in the law of your own life, deep within the recesses of nature, in your soulish condition and spiritual state of being. And to deal with you in judgment God has but to "stand you up" and prompt you to speak or act – and immediately you will manifest exactly what is stored in the constitution of your inner reality. At once your "book" will "open", each line being made clear, and you will be judged by the things written in that book which you are. As someone has written, "What an aid to justice it would be if our courts could open such a book instead of relying on testimony! Written records, letters, photographic evidence, fingerprints, and all the minute details so dear to the detective, are far better evidence than that elicited from human witnesses. Men do not see anything alike. They color it with themselves. Even their truest testimony is tinged with their own ego. How interminable would be the session if sinners were to be judged according to the testimony of their fellows! None of this is needed. All will be confronted with the facts. The facts are written within. The scrolls will be opened. 'And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works' (Rev. 20:12)." When God, either now or in ages yet unborn, lays His mighty hand upon you, my friend, and summons you to STAND before Him, your book will open, and you will manifestly be shown to be exactly what you are, for "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature (dead or alive, visible or invisible) that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:12-13). In other words, God can see right through you. The substance of what you believe in and are will be exposed for all to see. You will not be able to help yourself. God will provoke

you by His omnipotent ability to open up and reveal precisely what you are. Your heart is the evidence brought before His Court.

In harmony with these thoughts I share the true and penetrating words of Terry and Tykie Crisp from one of their recent and excellent articles. "There can be no doubt that all these things were attributed to Christ in the days of His flesh! He came to bring justice and judgment, to bring equity and fairness, to bring balance and truth to the inhabitants of the earth. He came to set the record straight! When the 'Word made flesh' opened upon a person's life, He could read them like a book! There was not a secret sin, or hidden motive that escaped His sight. He took them all into account and weighed them in the scales of divine justice. This is why He could look into the heart of a despised little publican by the name of Zacchaeus, and the life of a spurned Samaritan woman who had been married five times, and the life of a common harlot by the name of Mary, and grant forgiveness to them; and yet, speak words of anathema and condemnation upon the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, who, as Jesus said, were like unto 'whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness' (Mat. 23:27). His judgment was not based on how men seemed to be, but by the true intents of their hearts. His was the determination of 'just weights and balances' (Prov. 16:11), the result of acknowledging the Spirit in all things. Therefore, when men stood before this 'Book of Life', **RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT PROCEEDED FROM THE THRONE!** He caused 'the dead', that is, those who were 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2:1), to hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who heard and believed on Him lived, they passed 'from death unto life!' This was not just something reserved for the future, but was a present reality.

"The life that Christ manifested, and the words He spoke, 'stood men up' , so to speak, and brought them face to face with their own true characters; and because His ways were so radically different, they demanded a response. One could not come in contact with Christ, and walk away the same! He would either be drawn to the Light, to become quickened and raised up in the newness of life; or else he would be drawn back into perdition,

being 'tormented in the presence of the Lamb'; but he would not, yea, could not be indifferent. A perfect example of this is found in John, chapter eight. Here we read where the scribes and Pharisees brought before Jesus a woman taken in the act of adultery; seeking, perchance, an opportunity to find fault with His judgments. 'Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: what do you say'? After they had repeatedly challenged Him on the matter, Jesus wisely turned the finger of accusation toward the accusers: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her'. Verse nine says, 'And they which heard it, BEING CONVICTED (judged) BY THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE, went out one by one, beginning with the eldest, even unto the last'. Praise God! Their 'day in court' could not have been made any more real to them if they would have been brought before the council of the Sanhedren, the 'Supreme Court' of their day! They had just stood before 'THE GREAT WHITE THRONE', 'THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST'; and the verdict was not favorable! Being left alone with the woman, Jesus spoke, saying, 'Woman, where are your accusers? Has no man condemned you'? She said, 'No man, Lord'. And Jesus said unto her, 'Neither do I condemn you: GO, AND SIN NO MORE'. Hallelujah to the Lamb! It was immediately following this scene that Jesus declared, 'I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life'. You see, when they came before Christ, the whole situation was elevated into judgment; and as a result, He 'brought to light the hidden things of darkness, and made manifest the counsels of the hearts' (II Cor. 4:5). He simply 'OPENED 'THE BOOKS'', so to speak, and they were automatically condemned by what was written therein!" – end quote.

God is writing in you and in me every day. Everything that is going on in your life and in mine from day to day is becoming a part of the book. How important will this be in time to come? Let us read on... "And the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life" (Rev. 20:12). Think of it! The time will come when people will be judged by what is written in their life and in your life. Let us understand! "And the books (them) were opened, and another book (you) was opened, which is the book of life." Men will be judged by what is written in their

books and what is written in your book – in your life. Adam will be judged by what is true in him and by what is true in God's Christ. Even now, my beloved, God judges the Adam in us by opening our book and by opening His book within us.

Without doubt, God is the great "book opener". I shall never forget an occasion many years ago when the Lord pressed this message home to my heart. In those days I was accustomed to changing the oil in my car. It never ceased to amaze me how a simple ten-minute job could invariably turn into a disastrous hour-long ordeal! This certain day I had a few extra minutes, so determined to utilize them by changing the oil. I crawled under the car and proceeded to try to remove the oil plug. But it refused to cooperate. It simply would not budge. I pushed on the wrench with all my might, I grunted, groaned, snorted and moaned as the minutes passed into an hour. The plug refused to yield and by this time was becoming damaged. Exasperation laid hold upon me. At that point I became exceedingly agitated and began to act very un-Godlike. And just as soon as my rage reached its most explosive pitch, and what was manifested was all of ME and none of HIM, I saw two feet walking slowly by the car. The feet belonged to my neighbor. I knew that this neighbor was aware that I was a minister of the Gospel! Suddenly I realized that my "book" had just been "opened" and my neighbor had been permitted to read a very ugly and unsavory chapter! My heart smote me. "Oh God, No!" How ashamed I was that this man had read such a sordid scene! Humiliated and convicted (judged), at once I laid down the wrench and breathed the earnest prayer, "Father, FORGIVE ME! Help me somehow to get this oil plug out." No sooner were the words uttered than the Spirit whispered the words of wisdom: "Go to the other side of the car and pull instead of pushing." I crawled out from under the car and obeyed the prompting of the Spirit. In less than a minute the plug responded and the black oil flowed out. The message is clear – I could have drawn upon the Spirit earlier and prevented all the trouble – but God wanted to put His finger on something in my life! He opened my book and for me it was a "judgment day"!

The grand purpose for this "opening of our book" is so that all that is written therein may be exposed, revealed, displayed, and brought to judgment, dealt with by a concentration of divine

discipline and instruction, as the Father processes each individual. The procedure is simple but very effective. The person abiding in some realm of death is caused to "stand" before God – brought directly into relation to the countenance and dealing of God. God arranges the circumstances, puts him or her into a situation, and the "book" is "opened" – the inner condition uncovered, the secrets and intents of the heart manifest in such a measure and expressed to such a degree that there need be no other record of his or her state appealed to. Some men are faced with a woman to reveal lust in their heart. Some men are given spiritual gifts and talents to uncover pride, arrogance, love of power, and greed that lurks within their nature. Others are given problems and difficulties to reveal anger, hostility, bitterness, or unbelief. Still others are brought to the wilderness of temptation, as was our dear Lord, just to reveal the spirit, mind and nature of the Christ that has been formed in them! You see, Jesus was not driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to see whether or not He would sin; the encounter with the adversary was designed to show that in the crucible of testing, because He was the Son of the Father with whom the Father was well pleased – He would not fail the test! The book that was opened there in the wilderness of Judea proved to be THE BOOK OF LIFE and Jesus was judged out of that book. The result was His sonship ministry and the redemption of the world!

It is written: "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14), for, "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:16). Ah – you will despair and shrink before God's judgments until you clearly understand that God does not open your book to destroy you – but to DELIVER YOU! God brings no man to judgment apart from the opening of his book. It is a divine law – God can never deliver you, nor any man, until the corruption in your heart has been drawn into outward manifestation, exposed, to be dealt with by God's stern and tender hand. When the inner nature erupts in some outward uncleanness, DO NOT DESPAIR! Thank God for exposing the deceitfulness and wickedness, cast yourself upon the tender mercies of the Lord, and yield yourself under His mighty hand

that victory may be obtained in your earth. We must never be discouraged when the motions of the flesh and the carnal mind overwhelm us, but neither should we become complacent about it, for God will send forth judgment unto victory however long it takes and however severe the dealings. He will never terminate His judgments until every man is conformed into the image of the glorious Son of God.

Brother Bennie Skinner said in a message some time ago, "The scripture says that the saints will judge the world (I Cor. 6:2). God is preparing a mighty company of judges to judge the world in righteousness! 'And he that overcomes...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron' (Rev. 2:26-27). 'To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne' (Rev. 3:21). 'And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them...' (Rev. 20:4,6). You say, "But I thought God was going to judge the world!" He is – but in and by His saints. You say, "But I thought all judgment has been committed unto the Son." That's right – in and through His body, His people in whom He dwells and through whom He moves and acts. Yes, the saints are going to judge the world. And how? By voting against evil? By demonstrating against wickedness? By marching, by carrying placards, by writing our congressmen, by pleading issues before the courts? No! The thing that is going to judge the world is what is true in them and in you and in me. Our very lives will be a judgment to this world. The time will come when the 'books' will be fully opened. God is writing in us now. He is inscribing His nature, His knowledge, His wisdom, His will, His power and authority on the fleshy tablets of our heart. Each one of us is a page in the eloquent book of the Lamb's Life. The life that is being fashioned and formed within our nature is the Book of Life. God is writing in us every day. Paul speaks of it in II Cor. 3:2-3. Paul says, 'You are the epistles of Christ – ministered (written) by us.' Paul's purpose was, as my purpose is, to serve God's elect, to teach, to instruct, to encourage, to bless, to strengthen by precept and example, so that the Lord's people can be written in by the finger of God. God wants to write in your life.

"God is not interested in you learning all the right doctrine – that's the letter. It's not as important to know the right doctrine as

it is to have the right spirit. It is vastly more important to have the right spirit than to know all the doctrines correctly. I have known people who had all their theology down pat, they had a brilliant grasp of all the doctrines and could articulate them masterfully, but their lives were full of death. Their walk was void of life, joy, victory, wisdom, peace and the image of God. In their presence they had no ability to bless, strengthen or encourage you – all they could do was spout doctrines and quote chapter and verse to prove it. They were always looking for an argument and condemning everyone who did not agree with them. But that is not what is important! If I'm around you I want to edify you, I want to lift you, I want to bless you, I want to impart to you, I want to encourage you, I want to help you, I want to assist you to grow and develop into the nature and character of God. So my life is to be an instrument to write upon the fleshy tables of your heart, not in dead letter, by rules and laws and commandments, but in spirit, so that your life is transformed.

"Furthermore, God uses every experience of life to write the life of the Lamb in our book. God uses my wife to write in my book. God uses my children to write in my book. God uses my neighbors to write in my book. God uses my fortunes and my misfortunes to write in my book. God uses my enemies to write in my book. God uses circumstances to write in my book. God uses trials and testings to write in my book. God is writing in you, dear one, in everything that touches your life. That is why Romans 8:28 is so real, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.' You say, 'Man, I wish I hadn't had that experience.' Don't say that! God arranged that experience. It seemed a horrible thing, a terrible thing you went through, and you wouldn't choose to go through such a thing in a thousand years. You would never have chosen that path, but God chose it for you, because God is writing in your book. God is writing in your book! He's not writing for nothing – one day your book is going to be opened! And there is only One who is worthy to take the book and open it and loose the seals thereof, and that is the Lamb in the midst of the throne. The Lamb! Oh, the wonder of it! The book is the book of the life of the Lamb. The opening of the book is the unveiling of the life of the Lamb, the

revelation of His life written and engraven in the minds and hearts of those who share His nature. He is the One who is worthy to take each one of us and open us up. And it is only through Jesus Christ our Lord that we can be opened up as the Book of the Life of the Lamb.

"Most of us would rather remain a closed book. We wish to stay closed because of our unique personality, we are shy, reticent, humble, immature, or inexperienced. But I declare to you, my beloved, that when God has finished writing in you, when He makes you a living epistle that He knows is capable of being read and known of all men, then HE WILL OPEN YOU UP. When God begins to break and remove the seals from off of us things will begin to happen in the outer world. Why is there such darkness over the earth, and gross darkness over the people? Because the very light of God is concealed within us. Although we are the light of the world, the light is shut up. God must work mightily in us to release the light of our lives that His glory may arise upon His people and be seen upon them. And when that hour arrives nothing can stop God's judgments from coming in the earth. And when His judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Blessed be His wonderful name!" – end quote.

## *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).