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FROM THE CANDLESTICK

TO THE THRONE

Book Five

The Four Winds, The Sealing Of The 144,000 and the Golden Altar

By J. Preston Eby

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Chapter 96

The Four Winds Of Judgment

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, *holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.* And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, *Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*” (Rev. 7:1-3).

There are many beautiful truths and deep mysteries hidden in the symbolisms of this passage, but I am sure the reader can discern in the action of the four angels the ministry of *judgment*. Four is the number of that which is world-wide or universal, and the winds which blow with devastating force are the symbol of judgment. Everywhere in scripture the winds are revealed as divine agents and used either for blessings or for judgments. Here, the four winds are significant of judgments which for the time, the four angels are holding back in order to permit the Seer to have a vision of something that must be brought forth and established *before* the winds are permitted to blow!

Let not the winds blow — *until!* Hold the winds back — hold everything in restraint for a season — endure the corruption, UNTIL THE SONS OF GOD ARE SEALED IN THEIR FOREHEADS! Bring no judgment upon the earth realm, or the sea realm, nor upon the trees, representing those activities, works, creations, and institutions of men which grow and are produced out of the carnal mind (earth) — let there be no judgment upon any of these things *until* the sons of God have put on the mind of Christ! As I write these things and meditate upon them it becomes crystal clear within my spirit that there can be no *righteous judgment* out from God’s elect until we all have been imbued with the *nature of the Father and the mind of Christ*. Any man, apart from the mind of Christ, is unqualified to render any kind of judgment — and he will never be able to judge even his own soul, or his body, or the trees that grow out of his earth, apart from the understanding and wisdom of the mind of Christ. Much less is he prepared to administer righteous judgments to those realms outside himself — the world of mankind. Righteous judgment comes only out of the heavens of the spirit of the Lord! Thus the divine fiat issued by the word of the Lord that the four winds be restrained from blowing upon the earth, the sea, or any tree, until the mind of Christ has been fully formed in God’s kings and priests!

The true judgments of God by which the world learns righteousness, proceed out from the *seven spirits of sonship*, of which the prophet Isaiah says, “And the spirit of the *Lord* shall rest upon Him, the spirit of *wisdom and understanding*, the spirit of *counsel and might*, the spirit of *knowledge and fear of the Lord*; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall ***not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears:*** but with ***righteousness shall He judge*** the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod (authority) of His mouth (word), and with the breath (spirit) of His lips shall He slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins...for the

whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:2-5,9).

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 to even hear the subject mentioned. They have absolutely no idea of the wonderful blessings in store for a sin-weary and death-ridden world under the glorious reign of the sons of God filled with all the nature, wisdom, glory, and power of God!

How differently did the holy prophets and apostles regard that promised DAY OF JUDGMENT! Note the expectation in Isaiah’s spirit as he announces: “Yea, in the way of THY JUDGMENTS, O Lord, *have we waited for Thee*...with my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early: for when THY 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 *will learn righteousness!* 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 longs to behold such a thing! Every time I scan the headlines of the morning paper, or watch the evening news on television, I am seized with an intense yearning that the inhabitants of the world will *learn righteousness.* As I drive across this great land of ours; as I walk the streets of our cities and towns, beholding the condition of those about, my spirit groans with unutterable supplication that the inhabitants of the world will *learn righteousness!* What a marvelous provision of our wise and loving Father that, to this very end, He has ORDAINED JUDGMENTS to come forth in the earth. Bless His name!

Hear the note of triumph and exultation when David speaks by the inspiration that the Spirit gives, saying,

“Let the heavens be glad
And LET THE EARTH REJOICE;
And let men say among the nations, the Lord reigneth!
Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof;
Let the fields *rejoice*, and all that are therein.
Then shall the trees of the forest
Sing aloud at the presence of the Lord,
Because He cometh TO JUDGE THE EARTH.
O give *thanks* unto the Lord, for *He is good*;
For His mercy endureth forever!” (I Chron. 16:31-34).

Why will “the trees of the forest” *sing out* when He is coming to JUDGE THE EARTH? One would think they might weep, or shrink in fear and consternation at the thought of His judgments, but why all the *singing*? Why the *rejoicing*? Because God’s judgments are an expression of His **goodness** and everlasting **mercy**, designed to teach the inhabitants of the world **righteousness!** Ah, this would not be the case should the sons of God unleash

judgments upon the world *before* they have been sealed in their foreheads with the precious mind of God's Christ! Who knows how misguided and ruthless some might be in their efforts to establish righteousness in the earth! But our wise and glorious Father has even now issued the edict: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, **TILL** we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads!" The earth shall rejoice because this means that mankind has reached the **turning point** in our degeneration, and have come to the times of regeneration. This is true even now for the body of Christ, but must ultimately reach unto the whole world and the entire creation! His presence, while it speaks of His utmost holiness, and will not tolerate the continuance of evil, brings the changes needed for peace, joy, and righteousness. There shall surely be those severe prunings, crushing, shattering, melting; but when they shall have accomplished their desired results, His new life shall flow in cleansing, quickening, restoration, and victory!

This same ecstatic exclamation of joy and gladness at the prospects of the coming of God's righteous judgment into the earth is found all through the psalms and the prophets. If you are truly destined to stand among the company of the manifest sons of God, the long-awaited liberators of creation, you will most assuredly share the thrill of the heavenly vibration in the psalmist's inspired song: "Say among the nations that the Lord reigneth: the *world also* shall be established that it shall not be moved: HE SHALL JUDGE THE PEOPLE RIGHTEOUSLY. Let the heavens rejoice, and *let the earth be glad*; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the forest *rejoice* before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh TO JUDGE THE EARTH: HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS, and the people with His truth" (Ps. 96:10-13).

"Make a *joyful* noise unto the Lord, ALL THE EARTH: make a loud noise, and *rejoice*, and *sing praise*. Let the sea (raging, surging multitudes of humanity) roar, and the fullness thereof; THE WORLD, AND THEY THAT DWELL THEREIN. Let the floods (armies) *clap their hands*, let the hills (small kingdoms, third world nations) *be joyful together* before the Lord; for HE COMETH TO JUDGE THE EARTH: WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL HE JUDGE THE WORLD, and the people with equity" (Ps. 98:4,8-9).

If you will take the time and make the effort to look up the words *judge*, *judgment*, and *judgments* in a good Bible Concordance, reading down the lists of scores upon scores of passages in which these words are found, you will quickly make the enlightening discovery that only occasionally do these terms denote the negative aspects of judgment: condemnation, wrath, and destruction. In the vast majority of cases judgment is presented as something altogether desirable, beneficial, and glorious! Consider these examples: "The Lord shall endure forever: He hath prepared His throne for *judgment*. And He shall *judge the world in righteousness*, He shall *minister judgment* to the people in uprightness" (Ps. 9:7-8). "Sing unto Him a new song...for the word of the Lord is right; all His works are done in truth. He *loveth righteousness and judgment*: the earth is full of *the goodness of the Lord*" (Ps. 33:3-5).

"*Justice and judgment* are the habitation of Thy throne: *mercy and truth* shall go before Thy face. Blessed are the people that know the *joyful sound*" (Ps. 89:14). "*I will sing of mercy and judgment*: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing" (Ps. 101:1). "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall *bring forth judgment* to the nations. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth *judgment unto truth*. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He

have *set judgment in the earth*: and the isles shall wait (expectantly) for His law” (Isa. 42:1-4). “The Lord liveth, in truth, *in judgment*, and in righteousness; and the nations shall *bless themselves in Him*, and in Him shall they glory” (Jer. 4:2).

The passages above, and many more, reveal the great truth that the judgments of the Lord are unto truth, righteousness, and glory! Anyone judging righteous judgment must be able to judge out of the mind, heart, nature, wisdom, and spirit of the Lord! That is why our all-wise Father has restrained the winds of judgment until all those blessed ones who are apprehended to reign with Christ in His kingdom, to judge the nations, have been *sealed in their foreheads* with the mind and nature of the Lord! As we go forth in the land to bring God’s righteous judgments to all men, we will not be zapping people with lightning bolts out of our finger tips, but we shall speak the wisdom, counsel, and commandment of the Lord out of the mind and heart of the Father in every situation!

A beautiful example of what this means is given us by brother George Warnock as recorded in his book *Seven Lamps of Fire*. He writes, “I recall a story about William Branham, a prophet of the last century. One time in a large congregation there were one or two in the congregation causing some kind of disturbance. As he sought the Lord quietly as to how to deal with it, the angel of the Lord (who accompanied brother Branham) said, ‘Speak the word, and I will stand behind it.’ He knew at that moment he had authority to pronounce whatever judgment was necessary, and that it would come to pass. But he sought the Lord in the matter...and suddenly he knew what he was to say. So he turned to the people who were causing the trouble, and said something like this: ‘The angel of the Lord told me he would stand behind the word that I will speak. But in asking the Lord about it, I believe I am to say this: *I forgive you.*’ He mentioned the tremendous blessing that came upon him that evening when he went home, and how he sensed God’s pleasure in the decision he had made. In the one and only private interview I had with this prophet, he said, “Now no matter what I tell you, or what any prophet might tell you — you must always go by what the Lord shows you...because even a prophet of God can be wrong...you know, Elisha was wrong when he cursed those children, and a bear came out of the woods and killed them...he shouldn’t have done that” — end quote.

In the Bible the ones whom God raised up as judges for His people did more than just settle disputes between individuals or hand down and execute judicial decisions. Those judges were actually THE DELIVERERS OF GOD’S PEOPLE! There is one book in the Bible that is specifically named “Judges.” As a book it is a thriller! Therein we read of the fearless exploits of those mighty men whom God, “the Judge of all the earth,” raised up for the salvation and deliverance of His oppressed and afflicted people. Hail the day of judgment that began when God raised up a judge to execute judgment for His afflicted ones! for these judges were, indeed, “saviours” of Israel by a special anointing of the Spirit of the Lord.

Throughout the administration of the judges the people were blessed. Note, for instance, how, when under oppression by their enemies because of a transgression against the Lord, Israel was again and again released and blessed by the raising up of judges. Thus we read: “When the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a **deliverer**, who delivered them...and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he **judged Israel**, and went out to war...and prevailed...and the land had rest” (Judges 3:9-11). And again, “The Lord raised up judges that **delivered them** out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And when the Lord raised up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge” (Judges 2:16,18).

Those wonderful judges were raised up long millenniums ago for the deliverance of Israel from their physical enemies; but now, in this glorious new age of the kingdom of God, the Lord is preparing a mighty COMPANY OF JUDGES whose responsibility it shall be to JUDGE THE WORLD in righteousness! It is not from natural enemies such as Nazi Germany or Al Queda that these judges shall deliver the people, but from the *real, true* enemies of mankind — the carnal mind, the flesh, self-will, ignorance, sin, disobedience, rebellion, retaliation, war, bloodshed, brutality, immorality, unfaithfulness, greed, hatred, strife, anger, deceit, lying, ego, pride, sorrow, pain, sickness, weakness, limitation, fear, and the last and most powerful enemy of all — death!

“And he that overcometh...to him will I give *power over the nations*: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron (divine strength)” (Rev. 2:26-27). “To him that overcometh 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). “The ancient of days came, and ***judgment was given to the saints of the most High***; and the time came that the ***saints possessed the kingdom***” (Dan. 7:22). “Do ye not know that the ***saints shall judge the world***? And if ***the world shall be judged by you***, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” (1 Cor. 6:2). So, though the church and the world have long been under the power and oppression of the adversary, yet He who paid for the sins of all with His own precious blood will take His great power and reign in blessing over realms that hitherto have not known Him. He will *judge* and *deliver* all those whom He so loved as to redeem! With this ALL the prophetic declarations agree!

Thank God! The very thought of an age governed by the sons of God who are filled with the seven-fold intensified Spirit of the Lord leaves me absolutely breathless! Words become totally inadequate and human ability to articulate the wonder of such a thing fails completely. Our faltering minds cannot totally appreciate nor comprehend the glory that God is bringing to us in this hour, yet we have heard His word and received His promise in and by the Spirit, and His preparations are mighty within us. It is indeed wonderful!

Earlier I quoted the scripture passage wherein David said of the Lord, “The Lord shall endure forever: *He hath prepared His throne for judgment*. He shall *judge the world* in righteousness, He shall *minister judgment* to the people in uprightness” (Ps. 9:7-8). God is preparing His throne for judgment! His throne is a people that is emanating His authority, His life, His wisdom, and His power. He sits within them; they are His enthronement. And He is our enthronement! These kingdom-thrones are sat upon by people who have been sealed in their foreheads by the Spirit of the living God. They neither think nor act like the human judges of this world! We know that His throne is a people that has realized within themselves the Father’s mind, nature, heart, and will. Judgment has had such a limited meaning, but it is a broad and expansive word, and what it means for us is that by the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord within us we can see all things as they really are — then we can judge all things!

Thus the word of the Lord says, “Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall proceed from me, and ***I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people***. My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall *judge the people*” (Isa. 51:4-5). He will cause His judgment to be light. That is what we need — LIGHT! Light is understanding. You see, my beloved, when there is a people that can correctly see into the true nature of things, all nations will receive the wisdom of God and yield to His righteous rule. Just as the wisdom in Solomon brought peace and blessing and prosperity to the kingdom of Israel, so shall the wisdom in the sons of God bring peace,

blessing, and prosperity to all mankind! Let me tell you something — the people of the world today are not rejecting Christ — they are rejecting the *impotent, superstitious* Christ of religion! The people of the world, the Russians, the Chinese, the Moslems, the Hindus, the Buddhists, the atheists — none of these have ever beheld the glory of the living Christ of God! They have heard sermons and platitudes, they have seen good works and ceremonies and rituals, they have seen missionaries and preachers and Christians doing all their religious things, and sermonizing about Jesus and the gospel, but they have never beheld HIM! They have never seen the revelation and manifestation of Christ in His glory, power, and majesty! But the real Christ, in the hour He appears, in the moment He speaks, men fall like dead men in the presence of His blazing glory and cry out, “Lord! What wilt Thou have me to do?” Before His awesome majesty men are transformed into new creation men!

“He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness” (Ps. 9:7-8). No man spoke more than David about the judgments of the Lord coming into the earth, and the universal rulership of Christ the King. Truly king David had a keen understanding of ruling, reigning, and judging, because he was a king! But when David saw by the Spirit into these words, he wasn’t speaking as a king — he was speaking the mind of God on behalf of all of us who would see the same truth. “He will judge the world in righteousness.” The question follows — how will God judge the world in righteousness? Has anyone read the newspaper lately? Has anyone listened to the television lately? Have you seen what is happening in our society today, not to mention the wickedness and atrocities that are taking place all over the world? How can David look at God and say, “He shall judge the world in righteousness!” How can there ever be righteousness in this world? How will God judge the world in righteousness?

When Paul was taking up the issue of truth with the world of His day he went to a city called Athens, one of the great centers of learning in the ancient world. He went up on Mars Hill where there were philosophers and Epicureans and Stoics who liked to babble on and on about a great many things of which they had little understanding. As Paul spoke to these Athenians, the first thing he told them was, “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you! God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed any thing, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. At the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: **because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will JUDGE THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS BY THAT MAN WHOM HE HATH ORDAINED;** whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead” (Acts 17:22-31).

The answer to the fact that God will judge the world in righteousness is that not only has He appointed the righteous Judge, but He has appointed a DAY. Notice — He did not appoint a NIGHT. It is the *Day* of the Lord, not the *Night* of the Lord! If you listen to the eschatology of the popular churches today the judgment day is a terrible, horrendous, heart-wrenching time of gloom, doom, disaster, and destruction — but it is **not** an experience of doom and gloom, for it is God’s DAY. The day comes by the rising of the sun — the experiencing of LIGHT AND ILLUMINATION! The superstitious religious thinking is that one day the world is going to burn up and all the saints are going up to heaven; and then one by one we will each present ourselves before St. Peter and he will search our record, the video is going to

play, and everyone will be embarrassed. But I'm telling you that the judgment is going to happen right here on earth *in the flesh*. That is what will make it so very *real!* God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness and He has given absolute assurance about this in that He raised Christ from the dead. Why didn't Paul tell the Athenians about Christ's miraculous birth? Why didn't he tell them about His marvelous ministry, His wonderful teaching, and the mighty signs, wonders, and miracles? Why did he not tell them about His vicarious death? Why didn't he relate to them the gospel story? Why did he skip from philosophy right over to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead? Because that is what was on Paul's mind. That's it. **THAT'S THE ISSUE!**

Jesus Christ is the revelation of the Father, the Father's expression, the Father's word, who has all power in heaven and in earth! He sits upon His Father's throne and has power to change every one and every thing! He has the power to put all enemies under His feet and solve the sin and death issue once and for all for mankind! This is the resurrected Lord! He ever liveth to accomplish all that the Father purposes for this world! God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world by that man whom He hath ordained, and the assurance He has given to all men is that He has raised Him from the dead! The lovely Christ who forgave sins, who conquered hearts, who healed the sick and raised the dead, who commanded the elements, has overcome death itself and now lives to bring forth a glorious body in the earth, a people empowered by His resurrection to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. Just "saving souls" is not the issue for the body of Christ, the sons of God. Just "healing the sick," "meeting needs," "blessing hearts," and "doing miracles" is not the issue for the sons of God. God will do *much more than that for mankind!* **"The bondage of corruption"** is the issue for the manifest sons of God! That is the only ministry designated to the sons of God in the context of their *manifestation* (Rom. 8:18-23). Only an *incorruptible people* in spirit, soul, and body can deliver men from both sin and death! The manifest sons of God are the only people called, chosen, and ordained to rule, reign, judge, redeem, transform, and make holy, incorruptible, and immortal every man and everything upon the face of the earth! The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the *assurance to all men* that Christ our Lord will raise up in the earth His own glorious body in the power of His resurrection to DELIVER CREATION FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION! Isn't it wonderful!

We have a calling in the kingdom of God that is greater and more expansive than anything we could ever have imagined! The Lord chose this calling for us, and He will also see to it that we lay hold upon it, not with these old worn-out bodies of flesh and blood, but with our new, incorruptible and immortal bodies that are just like HIS! "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall *change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body*, according to the working whereby *He is able* to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:20-21). The thought of being incorruptible and immortal, possessing a body like Christ's body of glory, is beyond us. It is a mystery that is unknown to mortal man. Yet it is our Father's promise for every one of us who has received the call to sonship! And despite the mystery of it, our Father *is able* to bring it to pass in our lives, for His glory! This mighty change has nothing to do with the health of our present bodies, or any vitamins, minerals, herbs, or supplements that we can take! Our natural, earthly, fleshly bodies are corruptible and dying! All who read these lines are continuing to "age" every day of your life! These "vile" bodies must be **changed** by the power of Christ's resurrection, and this is a pure work of the Spirit, which shall also be fulfilled *by the Spirit!*

The flesh and man's ministry will have no part in that glorious work of the Spirit! The promise is, **"The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this**

*corruptible **must put on incorruption, and this mortal **must put on immortality*****” (I Cor. 15:52-53). What a wonderful promise this is! There can be no manifest sonship short of this great work of the Spirit in us. “For the earnest expectation of the creation *waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God...because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption* into the glorious liberty (from sin and death) of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting for the adoption (placement as sons), to wit, the **redemption of our body***” (Rom. 8:19-23). Our Father has given us assurance that the hour is wonderfully nigh at hand when the sons shall be **changed in spirit, soul, and body** into the likeness of Christ in the power of His resurrection! Our deliverance from sin, carnality, corruption, and mortality is the very thing that will release the “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” This great spiritual work has already begun within us, for we are progressively and continually being transformed into His image and likeness. What a wonderful future we have in Christ! What a grand and glorious hope all mankind has in Christ! God is preparing a people, a transformed people, a qualified people, a victorious people, an incorruptible people in the nature of God — prepared as His judgment in the earth. Oh, the wonder of it!

How is judgment going to come to the world? Not by some fire-ball crashing out of the sky with a whip saying, “Ah-ha, I’m going to get you now!” That is the mentality of the church world. But that is not what is going to happen! God is going to *bring forth Christ in His people*. When Christ appears on earth again in the fullness of His power and resurrection in His many-membered body, it will bring judgment and it will bring truth and life. It will be judgment, but it will *rest for a light to the people!* It will be judgment, but it will *cause the inhabitants of the world to learn righteousness!* It will be judgment, but it will *deliver creation from the bondage of corruption!* The body of Christ bears a message and manifestation of LIFE, not destruction! That’s righteousness — judgment!

The Lord *is coming in a people*, and through this people all the people of the world shall at last be **convinced** of the error of their ways and of the correctness of the ways of the Lord! The apostle Jude says it plainly, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, *the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to **CONVINCE ALL THAT ARE UNGODLY AMONG THEM of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him***” (Jude 14-15). Every mouth will be stopped! All the evolutionists, atheists, humanists, scientists, educators, politicians, along with all the wicked of every class will be forever silenced, speechless before the glory of His power! While the King James Bible says, “the Lord cometh *with ten thousands of His saints,*” the Greek text actually reads, “The Lord came *in holy myriads OF HIMSELF.*” HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF — a people of His own image! Man in the beginning was created in the image and likeness of God and commanded to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with the image and the spirit of God. And today the Christ spirit in union with the new Eve, the bride of Christ, is reproducing His image in the earth and the hour is upon us when they are going to stand in radiant glory and HE SHALL APPEAR IN HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF — TO **EXECUTE JUDGMENT UPON ALL AND CONVINCE ALL!** Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who hath made us kings and priests and judges unto God and we shall reign on the earth!

Now in saying, “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, *till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads,*” it becomes evident that a work must be

accomplished within the judges before they are qualified or commissioned to judge. You see, there can be no righteous judgment out of us in a heavenly realm until we have been sealed in our foreheads — until we have put on the nature of our Father and the mind of Christ. The day which God has appointed, in the which He shall **judge the world**, is now at hand. The judges for this day are now in preparation for their awesome task! Yes, you shall judge the world, saints...but you will do it in humility and with a broken heart full of compassion and love. The first aspect of the ministry of the judges in this new kingdom day is *judgment*. This work, however, shall be swiftly followed by the second ministry of *mercy, deliverance, and restoration*, for God's judgments are ever unto correction and redemption. Praise God!

After six millenniums of sin, sorrow, tyranny, war, oppression, pain, and death mankind needs DELIVERANCE! The NATIONS need a change! For six thousand years the earth has been governed by the will of carnal men and the will of man has been usurped by the mind of Satan. The nations have been governed variously by kings, emperors, dictators, prime ministers, and presidents, but the net result has always been the same, for the corrupt nature of man ever asserts itself, seeking its own purposes, fulfilling its own desires, and doing its own will.

Are the people not deeply disappointed and perplexed today by the political and judicial systems that operate in this hour, even here in the United States of America? Truly I can say to you that in our time, as at no previous time, is when the words of the Psalmist have come true as a prophecy in respect to men in a political and judicial capacity who are like "gods" but have betrayed the people in their office: "They know not, neither will they understand: they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps. 82:5). Or, as the Amplified Bible so aptly translates, "The *magistrates and judges* know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in the darkness; all the foundations of the earth (the fundamental principles upon which rests the administration of justice) are shaking."

Can anyone possibly imagine what would happen to a nation if all the members of its government were completely *selfless* instead of completely *selfish*, if they were sons of God **walking in the mind and spirit of Christ**, instead of handshaking, baby-kissing, politicians seeking to curry the favor of men for personal advantage, or if the judges judged by the spirit of wisdom and discernment from God instead of by the tricky technicalities of the law! What if the leaders of the world were filled with the Holy Spirit of God and moved under the power of His anointing turning men to God instead of building larger armies and navies, more sophisticated missiles, and more destructive bombs? What if judges and social workers had the word of God in their mouths and power to cast the demon spirits out of men instead of carrying them off to some ungodly psychiatrist, psychologist, mental hospital, or prison? To even contemplate such things in this age of darkness only serves to bring a sad smile to our faces, but I can assure you in all confidence that this present day of darkness is even now merging into God's glorious DAY OF JUDGMENT where all things shall be made new. The whole system is rapidly sinking and collapsing around us and God is even now preparing a righteous government of holy sons of God to replace it!

Destruction of the demonized systems of this world will certainly call for a change of judgeships over mankind. According to our Father's gracious provision, then, new thrones of judgment come into existence! Nothing else but a **better body of judges** could be expected to occupy those thrones of judgment, which are established by God's authority in the heavenlies! God's judges will not be men in judicial robes sitting on a bench in a courtroom. Oh, no! God's judges shall be men possessing the *mind of Christ*, clothed with

the *omniscient wisdom, omnipotent power, and incorruptible life* of God, sitting upon the throne of God's glory, speaking the words of God with divine authority and creative energy. Mighty **deliverance** and **transformation** will come upon misled, misruled, and misjudged mankind! Isn't it wonderful!

THE FOUR ANGELS AND THE FOUR WINDS

"And after these things I saw *four angels* standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the *four winds* of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the *four angels* to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Rev. 7:1-3).

Gazing down through the telescope of the spirit of revelation John sees at the four points of the compass four angels striving with the four winds of the earth, which are about to rush in. The four mighty angels stand like four living watch-towers on the four corners of the widespread earth. And these four august spirits hold a special command from God to keep sleepless watch and command at the four gates of the earth. So vigilant are those four heavenly sentinels that not so much as one breath of angry air passes through their gates until they are released by the mind of Christ in God's sons.

The three-fold repetition of the number *four* in the "four angels, four corners of the earth, and four winds," emphasizes the number of the *earth*. The four angels are standing on the "four corners of the *earth*." They are holding, not the "four winds of *heaven*," spoken of in other prophecies, but the "four winds of the *earth*." The four winds of the "earth" under a different figure are the seven spirits of God "sent forth into all the *earth*." How very significant that in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, all three languages which have played so prominent a part in the history of the written scriptures, the word "spirit" is closely linked with the "wind." To the writers of the Old Testament the wind that blew down from the mountains and came in from the sea seemed like the breath of God; in it they saw a parallel to the mysterious, invisible action of the Holy Spirit. The record of creation in the book of Genesis opens thus, "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." The Spirit, or breath of God, which moved over the waters in the creation of nature, also gave life to man. "Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*; and man became a *living soul*." It was the Spirit, or the breath, or the wind of God that gave man life! The relationship between wind and breath is still expressed today when someone says, "I had the wind knocked out of me!" They mean their breath. And the breath of God is the spirit of God which is also the wind of God! That is the mystery!

The four angels are four messengers, or a four-fold message, a four-fold word, sent forth from God respecting the moving of His Spirit across the earth! The angels represent an administration and activity of the Holy Spirit by the word of the Lord! These are not four literal angels holding the literal winds of the earth. These are symbols, word pictures of mighty spiritual operations and workings! The use of God's "winds" to bring either judgment or deliverance and life to His people is not new. Consider the work of His winds in the following passages:

"In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even into His ears...and He rode upon a cherub and

did fly: yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind” (Ps. 18:6,10). “Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: He sendeth forth His commandment upon the earth: His word runneth very swiftly. He sendeth out His word...He causeth His wind to blow...He showeth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel” (Ps. 147:6,15-19). “Then said He unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived...” (Eze. 37:9-10). “And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come” (Jer. 49:36). “And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap...Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters” (Ex. 15:8,10). “Behold, I will make thee (into) a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains (kingdoms) and beat them small, and shalt make the hills (small kingdoms) as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 41:15-16).

Webster’s dictionary defines wind as “air in motion; a strong, fast moving current of air; gale.” Thus the four winds of the earth denote a spiritual movement as air in transit, the mighty power of the breath of God sweeping across the face of the earth and the sea, bringing either blessing or judgment. It is the power and manifestation of the kingdom of God by the Spirit of the Lord! Jesus said, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh” (Jn. 3:8). He could have even gone on to say, “thou hearest the sound thereof, thou seest the trees bending, thou seest the leaves and dust flying before it, but canst not tell whence it cometh.” Although the wind itself cannot be seen, we bear witness by the results that it is a *mighty power!* It is a power that can move and change things! When God moves by His Spirit you cannot see Him moving in any tangible way, but you see the effects as things begin to happen and move and change. That is exactly how the kingdom of God works by the moving of the Spirit of the Lord — God making His rule *effective!* It comes “without observation” into the hearts of men by the invisible yet powerful action of the Spirit of God. As the Lord moves sovereignly and mightily by His Spirit, the *effect* goes out and things everywhere begin to change!

The wind can accomplish positive things by helping plant life to proliferate through pollination and the distribution of seed across the countryside. It can blow the smoke and smog out of a valley, bringing wonderful relief to the people with breathing problems. It can cool the day, giving respite from the stifling heat. Or, it can be destructive, as we have seen in the case of hurricanes, tornadoes, and tsunamis! The force behind these winds can be tremendous, absolutely breath-taking to experience, leaving behind a trail of desolation, trees plucked up by the roots, houses left as rubble, and some things disappear entirely from their location. That is what the Lord was talking about when He prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah that He would send His “wind” and scatter Elam until there would not be a nation on earth that the people of Elam had not been scattered into! Of course it was not the literal wind that scattered Elam, but the moving of God by His Spirit, creating the conditions that caused their scattering. The Lord can bring beautiful blessings through His mild and gentle winds, or He can root out and destroy kingdoms with His fierce and mighty winds. In the early 1990’s God sent His powerful winds and demolished the empire of the Communist Soviet Union! Oh, yes, it was our God and Father who did this! Who could

possibly hold back the winds, prevent them from blowing, or send them forth in whatever power and force needful? None but God! He alone is the Master of the Winds!

The Argentine prophetess known as Annie has shared the following experience she had in the Spirit. “Having a painful sore throat that day which made it very difficult to swallow, I thought that I would not be able to enter into the Spirit. But the urge to get alone with Him and pray was too strong to put off even for sickness, so I went to prayer. Suddenly I was THERE and I saw Jesus. His whole body was suspended high in the heavens and as always, His whole being and raiment was radiant with that light that ever accompanies Him. A number of angels were there with Him but took no part in this vision; they were but spectators. All around Him and enveloping Him, there was a most *strange and powerful wind blowing*. There was no debris in this wind but it was fully visible: it had substance and consistency and was full of life and light. But its most marked characteristic was its great manifestation of POWER. It blew with great power and might! It not only enveloped Jesus and the angels, but me also. At first I saw it from a distance, but then I was moved to be within this great wind and I found myself beside Him.

“With all this tremendous manifestation of power in this living wind, I was not afraid because Jesus spoke to me telling me not to fear. His word filled me with great peace. The wind was blowing with great velocity, although I could not tell from whence it came. After a while, in the midst of this most strange and invigorating wind, Jesus spoke to me saying that ***soon there would be a taking hold of His strength and power, and a marching forth in the paths that He had already marked out, promising that He would accompany His own throughout these paths.*** Returning to my natural state, I found myself bathed in sweat though the day was cold. My throat was entirely healed and the infection did not return” — end quote.

The number *four* in Biblical numerology bespeaks *the earth, or that which pertains to the earth*. It also denotes *the world, and that which is world-wide*. The earth and the world have four regions: north, south, east, and west. There are four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Our atmosphere experiences four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. There are four kingdoms: mineral, vegetable, animal, and spiritual. And there are four winds — from the four directions of the planet.

Our heavenly Father controls the winds, both the natural and the spiritual. At this very moment His winds of judgment are restrained. Don't buy into the notion, dear ones, that God is actively out there judging the nations today. Oh, no! His word has gone forth, and throughout this age of grace the heavenly sentinels have stood at the gates and held those winds in their fists during all this time that the Lord has been forming His body in the earth. The winds of judgment will not be released until all the holy sons of God have been sealed in their foreheads! Then the winds shall sweep across the earth in mighty power, with irresistible force to bring a new age and a new order of righteousness, glory, and life into the earth for all mankind!

Hold those winds, angels — God is finishing His work in us — the manifestation of God through His sons is drawing nigh!

Chapter 97

The Sealing Of The 144,000

“And after these things I saw four angels *standing on the four corners of the earth*, holding the four winds of the earth” (Rev. 7:1).

The four “corners” of the earth signify the four “quarters” of the earth, meaning the four parts, regions, or directions. Although some have tried to prove that the earth actually has “corners,” that is beside the point. The word is translated from the Greek word *gonia* which means both “corner” and “quarter.” The same word is translated quarter in Revelation 20:8. “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the *four quarters* of the earth.”

There are *four* corners or quarters. The number four takes whatever God is saying or doing and expands it in every direction — north, south, east, and west. If you’re traveling north, south, east, and west you’re going in every direction! The number four denotes the creative work of God and expands it into all creation. Four is seen in the work of creation. There were four steps in the creative processes of God — emanation, creation, formation, and manifestation. When God moves within your inner world, in the power of four, He sends forth the reality of Himself into all the parts of your earth or state of being. Four is not the number that tells us merely that God is the Creator, but that He is filling the creation everywhere with Himself! Four reveals the omnipresence of God in creation. Centuries ago the inspired David lifted up his voice in awesome contemplation of the majesty of God and declared, “Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee” (Ps. 139:7-12). Ah, truly four is a blessed comfort and inspiration, for it speaks to me that if I make my bed in hell, even there HE is *with me!* Aren’t you glad!

In the opening chapters of Genesis we find *four rivers* flowing out of Eden into all the known earth of that day. “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium (pearl) and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates” (Gen. 2:10-14).

In connection with the story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, we are told of a remarkable river that had its source in Eden, but on flowing out of the garden divided itself into four branches. The picture is that of man placed in the garden before a tree called the tree of life.. By the side of the tree of life there was a river, and by the flowing of this river there were some precious materials: gold, pearl, and onyx stone. Remember, this scene is in the

opening chapters of the Bible! At the end of the revelations of the scriptures, we find the same thing again in the very last two chapters. There we see a city built of gold, pearls, and precious stones, the same kinds of materials listed in chapter two of Genesis. There we also see a river flowing, and on either side of it grows the tree of life. Here you have the river and the tree of life once more. How remarkable that man's history began and ends at the same river and tree of life! The tree of life in Genesis and the tree of life in the Revelation are not two different trees, but the one and selfsame tree. The river flowing out of the garden and the river flowing out of the city are not two separate rivers, they are the same wonderful river!

In order for the river to flow out of Eden it was necessary for Eden to be located in a high, elevated place. This high altitude or "higher realm" of the garden of Eden typifies the kingdom of heaven on earth! The kingdom of heaven on earth is also the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of God is within you, Jesus has taught us. The kingdom of God is in our spirit, which is the offspring of God! God placed Adam, or the first humanity, in the garden of Eden, or the kingdom of heaven, a place or state of being of light and beauty, from whence flowed the springs of the fountain of the river of life, the source of living water. Without the garden lies the "lower realm" of earth, bespeaking the human condition as man walks in a sense of separation from God, walking not after the spirit, but in his own soulical consciousness, according to the imaginations of the carnal mind, and the defilement of the flesh. The lower realms of earth represent the whole dreadful realm of darkness and death in which is contained every sin, sorrow, tragedy, pain, trouble, sickness, heartache, fear, and torment known to man. The higher realm of Eden extends upward into infinitude, glory ascending above and beyond glory, for Eden, or the realm of the spirit, is the gate to the unbounded and inexhaustible heavens!

The lower realm includes this world and everything that is beneath it, all that pertains to *soul* and *body*. It descends into the lowest realms of the bottomless and embraces the outer realms of darkness. And flowing from the higher realm of the kingdom of heaven to the lower realm of the kingdom of darkness is the blessed river of life! Its incorruptible waters of spirit and truth are more real and sparkling and alive than any river on earth! It pulsates with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit and vibrates with the sheer exquisite beauty of the divine nature of our great and glorious God and His Christ that is impossible for my poor pen to describe. Its glory surpasses the shining of a million diamonds in the sun, for it is the glory of the Lord God Almighty! And this glorious river of life is not a historical river from an ancient time, nor is it a future river of a coming age, nor yet is it a crystal river in some far-off heaven somewhere. Ah, my beloved, the wellspring of this river is right there *within the Eden of your spirit!* "Whosoever takes a drink of the water that I shall give him shall never, no never, be thirsty anymore. But the water that I will give him shall **become a spring (artesian or a literal Niagara) of water welling up and flowing continually within him into eternal life**" (Jn. 4:14, Amplified). "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his innermost being shall flow RIVERS OF LIVING WATER**" (Jn. 7:38).

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

As the river of God flowed out of the Paradise of God, it divided and went in four directions. This is a type or symbol of the life of God, flowing out of the kingdom of God to the whole earth! Individually, it means the life of God within our spirit flowing out into soul and body. Our soul and body can never live in incorruption apart from the life-giving spirit! The nature of God's wonderful river of life is that it flows *outward*. "OUT FROM your innermost being will flow rivers of living water" is the great truth of it! Ezekiel once had a vision of a river that flowed out of the temple and got deeper and deeper as it flowed out to the sea (body realm, raging, surging masses of humanity), and it healed the sea, or gave life to all who dwell in the lowest realm of existence. The minute the river starts flowing *inward*, there is death. The life always flows *out* from the source of life, from the higher dimension to the lower. And in its outward, universal application, God Himself is the source, the wellspring; Jesus Christ our Lord is the fountain, the reservoir of this wonderful life; and the sons of God are the channel or river by which God's life shall be communicated to the arid barrenness of the earth realm. Thank God that this river now flows! The life of Jesus Christ is flowing as a mighty river out from the throne of God! First it is flowing out of our own spirit into the soul and onward into the body of each member of God's elect, bringing redemption, life, transformation, and immortality to our whole man! Then it flows out from us unto creation to revive, awaken, energize, revitalize, quicken, and restore all things and all men everywhere! Aren't you glad!

In the tabernacle of Moses *four horns* on the brazen altar pointed north, south, east, and west, revealing the great truth that the merits of the sacrifice, the power of the atonement, the life of the slain lamb, was efficacious for the whole man and unto all the ends of the earth! The reality of what Jesus did on Calvary is to be realized in the totality of the experience of every man!

The golden altar of incense likewise had four horns on its four corners, showing that the power of our praise and our prayers is effectual on behalf of all creation. What we offer up to God is a sweet smelling fragrance which He is able to send forth into all the earth! The few laws that scripture contains are rays of light revealing only small portions of God's will, much as the words I now write are parts of the thought I wish to express. He who would know the complete will of God must look for the larger concept, discover the real objective. God's real and most inclusive objective is beautifully revealed in the words of the apostle Paul wherein he wrote, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for ALL MEN...for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who WILL HAVE A-L-L M-E-N TO BE SAVED, *and* to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a RANSOM FOR ALL, to be testified in due time" (I Tim. 2:1-6). The will of God is so far beyond our usual thoughts that we simply cannot understand it unless the Spirit enlightens us. The eternal God WILL have ***all men to be saved!*** We need to ask God to fill our minds with this great truth, by the Holy Spirit!

In December, 1981, I sent out an article in which I set forth the wonderful truth of the ultimate salvation of all men. Soon thereafter I received a letter from some precious folk who were deeply distressed by this teaching. They raised several objections, the first of which was stated thus: "*If we believe the way you are teaching, it will mean we no longer need to pray for the salvation of our loved ones as they will be saved in the end regardless of their standing. On top of that, all our past prayers have been in vain as the Lord will save them in the end anyhow.*" On the surface that may seem to be a plausible argument; but what makes such faulty reasoning so pathetic and tragic is that it openly contradicts the word of God! Let me quote again what the Lord says about this: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSIONS, AND GIVING OF THANKS be made for A-

L-L M-E-N...for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who **W-I-L-L HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, and** to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a RANSOM FOR A-L-L, to be testified (proven, demonstrated, fulfilled) IN DUE TIME.”

You will note that the command to pray for all men is rooted in the revelation of God’s will — God WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED. We must clearly distinguish between the *fact* of the ultimate salvation of all and the *manner* in which God brings it to pass. He condescends to work through human instrumentality. We are laborers together *with God!* Since God purposes to save all men, He has a precise PLAN, a PROCESS, a METHOD, an INSTRUMENTALITY by which to accomplish this! Part of the process is ***the intercessory prayers of the saints!*** Nothing can be plainer than this in Paul’s exhortation. The men who are to be saved are held under the power of darkness. The saints are called as God’s ***instrument of salvation,*** and their very first action in this great work on behalf of lost men is to engage in spiritual warfare, claiming these men for God, binding the enemy who enslaves them, speaking the word of their release in the power of the Holy Spirit, thereby initiating the process by which deliverance is brought to the captives. That is the very *first step*. “I exhort therefore, that, *first of all,* supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.” First of all! Prayer!

That all men be saved is God’s *purpose*. Intercessory prayer is the first step in the *process*. And though God has saved millions, perhaps billions, of men throughout this age of grace, the manifest sons of God are His ***ultimate instrument*** for the restoration of all things. To say that since God will save all men we need not pray for them, is to say that God has a purpose to save them, but NO MEANS BY WHICH TO ACCOMPLISH IT! It would be like saying that a contractor is going to build a skyscraper and, since *he* is going to build it, there is no need for engineers, carpenters, welders, electricians, plumbers, heavy equipment, nails, hammers, saws, etc. How absurd! All those things are necessary instruments and means of *accomplishing his will and plans!*

Through many years the spirit of intercessory prayer has stirred within my spirit and I have been compelled to pray for some of the most wicked, unbelieving, and treacherous men and women upon the face of God’s earth. I speak not of an occasional weak, insipid little table-prayer, but of deep travail and intense spiritual warfare on behalf of the souls of these individuals. Among those for whom I have been moved to intercede have been world leaders such as Golda Meir, Nikita Krushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, and Fidel Castro. Must I now believe that my prayers shall never be answered, and that the omniscient and omnipotent Holy Spirit who wrought so mightily in these supplications, failed? Ah — in chapters five and eight of the Revelation we find that ALL THE PRAYERS OF ALL THE SAINTS ARE BOTTLED UP BEFORE THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE IN THE HEAVENS OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD! (Rev. 5:8; 8:2-5). Oh, yes! God has not forgotten any prayer or any man — He has appointed a day for every prayer to be answered even as He has ordained a time for every man to be awakened unto God! Never give up, my beloved, in your intercessions and thanksgiving for God’s deliverance to come to those He has appointed you to pray for. You and I, my beloved, are God’s *new creation* in the universe! My heart leaps with joy within me as I contemplate the great and eternal truth of God’s wonderful purpose in His new creation people — to REVEAL GOD’S GLORY EVERYWHERE! The golden altar has *four horns* — they point and reach to the utmost extremity of all of man’s need from the highest heaven to the lowest hell. That is the power of *four!*

Four points not only to everything everywhere, but also to everything *within us*. All the four's of scripture reveal how the Spirit of God takes the life and power of the seed of God in our spirit and sends it out to permeate, quicken, change, and transform every aspect of our being. Now remember — we are in a spiritual book, a book that speaks about the earth that *you are*. If you look at a globe, where would you find four corners? But if you look at *psuche*, the *soul*, the earthiness of your life, you will find four corners! You will find the *intellect*, the *will*, the *emotions*, and the *desires*. There are four aspects, sides, corners, or quarters of the soul life. Here are specific areas of our lives that God is dealing with in order to bring us into a “foursquare” relationship with Him. This “four corners” or “foursquare” principle is also seen in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

The four winds are the winds which blow upon the earth, or upon the soulical realm of our life. No man can be delivered, changed, and transformed apart from the work of God's winds! Many and varied are the ways and paths by which the Lord in faithfulness processes and develops the people He has chosen. A most important aspect of this work of God's winds in the experience of God's elect is found tucked away among the priceless gems in the treasure house of truth of the Song of Solomon. “Awake, O *north wind*; and come, thou *south*; and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out” (S. of S. 4:16). A number of the thoughts I will share concerning the north wind and the south wind have been inspired by, or gleaned from, the writings of C. H. Macllraavy (out of print).

The word, wind, as I have pointed out earlier, in both the Hebrew and the Greek, is the same word that is translated “spirit” in other places. Wind often serves in type of the moving of God's Spirit! As the apostles *waited* upon the Lord in the upper room, suddenly “there came a sound from heaven as of a *rushing mighty wind*, and it filled all the house where they were sitting...and they were all filled with the *Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:2,4). Let it be clear — though the time has often seemed long in God's dealings within us, and while the vision tarries, we have to hold steady and just *wait for it* — things which the Spirit has spoken in our hearts that He will do *in and through* a people — yet He knows the hour when the SPIRIT OF GOD SHALL BLOW ACROSS OUR LAND, bringing the creative power of God in victory and fulfillment in Christ.

When the clouds of trouble, darkness, death, or unbelief have hidden the heavens, “The wind (or spirit) passeth, and cleareth them. Out of the *north* cometh golden splendor; God hath upon Him terrible majesty” (Job 37:21-22). Thus it is with that working of the Holy Spirit, which is called the “North Wind.” He comes, blowing upon our garden, convicting, judging, shaking, stirring, blasting, reprovng, and dealing. It is He who convicts us when we are not walking in the Spirit; it is He who teaches and stirs us up to press on when the battle is hot; He shows us where we are slack and where we must put off our carnal thinking and our trust in the flesh, that we may put on the mind of Christ and the power of God. He moves upon the dark clouds of the carnal mind and natural, human reasoning, He moves upon the fog of man's traditions, theories, and self-righteousness. Out of the north, He moves upon all that hides the truth from our vision; and as He clears the atmosphere about us, the golden splendor of the light of God shines into our lives, with the revelation of His terrible majesty, His awesome greatness!

“Awake, O *north wind*...blow upon my garden.” Who would ever pray for a *North Wind*? But whether or not you ever pray for it, it is apt to come anyway! Hardly a day goes by in the life of any son of God that he is not visited by some contrary or stormy wind. They come unexpectedly, often leaving us upset, confused, and worse. “O that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; yea, I would wander afar, I would lodge in the wilderness. I

would haste to find me a shelter from the raging wind and tempest” (Ps. 55:6-8). We, too, would many times like to escape from these harrowing winds, but cannot. *God is in the wind* and His word is faithfully and powerfully wrought in us by the wind! The prophet Nahum writes, “*His way is in the whirlwind and storm*” (Nahum 1:3).

We are the garden of God, and He sends the cold winds of persecution, adversity, and trials, to blow upon us to help perfect the fruit in us and to disperse the fragrance of Christ. The north wind will certainly strip us — leaving a veritable picture of frustration and devastation in its wake. But God does not send the chilly blasts against us because He is angry with us, or because He delights in punishing us. As Bill Britton has written, “These things are necessary in order to bring us to His glory. He put the gates on the *north side* of the city of God for a purpose. In our reluctance to suffer, we would rather He had just built a strong wall on the north side and put no gates in it. But His wisdom is greater than ours! Thank God, He also put gates on the south side. That lets in the blessings, prosperity, the warmth of His presence, and His peace. These and many more of the good things of God are necessary also to our growth. It would be a cold hard journey if it was all trials and no blessings! Open the south gates, friends, and enjoy the goodness of God! But do not run and hide when the northern gale blows fierce through your land” — end quote. And so it is that even though you do not pray for the north wind to blow upon your garden, if our Father, in His infinite wisdom, sees that that is what is needed so that “the spices thereof may flow out,” you can put it down for certain that the north wind is going to blow!

There are some folk who adopt a sort of philosophical attitude when the north wind blows and their little world closes in around them. In the midst of all the turmoil and upheaval they say, “Well, I suppose God is working out something in me, doing for me something that He sees needs to be done.” “For *me!*” Why can we never get beyond “*me*”? Me, me, me. Always thinking of “me.” Did it ever occur to you that God has others in mind besides *you*? True, He allows certain episodes to take place in your particular sphere — and there is, certainly, much to be accomplished in your life, a great deal of advancement and perfection — but, after all, there are others, too, a whole creation groaning and travailing for the manifestation, for the out-flowing of God from the garden of His sons! That is what both the fruit and the spices are for. The perfume is to *flow out!* Just as the river of Eden is to *flow out!* So when He desires to awaken a person to the power of His life within, He can send the north wind upon *your* garden and let that other soul watch you and your reaction. He puts you, or your garden, on display, and says, “Look over there if you want to see what the grace of God can do in a life that is processed by me.” Look at the wind blow! Look at those flowers! Do you smell the perfume? It is divine! It is out of this world! And the fruit — it is the fruit of a divine life. Eat of it — and you, too, will live!

It is not the severe episodes through which we sometimes go, that are an end in themselves, but rather the means to an end. Do not magnify the means, or the wind, but meditate deeply upon the eventualities. Think of the objectives, the ultimate outworking of God. By faith look down through the vista of all God’s dealings and see what a glorious accomplishment will have taken place. “Stormy wind fulfilling His word” (Ps. 148:8). Instead of becoming too preoccupied with the individual notes played on one instrument, anticipate rather the grand finale of God’s majestic symphony when all of His instruments combine to produce heaven’s harmony in one last melodious chord of glorious triumph! Then you will be glad that the winds blew.

It has been said that variety is the spice of life. The wind does not always blow with the same velocity, nor from the same direction. After so long a time there is a change. Our loving

heavenly Father who holds all the winds in His hand is omniscient. He knows just when to cause one wind to cease blowing and when to turn another loose.

Blessed be God! The Holy Spirit comes to God's elect, not only as the north wind, but also as the south wind. It is after the work of conviction, stripping, and purging, that the Holy Spirit comes as the Comforter. It is after man's carnality and flesh are uncovered, that the Spirit comes as the balmy south wind. With warm rain and gentle breezes, He brings encouraging movings within us as we listen to His voice and yield unto Him. As the south wind, the Holy Spirit woos us on and reveals our true identity and destiny in Christ, bringing to us a deeper apprehension of the magnitude of the grace of God, the magnificence of our high and holy calling in sonship, and the gracious purpose of God for His entire creation.

There are also the east wind and the west wind. The east wind is God's wind of change and renewal! The great things of God are considered to come out of the east. The coming of the sun of man is from the east even unto the west, out of the dawning of a new day. A strong east wind divided the Red Sea and made the way for the children of Israel to escape Egypt, but also piled up the waters to drown and destroy the armies of the Egyptians! The east wind is also stormy; it wrecks ships; it withers growing things. It is a wind of both blessing and cursing. The truth of Christ is as a storm unto all other powers and authority. That truth will make or break us. It just depends upon where we are when the east wind blows! The west wind is the wind in Palestine that brings the rain (Lk. 12:54), both naturally and spiritually. The west wind can bring the outpouring of the Spirit that refreshes and leads to maturity, or it can bring the fierce storm with devastating floods that sweep away all the works of man! Just like the east wind, it depends upon where you are when the west wind blows!

It is after He has come with convicting and purifying power, revealing to us the error of the carnal mind, and the vanity of our confidence in ourselves and all our efforts and abilities, that He comes with encouragement, enlightenment, and quickening and points to the sufficiency and power of the Christ life within. I mentioned earlier that one of the functions of the winds is to blow the smog and pollution out of the valleys. The Lord uses the winds of His spirit-dealings to clean out all the mixture and pollution of our double-mindedness where we see ourselves as men of flesh, weak, helpless, worthless, struggling, our old man asserting himself to keep us in captivity to sin and failure. In this hour God is forming a people who have allowed Him to blow out all our erroneous concepts and ideas of our false identity in Adam, and to blow out all the pollution that came from the systems of this world, and religion. When all the smog and pollution of our own thinking and carnal understanding has been blown away we are then able to see WHO WE TRULY ARE! We are the *new creation*, we have the *mind of Christ*, our old man *is crucified*, and *Christ is our life* and our *only identity and reality*. It is when, as the north wind, He has blasted all our self-activities and confidence in the Adamic man, and through that revelation of ourselves He has brought us low in the dust of humiliation, then He comes as the gentle spirit of consolation and faith and reveals CHRIST WITHIN, OUR TRUE IDENTITY, *who will now do all and must be our all in all*. As we begin to grow and bear fruit out of the new creation man, the Christ within, the spices begin to send out their fragrance! "And...the south wind blew softly" (Acts 27:13).

In commenting on the north wind Ray Prinzing expressed the same truth in these words: "Two words to note: blow, and flow. You will never truly FLOW until you have experienced the BLOW. When the north wind comes roaring down and meets the south wind, when the cold front clashes with the warm air, there is a very turbulent condition — and THE BLOW is on! Yet here is one who so longed to dispense the sweet aroma of the spices of the garden, that they actually *asked* for the BLOW! In all the upheaval and tempestuous condition that would

take place, the debris of self would be removed, the chaff would be winnowed out, and the sweet savor of HIS LIFE would FLOW out to bless. Not only to bless others — but the real desire was that as the spicy aroma was wafted out, it would allure her Beloved into the garden, and then she would be fully satisfied. IN THE THIRD DAY WE SHALL LIVE IN HIS SIGHT. Are there some rare spices within us that the trials release, which cause Him to desire us? There is a sweet savor, a spirit worship unto Him, that will be known as we submit to the BLOW upon BLOW, however stormy the trials and happenings are, and however heart-wrenching the smittings of our brethren might be. God has ordained that we be TORN and SMITTEN, but also HEALED, binding us up, and through all these processings prepare us to be RAISED UP to experientially live in His sight, seated with Him in the heavenlies” — end quote.

THE ANGEL ASCENDING FROM THE EAST

“And I saw *another angel ascending from the east*, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads” (Rev. 7:2-3).

John is still wondering what the four angels holding the four winds can mean when he sees the four mighty sentinels all at once turn their eyes to the east. And behold, another angel comes ascending out of the east as the morning sun comes, announcing God’s *new day*. He comes clothed with light as with a garment; the widespread earth shines bright under his glory; and his voice is as the sound of many waters. The ascending angel holds in his hand the seal of the living God! And, addressing himself to the four mighty sentinels, he speaks to them with a voice that they hear above all the commotions that arise from the earth, and the tempests that rage in the sea, saying to them that they are commanded not to hurt the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until “we” have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

There can be no doubt that the seal in the forehead of God’s bondslaves is the *mind of Christ*. And I have already pointed out that no man is qualified to *judge the world* until he has been sealed in his forehead with the *mind of Christ*. Only the glorious mind of Christ brings the balance between mercy and judgment! It was, then, of this Christ-mind that David prophesied when he said, “Surely His salvation is nigh...**mercy** and **truth** are met together; **righteousness** and **peace** have kissed each other” (Ps. 85:9-10). Mercy and truth are met together — praise God, what a summit meeting! These words are pregnant with meaning. When one contemplates the impossibility of such a union, it is an overwhelming thought that mercy and truth are met together. Truth is harsh and demanding; mercy is lenient and lax. Truth condemns and devours; mercy covers and exonerates. Only when one has intermingled the ministries of priest, king, and judge are these incompatible forces MET TOGETHER!

Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED JUDGE, he shares in that omniscient mind that discerns the true nature of all things, and therefore judges righteously. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED KING, he shares in that dominion, that power that is in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Partakers with Christ in this heavenly calling, when one actually becomes an ANOINTED PRIEST, he shares that unlimited outflow of mercy, compassion, and unconditional love that is derived from the heart of our great High Priest. Only one possessed of this three-fold mind of Christ is qualified to control the four winds of judgment that blow upon the earth, the sea, and the trees! Only the sons of God sealed in their foreheads with

the mind of Christ will be able to *judge* the world in righteousness, *rule* the world with a rod of iron, and at the same time *reconcile* all things to God! All others would, if given a chance, pour out unbridled vengeance, wrath, and damnation upon the rebellious!

Now, of this angel it does not say, "...*descending* from the east," but it says, "...*ascending* from the east." In the natural, it is the *sun*, the source of light and day, which *ascends* out of the east. Some translations say, "ascending from the sun rising." This is a true translation. Ezekiel beheld the glory of God coming from the east. "Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *came from the way of the east*: and His voice was like the voice of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory" (Eze. 43:1-2). Can you not see the mystery? Is this not a similar description to the angel ascending from the east in the Revelation? This is the Lord Himself arising in His elect! The star which heralded His nativity when the firstborn Son of God came into the earth came from the *east*! He Himself is called, "the bright and morning star." His glorious appearing is referred to as the "bright shining which shines *from the east* even unto the west." This "angel" ascends from the sun-rising, the quarter from whence proceeds the light of day which gilds the loftiest mountain-tops and penetrates into the darkest recesses of the valleys.

We see then that the sons of God, as the overcoming body of Christ, are arising in splendor and glory over the earth. They speak with the voice as the sound of many waters! God wants His sons to rise, and we are beginning to rise as in and by the Spirit we ascend from one glory to another in Him in this great day! Yet we also know by the Spirit that our ministry to the earth realm cannot break forth *until* we have been perfectly and completely sealed in our foreheads with the mind of Christ! THIS IS TODAY A PROPHETIC WORD IN THE MOUTHS OF GOD'S SONS! THIS IS THE WORD I PROCLAIM UNTO YOU! You will notice that John sees one angel ascending, but he then reveals to us the great truth that this angel represents a *corporate ministry*, for he records the angel as saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till '**WE**' have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The angel is more than one — he is "we."

It is my conviction that it is not speaking of just one literal angel, but of a messenger company, and the message they bear, a spiritually empowered ministry proclaiming the revelation of sonship and the word of the kingdom. It is God Himself who has raised up this ministry in the earth! In our generation this ministry has appeared, rising higher and higher upon the horizon! The purpose of this ministry is to bring illumination and quickening to God's called and chosen elect! The word going forth in the power of the Holy Spirit is bringing the dawning of a new day within us! There is a ministry ascending out of the dawn of this new kingdom day and my ransomed soul rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory to have a small share in it. It's sent from above! It has come by revelation of the Spirit! It's sent to awaken the Father's apprehended ones, to alert, to instruct, to cleanse, to purify, to encourage, to strengthen, to mature, to prepare and quicken the called-out ones so that the servants of God may be sealed in their foreheads. This is the ministry of the hour that God has sovereignly raised up throughout the whole earth, in practically every nation under heaven, to renew our mind to see what we couldn't see, hear what we had never heard, and experience that which we are destined to experience as sons of God! Oh, yes! This is God's *new day*!

I can hear someone asking, "How can the angel be the sons of God, and the 144,000 who are sealed be also the same company of sons?" But I ask, Is that not like asking how Jesus can be both the Lion of the tribe of Judah *and* the Lamb in the midst of the throne? Is He a lion or is He a lamb? The answer, of course, is that He is *both*! The imagery presents two aspects

of the same thing — the nature of Christ. All of this is taking place *within us*, beloved. The angel ascending from the east is indeed a *ministry* and a *word* flowing in and through those who have been apprehended to be sons. We are not the sealed sons — yet! The sons are rising up to come to a certain level of growth and development in Christ. The prophetic word speaks out of our midst declaring that though we would like to enter right on in to the fullness of God and the manifest sonship ministry, we cannot *until* we are fully sealed with the mind, nature, and spirit of the Christ! But still, it is the same angel, the one that rises and ascends, the one that cries with a loud voice (the prophetic word), that also seals the servants of God in their foreheads! Now you ask, “How then are we being sealed in our foreheads — how are **we** doing the sealing?” Ah, it is by the word and the spirit of the Lord that is rising within us and trumpeting through us! This very word, and the dealings of God which accompany it, brings the seal of the living God! As we speak to one another, and minister to one another, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the word and the spirit work mightily within our minds and hearts, we are enlightened and strengthened to submit to every dealing of our Father as He perfects and transforms us into the image of His Son. Oh, the mystery of it!

We are being sealed in such a way that we cannot be unsealed; the world, the flesh, and the devil can never come in to deceive us, trip us, thwart us, or take anything from us. God is doing a thorough work! It is by the Spirit of God that we are sealed, and it is by the living word of God raised up within us that the Holy Spirit seals us. In other words, the life of God is the power and force that seals us, the operating officer is the Holy Spirit, and the messengers of God who speak the message and minister the Spirit are the ministry God has ordained to be the instruments of the sealing. It is all the activity of God *within us* and *through us*! But John sees it in its different aspects as an angel ascending out of the east, crying with a loud voice, and then sealing the servants of God in their foreheads. It is indeed wonderful!

SEALING THE 144,000

144,000 is not a head-count, but a number representing *who they are*. God has many more overcomers than 144,000! Can you imagine an age governed by a people filled with the mind of Christ, conformed to His image, led by His Spirit, endued with the fullness of His authority and power? Can you even comprehend what it would be like for 144,000 manifest sons of God (if it *were* a literal number), 144,000 reproductions of Jesus Christ in all the glory, wisdom, authority, and power of His resurrection, turned loose on this world to speak the words of God and do the works of God with no limitations at all? That would be almost a thousand manifest sons of God for each nation on the earth!

The opening work of this new day of the kingdom is the sealing of the servant-sons of God! When it is fully demonstrated that the fullness of Christ can be raised up, formed, and manifested through a people, then those who have overcome as Christ overcame, and have put on His mind, nature, wisdom, and power, will inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world. The one hundred and forty-four thousand will stand upon the pinnacle of the heavenly mount Zion to rule and reign with the Lamb in the throne! The sixth seal closes when the sons of God have received the seal of God, and are waiting for the greater appearance and revelation of Christ in His body of sons.

A seal is used to render valid or authentic any enactments or laws that a person or power may promulgate. Frequent instances of its use occur in the scriptures. We read that Jezebel “wrote letters in (king) Ahab’s name, and sealed them with his seal” (I Kings 21:8). *These letters then had all the authority of king Ahab!* Again, “In the name of King Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king’s ring” (Esther 8:8). Throughout the centuries a seal on a

signet ring was pressed into sealing wax to give authenticity to a document. The seal represented the owner and his authority. When a king sent a message to another king, he set his seal on it. When the messenger delivered it to the king for whom it was intended and put it before him and the king saw the seal, it was as though the sender was standing right there before him speaking the words! The seal of the living God, then, means that God is sending forth His word through His sons in all the authority of His name and presence! This “sealing angel,” furthermore, represents “the living God” in contradistinction to the impotent God of man-made religion, tradition, ritual, and ceremony! The living God is coming in the power of His kingdom, and this seal upon the sons represents His *kingdom authority!* This is the authority that is coming to the sons of God and by this authority they shall reign and make all things new! Just as when I write my name in a book, that book is mine, so here those sealed with God’s seal are marked as His own. They themselves are His document, His message, His word, His will, His commandment, His manifestation, His authority in the earth!

In consideration of these facts which I have briefly stated, it should be easy to understand the distinct difference between the “mark” of the beast and the “seal” of the living God. Although many people refer to the “mark” of God on the sons of God, the words “mark” and “seal” are not the same word in the Greek, nor do they signify the same thing. The word mark is from the Greek *charagma* meaning “a scratch, etching, or sculptured figure.” It is used in the book of Revelation eight times, always in reference to the mark of the beast. Seal is from the Greek *sphragis* meaning “a signet or a stamp impressed as a sign of privacy, genuineness, or authority.” “Marks” or brands were often put upon slaves to indicate their serfdom. It was not different from the brands put upon cattle today. Temple slaves were frequently branded with the insignia of the temple where they served. One of the Roman emperors branded Roman citizens in the face with a hot branding iron to show they were the property of the empire. You will search the whole book of Revelation in vain for one saint with a “mark” upon his forehead or in his hand! The “mark” was the property sign. And while we do indeed belong to the Lord, that is not the message the spirit of revelation is conveying to John the apostle, and to us, God’s elect! The “seal” was the sign of authenticity and authority! Let the servants of the beast wear their property “brand” as the steer in the pasture or the donkey at the cart! Not so the sons of God! They bear no “marks” but are “sealed” with the seal — the nature, the mind, the message, the word, the representation, and the authority — of the *living God!* The seal is the solemn token that we are God’s special treasure and representatives sent to speak His words, do His works, and manifest His glory! Aren’t you glad!

Many believe that the purpose of the sealing of the 144,000 is for their protection and preservation during the “great tribulation.” While the idea of protection is inferred in the Greek word for “seal,” it is my conviction that the sons are sealed, not primarily to protect them from harm, but to *qualify them* to bring the righteous judgments of God into the earth! In my view, that is the clear indication of the context.

The great work of the ***seal of God in the forehead*** is the ***change of our mind***, or more accurately the ***taking of another mind***. For the taking of a new mind brings about the existence of a new being, and new beings bring about the existence of a new order! The present mind of man is polluted and there is no denying the fact. All the appropriations of all the governments, all the laws and ordinances, all the wars and change of governmental systems, all the charity, relief, and social organizations and programs, all the rituals and promotions of religion, will do little good whatever in correcting the problems of moral pollution or any other kind of pollution, until the ***mind of man*** is cleansed and renewed. The sons of God, having the seal of the living God upon their foreheads, and the Father’s name inscribed

in their foreheads, are the **FIRSTFRUITS OF AN ENTIRELY NEW ORDER OF MEN TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF THEIR MINDS!** What glorious hope and expectation this inspires in our hearts!

The nature of God is written in the forehead or the mind of every son of God! When the nature of God is written in one's forehead, how will that one act and react in relation to the sea, the earth, and the things growing out of the earth realm? *They will act like God!* That is why God has no problem in turning His kingdom over to His sons to judge and rule over all things. They possess His mind and heart! The sons will not, and cannot, act any differently than the will and purpose of the Father! All the sons want is what the Father wants! That doesn't mean, as some suppose, that a son must run to his Father every hour or every day or every week inquiring, "Father, what do you want me to do? How should I handle this situation?" and then wait there for an answer. Oh, no! The sons have the *mind* of the Father, they inherently possess the *knowledge* of His will, ways, and purpose. Sons instinctively, spontaneously *understand* the plans of the Father! This sacred knowledge is inborn and inbred in the very constitution of the new creation man! We used to think that in order to get a "word" from God we had to hide out in a room and pray for an hour. Now don't misunderstand what I say — I do believe in prayer and the power of prayer. It is part of the cosmic order of God. No man on earth has walked out this life of sonship more perfectly than our elder brother, the Lord Jesus, and He prayed often, sometimes all night. But He wasn't praying to "get" something from the Father; He prayed *because He was a Son* and shared that intimacy of fellowship with the Father. It was the *Father in Him* that showed Him the works! He knew the Father's voice at all times, and the Father's voice spoke within Him for the Father was in Him as His very life and reality. Oh, the wonder of it! When God dwells in His temple He speaks out of His temple at all times. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another..." (Col. 3:16). That's not talking about memorizing scripture verses! It's talking about the true experience of every son — the voice of the Son of God speaking out of His habitation in our spirit by the mind of the Father within.

Be not misled nor deceived, my beloved brethren. The sealing of God's people does not come by the hand of man! It is not accomplished by any man or woman, or group of men and women, coming to perform an outward ritual, ceremony, or pronouncement upon the individual. It comes not by anointing with oil, water baptism, issuing a decree, laying on of hands with prophecy, or any other outward administration by man. Various ones through past decades have declared that they have been given a revelation and a commission to perform some kind of ministry of "sealing" to guarantee one a position in God's elect. Some have thus been "sealed" against the death angel, or into immortality, or as a manifest son of God. Some years back, one man held large meetings where he issued "identification cards" to those who accepted his teaching. The cards were numbered from 1 to 144,000! They supposedly secured a place in that company who would stand with the Lamb upon mount Zion! It would be wonderful if the sealing of our mind could happen in one climatic moment, that someone by praying or laying hands on us, or something, could accomplish the process, but that is not the case.

Numerous have been the men who have presumed that they personally were Elijah the prophet, the seventh angel, the two witnesses, or the angel out of the east having the seal of the living God, or some other special messenger of God to prepare God's elect for the coming glory; but all have miserably failed. Oh, yes! God does have His messengers proclaiming by the Spirit His purposes in this significant hour, but it is a corporate ministry of the many-membered body, and even then I do not hesitate to tell you that the sealing of God's elect with the glorious mind that is in Christ Jesus is *the sovereign work of God by His Spirit!* No "man"

can impart it to you! *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are **changed into the same image** from glory to glory, even as **by the Spirit of the Lord**”* (II Cor. 3:18).

Ray Prinzing shared these meaningful words of admonition: “Beloved, we cannot seal our own minds into the things of the Spirit, it takes the sovereign illumination of the truth of God to rid us of the carnal mind. No man can seal anybody else’s mind from the system of the world, but it will require that “line upon line, precept upon precept” as the Spirit brings truth to you, to dissolve the shadows and bring forth the light of His mind, until we are cut off from the minding of the flesh, and sealed into the mind of Christ.”

Chapter 98

The Sealing Of The 144,000

continued

“And I heard the number of them that were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel” (Rev. 7:4).

In order to understand the deep mystery of the hundred and forty-four thousand we must see beyond the veil of the flesh and the mists of the earthly and literal and see right into the very heart of God with the eyes of the spirit. My purpose in writing of these mysteries is that all who read might see WHO ISRAEL IS. There is a marvelous prophetic passage of scripture in the book of Genesis in which is related the experience of the very first Israel of God. *“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more **Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved”*** (Gen. 28:24-28).

It may stagger your imagination to hear what I now say, but once you grasp the truth, you will be mightily helped by it. The kernel of truth in the story related above concerns how Jacob became Israel, Prince of God. It’s so very important for those who would lay hold upon the reality of sonship to study the life of Jacob who was first called Israel. For, as a brother we ministered with some years ago has written, “Jacob was not the only Israel, but he was only the *first* Israel of God! For you see, the word Israel simply means PRINCE OF GOD, and Jacob was only the first man that God called out of the world to deal with him until He had changed his nature from the nature of a schemer and a grasper and a supplanter, which was what his name Jacob meant by interpretation, to the nature of one who no longer went through life and thought to conquer life by his own scheming and grasping and supplanting, but became one who, completely helpless in his own strength, could take hold of God and say, I will not let you go until I get the blessing. And when God had changed Jacob’s nature from the nature of a schemer, a grasper, and a supplanter to the nature of a **prince of God**, He gave him a new name to fit his new nature!

“The Bible says there wrestled a man with Jacob all night long. And toward the breaking of the day, when he prevailed not, the man touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh and Jacob became absolutely helpless and could walk no longer in his own strength. And then the picture changes. No longer is the angel of the Lord wrestling with Jacob, but now Jacob is wrestling with the angel of the Lord! And he takes a fresh hold upon the angel of the Lord, and the angel of the Lord said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. The angel really didn’t want

Jacob to let go, he was only testing Jacob to see how hard Jacob could hang on. And Jacob takes a fresh grip, and says, I will not let you go until I get the blessing! And the angel of the Lord says, What is your name? He says, *Jacob*, — schemer, grasper, supplanter. And the angel says, No, thou shalt no longer be called Jacob, but ***Israel, Prince of God!*** For as a prince hast thou power with God and men, for thou hast prevailed. No longer Jacob, schemer, grasper, supplanter, but Israel, Prince of God. And as such Jacob was only the *type* of all those in every generation that God calls by His Spirit, out of the world, to change their nature from the nature of schemer, grasper, supplanter, that is, *fleshly dependency and effort*, to a ***prince of God with power***. Then He gives them a new name to fit their new nature! Therefore, Jacob was the first Israel, for he was the first called out of the world that God might change his name and his nature.

“Out of Jacob came twelve sons and they were mighty ones, God’s Israel for that generation. Out of them came twelve tribes, and they were God’s Israel for their generation. Then, finally, out of the twelve tribes came Jesus, and while Jesus was in the world, He was God’s Israel, God’s Prince. Then out of Jesus came a generation of enChristed Israel and they were God’s Israel, God’s mighty ones, for their generation. Then over the last 2,000 years have come generation after generation of enChristed Israel. Each out of the previous generation, and they were God’s Israel for their generation and now, we who have been called and chosen by the Spirit of God out of the masses of the world and religious Babylon, that God might deal with us and change our nature, that he might change our name — *we are God’s Israel for our generation!*”

“Dearly beloved, this is the place that God has been apprehending you and me for, waiting for us to come to from the day we were born! Yea, the river Jabok, where Jacob camped, is where we have been brought to the place of aloneness with God, separated from the world and religious Babylon. Here we sit completely helpless and the hollow of our thigh has been touched where we can no longer walk in our own strength. No more schemes to depend on, no more of our own thinking, carnal ways, and fleshly effort. The flesh has schemed and worked our way into a corner where we can’t go backward or forward, the only way we can look is up! Then the Spirit of God begins to wrestle with us through that long night of darkness wherein He seeks to change our *nature* from one who is always seeking to grasp and scheme and push our own way into the things of God, to one who has become completely helpless. No longer able to walk in our own strength, but in prayer and the spirit we take hold of God and say, I will not let you go until I get the answer! There is coming a breaking day for us; yea, our long night of darkness and testing is coming to an end, and the daybreak is coming to us where we’ll become that helpless in our own strength. And God will have finally changed our nature from one who continually tries to grasp and supplant our own way through by self-effort and fleshly striving, to one who, completely helpless, takes hold of the Lord, and in and by the spirit says, I will not let you go until you bless me with that new and greater thing that only comes from you!

“When that happens God changes our name and gives us a new name to fit our new nature. Only the new name that He gives us is not just Israel, Prince of God. The name that He gives us is CHRIST — SON OF GOD! For then is fulfilled the scripture wherein Jesus said, ‘Him that overcometh...I will write upon him ***my new name***’ (Rev. 3:12). ‘Thou art the CHRIST, the SON OF THE LIVING GOD’ — that’s who He is, and that is our new name! From that hour forth we have power with God and with men, and prevail over every battle that will ever come against us, for God has changed our nature from one who fights his own battles to one who has become completely helpless in his own strength and ability; one through whom *God fights!* Then the angel of the Lord says to us, What is thy name? Jacob, schemer, grasper,

supplanter? No! From henceforth thou shalt have a new name. Not just Israel, Prince of God, but Christ, Son of God. And thou hast prevailed. Hallelujah!" — end quote. And these, my beloved, as Jacob-Israel of old, ARE THE TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD! "If ye be Christ's, T-H-E-N are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29). "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE" (Gal. 4:28). "For we are the circumcision (Israel), which *worship God in the spirit*, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH" (Phil. 3:3). That is Israel whose thigh has been touched! Oh, the mystery of it!

THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Everything in the book of Revelation is a sequence. The seven trumpets flow out of the seven seals, the seven vials flow out of the seven trumpets. The book begins on the isle of Patmos, moves to the seven churches of Asia, and proceeds to the throne of God. It is a mighty stream of God, the river of life flowing out from the throne and flowing and flowing and flowing until all creation is watered, quickened by His life — all things made new! The seven promises to the overcomers are *seven steps* in the progression of our overcoming and receiving within ourselves the fullness of our inheritance. Some contend that there is no *processing* in God — everything was finished by the work of Jesus two thousand years ago. But the revelation, the unveiling of Christ within us, involves seven seals which are *broken one at a time*, and a work is wrought under each seal. Who can deny that that involves a *process* — and the work wrought in us through that process ***is processing!*** As each seal is broken there is a further activity of God in the soul and in the body, there is more light, more understanding, greater victory, maturity, glory, and power! Everything is sequential! And here in the names of the twelve tribes of Israel there is likewise a sequence — twelve precise *steps* in the progressive sealing of the mind of Christ in our foreheads! John was in the day of the Lord and from that vantage point he could see the end from the beginning, the whole process of God from beginning to end. Nothing was hidden from him, he saw in and by the Spirit the entire unfolding of the purposes, activities, and accomplishments of God within His elect and in all creation!

The 144,000 are divided into classes called by the names of the twelve tribes of Israel — the twelve tribes of those who are the Princes of God! It is a common mistake to think of these as the natural, fleshly tribes of Israel, either of the Jews or the ten-tribed house of Israel. But the Revelation is a *spiritual book* and these are *symbols!* If the four angels, the four winds, the four corners of the earth, the seal of the living God, the earth, sea, and trees, are symbols, then the twelve tribes that are sealed are likewise symbols! Can anything be plainer than that? These are *character names*, indicating the various aspects of character developed spiritually in every son of God. It doesn't indicate different groups or companies of God's elect, each company bearing the characteristics of only one of the tribes of Israel. These twelve spiritual character traits represent *twelve steps* in our experience of Christ by which we progressively put on the mind of Christ and grow up into His mature nature and character — the nature and character of *sonship to God!* Twelve is the number of *divine government*, therefore these twelve steps bring us to the throne of God's kingdom to govern the world in righteousness and reign with Christ over all things!

Each step represents a new level of spiritual experience and maturity ordained for every one apprehended to sonship. Each tribal name reveals an attainment of the life and glory of God in our own experience until we find ourselves seated with Him in His throne. Twelve tribes speak to us of different dimensions of growth which all the Lord's elect must pass through. The twelve tribes are *twelve stages* by which we move out of one realm into another, out of

one level of consciousness into a higher level of consciousness, and out of one state of being into a more perfect state of being. The twelve tribes represent twelve steps of ascent to the throne of the universe! We cannot reach the throne in all it means and is until we have passed through them all in succession. Each experience is greater than the preceding one! Each step through the tribes brings us closer to incorruptible nature and immortal life and the authority and power of the throne!

All who are called and chosen of the Father as king-priests are diligently climbing up that ascending pathway! We are daily applying ourselves to this walk! By the strength and power of the Christ within, we are pressing upward through one tribe at a time. The twelve tribes were not all birthed at the same time! The head of each tribe was born in his time, one after another, until all twelve had been birthed! This is a picture of our progression in spiritual life from one tribe to another! As we pass from tribe to tribe we experience within ourselves all that each tribe embodies. When we have arrived at the last tribe — Benjamin — we will be *sons of the right hand!* We will have experienced within ourselves all the authority, power, and dominion of God's omnipotent throne! Once the reality of each of the twelve tribes has been progressively fulfilled within us, the victorious believer is then complete, mature, and has attained the first resurrection and the glory of manifest sonship. We will be able to rule over all things as sons of God! God's promise to Abraham in the long ago will at last be fulfilled in all its glorious and eternal reality — *"in thee, and in thy seed, shall ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED!"*

Before proceeding into our study of the twelve tribes of Israel, there is a very important truth which we should all understand in this connection. One of the tribes of Israel was omitted from the list of tribes given us by the Holy Spirit in chapter seven of the Revelation. That tribe is *Dan*. Dan means "judgment." When the dying Jacob blessed his sons, he said of Dan, "Dan shall *judge his people*, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a *serpent* by the way, an *adder* in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward" (Gen. 49:17). Abrupt, fragmentary, and enigmatic as these words are, they startle us by the way they raise questionings within our minds about the nature and role of Dan. We are looking upon a specially sealed company, an hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of Israel. But Dan is not found among them! In Jacob's prophecy over Dan, the patriarch's first words concerning Dan imply a strange, dangerous, and low place — if not the lowest place — for him. When the tribes of Israel crossed the Jordan and conquered the promised land, Dan was given a portion on the extreme northern border of the land. He retained his place as part of the nation, but was far removed from most of the action. And if we naturally ask, *Why?* the answer is in the verse quoted above: "Dan shall be a *serpent...an adder...that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.*"

Plainly these are negative characterizations which associate him in some way with the power of the adversary, and a dark, sinister role among the tribes. The word "serpent" denotes the idea of wisdom and cunning (Mat. 10:16). The serpent's weapon has always been his mouth — specifically, the *venom* that comes out of that mouth! The word "adder" in Hebrew means "to snap at, thrust out the tongue" and fits the idea of spoken venom as a weapon of jealousy and anger. God gave Dan the commission to judge Israel righteously. Keen observation and spiritual discernment are necessary for a judge! These gifts were given to Dan, but instead of using them aright, he became a backbiter, a cruel critic, a condemner. The gift intended for a blessing, when perverted, became an injury, causing others to fall. The cruel critic, the one who always detects the evil in others and speaks of it first, has the gift of judgment misdirected. None who persist on that course can inherit the throne, for the manchild occupies the throne whereas the "accuser of the brethren" is cast out of the heavens of

dominion! The most famous Danite was Samson who judged Israel for twenty years, but sold out his anointing to the Philistine seducer, Delilah. The history of the tribe of Dan is darker than the history of any other of the twelve tribes. Jeroboam, Solomon's servant, set up a golden calf in Dan and put high places throughout Israel, causing Israel to sin.

The spirit of unrighteous judgment, vindictiveness, and condemnation is the spirit of the church world today! The judgment preached and expressed in the church systems is the spirit of the serpent, for it presents God's judgments as punitive, vindictive, destructive, and eternally tortuous rather than a loving, purposeful correction. That's the serpent, it bites you when it shouldn't, and its bite is deadly! Jesus crushed the serpent's head, he has no more power to bite you, yet the preachers still put the deadly venom of condemnation, destruction, and eternal damnation into their proclamations of judgment, characterizing God as a vengeful, implacable tyrant ready to cast men into never-ending hell fire for the slightest offense. Dan does not represent the righteous judgment of the sons of God, but rather the unrighteous, heinous, hateful judgment of a maniacal despot.

When we come to the sealing of the twelve tribes Dan's name is left out. The omission is absolute — the tribe is cut off from its brethren and its name blotted out. This one tribe is deleted and another is added. In like manner there was a deletion from the number of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and an addition. Judas was cut off from his apostleship, and Matthias was added (Acts 1:15-26). God took something that didn't pertain to the order of sonship, and added that which complemented or fulfilled the spirit of sonship. So when vindictive judgment was removed, Levi, the tribe of the *priesthood*, who had no inheritance in Israel, and was not normally included in the list of tribes, was added. Can you not see the mystery? The spirit of condemnation and vindictive judgment was **removed**, and mercy and reconciliation were **added!** "To wit, that God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*" (II Cor. 5:19). THAT is the spirit of sonship! Mercy, grace, reconciliation, deliverance, redemption, restoration, and life for all! Yet — that includes even Dan! People possessing the spirit of the tribe of Dan are not finally cut off from the goodness of God, for in Ezekiel's glowing prophecy there is a portion for Dan (Eze. 48:1). No man is eternally cut off from God! But those of the spirit of Dan are not included in the company of the manifest sons of God!

JUDAH

"And of the tribe of *Judah* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:5).

Let us consider this highly unusual statement. If we were talking about the natural Israel, the proper order would be to begin with the firstborn son of Israel — Reuben. It would read, "And of the tribe of *Reuben* were sealed..." The people of Israel were extreme devotees of the proper order. Listing the eldest son first is as much a part of Old Testament order as were the feasts of Israel! In every previous genealogy, the list of tribes **always** began with Reuben. Now we come to the book of Revelation and the order is changed, and the tribe of Reuben is not listed first. Here we find the tribe of Judah listed in the first place. There is a wonderful reason for this! The book of Revelation is not a historical or prophetic book either *about* the fleshly Israel or addressed *to* the natural Israel. It is a *spiritual book* addressed to a *spiritual people*, the church, which is the *body of Christ!* The reason we have the tribe of Judah listed first is because it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, and He is the *firstborn* of a *spiritual seed* which is the spiritual and true Israel of God! He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and by His spiritual and heavenly kingship and dominion we are raised up into the

seed of Abraham by the Spirit. “Now therefore ye are *no more strangers and foreigners*, but fellow citizens with the *saints*, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God *through the Spirit*” (Eph. 2:19-22).

What I am declaring is not what is referred to as “replacement theology” which just throws the natural Israel out and brings the Gentiles in. What God did was draw a larger circle, and the circle is just this: “Anybody who comes to me to be covenantally related to me must come by the *new birth*, for “verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be *born again* (Greek: *from above*) he cannot see...*enter* the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3,5). Jew, Israelite, Greek, Russian, African, Asian, or whatever, there is only one way into the covenant of promise, and that’s not by physical birth or natural genealogy, for “in Isaac shall thy seed be called” and Isaac comes by a ***supernatural birth!*** The firstborn of this heavenly lineage is our Lord Jesus Christ who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah whose right it is to rule, to sit upon the throne of Israel, which is the throne of the Lord within us. As it is written, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto HIM shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. 49:10). *Shiloh* is the Lord Jesus Christ! We are not dealing with a natural Israel in the book of Revelation, but with a spiritual seed brought forth out of the loins of Christ by the new birth. This Israel *begins* with the spiritual and heavenly tribe of ***Judah!***

When the aged Jacob lay dying he commanded his twelve sons, who were destined to be the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, to come to his bedside that he might impart to them his prophetic blessing. “Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father” (Gen. 49:2). The twelve boys dutifully assembled to hear their father’s all-important final words. Israel pulled himself up to sit on the edge of the bed and his sons gathered themselves around him. We are not told what emotional reactions the twelve sons had as each heard his respective blessing, but contained in the blessings were exhilarating highs and depressive lows as Israel prophesied of their destinies.

Let it be thoroughly known and understood by every reader of these lines that the list in chapter seven of the Revelation is a list of persons, and the first, the Leader, of this list is the tribe of Judah! The tribe of Judah is now, under the new covenant, counted as the tribe of the FIRSTBORN. Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah! He is, furthermore, the “*firstborn* among many brethren”! He is the “*firstborn* of every creature”! He is the “*firstborn* from the dead”! He is the firstborn among many brethren, and that means that He is not the only son of God, He is the *first* son of God, there is a vast company of sons destined to grow up into His likeness, to share the fullness of all that He is and has. He is the firstborn from the dead, and that means that He is not the only one to rise from the dead, He is the *first* to rise from the dead, and multitudes shall follow. He is the firstborn of every creature, and that means that He is in the position to restore the whole creation and every living being in it to find their one head in Him, that God may be all in all. It is indeed wonderful!

From earliest times the firstborn son held an honored position in the family. The law of the firstborn is divinely recognized throughout the scriptures in both the sphere of the family and in that of the nations, and also in the heavenly regions as well as the earthly. God commanded to Israel that the firstborn son should inherit twice as much of the father’s estate as any other child (Deut. 21:17). To this son fell also the right and responsibility of control in the family, subject to the father; and also, in the older eras at least, the firstborn son acted as the family priest. The firstborn came into considerable prominence at the time that God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt. Among the Egyptians, the firstborn were

dedicated as sacred to the sun god Amon-Ra, the supposed preserver of all the firstborn. The tenth plague that the Lord brought upon the Egyptians served to discredit this god and showed up his inability to protect the firstborn. By obeying God's instructions concerning the slaying of a lamb and the splashing of its blood upon the doorposts and upper part of the doorway of their houses, the Israelites did not lose their firstborn in death, whereas all the firstborn of the Egyptians, both of man and beast, were slain (Ex. 12:21-29).

God claimed as specially His own all the firstborn males of Israel. These were in the highest sense HIS FIRSTBORN! But then God substituted in their place the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe, so that this entire tribe became especially His firstborn son. They were to grow up — to be educated, disciplined, and trained — to live and serve the peculiar property of the living God, separated from all others by the very hand of God, hallowed unto Him, sanctified as His ministers on behalf of all to whom He would show His mercy and power. The Levites were in fact the TITHE AND OFFERING of the people unto God. Aaron was to “offer the Levites for an OFFERING of the children of Israel” and thus they were “wholly given” unto the Lord to do nothing but serve Him and His people.

Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren, but the entire house of sons is called the “Church of the Firstborn” — the body of that firstborn Son who is become the Head of the Order of the Firstborn! Jesus was the firstborn and as such received the inheritance of the firstborn. But by His graciousness and love and purpose we share with Him — counted as heirs of God and JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST in the inheritance of the firstborn!

Let us use this illustration. At the performance of an opera, the first part of the evening is given over to the playing of the overture. As I understand it, the overture is made up of, or contains, parts of all the main numbers of the whole opera. The overture is an overall preview, or glimpse of the opera throughout until the end. But following the overture, the action goes back again to the beginning, and the whole opera is performed in its detail unto the finish. Thus the overture presents the plot in portions, and points to the end, so that one who has never heard it, will have a view of the action and the climax of it. But, as I pointed out, following the overture the action returns to the beginning and the detail of the whole plot is played out. However, both the overture and the detailed action come to a common end or result.

Let all who read these lines grasp the great truth that THE MANIFEST SONS OF GOD ARE THE OVERTURE OF GOD'S WHOLE GREAT DRAMA OF SIN AND REDEMPTION! Jesus is the overture for the sons, while the sons are the overture for all creation. The working out of redemption and restoration into the image of God is revealed in THE MAN CHRIST JESUS. He is the first, and so far, THE ONLY PERFECTED MAN. This gives us knowledge of two wonderful things! Through Jesus we have the knowledge of the END of God's great drama of sin and redemption — MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD! But we also have the knowledge of the dealings and processings by which man is brought to that end. And WE ARE THE OVERTURE, the preview, the firstfruit, the demonstration of all God's wonderful creative and redemptive purpose, presenting upon the cosmic stage of the universe the final end that God has in mind for His whole vast creation, praise His wonderful name!

Jesus is the *firstborn!* And that is where our sonship *begins!* We must be *born of the seed of the firstborn*, be a member in the *church of the firstborn*, and a part of the *body of the firstborn*, who is the *Lion of the tribe of Judah!* You've got to start with Jesus or you will go nowhere in God. Truly HE is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*, and no man comes unto the Father but through HIM! Not only does no man come to the Father except through Jesus, no

man can come to *sonship* to God except through Jesus! HE is the *firstborn* among many brethren! As the first born it is He who received the “double portion” of the inheritance that *through Him* and *with Him* we may receive and share in it as joint-heirs. That is the mystery. HE is our *Elder Brother!* HE is the *High Priest* of our *profession!* HE is the *Captain* of our *salvation!* HE is the *Forerunner* who has entered in beyond the veil *for us!* Never forget it, my beloved!

The central truth in the sealing of the tribe of Judah is just this. The *sealing* bespeaks a knowing, an experiencing, and putting on of Christ in a deeper, fuller, and more powerful measure. It is here that we meet JESUS, no longer merely as our Saviour, Healer, Baptizer, and Blessor, but as the SON OF GOD with power! As we are sealed in the tribe of Judah the revelation of HIS SONSHIP and OUR SONSHIP IN HIM breaks with wonder within our illumined consciousness in the power of the Holy Spirit. In that blessed moment we behold Jesus as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the King of Israel, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and the Lord of the universe! We see Him upon the throne of His Father! When we are spiritually birthed or sealed as a member of the elect of the tribe of Judah, we are quickened to the reality and the realm of sonship, to see as we have never seen, to hear as we have never heard, to understand as we have never understood the Father’s purpose for us, receiving within ourselves the witness of the spirit in the *call to sonship!* I’m sure that all who read these lines who have received the call to sonship, remember the day or the time or the season when each was initiated by the dealing of the Father into this NEW REALM IN CHRIST. From that time forward we knew and understood with great clarity and deep conviction that we are no longer merely believers, or disciples, or Christians, but indeed SONS OF THE LIVING GOD!

It is appropriate at this point that I share the inspired words of brother Charles Schmidt who has penned a message that should be heard by every man and woman and young person who has received the call to sonship. Brother Schmidt wrote: “One of the present prevailing topics in many Spirit-filled circles is that of *sonship*. And this issue of maturity, of God-likeness, of the magnitude of our inheritance in God is to be the foremost issue of the hour! Amidst the wealth of scriptural truth that is to be brought forth on the subject of sonship there is, however, also to be heard the sound of a tone from time to time that is neither scriptural, nor true, nor set for the enrichment of the saints of God. It is one of the gravest errors ever to be written or uttered in connection with the subject of sonship. It is summed up in the following statement taken from the tape of an exhortation on sonship. *‘All too long we have put Jesus on a pedestal. It is time to take Him off the pedestal and move up into the place where God has ordained for us to move in.’* And, all too often, what has not been so bluntly stated as this has been implied or suggested in other ways.

“First of all, I observe that those who hold such diminishing views of our Lord Jesus and yet propound the vastness of our sonship inheritance are actually thereby doing the most to hinder men from being brought into fullness, for actually all the prospects of inheritance and fullness and wealth are treasured in none other than the person of Jesus Christ. It is of *‘His fullness (that) we all received, and grace upon grace’* (Jn. 1:16). If He is depreciated, then also are we! If *‘the church is His body, the Fullness of Him that filleth all in all’* and His Fullness is depreciated, then by so much also is the treasury of the saints depleted!

“We may rather safely conclude that the greater and grander and more excellent Jesus Christ appears, the more of His fullness we as His members can believe to appropriate! Yes, some are blindly lowering Jesus so as not to feel His stature too high for their reach, but God has *‘highly exalted Him’* and we are to rejoice that we are joined to Him there by faith and as

members of His body are made full in Him! The apparent endeavor of some to lower Jesus a bit and then exalt us some is that we all, the Son and the sons, may appear on the same level. This, however, is unscriptural. We are told in the Song of Songs that the Shulamite confesses her lover to be...*the CHIEFEST among ten thousand — DISTINGUISHED, PREEMINENT, SOLITARY IN EXCELLENCE AMONG TEN THOUSAND*' (Song 5:10). The ten thousand may be ten thousand sons of God — but HE is still 'solitary in excellence amongst' them. He is the HEAD; they are His Body!

"There is a singular worthiness about Jesus Christ that makes Him ever 'THE KING of kings and THE LORD of lords.' That we should be made kings and lords in Him is scriptural. But that He Himself, by virtue of His own eternal majesty, should be 'THE KING of kings and THE LORD of lords' is exactly as scriptural. Regardless of how emphatic the demand that we should be '*like Him*,' He still shall stand as having '*the preeminence in all things*' (Col. 1:18); as '*highly exalted*' with every knee bowing to HIM and confessing HIM as '*LORD to the glory of God the Father*' (Phil. 2:8-11). Indeed He is exalted as '*far above all*' (Eph. 1:21). As has been said before, that we even appear at all, no less that we should appear with Him in glory, is purely by His mercy and solely by virtue of our union with Him who is our living Head.

"But some are not even content to lower Jesus in their estimation to the same level as the sons of God — they would even exalt the possibilities of our sonship beyond that of the sonship of Jesus! The support is found by partially quoting John 14:12, '*the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do.*' Greater works! Therefore greater sonship! Therefore greater than Jesus! The obvious omission is what deflates the balloon — '*greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father.*' Had He not gone to the Father, He could not have come again in us; and it is only HIS PRESENCE IN US that allows of any 'greater works'! The 'greater works' are actually HIS! His ministry in His Universal Body is destined to be greater than His earthly ministry in Galilee! The Gospels indeed are simply '*all that Jesus began both to do and teach*' (Acts 1:1). And the Acts and the Epistles are but greater continuations of His doing and of His teaching through His many-membered Body. Do we then exceed Him? No! But rather His Universal Ministry in us exceeds His former Judean ministry! And this keeps the proper perspective!

"Consequently, no individual saint could ever be Jesus or ever be equal to Him, no more than an individual part could ever equal the whole. Jesus is unique! He is the '*one of a kind*' Son of God! '*One of a kind*' is the best translation of the Greek word *monogenes*, usually translated as *only begotten*. Whereas we are sons of God, Jesus is 'monogenes,' the unique, one-of-a-kind Son. It takes all of us together to express Him and to flesh Him out on the earth. But He alone — singular, solitary, and unique — expresses all of the Father's fullness, and He alone fully within Himself fleshes out the invisible God! Jesus' incarnation is, therefore, *unique*. His Godhood is *unique*. He is the King of all other kings and the Lord of all other lords! He stands supreme, solitary, and singular. He is the Head, and we, all together, are HIS BODY. He is the Vine — the root, the stems...we are the branches in Him.

"One final observation before we conclude. Many will think that this is all just fine as long as we relegate this supremacy to *Christ* but not to *Jesus*! Subtle distinction, but none-the-less there in the minds of some and none-the-less erroneous. The Christ — that is, the eternal nature of God is indeed worthy to be supreme, some may reason, but Jesus, the man of Galilee, is like a worn out coat — to be hung up somewhere in the museum of Jewish history" — end quote.

Before concluding brother Schmidt's message I would like to insert here this observation. The notion that there is a "Christ" apart from "Jesus" is nowhere supported in the scriptures. Yes — Christ is corporate, a composite body, a many-membered man, of which Jesus Christ is the Head. He is also the firstborn; as Head the one who in all things has preeminence. Listen to the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul: "For IN HIM dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead *bodily*. And YE ARE COMPLETE **IN HIM**, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:9-10). A many-membered Christ implies that each member possesses an *identity*. We certainly understand that in the natural each member of a body has its own identity! We know the difference between an arm, a foot, a kidney, a heart, and a stomach! Do you suppose, dear one, that in order to be a member of the Christ-body that you must lose your identity as an individual with a particular place and function within that body? Is it not true that should every member of Christ lose his identity Christ would cease to BE either a *body, many-membered, composite, or corporate*? If you do not forfeit *your* place, identity, and function in that many-membered body, how could it be that the resurrected MAN Jesus, who is the Christ, has relinquished His place and function as Head of the body? Nothing could be plainer! Nothing could be grander!

Oh, no, the flesh and blood man, Jesus of Nazareth, is not the Jesus we know; but the RESURRECTED MAN, JESUS OF NAZARETH, IS EXALTED AS HEAD OF THIS GLORIOUS BODY! After Jesus' resurrection, ascension, and return in the power of the Spirit, Peter spoke to the lame man at the gate of the temple, saying, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of JESUS CHRIST **OF NAZARETH** rise up and walk...and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength" (Acts 3:6-7). Oh, yes, this was not some "cosmic Christ" who made the lame man whole — this was the RESURRECTED AND ASCENDED **JESUS OF NAZARETH!** Don't try and do away with the man Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, my friend — He lives still, He has an identity still, we have one God and one mediator between God and man, the MAN CHRIST JESUS! He is still a man, He is still Jesus, He is still Jesus of Nazareth, and He is still a member of the Corporate Christ with an identity and function just the same as *you* have an identity and function. He is the HEAD! And we are the members of His body! And that is THE CHRIST! There is not some "cosmic Christ" that exists apart from these called and chosen and glorified men who make up the Christ. There is not one scripture in the whole body that suggests such an idea! It is an imagination of carnal reasoning, an interpretation of erroneous thinking

"JESUS CHRIST"! Oh, the glory of His name! "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is *above every name*: that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Reading this passage we can see clearly that it is NOT at the name of J. Preston Eby that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess! Nor is it at the name of some "cosmic Christ consciousness" that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess! It is not even at the name of "Christ," the many-membered, corporate One, that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess! Oh, no! It is at the name of JESUS that every knee bows and every tongue confesses! JESUS is the name above every name! Not "Christ" — but **JESUS!** God has exalted HIM! Nor does every tongue confess that J. Preston Eby is Lord, to the glory of God the Father! Nor yet does every tongue confess that the "cosmic Christ consciousness" is Lord, to the glory of God the Father! Nor does every tongue confess that the "Corporate Christ Body" is Lord, to the glory of God the Father! Oh, no! *Every tongue* shall confess that **JESUS CHRIST IS LORD**, to the glory of God the Father! He is Lord! JESUS! How sweet the name! How glorious the name! How powerful the name! How exalted the name! We cannot divorce the "Eternal Christ" from JESUS OF NAZARETH! It is

Jesus of Nazareth that God raised from the dead, raised up far above all heavens, gave the name above every other name, and made Head of that Christ-body which we are. That is the only Christ there is!

Now to conclude brother Charles Schmidt's writing on this subject. "I wish to sound a solemn warning in conclusion. We are fore-warned in the *literal translation* of I John 4:2-3 that 'every spirit that ANNULLETH JESUS IS NOT OF GOD: and this is the *spirit of the anti-Christ* (opposer of Christ), whereof ye have heard that it cometh.' It is one of the most dangerous things to annul or to diminish or to depreciate Jesus in any way — either by implication or by omission or by direct statement or by statements that could be misunderstood — *for by thy WORDS thou shalt be justified or condemned.*

To touch HIM is to touch the very heart and core of our faith. To degrade Him in any way is to be as foolish as the branch that is cut down and destroyed the vine from which it was growing in order that men might not be hindered in noticing the branches. To undermine Him is to destroy the very foundation of everything we have in God — for it is all in Him. He is the fullness — the entire plenitude of everything that God is. He fills everything everywhere with Himself. He upholds everything by the word of His power. He is creator of everything, sustainer of everything, and ultimate possessor of everything. He is the whole creation — and Jesus is His Name! Everything has life in Him. And in everything everywhere He is preeminent. Everything has been placed beneath His feet, and He has become Head over everything to the church, which is His body! And it is only because of His wonder and His beauty that we shall shine as the stars forever — for we are conjoined to Him, united with Him, alive in Him, filled with Him, seated with Him — made sons of God in Him, this Beloved WHO IS our very life! Amen!" — end quote.

The significance of Judah being listed first among the tribes of God's sons who are sealed is spiritual truth concerning those who are born out of the tribe of Judah, those who comprise "the church of the *firstborn*, whose names are written in heaven" (Heb. 12:23). Jacob's dying prophecy to Judah was this: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:8-10).

There is an inexhaustible storehouse of spiritual truth in that wonderful prophecy! All that is said of Judah speaks of overcoming, strength, power, authority, dominion, and rulership. These characteristics reveal the awesome purpose and destiny of each apprehended son of God! But since only the *names* of the tribes are given to John, it is obvious that these are *character names*, so we will not explore all the facets of the lives of the twelve sons of Israel, but will restrict our meditations to the meanings of the names. The significance of Judah's name is revealed in this portion of Israel's prophecy, "Judah, thou art he whom *thy brethren shall praise...*" It is appropriate that Judah would *be praised* by his brothers since his name means *praise!* The account of his birth makes this clear: "And Leah conceived again, and bore a son: and she said, Now will I *praise the Lord*: and therefore she called his name Judah; and ceased bearing" (Gen. 29:35). Thus Judah, whose name means *praise*, will *be praised* by his brothers who will recognize his position of leadership.

It doesn't mean merely that Judah was a praiser — one who continually offered up spiritual praise unto God. I do not doubt that Judah was a praiser, but praise is often associated in our

minds with singing, thanksgiving, and noise — but true praise lies beyond what one speaks — it is a state of being. “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren *shall praise...*” Judah was not known for *praising*, rather *he was praised* because his life *was a praise unto God!* There is a principle I have alluded to over and over again through the years, namely: The highest form of anything is TO BECOME that thing. Thus we see that the highest form of praise is not shouting words of adulation to God, it is when we become a LIVING PRAISE in our state of being, emanating the virtues and excellencies of Christ! We are to BECOME HIS PRAISE in the earth, not to just praise, but a state of being that redounds to His glory. Our Elder Brother and Pattern, our Lord Jesus the Christ, is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the strong One of this glorious tribe, who was ruled by the mind and will of the Father at all times and in all things. His life *was a praise* to God! It was in harmony with the purpose of God and revealed the character and glory of God. That, my beloved, is where we begin our journey into the fullness of God, to the heavenly mount Zion, to the throne of God and the Lamb!

Before we received the call to sonship we were great *praisers*. And truly He is worthy of *all our praise!* We praise Him still! Not, however, as many who simply love the “atmosphere” of praise and get a “high” from entering into a realm of praise that makes them feel emotionally whole. If we are praising for what “we” get out of it, then we have missed the whole point of praise! Many people so esteem that wonderful “atmosphere” or “feeling” derived in the realms of praise that they truly *worship praise* more than they worship the Lord! Some do the service of praise because they believe that praise brings the presence of the Lord. The truth is, however, that it is the *presence of the Lord that brings praise!* In the days of the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit the people were caught up in realms of the “high praises” of God, and it was glorious far beyond any attempt to describe! Yet — many lost sight of the fact that it was not praise that brought the Rain — it was the Rain that evoked the praise! Never in the scriptures were men moved to praise God in order to bring a revelation of His glory. Instead, it was when the Lord came to them, and appeared to them in His glory, that men were moved to praise and exalt His greatness!

In the book of Revelation we have the same picture; it is only when the Lamb is revealed standing in the midst of the throne that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders sing their hymn of praise, followed by the voice of many angels, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, crying out, and saying, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!” It was not the praise that brought the revelation of the Lamb! Rather, it was the revelation of the Lamb in His glory and majesty that evoked this universal paean of praise!

When the Father sovereignly apprehended us unto the high calling of sonship, we were drawn out of the world, and out of the carnal church systems of man, separated unto God to ***be a praise*** unto Him! Our sonship calling begins when we are sealed in the tribe of Judah, the tribe that is to *be praised*, and it begins with a word from the Lord spoken into our spiritual ear, “You are not called to be an ordinary believer or Christian — you have been chosen of the Father to be a special people unto His purpose, to become His expression and His praise unto all the ends of the earth!” What a calling!

Chapter 99

The Sealing Of The 144,000

continued

The one hundred and forty-four thousand are divided into classes called by the names of the twelve tribes of Israel — the twelve tribes of those who are Princes of God! The Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and like everything else in the book the twelve literal tribes of Israel are used as *symbols*. These are *character names*, indicating the various aspects of character developed spiritually in every son of God. Many believers have one or more of these characteristics fulfilled in them, but here it is not the whole tribe that is sealed, but only a portion, a special, separated people unto a particular purpose in God. In this vision the twelve tribes do not indicate different groups or companies of God's called and chosen elect, each company bearing the characteristics of only one of the tribes of Israel. These twelve spiritual character traits bespeak of *twelve steps* in our experience of Christ by which we progressively put on the mind of Christ and grow up into the maturity of His nature — the nature and character of *sonship to God!* This is a people that has experienced *all* that is represented by every one of the twelve tribes! Twelve is the number of *divine government*, therefore these twelve steps bring us to the throne of God and the Lamb where we shall govern the world in righteousness and reign with Christ over all things!

REUBEN

“Of the tribe of *Reuben* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:5).

Reuben is the *second* tribe in the list of tribes revealed to John and the name means “*Behold a son!*” Once we have met Christ in the spiritual reality of the tribe of Judah, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to whom is given the scepter and the throne, we receive the revelation of sonship, which is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. When we have been quickened to our true heritage and destiny as sons of God, the next step is for the life of sonship to begin to be raised up within us. We are no longer concerned about the elementary and childish things most Christians are occupied with, but our whole desire is for Christ to be *formed in us*. Suddenly we do not see ourselves as mere believers, nor do we see those the Father has joined us to as just “Christians,” but we view one another as *sons of God*. Our whole life becomes focused on the life of sonship. The cry of our heart becomes, “Behold, a son!”

We are not at this point a mature son, or a manifest son, for this is merely the *beginning* of Christ raised up in our lives in the power of the Spirit! It is here that the new creation man begins to grow and develop within us! It is the dawn of our sonship walk, the first baby-steps of our journey to the throne! In that blessed moment when the call to sonship was first quickened in our hearts, my beloved, it marked the very point in our walk in God when the cry was heard in and by the Spirit — “Reuben! Behold, a son!”

GAD

“Of the tribe of *Gad* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:5).

The *third* tribe of Israel listed is Gad. Gad translates as “*a troop*.” On his death bed Israel prophesied of Gad, “Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but *he shall overcome (the troop) at last*” (Gen. 49:19). The book *Jacob’s Dozen* gives this meaningful insight: “The English versions of the scriptures cannot adequately catch the word play in this statement. Four of the six Hebrew words in this verse are some form of the word ‘Gad.’ The following rendering more closely catches the meaning: ‘Gad, a troop shall troop upon him, but he shall troop on their heels.’ The passage succinctly prophesies that the tribe of Gad will be harassed by tribes of hostile enemies but will eventually repel their advances. A map of Israel in biblical times vividly displays the precarious position of Gad in relation to some of Israel’s ancient enemies. Hostile bands of Ammonites and Moabites bordered his territory.

“The constant exposure to hostile enemies resulted in Gad’s developing a reputation as fierce warriors, constantly ready to defend their land. In David’s days as a fugitive from Saul, the Gadite warriors who joined him at Ziklag were described in the following way: ‘And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David in the stronghold in the wilderness, men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, they could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and who were as swift as the roes upon the mountains’ (I Chron. 5:18-20; 12:8). Though little is mentioned of the tribe of Gad in the Bible, the lessons to be learned from them are many. Gad graduated from the proverbial *school of hard knocks*. His difficult experiences produced a toughness that only hard times can bring! The spiritual lesson gleaned from Gad is that in the furnace of affliction we are prepared to come forth as gold. Finally, the promise to Gad is that *‘he shall overcome at the last.’* This corresponds to the seven promises to the *overcomer* in the book of Revelation!” — end quote.

“A troop” refers not to the large number of Gadites, but to their development as warriors and their victorious warfare against their enemies. As we move from the spiritual experience of Reuben where the new life of sonship begins to spring forth within us, the long process begins of the spiritual experience of Gad, the process of *overcoming!* The reason so many people fail to attain to great heights in the Spirit is because they are unable to see God’s purpose, and therefore they have no particular incentive to seek the great heights that are in Him. Multitudes of Christians are taken up with carnal ideas and childish notions about pleasing God enough to die and go to heaven, about mansions and harps and sitting on clouds eating pork chops with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in, to be able to grasp the transcendental realities of the kingdom of God!

There are certain basic principles of the kingdom that are raised up within the consciousness of all who are called to sonship. We are learning to think like God! We are beginning to *rule with Christ in this life!* Too many saints are weak, frustrated, fearful, and defeated. But the dynamite of God’s Spirit comes into the life of every apprehended one and blows us out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression, and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy, and triumph in His kingdom! To the Gadites the Spirit admonishes: “*Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armor of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world — the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Wherefore*

*put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and having fought to the end, **TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD***" (Eph. 6:10-14, Weymouth).

As I have pointed out on numerous occasions, the journey to the throne of the universe begins in that small and undistinguished place where you are. The kingdom of God is *within you*. The enChristed who are to reign with Christ from sea to sea, from planet to planet, and ultimately from universe to universe, are being trained and prepared! Think not in your heart, precious friend of mine, that you may pass your life here careless, indifferent to the dealings of God, suddenly to awake one fine morning to find yourself sitting with Christ governing the galaxies, because such a thing will not be. This present time is but God's great "Boot Camp," His proving ground for those who become equipped to reign with their Lord over the things of this world, over sin, sickness, sorrow, and death, over the nations, and over the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies! And the place which He is preparing for each one is not only an age and a world to come, and a kingdom of life, light, glory, and dominion, but a place IN HIM, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, mind of His mind, heart of His heart, nature of His nature, life of His life!

"Overcome" — that is a fighting word, indeed, a *Gadite word!* It subdues, conquers, vanquishes, prevails, and comes off the victor! "Overcome" means *victory*. Now "victory" is a word that thrills! Everybody longs to win. If we play even the most trifling game, we prefer to come out victors. This is all the more true when the conflict is a matter of life and death! "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," said Jesus in the hour of His passion. "Overcoming" is a big word! It means there is something to *come up over*, and getting over it is a divine thing. Even the Lord Jesus was made perfect through the things that He suffered, through blessed obstacles and divine agonies. Sometimes I have been asked why God permits so much evil. "Permits?" Why, bless your heart, He sends it! The old mystic was right who said, "There is no doer but God." Not one of the ills of life could ever touch you if God did not sign the order. No matter how malignant your assailant might be, when anything has come to you which your soul pronounces unwelcome, praise God and go on — and *then you have overcome!* The evils, as we call them, of life are often not evils at all. We mix up evil with wickedness, rebellion, or some other negative and talk as if the two were the same. They are not! Evil is a larger term, and pain may be included in it. When we understand the ways of the Lord, we would not have suffering, trial, difficulties, trouble, tribulation, or sorrow expelled from life for all the glory that imagination can conjure up!

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to *try you*, as though some strange thing had happened unto you" (I Pet. 4:12). "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that *ye may be tried*...be thou faithful...and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may *sift you as wheat*: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted (changed by the sifting), strengthen the brethren" (Lk. 22:31-32). When we can realize that God ordains **trouble, trials, and tribulations** to bring forth the gold of His divine nature from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might *learn Thy statutes*" (Ps. 119:7).

Any living thing that grows up without any opposition is weak and powerless. Not only do **opposing forces** promote growth to produce strength, stamina, and endurance, but they also build character in people. God's sons must be strong and powerful, and anything that

desires to be strong, or anyone, must wrestle with a force that is contrary to them! A plant that grows in a greenhouse sheltered from the winds and rains, pampered and protected day after day, may grow large and beautiful, but it is inherently weak, and if suddenly exposed to the elements will quickly wither and die. Any man who wants to build muscular power to be strong to overcome an opponent, must spend weeks and months and years in vigorous training doing heavy exercises, lifting heavy weights, using the **opposing force** of gravity to **develop his strength**. There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God! There is a great work our Father has for us to do in the age and the ages to come! Our work is to subdue, deliver, reconcile, restore, and transform all things and all men unto God! And He is now preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us! Can we not see that ALL THE OPPOSING FORCES WE NOW ENCOUNTER, AND OUR RESPONSE TO THEM are working together for our good — to first make us overcomers within ourselves, to develop the strength, character, understanding, compassion, wisdom, faith, authority, and power we must acquire to subdue and restore all things to God! God is right now, this very hour, making us spiritually like unto the Gadites who joined David to subdue the enemies and possess the land! Through our trials and testings, and our overcoming in them, we are becoming spiritually men of might, men of war fit for the battle, who can handle shield and buckler, whose faces are like the faces of lions, and who are as swift as the roes upon the mountains! Aren't you glad!

Paul Mueller has written, "The principle purpose which is uppermost in the mind of the Father at this time is the growth and coming to maturity of His chosen remnant. Every other purpose under heaven is secondary to this greater purpose during this exceptional time. Therefore, it is essential that all who are members of this Christ body, the sons of God, should concentrate on their own spiritual maturity. Strive not to do the religious works of man, but seek rather for the fullness of Christ in your own heart and life. There is no other purpose under heaven that can equal this grand and holy purpose of the Father. Put away all the desires and appetites of the world and of the flesh, and seek only to please the Lord. And if you really care for the masses of the world who know not God and His wonderful grace and mercy, then you will seek for His fullness in your life. If you have really heard the groans of a creation that is suffering under the burden of sin and shame, you will cease all your religious activity, which is really only the works of the flesh, and will follow hard after the Lord. Let us seek to please God as Enoch did, and we will witness a glorious manifestation of His life that will set every captive free!" — end quote.

GREAT CHANGES ARE TAKING PLACE NOW IN THE LIVES OF GOD'S ELECT. We are being changed "from glory to glory" by the Spirit of the Lord! We are not of those who come to a certain understanding of God and His purposes and then settle down in that spiritual "place," to await a change that will come some day. Our change will certainly be *consummated* at a time yet to come, including the transformation and immortalization of our bodies, but the changes are taking place progressively within us NOW! Each step we have taken in God has made us the more mature and victorious sons of God that we are now in the kingdom of our Father! We cannot hope to be transformed in that "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" appearing of Christ if we fail to take any of the revealed steps of spiritual growth, which are revealed to us by the Spirit in the glorious promises to the overcomers out of the seven churches, and are necessary for our complete and total transformation. Each step of spiritual growth in God is an indispensable and essential part of our full salvation!

We are learning the lessons that will help us to better serve in the kingdom of God. As we do, great heavenly wealth and power and opportunity to bless and restore all things lie ahead for each of us. Through God's overcoming elect, creation will be lifted, redeemed,

restored to life and liberty and glory — and that's just the beginning! Now notice — first, we behold the glory of sonship in the Lion of the tribe of Judah. There we receive *our call* to sonship! Next, by the quickening of the Father within, the life of sonship begins to be raised up in our experience in the tribe of Reuben. Now we *behold a son!* And then in the tribe of Gad we *enter* God's wonderful training school of overcoming by which we are made strong, victorious, and mighty in God! God is raising up His *spiritual storm troopers*. Oh, how beautiful this is!

ASHER

“Of the tribe of *Asher* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:6).

The *fourth* tribe named is that of Asher. His name means “*Happy*.” Asher was the son of Israel by Zilpah, his wife Leah's handmaid. It is important to know that in those days the “handmaid” was the personal property of her mistress, and any children born to her were counted as the offspring of the mistress. Therefore it is that at Asher's birth it was Leah who exclaimed, “*Happy am I*, for the daughters will call me blessed (happy): and she called his name Asher” (Gen. 35:26).

By the spiritual provisions of the tribe of Asher the members of God's elect begin to experience the rich blessings of the Lord and the overwhelming *joy* of His kingdom! It is in the tribe of Asher that we learn that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and *joy* in the Holy Ghost!” The kingdom of God is *joy!* What a beautiful day it is when we step onto the territory of the tribe of Asher and discover the unspeakable joy of the kingdom of God! It is a special and surpassing type and quality of joy! There is more than one kind of joy in the world today. A Swedish massage or the sensual pleasures of sex are examples of *physical joy*. There is also a superficial *soulish joy* experienced by every man, woman, and child on earth irrespective of whether they be saint or sinner, moral or immoral, or what god they serve. It is the joy of children playing, the joy of a loved one coming home, the joy of a wedding, the joy of a newborn baby, the joy of the amusement park and the dance floor, the joy of delightful children who are an honor to their parents, the joy of accomplishment and recognition. Soulish joy is often a *religious joy* inspired by the singing of peppy choruses with the clapping of hands, and emotional prompting from the pulpit. There is nothing wrong with such joy, but if it can be “worked up” it is soulish, not spiritual! While such expressions of praise and thanksgiving may be done “as unto the Lord” they should never be confused with *spiritual joy* which is the joy of the kingdom of God and joy in the Holy Ghost!

Many good things bring soulish joy to our lives, but none of these have any relationship to the kingdom of God. You see, the kingdom of God is not merely joy — it is joy IN THE HOLY GHOST! It is God's joy. It is heaven's joy. It is divine joy. It is spiritual joy. It is *joy unspeakable* and it is *full of glory!* We are the people of God, His chosen elect in the earth to accomplish His kingdom purposes. We are the vessels that contain the Spirit of God. We are the embodiment of God's Christ. To have a conscious revelation of what Christ is in us arouses the consciousness of the kingdom of God within. The kingdom of God is in our spirit. When we walk in the spirit we are walking in the mind of Christ and in the power of the kingdom of heaven! “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the *sons of God*” (Rom. 8:17). The sons of God are also called the “sons of the kingdom” (Mat. 13:38). When the Holy Spirit rules us, when Christ in our spirit rules us, what other son could we be? The Spirit of Christ has come to rule our soulical senses and our body! Christ is being raised up within us as the personality and power of our lives! We can now walk and live

above every storm and trouble, above all weakness and limitation, yea, above even sin and death! In this kingdom of the spirit tears are wiped away from off all faces and sorrow and sighing flee away as the kingdom rules our lives! It is here that we know and experience the profound and eternal *spiritual joy* that **is the kingdom of God!**

Spiritual joy is the sentiment and feeling of the man who, by virtue of the indwelling of divine life, shares the emotions of God Himself. God is *spirit*, therefore the emotions of God are *spiritual*. God is the eternal God and His kingdom is everlasting. His joy, therefore, is constant, unaffected, and unmoved by the changing course of events, for it has as its source the unchanging God! The Lord joys in His own perfections, unable as the perfect One to rejoice in anything less than the perfect. By spiritual birth and divine nature man is enabled to share the joy God has in Himself, unmoved by the swirling currents of ever-changing events in the outer world!

Often through the years we have seen the bumper sticker proclaiming “Happiness is...” and whatever the natural man relishes is added to those words. Only with the mind of the spirit may we discern the deep truth that such happiness is not *spiritual happiness* but the distorted Self's substitute. That kind of *happi-ness* is related only to *happen-ings*. It depends on the nature of the happenings around man, whether they please him, suit his fancy, and meet his soulish standards and physical cravings. If they do, then he is *happy*. If they run cross-currents with the desires of the Self, then he futilely wishes that they would *unhappen!* And caught in that vice of circumstances he becomes *unhappy!*

The firstborn Son of God was happy — with the joy of the kingdom of God! He bequeathed this joy to His disciples. “These things have I spoken unto you, that *my joy* might remain in you, and that *your joy* might be full” (Jn. 15:11). When Jesus spoke these words He was under the shadow of the cross, suffering and death were blowing their chill breath in His face, and yet the song of His heart could not be hushed! The joy that characterized all His yesterdays was with Him still! And what a deep and satisfying joy that was! It is the joy of sonship to God! It is the indestructible joy of the eternal Spirit! It is the joy of the kingdom of God! It is not the joy of emotions worked up by singing a chorus twenty-five times amid passionate exhortations to worship — it is rather joy rooted in divine calling, divine knowledge, divine purpose, divine will, and divine nature. The joy of Jesus was not human happiness dependent upon *happenings*, or *stirred emotions*, but a new kind of joy, a higher dimension of joy, a deeper current of joy, the joy given by the seal of the living God upon the foreheads of the holy sons of Asher!

Such a lifestyle and language of joy does not just happen. To come up on mount Zion, to reign with Christ as sons of God, is to follow Him whom God has “anointed with the *oil of gladness* above all His companions” (Heb. 1:9). This wonderful oil of gladness *flows from Christ the Head to Christ the body*. The oil of gladness is the anointing of the *joy of sonship to God!* It is the joy that belongs only to the sons of God! I think that many who read these lines are, through the deep dealings of the Father, coming to know this kingdom joy in a very real and precious way. Those who have received the call to sonship, those who have experienced the strippings and purgings, the trials and the testings, those unto whom the Lord Himself has come as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, those who have fought the spiritual battles of the Gadites, and overcome in them, know experientially what I am talking about! Ah, what joy this is!

“Beautiful for situation, the *joy of the whole earth*, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King” (Ps. 48:2). When we live in this high realm of the Spirit where we

are filled with the joy of the Lord, we live in mount Zion, we are citizens of that heavenly city and that holy mountain — and **we are the joy of the whole earth!** There is no people in the whole earth that has joy like the people that dwells in mount Zion. Mount Zion is the governmental realm of God! It is the seat of His sovereignty and His kingdom! It is the center of His authority and His power! Where do *you* live? What is *your* residence? Do you dwell in the joy that nothing, absolutely *nothing*, can disturb, diminish, or destroy? When you live in mount Zion you are the joy of the whole earth! In a world where everyone is troubled, sorrowful, fearful, frustrated, and dejected, your very presence will cause the whole atmosphere to change! The joy of the Lord is coming to the earth in and through us! If that is not our experience, then we need to step over into the tribe of Asher!

It's like the old farmer that bought a farm. The farm was run down and dilapidated, the fences were broken down, weeds had taken over, everything was in disrepair and disarray, it was in terrible shape. After three years of toil and labor the old farmer had everything in beautiful shape. One day the preacher came by, looked over the farm, and said, "Brother Brown, the Lord has certainly done a great job on this farm!" Brother Brown replied, "Yeah, but you ought to have seen it when He had it all by Himself!" You see, beloved, God doesn't do anything apart from *us*. *We* are the temple of God. *We* are the priesthood of the Lord. *We* are the saviours on mount Zion (Obadiah 21). *We* are the kings upon His throne. *We* are the body of Christ. *We* are the arm of the Lord and the instrument in His hand. *We* are the government of God upon mount Zion — the **joy of the whole earth!** *We* are ordained to fill the whole earth with the joy of the Lord! There is *no other source* of joy, of the kingdom of God, for the peoples of this earth!

NAPHTALI

"Of the tribe of *Naphtali* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:6).

This brings us to the *fifth* tribe revealed to John, the tribe of Naphtali. Naphtali means "*wrestling*," but specifically struggling to attain to that which ***seems too high for us***. In Israel's blessings upon his sons he spoke of Naphtali in these descriptive words, "*Naphtali is a hind let loose; he giveth beautiful words*"(Gen. 49:21). "Hind" is the word used in the King James Bible for a *female deer*, or *doe*, just as "hart" is used for the *male deer*, or *buck*. Israel's prophecy is that the tribe of Naphtali would be known by their speed and agility like unto that of a doe! The fleetness and surety of foot seen in the deer is mentioned often in scripture. King David, acknowledging God's help during his flight from Saul, said, "*It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hind's feet, and setteth me upon my high places*" (Ps. 18:32-33). There is no doubt that David from his childhood had witnessed the hind as she fled, climbing high upon the rocks and the hills, at the presence of man.

Do you grasp the significance of this allusion? Hind's feet are of marvelous swiftness and made to carry them over difficult places impassable to slower-footed creatures. The thought in the psalmist's mind is that of a divine endowment added to human weakness, an imparting of agility and confidence to the soul, whereby it springs up, so to speak, out of the dangers which assail it on the lower levels of life, and climbs lightly and surely to the uplands of the spirit.

Some years ago I read the story of an Englishman who visited the West of our United States, in which he related the following incident. "It was in Colorado. Riding with a small party of friends through the picturesque scenery of that mountainous state, we came to a

rugged narrow pass which presently opened into a narrow glade wherein a herd of antelopes were quietly grazing. If I remember rightly another party coming in the opposite direction rounded the farther corner of the pass at about the same moment, so that the antelope were caught, as it were, between two fires. We didn't intend to do them any harm, but should greatly have liked a closer look at them. That, however, we did not get. The instant they caught sight of us they leaped up the side of the cliff to our right hand, at an almost incredible rate of speed, following one another gracefully and apparently without effort, from point to point in the giddy ascent, making scarcely a sound as they went, till they were finally lost to view amid the towering rocks and trees far above our heads. It was all over in a minute or two, and we were filled with admiration as we watched the rapidly moving feet of the pretty little creatures springing from crag to crag. It could hardly be called climbing; they were not pulling themselves up; they jumped and stood wherever they liked, in perfect poise, and without slightest hesitation. No fear of their way being blocked! They could go where a man could not except with utmost caution and at considerable risk to his own safety. They were absolutely secure, and they knew it. Up they fled, and were gone" — end quote.

Ah, "He maketh my feet like hind's feet" — the nature of the spirit is one of lightsomeness, of spiritual sure-footedness, if I may put it that way, a power and confidence whereby we are able to escape from any menace and find our way to heights where no evil can reach to harm or destroy. That is the nature of the spirit! Soul and body are much less sure-footed, they cannot lift themselves up, and hence the "wrestling" indicated in Naphtali — the struggle we each have experienced in our efforts to identify with the ability of the Christ within instead of the weakness of the flesh. There is no struggle in the spirit, for the spirit is the one who has hind's feet, and can skip and jump over any wall or any obstacle and escape any danger! The wrestling, or struggle, is in our mind as we follow on to be "renewed in the spirit of our mind" and identify with our true identity as the new creation man — Christ.

As we experience this warfare between the flesh and the spirit, between our old identity as human beings, natural men, and our true identity as sons of God, we are caught up in the spirit at times and are able to scale the heights and consciously walk in the high places of God. But then we revert back to our human consciousness and natural understanding and descend again in our consciousness, to identify once more with the rough-and-tumble of life on the lowlands. This is part of our growth experience and development into the maturity of the Christ! And thank God, we are learning the ways of the spirit! We are coming to understand that in every extremity there is always a way up. The way of escape from the flesh, the world, the pressures of life, the fears and frustrations, the temptations and troubles, is not to try and find a *way out*, but to discover the *way up!* As we seek the presence of the Lord and draw upon the life of the Christ within, the hind's feet of the spirit within are raised up within us and by them God sets us on high!

Nothing is less able to resist the assaults of its enemies than the gentle creature here referred to as typifying the child of God. It could easily fall a prey to those that seek to harm it; it has almost no power to defend itself against them; but it has one great gift that makes it superior to them, it can make swiftly to the everlasting hills, and no natural hindrance is great enough to bar the way. Oh, the mystery of it! Are you caught like a helpless deer in a horrible pit of death? The sun has hidden its face and the sky looms dark with trouble, difficulty, problems, habits, sickness, weakness, temptation, and pressures too numerous to count; there is no way out; it is hopeless to look for an escape; all the exits are closed to human wisdom and human strength. Ah, yes, there is a way UP! There is always a way up

in every situation, however desperate! God calls you, O son, daughter of the Most High, to take the way up! You have hind's feet in *your spirit*, right there within you, in the depth of your life where the mighty Christ dwells!

Now is the time to prove the revelation God has poured into your life; now your wise heavenly Father has opened the door of opportunity to take the highest ground and deliver your soul from death! Are you afraid? Are you too weak to make the effort? Do your weary limbs refuse to work? Even now the Father is sealing you as one of the twelve thousands of Naphtali! Lay firm hold upon the mind of Christ given you, upon the mighty indwelling power of the Christ within you, and the Christ will not fail you! Look not to this preacher, nor to that ministry, nor to another's gift. God will make *your feet* like hind's feet and set you on high! Others will not tell you this. They will tell you that if you will sit under *their ministry*, eat at *their table*, join yourself to *their church*, drink from *their fountain*, and put your offering in *their offering plate*, they can lead you into Life more abundant. But I point you today only to the God who can do all. I have no ministry to promote, no church to build, no following to gather, no movement to advance, no ego to inflate. The kingdom of God is within you, and the new creation man within you HAS HIND'S FEET! Just as surely as you have nerves and muscles in your body which enable you to walk and jump and run, so you have hind's feet in your spirit and they will set you on high! That is what sonship is all about! Only look to the Christ within, try your hind's feet, get your bearings, spring up and mount to where wide horizons break before you, and shining skies surround you on the blessed table-lands of heavenly life!

This is God's new day, this is *your day* — rise up and leap upon the mountains and skip over the hills. Our Beloved says to us, as He said to the Shulamite in the long ago, "*Rise up my love, my fair one, and COME AWAY!*" Ah, the spirit within you will leap over the sin and weakness in you, He will skip over the corruption and death in you, and cause you to rise into the immortal heights of the eternal mountains of God! Methinks you have heard the sound of His voice, methinks you have been stirred in the deepest depths of your being — arise O ye sons of Naphtali and ascend into the heights of victory and glory!

MANASSEH

"Of the tribe of *Manasseh* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:6).

The name Manasseh means "*Causing me to forget.*" "And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath *made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house*" (Gen. 41:50-51). Joseph had passed through many painful experiences with his family in the land of Canaan, but now God had so blessed and exalted him that the pain had been erased from his memory. Forgetting is a wonderful mechanism! God causes us to forget all the pain of the struggles, warfare, trials, and tribulations of the journey we have traveled into the fullness of God. He causes us to forget the mistakes, the embarrassments, the weaknesses, failures, and sorrows of the flesh realm and the bondage of corruption. And He causes us to forget immediately following the wrestling in the tribe of Naphtali where finally we get our hind's feet! Isn't it wonderful!

It is a natural thing to feel bad when we miss God, when we make a wrong choice, and do the wrong thing, but we never have to feel condemned! We simply have to turn away from it and know that God loves us, He is not against us, He is not "out to get us," in fact, He

ordained the very thing which we *perceive* as a mistake or a wrong choice — He arranged it in our experience to **teach us His ways!** He always comes to help us to get up and press on in Him! Every son of God is learning this great sovereignty of our Father and His unconditional love! Oh, how hard this is to believe, and the natural mind can't believe it, but we can believe it from the deepest recesses of our being, in our spiritual man. GOD IS NOT CONDEMNING YOU! That doesn't mean He *condones* and *winks at* and *overlooks* everything we think, say, and do, but His great heart of compassion freely forgives us and rises up within us to bring forth His victory. It is only the carnal mind that falls under the accusations and the condemnation and the guilt of sin-consciousness. The carnal mind is enmity against God and always thinks God is against it! As soon as we cry out to the Lord for mercy and strength He pours His healing ointment upon us and begins to flow in us by His presence and power. He wipes all the tears from our eyes! He appoints to each of His called and chosen elect that mourn and travail in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that we might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified ((Isa. 61:3). He washes us, cleanses us, flushing away all the old Adamic consciousness of sin, guilt, fear, and condemnation, establishing within us the consciousness only of the new creation man which is created after His image.

There is a further consideration concerning this great truth of “forgetting.” Biologists have discovered that there are two tiny glands at the back of the brain of the caterpillar which secrete a growth hormone. These glands control his growth as a worm and his larval life. It is when these two glands shrivel and cease to yield their life-giving flow that the caterpillar begins to die and the butterfly begins to form. This is most enlightening when spiritually applied to *the renewing of the mind!* This is a wonderful discovery, and I cannot help but believe that these two glands figure in some mysterious and divine way the carnal mind which gives motivation to the natural man. When we apply the fact of the existence of *two glands* instead of one, we see an amazing picture of the duality of the carnal mind — the knowledge of **good and evil**, and the law of **sin and death**. If you long, dear one, to be metamorphosed into the image of the heavenly, then “PUT OFF concerning the former manner of life the OLD MAN, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND; and PUT ON the NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:22-24).

It is an amazing fact that there is an active force, the secretion of a new hormone which appears in the brain of the caterpillar at the precise time when the two glands controlling the larval life cease to function. It is this new hormone which actually causes the metamorphosis from the chrysalis stage to the butterfly. In other words, both the death of the caterpillar and the formation of the butterfly begin in the creature's **mind!** The death of the caterpillar is effected by the cessation of a hormone from two glands in the brain, and the formation of the butterfly is caused by the secretion of a new hormone from another process in the brain. In the light of these remarkable circumstances it is most significant that the apostle Paul by inspiration wrote, “Be ye transformed (metamorphosed) BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND!”

All our lifetime we have been subject to the bondage of corruption and death which is rooted in the **carnal mind**. Ah — “to be **carnally minded IS DEATH**” (Rom. 8:6). That is God's own definition of death, and according to inspiration death is IN T-H-E M-I-N-D! “It's all in your mind,” they say, and though it may be spoken in jest, it is a wondrous and divine truth, nonetheless. In the same chapter a truth is introduced showing that the transformation of the body begins with the renewing of the mind, for, says the apostle, “to be

spiritually minded IS LIFE..." (Rom. 8:6). Ah — life, also, is in the MIND! And he continues,, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES **BY HIS SPIRIT WHICH DWELLETH IN YOU**" (Rom. 8:11).

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

Mind means thought, intellect, reason, sense, thinking principle. Thought is thinking! The *renewing of the mind* means the renovation, reconstitution, *reprogramming*, of our thought patterns and processes. The old mind, carnal and human as it is, is always thinking thoughts of sin and death! It leaves us mortal, corruptible, and unchanged. The new mind is the mind of Christ! To have the mind of Christ means to assume the identity of Christ, for the mind of Christ knows that it IS CHRIST. My natural mind knows that I am the flesh and blood man J. Preston Eby with all his human condition. My spiritual mind, however, knows that I am Christ, that is my true identity, for it is not I, but Christ who lives in me! The mind of Christ is the intellect, the thought patterns, the thinking principles of Him who has conquered within Himself both sin and death and abides forever in the life and immortality of the celestial! The mind of Christ is a transforming mind! It renews not only the mind, but the whole being and identity as well — soul and body. Our minds, our thinking, is being raised from the level of the natural, carnal, earth-bound minds we were born with, and is being *spiritualized*. This is not an instant change, it is not attained with one grand leap, but a continuous renewal as we hear the voice of the Spirit as He unfolds within us the mind and thoughts of God. These are thoughts of love, of righteousness, of life and light and power and incorruption and glory which transform us into the very image of God! As we wait in holy reverence in our heavenly Father's divine presence He teaches us how to think out of our divinity instead of our humanity! When we think like God we act like God. When we act like God we become like God. When we become like God we are the *sons of God*. It is indeed wonderful!

Paul speaks not only of the "spirit of life" but also the "*law of the spirit of life.*" He says that the *law of the spirit of life* is *in Christ Jesus* (Rom. 8:2). The law of the spirit means the nature, consciousness, and function of the spirit. It is the *way the spirit is!* Every life has a certain nature, consciousness, and function. The higher the life, the loftier its nature, consciousness, and function. For example, our youngest son, in his teen years, was a lover of hamsters. He had a hamster which from the time of its birth had never eaten anything but hamster food. One day he gave it an insect. Immediately, the hamster bit off the insect's head and then proceeded to eat it. Now this unique action of biting off the insect's head

before eating it is a feature of the “instinct” of the animal. It is in his nature, a part of his innate consciousness. Though you breed countless generations of hamsters, and not one of them ever sees an insect, the moment you give one of those distant descendants an insect he will promptly bite off its head and then eat it. He requires no training whatever! This is the LAW of its life — its inherent nature, consciousness, and function. Nature abounds with millions of examples of this *law of life-consciousness*. Everything is what it is and acts as it acts out of its CONSCIOUSNESS!

The life of our spirit is the life of God Himself, which is the highest life form in the universe! Therefore, it is the richest in consciousness! The life within us, when quickened (activated) by regeneration, causes us to be full of divine consciousness, and this consciousness is the consciousness of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE. The law of life within us is this consciousness. So — as we put off the carnal mind which is filled with the consciousness of sin and death, and are renewed in our mind into the mind of Christ which is the consciousness of righteousness and life, our spirit, soul, and body will become infused with not only the life of God, but also with the *law* of divine life, and we will walk in righteousness instead of sin — and we will think the thoughts of incorruption and immortal life instead of corruption and death!

As soon as we are regenerated and are awakened to the life of God within, this law of life produces within us divine consciousness. Our responsibility is to obey this newly activated law of life, thus thinking and acting out of the consciousness of life rather than death. In the beginning, the consciousness of this law of life may be comparatively weak and infrequent. Yet — as we learn to obey the very first impulses of this law of life, though it be weak, the consciousness following will become stronger and stronger. In this way the law of life can work within us in ever-increasing measures and power until it reaches every part of our whole being. In this way the life within us is enabled to expand outward and increase in depth and height until all corruption is swallowed up into life in every fiber of our being! This is Christ raised up in us in the power and glory of His sonship!

Few believe that the spiritual body can be put on here and now even as we stand upon our feet. Do you? Can you believe it is possible for you to be changed, transformed, metamorphosed in your whole man here in this life? And, since you cannot by any natural process perform this for yourself, are you willing and ready to come under the deep secret law of letting the mind of Christ *cancel out the carnal mind*, of letting the law of life *nullify the law of sin and death* in the secret chambers of your consciousness? Within the cramped cocoon which swings through the winter gale on the branch of a tree, a mighty transformation is taking place! Be still — all of a sudden the shell cracks, the cocoon gives way, the folded form stretches itself out of its cramped position, and limbers itself up with joy. In its new consciousness it does naturally what it has never done before, the former things have passed away, and with them all their limitations. The worm can fly! It is the law of its life! And the law of your life, precious friend of mine, is to know and live and demonstrate the full capacity of HIM who is within you THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE!

Now here is the mystery of it all. The butterfly has been caused to **forget** that it was ever a caterpillar! God causes us to forget! The Adamic mind and nature is being put off by the *renewing of our mind!* The day is coming, my beloved, when we will no more remember when it was or what it was like to walk in the old human consciousness of the natural man, any more than the caterpillar can remember once being a worm. Little by little and day by day God is causing us to **forget** the things which are behind and to press forward into the

glory that lies before! Oh, yes! This is what happens when we are sealed in the tribe of Manasseh — it is there that our mind is renewed and we are caused to **forget!** That is the spiritual characteristic of the tribe of Manasseh. Isn't it wonderful!

SIMEON

“Of the tribe of *Simeon* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:7).

Simeon was the second son born to Israel and Leah. The name Simeon is related to the Hebrew word for “*hear*,” denoting one who has a *hearing ear*. Leah gave him this name because of the thankfulness in her heart to the Lord expressed at his birth, “And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said, Because the Lord hath *heard* that I was hated, He hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon” (Gen. 29:33). God *heard* Leah’s prayer, and now Leah prophetically bestows that faculty of *spiritual hearing* upon her son! As soon as we begin to “forget” our old, carnal, worldly, and religious life of the past by the spiritual experience of the tribe of Manasseh, we are now ready to truly HEAR the voice of our Father in all that He will reveal unto us!

I am reminded of the story of the two old Dutchmen, sitting on a park bench. The night had come and the moon started to shine. Not far from the bench where they sat, a river flowed, and from the river came the chorus of the crickets. Pete, the first old gentleman, listened to the crickets and said, “Crickets sure do sing.” John sitting next to him agreed, saying, “Yep, they sure know how to sing.” Just then he heard the voices of the choir coming from the nearby church and remarked, “Beautiful music, isn’t it?” Pete said, “Yeah, and to think they do it just by rubbing their legs together!”

Each heard a different music — one was listening to the crickets and one was listening to the choir. What you hear depends upon where you’re coming from and what you’re tuned in to. Sometimes you meet one that is religious, awed by the crowds, the buildings, the great meetings, the charismatic speakers, the beautiful television programs, the music, and the wonderful works supposedly being done. They feel they are “rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” They can talk much of the milk of the Word, their spiritual gifts and religious toys. But they know nothing of the present truth of His gathering to Himself a remnant to bring them into His perfections. They are well versed in the traditional doctrines about the antichrist and the so-called rapture, but they know naught of the mighty move of God in the earth today preparing a firstfruit company of Kings and Priests to ascend the throne, reign over the nations, and bring the kingdom of God to pass in all the earth. You cannot begin to speak of the deep mysteries of the kingdom, or of those divine quickenings which the Holy Spirit of truth has whispered into your being, for they have no ears to hear them. Were you to declare the things we are hearing from our Father in the churches of our day, they would demand your silence or escort you to the door. Their eyes are closed against the bright vision of that which lies before at the manifestation of the sons of God and the consummation of God’s great plan of the ages. They are dull to the knowledge of the Spirit’s working in this hour in His elect. But, blessed be God, there is a people whose ears have been touched by the finger of God, a holy race of sons of God who are being quickened to hear THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD who speaks from the throne of the heavenlies!

Shortly after becoming king in Israel, Solomon traveled to Gibeon to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Here the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Ask what I shall give you.” Though grateful to the Lord for having chosen him to succeed his father David, Solomon

was keenly aware of his inadequacy to govern the people without divine help. “Give Thy servant therefore,” he implored, “an *understanding heart* to govern Thy people, that I may discern between the good and the evil.” Pleased by such a request, the Lord replied, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for long life, or for riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to recognize what is just and right, behold...I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings equal to you all your days” (I Kings 3:11-13). The expression “an understanding heart” is in the Hebrew text A HEARING HEART. And in Isaiah 50:4-5 we read of the inner discipline which Jesus and all the elect sons experience. “Morning by morning He (the Father) wakens, HE WAKENS MY EAR TO HEAR as those that are willing to be taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious...”

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

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

The sons of God, the mature ones, are coming to the place where they unmistakably *know His voice*. There is a *listening* to hear the sound thereof, a receptivity within, and a responsiveness to follow in obedience. He is teaching us secret, wondrous things out of His law! It is a precious walk, a communion that sustains and enriches us day by day. This is the blessing of Simeon — the Father is *sealing us with a hearing ear!*

Chapter 100

The Sealing Of The 144,000

continued

The book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and like everything else in this book the twelve literal tribes of Israel are used as *symbols*. The names of the tribes are *character names*, and the order in which they are arranged reveal the twelve spiritual character traits which the elect of God progressively experience as we put on the mind of Christ and grow up into the maturity of His nature. These bespeak of *twelve steps* in our spiritual growth and development, each step representing a new level of attainment of the life, glory, authority, and power of God until we find ourselves seated with Him in His throne. Twelve is the number of *divine government*, therefore these twelve steps bring us to the throne of God's kingdom to govern the world in righteousness and reign with Christ over all things! Each experience is greater than the preceding one! Each step spiritually through the tribes brings us closer to the incorruptible nature and immortal life, and the authority and dominion of the throne! In previous articles we have looked at the first seven of the tribes and now will proceed on to the eighth — the tribe of Levi.

LEVI

"Of the tribe of *Levi* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:7).

The author of the Old Testament book of Joshua takes great pains to let his readers know that all the twelve tribes of Israel received their lawful portion, or *inheritance*, in the land of promise. But the token of inheritance for the tribe of Levi differed from that of the other tribes. Levi had shown great zeal for the Lord at the time of Israel's sin with the golden calf at mount Sinai. For this the tribe was given a special reward! It was entitled to live off the offerings brought to the Lord's altar. It did not receive an inheritance of land. Its blessing was even greater: the Lord, *very directly*, was Himself Levi's inheritance! Therefore He took care of them without their tilling the land. The tribe of Levi with its special form of inheritance was a constant reminder to the rest of Israel that their portion of land was important because it was the Lord that gave it to them. He was its true owner. Yet for Levi, *the Lord Himself was their inheritance!* They served at His tabernacle and at His altar in His presence, and were also fed and provided for from that altar!

Levi is the *eighth* tribe revealed to us by the Spirit, representing to us the spiritual characteristics inworked into the life of every son of God. The name means "joined" or "*union*" and reveals to us the great truth that as we truly "hear" the voice of the Son of God within in the tribe of Simeon, we are then strengthened and enabled to move on to the tribe of Levi where we begin to live out of a sense of *oneness* rather than out of a consciousness of *duality*. Jesus came to *reconcile* men to God and to *restore* all things to their proper order — into the conscious awareness of *union in Him!* Some teach that the only separation from God that exists has been in man's consciousness — we have only *imagined* and *thought* we

were separated. There is an element of truth in that, but it is not the **whole truth**. The whole truth runs much deeper! Let us UNDERSTAND!

UNION OF SOUL AND SPIRIT

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH; go ye out to MEET (enter into union with) HIM" (Mat. 25:6). "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor unto Him: for the MARRIAGE (UNION) OF THE LAMB IS COME, and His WIFE hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

The revelation of Christ as the Bridegroom permeates His teaching and His parables and suggests the grand truth to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see. More than once He refers to Himself in His utterances as the Bridegroom. The solemn midnight cry raised by an expectant throng is, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," and they that are ready are represented as accompanying Him to the marriage. Whatever else the "virgins" may represent, the scene points unerringly to "the marriage" which brings the Bridegroom and the bride into their ultimate *union*. And He suggests the true purpose of all God's dealings with man in the parable of the wedding feast, whose opening words declare that "a certain king made a *marriage* for his son."

The cry was, "Behold the Bridegroom!" This addresses the heart. It is not an historical event. It is a *spiritual experience!* The coming of the Bridegroom is that revelation of the Christ that causes us to know that we are *united to Him*; it is the conscious knowledge and the experiential reality. We cannot understand the relationship of the bride with the Bridegroom until we know UNION. We cannot be in that particular concert with Christ which the name bride expresses until we yield ourselves to be made ONE IN HIM. And this is not something which happens someday when Jesus comes crashing down through the clouds. Oh, no! This is a present reality! When I know that I am united with the Christ I am so identified with His name, His person, His presence, His life, and His interests that they are paramount with me. Few know it! A wife is one who has reached maturity, one who has given herself in a mature relationship completely and unreservedly for her lover, one who has lost her own name, residence, individuality, and identity to take his. She has left all to follow him! The result of such a union is described by the inspired apostle in these words: "...that we should be married to another, even to HIM who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).

It was to the church which is His body that Paul wrote, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be *joined* unto his wife, and they two shall be *one flesh*. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning CHRIST AND THE CHURCH" (Eph. 5:31-32). It was also to the saints that Paul addressed these significant words, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be *married to another*, even to HIM who is raised from the dead..." (Rom. 7:4). Again it was to the elect of the Lord that Paul explained, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have *espoused you* to ONE HUSBAND, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to CHRIST" (II Cor. 11:2).

In our consideration of the Bridegroom and the bride we need to remember that first of all these precious realities are fulfilled in us personally! Christ is not just in some far-off heaven somewhere; for us He is our life and our hope of glory, and it is CHRIST IN YOU. This is a phrase of inexhaustible wonder — "Christ *in you*." I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME" (Gal. 2:20). "For He abideth with you, and

SHALL BE IN YOU" (Jn. 14:17). "He shall be IN you." In these simple words our Lord announces that wonderful mystery of His indwelling which was to be the fruit and the crown of His redeeming work. It was for this that man had been created! It was for this, God's incarnation in the flesh, that the Spirit had revealed God unto men! It was for this that Jesus had lived and was about to die. Dwelling in them, He would prepare them to receive Himself as their true life and identity — as Bridegroom! We will never understand the deep mystery of the Bridegroom and the bride until we know that Christ is the Bridegroom and that Christ *lives in us*. All who give godly consideration to these simple truths cannot avoid the conclusion that the BRIDEGROOM IS WITHIN US. There is deep within the inner sanctum of each of us a place where the Bridegroom dwells and He comes out of that place and woos us into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Himself!

Suppose someone wants to visit me. He must first find where I live! If he cannot locate my home, he will have to forfeit his visit. Although there is much talk about Christ living in us, the vast majority of Christians have absolutely no idea *where it is* that He dwells in us! If you know that I live in El Paso but you don't know *where* in El Paso I dwell, you may never find me. We can never know Christ the bridegroom, or union with Him, until first we know *where He dwells!* A wonderful clue is found in these words, "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you...and if Christ be in you, the *body is dead*...but the *spirit is life*" (Rom. 8:9-10). Romans 8:9 refers without doubt to the Holy Spirit of God, but verse 10 refers to the human spirit. "The *body is dead*...but the *spirit is life*." Of course, the Holy Spirit cannot be compared with our body. The contrast is between what is true in OUR BODY and what is true in OUR SPIRIT. If Christ is in us our body (the earth man) is dead, but our spirit (the new man) is life, quickened and energized by HIS INDWELLING LIFE!

Ah — Christ is in us, but where within us is He? In what part? What is His address? It is abundantly clear — Christ today is in our spirit! There is no need to be vague like many who say, "Oh, the Lord is in you and the Lord is in me." The Holy Spirit has definitely revealed that Christ is in our spirit. "The Lord be with thy spirit" (II Tim. 4:22). 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 elect — 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 is swallowed up into His. "There is ONE SPIRIT," says the apostle. That one spirit is neither the Holy Spirit nor our spirit — it is His Spirit *joined* to our spirit — for "He that is *joined to the Lord I-S O-N-E S-P-I-R-I-T!*"

It is a blessed day for any man when he makes the amazing discovery that Christ Himself is the Bridegroom; that this Christ is in our spirit; that the Bridegroom is thus in our spirit, His place of residence; that the coming of the Bridegroom is WITHIN! It should be obvious to every spiritually thinking mind that if the Bridegroom is within, the bride is likewise to be found within! Marriage is the conjunction of two into one. When these two enter into union, they are called one. It is no longer Miss Jones and Mr. Brown; it now Mr. And Mrs. Brown. There is, therefore, a part of our being which must be wooed by Christ in our spirit and brought into relationship and oneness in Him. Bride in Hebrew is *kallah* meaning "the completed one" or "the perfected one." It reveals the concept of a woman being completed once she is married to her husband — and, as Paul so beautifully expresses it, "YE are complete IN HIM!" In order to identify this bride within we must understand what part of us it is that must be perfected. The bride is a woman, a female. THE BRIDE IS THE FEMALE PART OF YOU! Your *soul* is the female part of your being; therefore your soul is the woman or the bride of Christ who is in your spirit. For a clear picture of this truth I now call your attention to the awe-inspiring wonder of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden!

The story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden is the greatest parable in the Bible. I do not mean by that that there was no literalness to the garden or to Adam and Eve in it, for literal things always serve as *parables of spiritual realities!* The record of Adam and Eve in the Garden is supremely important because it explains the real nature of our life here on earth. It tells us about ourselves, it portrays in vivid imagery our true state of being, our testings, our fall and redemption, and our destiny in God. It is the blueprint of spiritual anatomy. Once we thoroughly understand Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden we then understand the nature of God, the nature of man, and the ground-plan for the outworking of the purposes of God through the ages. There is one thing about which the Lord's people must be perfectly clear. The Bible is not primarily intended to teach history, or biography, or geography, or natural science. It is intended to teach **divine principles and spiritual realities!**

On a day in the long ago the inspired apostle Paul penned these telling words: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a **chaste virgin to Christ**. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent **beguiled Eve** through his subtlety, so **your minds** should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:2-3). In this significant passage Eve in the garden of Eden is contrasted with two things: the *bride of Christ* and the *mind*. The mind is a function of the *soul!* The four-fold function of the soul is in the *mind*, the *will*, the *emotion*, and the *desire*. It was in the soul that Eve was beguiled. The vision of the bride of Christ pervades the whole of scripture, from Eden onward, with ever-increasing clearness. Eve, the mother of the human family, is the first type of this great mystery. Let us not underestimate this remarkable woman from whom the whole human race has sprung!

In that ancient shadow Adam stands as a type of the spirit, Eve is a type of the soul, and the garden of Eden serves as a type of the body where both dwell, which Adam was to "dress and keep." Thus we see our tri-partite being symbolically portrayed in the Adam-Eve-Garden story! The Garden was the earth, the land, the locale; and Adam and Eve were its inhabitants, in the same way that our spirit and soul are the inhabitants of the physical body. It is through our "Eve," our soulful faculties of mind, will, emotion, and desire, that we who have been espoused to Christ the Bridegroom in our spirit, can be "beguiled" and turned from our single and pure devotion to Christ, entering instead into intimate but illicit associations with the flesh, and the fleshly systems of the world and religious Babylon, thus disqualifying ourselves from being presented to Christ as a pure and holy virgin. Paul shows that just as Eve was beguiled from her singleness to God and her husband, so those espoused to Christ can be corrupted **in their minds** from their singleness to Christ in our spirit.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the *marriage of the Lamb is come*, and His *wife* hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). When God created man in His own image he was ONE, not separated in the beginning into two persons. Thus he remained until the Lord separated the feminine from the masculine, making Adam and Eve, man and woman, to exist separately. Within the one man's nature were both masculine and feminine elements, all the possibilities of both male and female, all the potential of fruit and power, wisdom and love, strength and nurture. This spiritual man, being a son of God, possessed that perfect chaste virgin **within himself** and could have replenished the whole earth with his kind in God's image by a word of power!

It was not the burning self-desire of Adam that caused Eve to come forth, but the purpose of God! It was God Himself that initiated the whole process, for the record states, "And the

LORD GOD said, It is *not good* for the man to be alone; I WILL MAKE Him an *help meet* for him" (Gen. 2:18). Eve was God's idea! "Meet" in the expression "help meet" is an old English word meaning "suitable, fit, proper." The whole flavor of the word "meet" is to fit, join, agree, be in union, be together. No hostility here! No war between the sexes! And no division. God made a helper to properly and suitably fit, join, combine, agree, be in union with, yes, to be ONE with Adam, and he ONE with her!

When Eve had been built by the skillful hand of the Creator we read that He "brought her unto the man" (Gen. 2:22). I cannot conceive of anything more exquisite and meaningful than that beautiful type! I say to every soul reading these lines, Have you been brought to Christ where Christ is? If you do not know union with Christ in your spirit, you will never know union with Him in the sky nor in any heaven anywhere in all God's vast universe. And know this, oh man, you cannot become "spiritual" by any self-effort! Many seek to be spiritual by *doing something*: by prayer, reading the Word, devotedness, keeping the commandments, paying tithe, doing good works, keeping the traditions, attending meetings; but spirituality is not to be found in any of those things! The only pathway to spirituality is to be **brought by the Spirit to realize union with Christ!** One can only be *spirit-ual* by union with *spirit!* Union! What was Eve's thought when her eyes first rested upon Adam? I doubt not that she was completely overwhelmed, truly *fell in love at first sight*, was immediately drawn by irresistible cords of love and passionate desire to find *union* with him!

The allegory of lover and beloved, bride and groom, marriage and union, gives to us the highest example of the *oneness* which we desire to share with Christ, which we seek within ourselves, the union of our soul with our spirit. We are weary of the sense of duality and separation! We are frustrated with the unending warfare between the flesh and the spirit! We are tired of speaking in tongues one minute and flying off the handle the next! From the time we were awakened to Christ in our spirit we have struggled with this dualness — our mind often pulled in the direction of the flesh, while yet our soul truly *yearns* for that life from above which alone would satisfy. Thank God! The spirit of Christ within is gaining the ascendancy as He woos the soul and the soul becomes more and more subdued. But the prayer remains, "that they all may be ONE..."

Long millenniums ago the aged prophet-king of Israel articulated the deepest cry of the soul-bride for her beloved, saying, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth **my soul** after **Thee**, O God. My **soul** thirsteth for **God**, for the living God..." (Ps. 42:1-2). As a woman yearns for union with her husband, so the soul longs for reunion with Christ. The natural mind cannot comprehend what fearful loss befell the man in Eden when the woman was severed from him. All the female qualities of tenderness, patience, long-suffering, intuition, nurturing, gentleness, submissiveness, and succor were separated from his bosom and embodied in Eve. But consider also what the woman lost in strength, wisdom, courage, bravery, energy, stamina, and much more. Nature has created the fundamental urge of every human being for re-union with its counterpart — to find itself again in WHOLENESS. This complement of the sexes one with the other, and the need for union to find wholeness and experience fulfillment, is the greatest proof that the Genesis record of how the woman was taken out of the man is absolutely true and reliable! Just as there is the natural drive for union with the opposite sex, there is also within the soul the intense thirsting for union with God! The truth is, this urge exists not only within the soul — it is just as powerful in the spirit! This is the meaning of the mystery of "the way of a man with a maid," the mystery that every human being, male and female, goes through a "mating season." We call it dating, courtship, and engagement! In the natural, it is the man who courts the woman and is the aggressor. It is most often the boy who chases the girl! The

bride of Christ (the soul) has now entered a great "mating season" of reunion with God. In His appointed times the Christ within our spirit initiates the courting in His own subtle yet divine way as He woos the soul, drawing our desires and affections unto Himself. There is to be a unification within, so that all our soul realm is swallowed up into the life of the indwelling spirit of Christ, bringing us eventually into the personal experience of THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB!

It is a great blessing to our hearts to understand the true order of *union* in the kingdom of God. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He **him**; *male and female* created He **them**. And God blessed **them**, and God said unto **them**, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue it**; and **have dominion over** every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:27-28). My reader will observe the change from "him" to "them." We are not presented with the actual fact of the formation of the woman until chapter two; but even here we find God blessing "them," and giving "them" JOINTLY THE POSITION OF UNIVERSAL GOVERNMENT. All the inferior orders of creation were set under their JOINT DOMINION. As Andrew Jukes has somewhere pointed out, Eve received all her blessings in Adam: in him, too, she got her dignity and position and power. Though not yet called into her individual identity, she was, in the purpose of God, looked at as part of the man. Universal dominion was not given to the male characteristics of Adam alone; it was not said, "let **him** have dominion," but "let **them** have dominion!" There was no other creature so near to Adam and Eve, because no other creature was part of himself. What affection Eve had for Adam! What nearness she enjoyed! What intimacy of communion! What full participation in his thoughts and in all his powers! In all his dignity, and in all his glory, wisdom, and authority, she was entirely **one**! He did not rule *over* her, but *with* her. He was lord of the whole creation, and she was ONE WITH HIM! They were the king and queen of the universe!

There is neither time nor space to consider the myriad ghastly consequences of the fall of man, but I would draw your attention to one disastrous result. The curses reaped **caused the inequality between the sexes** so prominent in the human family. The beauty and equality of man and woman in the garden of Eden disappeared. Strife, guilt, shame, discord, competition, and pain took over — the way of the flesh held sway! This bespeaks of the separation of *soul* and *spirit* within ourselves, making every man indeed *bi-polar*! And this is the re-union God is effecting in the experience of every son of God! The wonderful goal is not just our will, our mind, our emotions, and our desires *submitted* to Christ in our spirit, but for our will, our mind, our emotions, our desires to be made so ONE IN HIM until there is only ONE MIND, ONE WILL, ONE EMOTION, ONE DESIRE — the marriage union restoring **one new creature** — Christ and us, spirit and soul — **UNITED IN ONE! It is not His mind controlling** our mind, but just *one new mind*! It is more than a "fill me" with more of God, but a being swallowed up into Him, that henceforth it is only the **GOD-MAN**! This is the perfect man, the image of God, male and female, spirit and soul dwelling in unity and oneness in the Garden of the redeemed body, united in one, given dominion over all things. Oh, the mystery of it!

What a glorious experience the tribe of Levi brings to us! As I pointed out in the beginning of these thoughts, Levi means "joined" or "union." As we progress from tribe to tribe we are brought into this wonderful reality of the restoration of all things within ourselves. Only as this restoration is fully accomplished in our lives are we made whole, mature, balanced, holy, wise, compassionate, merciful, strong, powerful, and glorious as new creation men, the sons of God, kings and priests upon the throne! One can be "saved" without experientially appropriating the spiritual characteristics of all the twelve tribes of Israel. One

can be baptized in the Holy Spirit, speak with tongues, get answers to prayer, move in gifts of the Spirit, live a good Christian life, and die and go to heaven without experiencing within the full restoration of all the spiritual characteristics of the twelve tribes of Israel. BUT ONE CANNOT BE A MANIFEST SON OF GOD WITHOUT APPROPRIATING AND EXPERIENCING THEM ALL! That is the true meaning of the 144,000 sealed ones!

ISSACHAR

"Of the tribe of *Issachar* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:7).

Issachar means "*hire*," "*wages*," or "*compensation*," and he was given this name because of his mother's exclamation at his birth, "And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me *my hire*, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar" (Gen. 30:17-18). When Leah gave birth to this goodly son she felt that the Lord had *paid her* or *recompensed her* for her service and obedience to Him. She was indeed *blessed!* Issachar received a rich and beautiful inheritance in the land of Israel, the fertile eastern end of the Jezreel Valley. His boundary on the north was mount Tabor and on the south mount Gilboa. The men of this tribe were known to be valiant men of might in all their families, and in all their generations. It appears that they were a laborious, hardy, valiant tribe, patient in labor and invincible in war. Can we not see by this that Leah was indeed *blessed* with a son who was also *blessed!*

In the spirit Issachar stands as a representation of the bountiful blessing of God that comes upon every obedient son. The apostle Paul in writing to the Ephesians made this wonderful statement, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath *blessed us* with all *spiritual blessings* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:3). The source of all blessing is our heavenly Father who *is spirit!* This includes all temporal as well as all spiritual blessings! However, in this beautiful passage, the blessings are not temporal, physical, natural blessings for the outer earth-man, but SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS for the inner new-creation-man. These blessings are not received in El Paso, Dallas, Tulsa, or any other city or place on earth — they are experienced only ***in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!*** These are realities, graces, and powers communicated from the person and glory of THE ASCENDED CHRIST! They are ***from Him*** and out of the high and holy ***realm in which he dwells!*** In the phrase "heavenly places" the word "places" is supplied by the translators — the Greek meaning is ***in the heavenlies*** or in the ***higher than heavenlies***. It is not a place anywhere in the universe, but a dimension in the spirit! The thought is that the spiritual blessings of God have their source and substance in the highest spiritual realms and are ministered to the Lord's elect from thence. This glorious realm is the realm of *incorruption*, *life*, and *power* which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sorrow, sickness, and death!

The blessings most sought after by believers are not those of which Paul here speaks, but mere blessings of the *corruptible realm* of earth such as healing and health for the body, financial prosperity, jobs, houses, lands, food, automobiles, relationships, solution to problems, multiplied daily needs, and a thousand more *earthly things*. It is remarkable that during the three and a half years of Jesus' earthly ministry, being found in fashion as a man, limited by the realm of the physical and mortal to which He subjected Himself for our sake, He never performed one act, not even one miracle, sign, or wonder on the spiritual plane of *incorruption*. Every miracle performed by our Lord was for the earth-man as He raised dead bodies, cleansed lepers, made the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and

healing every manner of sickness and disease among the people. He walked on water, turned water into wine, and fed thousands from five small loaves and two fish. It was excellent wine, and delicious bread and fish, but, nevertheless, just physical, material, and earthly, supplying strength for a few hours to the mortal man and then cast out into the draught. Nothing incorruptible or heavenly there! And nothing for the INNER MAN!

But once Christ came forth in the power of resurrection and immortality, once He ascended on high, He ministers now from a higher and more glorious realm, and now, as on the day of Pentecost, there *comes from heaven* something greater far than that which blesses the outer man, the spirit of the glorified Jesus has been outpoured that we might be **born from above** and made partakers of the **divine nature!** Truly He has raised us up within ourselves, in both consciousness and state of being, and "made us sit together in THE HEAVENLIES" It is here, in the heavenlies, that He blesses us with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in Christ; blessings of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, of joy and peace, of love and faith, of grace and glory, of might and power, of the mind of Christ and the image of God! What surpassing blessings are these! The earthly, temporal blessings are first experienced when we are spiritual babes, but the spiritual, heavenly blessings are reserved for *sons!* Reading the verses where Paul speaks of these spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, we notice that he follows immediately with these words, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestinated us unto **placement as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself..."(Eph. 1:4-5). One will know he is moving into **sonship** when, in all his asking, he asks most often for SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS instead of PHYSICAL BLESSINGS!

Only the *spiritual blessings* are able to deliver both us and all creation from the bondage of corruption! Only the omnipotent power of God can deliver this sin and death-cursed world from self, ignorance, sickness, limitation, sin, and death! I do not hesitate to tell you that the world has not yet witnessed the power of God on the level of *incorruption!* As our Lord did after His resurrection, so will the sons of God do. We will be in glorified bodies and we will belong to the heavenly world, but we will appear and take part in earthly life and show forth the fullness of the power and glory of His resurrection right here on earth! This is Christ coming to be revealed in **the fullness of Himself** among all peoples and before all nations! Our Lord's life on earth after His resurrection gives us an illustration of what resurrection life ultimately means. Only resurrection life and power is the **fullness of sonship!** "And declared to be the **son of God with power...BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD**" (Rom. 1:4). "Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the **adoption (placement as sons), to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY**" (Rom. 8:23).

Following His resurrection Jesus was in a place simply by *willing* to be there, regardless of space, time, or material obstructions. He had access to the heavenly spiritual realms and to the earthly dimensions as well. He was truly *trans-dimensional!* This is the destiny of all the sons of God! Since this is the truth concerning the resurrection of the firstborn son of God, it follows that this is the glory that shall be manifested when all the sons of God are glorified. Furthermore, the glory of the Lord to be manifested on this earth when all the sons of God are transformed and glorified shall be much more magnificent than it was when Jesus was glorified. Jesus was glorified to *ascend* and pour out the *firstfruits* of the Spirit; the sons of God shall be glorified to express *in the earth* the *fullness* of the Spirit and to deliver all creation from the bondage of corruption! This is the clear and plain revelation of the gospel!

Although the glory of the Lord revealed and manifested when Jesus was glorified was awesome, there is a glory coming that shall be greater by far! For it shall not be just one son glorified, but *many sons brought to glory!* The whole creation is standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons glorified and manifested! Every created thing is waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the family of God. Deliverance from corruption means the abolition of both sin and death — resurrection life and the nature of God expressed through everyone and everything! Oh, the wonder of it! Imagine the glory to be revealed when all the sons of God are transformed and glorified! And not to ascend to heaven in a cloud, but to minister deliverance, transformation, and glory to the whole creation! Truly this is the promised "coming" or "revelation" of our Lord Jesus Christ! That great event will be the transformation and glorification of the entire body of Christ, resulting in a ministry of such magnitude as to deliver all creation from the tyranny of carnality, decay, and death, into the glorious liberty and victory of the very sons of God. And what a triumphant victory that shall be!

When the manifest sons of God go forth it will be unlike any ministry you have ever witnessed or read about in church history! All revivals of former days and ages will pale before the glory of the manifestation of God through His sons. When the glorified sons of God appear even to one individual, be that individual a bag lady, street drunk, store clerk, drug lord, college professor, corporate CEO, or the president or prime minister of a nation, when a manifest son appears and speaks to that person or lays his hand upon him, there will be the appearance of the revelation of the Lord such as came to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Oh, yes! The power of the Highest will come upon that man, woman, or child with irresistible glory. In the presence of Him whose countenance is as the sun, a shudder will pass through their body, they will tremble uncontrollably, weep and become instantly and completely broken before the presence of the Lord, and the veil will be removed from off their mind and heart. There will be no need for a meeting, no need for a worship service, no need for a sermon, no necessity to "bring them to a decision," for the power of God shall illuminate, cleanse, and transform them, "down loading" as it were, a new mind, a new heart, and a new nature into the very fabric and core of their being. I am thoroughly convinced in my spirit, and I believe I have the Spirit of God, that just as God saved Saul of Tarsus in a moment of time, by the sovereign revelation of the Lord, so shall He reveal Himself to all men causing them to be *born again!* Their eyes will be opened to the glories of His kingdom just as they once were open in lovely Eden. Jesus came to bring life to the world! This is the life that will flow out through the sons of God! Oh, think of what it means! God gave this life for the redemption of Adam's race and man's transformation into the image and glory of God. Creation is waiting, waiting, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! Though we have had twenty centuries of preaching and ministry, after the old carnal order of the church systems of man, creation waits still and the world is shrouded in spiritual darkness. The old-order methods of the church systems can never deliver the creation from the *bondage of corruption, never,* I say, in a million years! After two thousand years of church ministry more people are dying without Christ and without hope than ever before in the history of the world! There must be a change, a drastic change, a radical change, a new ministry, a greater glory, something unprecedented and transcendental — **the power of the kingdom of God!**

In vain the mind seeks to understand the process by which all men can be irreversibly changed, converted, delivered, made alive, and transformed into the image of God. Yet the simple truth is that all that is needed to accomplish such a thing is an outflowing of the OMNIPOTENT POWER OF LIFE! For this very thing God is preparing His sons! And I tell you today by the word of the Lord that there shall be a dispensation of **omnipotent**

incorruptible life into the being of every called and chosen son of God! It is in the spiritual attainment of the tribe of Issachar that we shall ***receive our wages*** — we shall be recompensed for our unfaltering obedience and willing and total submission to every dealing of the Father in this walk of sonship to God! Our Father's remuneration shall be His overflowing supply of divine wisdom, love, incorruptible glory, omnipotent power and authority to fulfill the sonship ministry! We know for certain that we can't change the order, alter the course of history, abolish the multitude of false philosophies and religions, subdue the nations, deliver creation, and bring the kingdom of God to pass in all the earth by any of the tired old methods of the past. GOD MUST DO A NEW THING! GOD MUST IMPART TO US A MORE EXCELLENT GLORY! GOD MUST USHER US INTO A NEW REALM! HE MUST RAISE UP WITHIN US A NEW WISDOM AND A POWER WE HAVE NEVER HAD BEFORE! In the tribe of Issachar, where we receive the recompense of our obedience, we have truly come to the kingdom for such a time as this!

ZEBULUN

"Of the tribe of *Zebulun* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:8).

The next tribe listed after the order of the Spirit is Zebulun. Zebulun means "*dwelling, habitation.*" Can you not see the mystery? As we progress from tribe to tribe there is an ascending scale of spiritual growth, experience, and development moving us along from step to step, from dealing to dealing, from accomplishment to accomplishment, and from attainment to attainment. God continuously and increasingly floods our hearts with light, understanding, glory, reality, and power! In the tribe of Judah (to be a praise) we receive the revelation and call to sonship. In Reuben (behold a son!) the life of sonship appears and begins to be raised up within us. In Gad (a troop) we learn spiritual warfare by which we begin to overcome. In Asher (happy) we are flooded with the overwhelming joy of the kingdom of God — unaffected, indestructible joy and confidence. In Naphtali (wrestling) we are given hind's feet to ascend into the high places of the Spirit in overcoming victory. In Manasseh (causing to forget) we are transformed by the renewing of our mind. In Simeon (hearing) the revelation of God's truth and purpose in us comes into focus with great clarity as we truly "hear" what the Father is saying to us. In Levi (joining, union) there is the marriage of soul and spirit within, restoring us into singleness, oneness, and wholeness in union with Christ — man as man was meant to be. In Issachar (payment, compensation) we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places, endued and empowered with all that is needed to fulfill the sonship ministry — all the fullness of God!

Now we come to Zebulun (dwelling, habitation) where we no longer just "receive" things from God, but at last we *enter into* the high calling of God, granted an abundance entrance into the kingdom of God, to remain, abide, and dwell in the Father's house of sons! It is here that we *find our place* in the new order of sonship, knowing of a certainty who we are, what we have received, what our mission is, and we recognize that now the hour of the unveiling is nigh at hand! There is a sense of urgency, yet we abide in Him and wait for God's hour to strike when we shall receive our marching orders!

JOSEPH

"Of the tribe of *Joseph* were sealed twelve thousand" (Rev. 7:8).

As the old prophet Israel sat upon his bed pronouncing prophetic blessings on his sons by Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah, he must have sensed something special in the spirit concerning

what God had in store for his two youngest sons — Joseph and Benjamin. These were the sons of his first and most beloved, the wife for whom he had worked so long, the sweet and beautiful Rachel. Rachel had been barren for many years while her rival, Leah, had given Jacob six sons! Although her handmaid Bilhah (according to the custom of those days) had given Israel two sons in her name, Rachel still longed for children of her own flesh and blood. In desperation she cried out to her husband, saying, "Give me children, or else I die!" (Gen. 30:1). In tender mercy, the Lord responded to the cries and yearning of her heart. "And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bore a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall **add to me ANOTHER SON**" (Gen. 30:22-24). The Hebrew meaning of the name Joseph is "*may He add.*" In other words, while Rachel rejoiced in God's goodness in giving her this son, she desired at least one more! God also granted that desire of her heart, and she gave birth to Benjamin shortly before her death.

In the natural Joseph was indeed fruitful. God blessed him in Egypt and brought him to a position of eminence and power next to the throne. The Lord gave him two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, both of whom fathered tribes, and in the Bible the lists of the tribes normally mention the *tribes* of Ephraim and Manasseh, rather than the *tribe* of Joseph. To be exact, there are sixteen tribal lists in the scriptures after the book of Genesis, and Joseph is only mentioned three times, his place usually taken by Ephraim and Manasseh. There is evidence that when the ten-tribed house of Israel, which had been carried away captive to Assyria, migrated eventually into northwestern Europe, from thence the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh finally became scattered also into the Americas, New Zealand, Australia, and a number of other nations. In the book of Revelation, however, the tribe of Joseph has nothing to do whatever with any of that! The book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*, addressed to a *spiritual people*, and concerns *spiritual realities*.

In its spiritual meaning, Joseph points unerringly to the great increase that has come into the lives of God's sons as we have progressed on this journey into God's fullness! I realize that many speak of Joseph, and the meaning of his name (may He add), in outward terms of the multitude of his descendants or of the vast increase of the kingdom of God in the earth. But when Rachel named Joseph, she did not have in mind the increase that would come out of Joseph himself, but "may He add" expressed her deep and insatiable desire for yet *another son!* Her reference was to Benjamin, not Joseph! Spiritually this points us to the ultimate consummation of our sonship where the work within us is complete, and in Benjamin we stand in all the glory, authority, and dominion of our full sonship as SONS OF THE RIGHT HAND! Oh, yes! In Joseph we have come to a high stature in Christ, to a place of rich fulfillment and glorious potential, yet still we yearn for the completion, for the fullness, for the HOUR OF MANIFESTATION! Our desire is for Benjamin!

It cannot be otherwise! All things have a beginning, followed by various stages of development, formation, growth, and increase until ultimately comes the fullness and perfection. Space travel did not begin by sending a man to the moon. Men jumped off cliffs, trying to fly with crude, homemade wings. Then men flew in balloons. The Wright brothers invented the first airplane, and other types of aircraft followed until the Russians startled the world by sending their Sputnik into orbit around the earth, inaugurating the space age. Today we are sending space probes throughout the solar system, and it is only a matter of time, if God permits, until Star Trek will move from science fiction to living reality. Can we not clearly see by this how it is that every step was *required* in the grand and epochal work of bringing many sons to glory! Nothing ever happens overnight! But all things move inexorably *forward*. And each of God's elect who reads these lines can truly see his portrait

in the progression through the twelve tribes or the twelve steps to the throne of God! Each of us is in there somewhere, according to the measure of Father's dealings and work in our lives.

When our lovely Lord Jesus came into this sin-cursed world bringing the word and power of the kingdom, He ushered in a new and glorious age. It is very doubtful that any in those days had the remotest idea that it was the Father's intention to take the next two thousand years to complete the great work of preparing the *kings of the kingdom*. Jesus came to bring in the new age of *the church*, the *seedbed* in which the kingdom would grow and develop to its **next stage**. When the conditions are fully ripe for this **next stage** of the kingdom, *this age will completely pass away*. As suddenly as the day of Pentecost came and changed the order of God in the earth, so suddenly will the new age of the kingdom of God through God's sons break with glory and power upon the earth!

How our glad hearts rejoice in the sacred knowledge that we are standing even now at the door of the *next new age* and the *greater glory* of the kingdom power that it brings! Oh, the wonder of it! Sonship! Sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ receiving power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron (spiritual strength)! Sonship is the hope of all creation and the joy of the Father's heart. The hopes and dreams of all the years for peace and righteousness and blessing and life upon the teeming billions of this benighted planet are met in the unveiling of God's sons, the *increase of the kingdom* for the new age. In Joseph we stand today and look over into the promised land, for we can see it in all its fruitfulness and bountifulness, and only a few steps will bring us there! With Rachel we cry, "May He add!" Oh, Benjamin! We will soon be there!

Chapter 101

The Sealing Of The 144,000

continued

“Of the tribe of *Benjamin* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:8).

Benjamin was the twelfth and last son of Israel, and the second son borne to him by Rachel, his beloved and dearest wife. When Benjamin’s older brother was born, Rachel named him Joseph, which means “*may He add*” — which made Joseph a *prayer* within himself, for Rachel used this name to make the statement that she desired of the Lord **yet another son**. She asked the Lord to “add” to her one more son beyond Joseph! This prayer was answered when Joseph’s younger brother, Benjamin, came forth from Rachel’s womb. His birth, however, was an occasion of joy mingled with sorrow. The record states, “And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor. And it came to pass, *when she was in hard labor*, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; *thou shalt have this son also*. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him *Benjamin*. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel’s grave unto this day” (Gen. 35:16-20).

As Rachel lay dying, her last act was to name her newborn son Benoni, meaning “*son of my pain*.” Jacob, however, named the child Benjamin, meaning “*son of the right hand*.” The scene is strikingly reminiscent of the apostle John’s vision of the birth of the manchild! Just as Rachel was in hard labor to bring forth Benjamin, so the sun-clad woman of chapter twelve of the Revelation is seen “*travailing* in birth, and *pained* to be delivered.” Then we read of this marvelous birth, “And she brought forth a *manchild*, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” We know, of course, that the position to which this overcoming manchild company is caught up is that which is occupied by the firstborn Son of God who is seated at the **right hand of God!** And just as Rachel died following Benjamin’s birth, so the woman who brings forth the manchild “flees into the wilderness.” Both figures reveal the great truth that as soon as this “son” is birthed **the old order which birthed it forever passes from the scene!** Rachel went to her grave, and the church-order-mother of the manchild flees to the wilderness. The “son of the right hand” now brings forth a new day and a new order as he reigns upon the throne!

A son! A son at the right hand! In Benjamin we complete our journey into sonship and to the throne! The throne of Israel was in Jerusalem, and it is wondrously revealing that Jerusalem was located, not in Judah as is commonly supposed, but in the territory of Benjamin! (Josh. 18:28). Many have seen a reference to Jerusalem in Moses’ blessing on Benjamin, “And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all day long, and **He (the Lord) shall dwell between his (Benjamin’s) shoulders**” (Deut. 33:12). The dwelling place of the Lord among His people

Israel was in Jerusalem, in the temple. Thus, the Lord later located His sanctuary, the temple, in the territory of the inheritance of Benjamin! The glory of the Lord *now* rests upon the sons of God who make up the body of Christ, which is also the true and eternal and spiritual and heavenly temple of God and the New Jerusalem!

God's glory is not now, nor has it ever been, on a denomination, program, or building of man's design. His glory is the glory of Christ, which is the radiance and splendor of His mind, nature, and power in the realm of the Spirit. The glory of the Lord is that holy and awesome presence of the Lord that is supernatural, marvelous beyond my faltering lips or feeble pen to describe. That glory belongs to the Christ body! The unspeakable glory that Jesus had with the Father before the world was is now given unto God's sons! And the hour is nigh at hand when we shall be crowned with the fullness of the wondrous, majestic, and awesome glory and honor of the Lord! Through God's sons the name of the Lord shall be exalted in all the earth and before all nations! The nations shall come to the light of the glory of God upon us, and kings shall come to the brightness of our rising! When the Christ body is complete and mature and united in one, when we shall have fully experienced within ourselves all the character and purpose of the twelve tribes of Israel through the dealings of God, we shall be changed into His likeness in spirit, soul, *and* body and crowned with glory and honor. We shall then have dominion over the whole creation in that wonderful and omnipotent power of His resurrection! Oh, yes! The Christ body is the temple of God, the priests of the Lord, and the kings of the kingdom. All of this is represented spiritually in the sealed ones of the tribe of Benjamin!

Many a sermon has been preached on the rule of the kingdom of God on earth, and I think most of them have missed the mark because they see only God reigning over His kingdom. The greatest mystery of the ages is that on the throne of God today is a MAN. God came down from heaven and invaded humanity, He took upon Himself the nature and body of a man, so that when He went back to the throne (His omnipotent power in the Spirit), He would take humanity back to the throne. There is no mystery to it that God sits on the throne, He belongs there; but to think now that MAN is sitting on the throne! "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs...THIS JESUS hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED..." (Acts 2:22,32-33).

There is confirmation of this in Acts 7:55-56 where we read concerning Stephen, "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and JESUS STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. And said, Behold I see the heavens opened and the SON OF MAN standing on the right hand of God." Of course God does not physically have either a throne or a hand! The "right hand of God" is simply a metaphor denoting the *visible manifestation* of the invisible spiritual realm of **all authority, power, and dominion**. Moses and the children of Israel claimed to have *seen* "the right hand of God" (Ex. 15:6) when the waters fell in upon the armies of Pharaoh and they were drowned. What did they actually see? Nothing but a tremendous manifestation of God's power and glory! This, they called "the right hand of God."

The right hand of God is not a physical location somewhere in the universe. The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent **spirit** is not a physical one, but speaks of the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AND UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The right hand of God is the realm of *manifest* power and authority out of and by the Spirit, a position of eminence, a condition and a state of divine being. It is the assumption of the

almighty power and universal dominion of the Father! It is the dispensing of His *positive energy force* into His creation. The “right hand” signifies the chief place, position of excellence or favor, next to the chief ruler. Those manifesting and dispensing the life and power of God into creation are not *themselves* GOD HIMSELF. They are the expression and revelation of God who indwells them and flows through them! Thus, since they are not the very power itself, but the vessel or vehicle of that power, they are described as “on the right hand of God” or “at the right hand of power” or “at the right hand of the Majesty of High.” Exalted to that high realm Jesus no longer walks in a limited, physical, mortal body, for He now indwells the spirits of His many brethren, who are THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL (Eph. 1:22-23). Can you not see the mystery?

Blessed be God! We now have a share in the **realm of the right hand!** “When we were dead through our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with Him, and made us *sit together with Him* in the heavenly places (the heights of His own exaltation)” (Eph. 2:5-6). This shows that as we come to know the resurrection life of Christ, we are also made to experience the *ascension* of Christ. We are chosen of God not only to be made alive from the dead and have God’s life, but also to sit in the heavenly places as ASCENDED MEN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD!

This brings us to the thought I want to share in this message. Almost all churches and most believers are not aware of it, but for the most part we have made God to be a one-armed or one-handed Being. Of course we realize that God is spirit and has no body of material substance and consequently no arms or hands such as we have. But spirit is real, God is real, and the “eyes” of the Lord are omnipresent spirit eyes, His universal ability to see by the spirit! God does not possess some wonderful eyes up in some far-off heaven somewhere with X-ray vision by which He can see through the long distances of space. Oh, no! God is spirit, He is everywhere, and the eyes of the Lord are everywhere! He sees you right there where you are, not from a distance, even as He also, at the same time, sees all things everywhere throughout all the unbounded heavens right there where He is by His omnipresent spirit! All the faculties of God are omnipresent spirit faculties and exist by His presence in all places at the same time. The arms and hands of God are omnipresent spirit arms and hands, bespeaking His universal ability to act, touch, and perform by His Spirit!

The thought of God having a “right hand” and a “left hand” should not be strange to us, although the preachers have so often presented God as a one-handed Being. In the scriptures we find the right hand of God mentioned a great many times, and the left hand of God is mentioned on a number of occasions. A great deal has been said as to the meaning of the right hand, but few have seemed to have any understanding or revelation of the significance of the left hand.

Let us look for a moment at the meaning of these two words, right and left. The word “right” as used with “hand” is generally the Hebrew *yamiym* meaning “stronger, more dexterous.” The word for “left” is *smowl* meaning “dark.” From the meaning of these two words it is easy to understand that God’s right hand is His strength and dexterity, or His wonderful ability to do all things! The implication is that the right hand of God is the GOOD HAND of God, doing GOOD things. The Psalmist confirms this when he says, “In Thy presence there is fullness of joy; at Thy *right hand* are PLEASURES FOREVERMORE!” (Ps. 16:11). Again, “The voice of REJOICING AND SALVATION in the tabernacles of the righteous: the *right hand* of the Lord doeth valiantly. The *right hand* of the Lord is exalted” (Ps. 118:15-16). To which the prophet Isaiah adds his inspired testimony, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be

not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will STRENGTHEN thee; yea, I will HELP thee; yea, I will UPHOLD thee with the *right hand* of my righteousness” (Isa. 41:10).

It is not my purpose in this message to expound upon the subject of the *left hand* of God, but in passing let us note, as I have pointed out, the left hand in the Old Testament means “*dark*” and from this we can readily understand that it signifies the opposite of the right hand — what we call bad or evil. The left hand represents the ***dark side of God***. This is the hand of God so little understood! The distinctive work of these two hands is graphically portrayed in the wonderful parable Jesus told of the sheep and the goats. How sobering are these meaningful words of truth: “And He shall set the sheep on the *right hand*, but the goats on the *left*. Then shall the King say unto them on the *right hand*, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...then shall He say also to them on the *left hand*, Depart from me, ye cursed, into age-abiding fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...” (Mat. 25). But just what or who are these two hands of God? The two hands of God represent two aspects of God’s dealings, two ways in which He moves and acts to accomplish His purposes. We can readily see from the parable of the sheep and the goats that God deals through both *positive* and *negative* forces. Those in the right hand of God are a *spiritual people* raised up to manifest the glory of God; they are the deliverers and blesser of humanity! But those in the left hand are called “vessels of wrath” and “vessels of dishonor.” When God raises up negative forces in the earth, to judge something, or destroy a system or an order, those negative forces accomplishing God’s will represent the *left hand* of God! It may be communism bringing judgment on an apostate religious system, but whatever it is it is negative, *yet* an instrument in the hand of the Lord! His *left hand*, of course! Although they are raised up as a negative instrument in the hand of the Lord, there are no rewards for the work they do, they receive no kingdom, no status in the order of God for the ages to come. Rather, they are placed under the dealing hand of God in a process of fiery judgment to receive correction!

“Thy *right hand*, O Lord, is ***become*** glorious in power. Thy *right hand*, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy” (Ps. 15:6). While it is difficult for us to conceive of God becoming something more than He already is, and as to His nature there can never be any change, yet the Spirit reveals that the *right hand* of God had not previously been all that it was when the children of Israel triumphantly marched dry-shod through the Red Sea, for the prophet speaks of a day wherein the *right hand* of the Lord “is ***become*** glorious in power,” denoting a process in the ***unfolding*** of the power of His *right hand* in the midst of men. And, while the right hand of God is first and foremost the realm of God’s almighty power and authority, His right hand ***became*** glorious in power when it was revealed through mighty signs and wonders through the person of the man Moses.

May I now point out that there has again been a wonderful enlargement in the revelation of God’s right hand, for Jesus Christ has been exalted to the realm of the right hand; and there shall be a further enlargement, for the promise is sure, “To him that overcometh will I grant to SIT WITH ME IN MY THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). Thus Jesus was able to say, “ALL POWER is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:18), and again, “But YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...” (Acts 1:8). God’s right hand is ***becoming a people***, the Christ, Head and body, a many-membered SON OF THE RIGHT HAND; and the manifestation of God in and through this RIGHT HAND COMPANY shall ***become*** even more glorious in power as the appointed hour for the unveiling of the sons of God arrives. These shall not only declare His word, but shall have authority and divine ability to see it established in the earth! When the power of God arises in all fullness in His body of sons,

and He is exalted in the people He has prepared, how unspeakably glorious and honorable He will be in the eyes of His creation! These are the hundred and forty-four thousand who have come all the way into the tribe of Benjamin — **THE SON OF THE RIGHT HAND!** That is where the glory rests!

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

Truly, beloved, this RIGHT HAND COMPANY will get Him the victory! There is no doubt about it, no devil, no wicked men, no laws passed by legislatures, no edicts of kings, no armies of nations can stop this company from doing the things God has declared they will do, and because of their ministry, the nations will come to know the Lord and sing His praise. As the work of restoration progresses, what harmony, what glorious unity shall fill the universe, as this company of king-priests flows together, by that which every joint supplieth, to gather together into Christ all things, till all has been set in array, and God is indeed ALL IN ALL — everything to every one! It is indeed wonderful!

How sweet shall be the influence of this RIGHT HAND COMPANY, the *positive force* of God’s energy, ministering His life, His joy, His peace unto creation! How thankful we are not to be numbered among those who are called to the *left hand*, to walk in darkness, and be vessels of wrath. There is no harshness in the ministry of the right hand; oh yes, even the right hand “dashes the enemies in pieces,” but it is the destruction of the negative qualities that there might be *Life*. These bring correction ministered in love, leading all mankind to the fountain of living water, feeding them in green pastures, causing them to lie down and rest, and not be afraid. Ah — we would SEEK THE THINGS AT THE RIGHT HAND! “If ye then be risen with Christ, *seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*” (Col. 3:1).

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

With what joy and holy wonder do I tell you today that the power of Jesus Christ is the power that will again be manifested on the earth through the ministry of Christ’s *many*

brethren, the sons of God! What a calling rests upon the firstfruits! How humbly we should seek God, how fervently we should cry out to the Lord, that His work be completed in us to bring this sonship ministry to pass in the earth! How we praise God for the in-part ministry of the church age — it has been glorious beyond words and has brought us to where we are in God. But none can deny that the ministry of Jesus has not been fully duplicated in all the power and glory of the kingdom of God! Who among us can raise his hand and tell me that in him, or in his prayer group, or in his church, or in his movement, or in his sonship convention, the miraculous sonship ministry of Jesus has been reproduced in all of its fullness and power? Regardless of how much revelation we have, or how many miracles we have seen, or how many spine-tingling prophecies we have heard, were we to make such a claim we would all be found liars. After two thousand years of the meticulous formation of the Christ body, creation *still* groans and travails *waiting* for the *manifestation of the sons of God* who shall *deliver creation itself from the bondage of corruption*.

The greater ministry of the sons of God will allay every disturbing element; break the power of sin and death; put down every wrong; still every clamoring tongue; calm every raging sea; touch every inflamed sore of society; unite into harmony every quarrelsome crowd; heal every excruciating pain and suffering; pilot every tossed soul into the harbor of rest; banish all fear, malice, bigotry, and hatred in the melting fire of divine love; bind every demonic power; dissolve every corrupt government; undo every heavy burden; swallow up every false philosophy and religion into the quickening of truth and reality; heal every sickness, disease, and torment; fill to the full every lack and void; impart life more abundant to all men everywhere; and give joy unspeakable and full of glory until the whole earth is full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and all creation pulsates with the scintillating life and light and love of God!

This revolution will come through the ministry of the sons of God and will penetrate and judge the motives, character, intents, activities, and institutions of the whole world! This marvelous work will be wrought by a company of king-priests after the order of Melchizedek. This sonship ministry will be the most awesome and powerful ministry the Lord has ever unleashed on an unsuspecting world! Nothing will be able to stand before it! No philosophy, creed, science, academics, or humanistic concept of men shall be able to gainsay the wisdom of God in His sons! It will consume and break in pieces the whole fabric of the nations! The economic, cultural, educational, military, ecclesiastical, and political structures that man has erected by the carnal mind and fleshly wisdom will disintegrate before the very eyes of all men! These sons of the Most High are even now being prepared and empowered with the mightiest weapon in the universe — the sword of the Spirit which is *the living word of God!* All things and all creatures obey the command of the word of the Most High God! At His word creation springs forth and darkness flees from before His face!

“The Lord shall utter His voice (speak His word) before His army: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?” (Joel 2:11). **All** that I have stated above is summed up in that one small passage of scripture! This army of God is earth’s deliverers and the Lord’s restoration hosts; not a revival crusade, not a political action committee, not a movement or organization, not a regiment of soldiers, but a *spiritual company of divine origin and formation* — invincible and all-conquering! These are the marching men and women of God progressing through the ages, tramping the corridors of God’s purposes, binding time and eternity together, fulfilling their mission, bringing the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Wherever the desperate needs of men are, from India’s vast land, teeming with

hundreds of millions, from Africa's dark juju ceremonialism, from the igloos of Iceland to the farthest reaches of Tierra del Fuego, from Wall Street to the Great Wall of China, from the ivory-covered halls of learning in Paris, or Cambridge, to the dusty roads of the commonplace of all nations — wherever man may be found — the sons of God shall bring the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of heaven with power and great glory!

The ministry and rule of sonship is ready to be poured out upon the nations of this world. What a perfect *luxury of blessing* shall come upon all mankind! The ministry of Jesus revealed in the four Gospels, shall be intensified by tens of thousands of manifest sons of God stepping forth in the power of His resurrection in the midst of the earth! When the mighty work of salvation, restoration, and transformation is complete, there will be none of those painful and debilitating diseases which now plague mankind. We shall need no doctors and the great clinics and hospitals of our cities and towns will have no patients who need treatment, surgeries, or nursing. From every mental hospital the inmates will stream forth shouting for joy at finding that God's Christ has touched their minds with His omnipotent hand of love and power, just as did the man of the Gadarenes in Jesus' day. From every prison in the world will leap forth prisoners of every sex and every age to testify to the saving, delivering, and transforming work of God in their lives, breaking completely and forever the shackles of sin and satan, turning thieves, murderers, and rapists into men of mildness, righteousness, and compassion. The power of sin and death being broken, the undertaker will look in vain for corpses and will find it the hardest thing in the world to keep his business open!

NOW HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! When God's *spiritual work* in the mind, heart, nature and character is finished in each of His sons, the **sign** that the hour for the manifestation of the sons of God has arrived will be given throughout the whole earth. On a day much like today, those who have been fully awakened within and transformed into His likeness in spirit and soul, will step into another dimension. Suddenly, instantaneously, and simultaneously **every sickness and disease in each and every body of all the sons of God will be totally and permanently healed**. This will be the most astounding **mass-miracle** of the ages! A shuddering will run through their bodies. In an instant these sons will burst into the resplendence of the shimmering glory of God brighter than the noonday sun! Incorruptible life will surge forth from within, quickening their mortal bodies with vibrant, self-perpetuating life! Their minds will at the same time be expanded with divine wisdom, understanding, and discernment! All things will become open and known! The secrets of the universe will become as clear as the letters of the alphabet! Creative power will flow from their mouths and their hands! The secrets of men's hearts will be revealed and they will know all that is within man; but they will not be permitted to speak these things except in private; only mercy, grace, and omnipotent love will flow forth to mankind! But the **very first sign** that the hour of manifestation has arrived will be the sudden, instantaneous, and simultaneous HEALING OF EVERY SICKNESS AND DISEASE IN THE BODY OF EVERY SON! You can watch for **that sign** that the day of full manifestation **is here!** Some will not receive this word, but it does not matter. The sign **will** be fulfilled, and glorious shall be the Day unto those who are appointed unto it!

This will be Benjamin — THE SON OF THE RIGHT HAND!

THE GREAT MULTITUDE

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a *great multitude, which no man could number*, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb,

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9-10). In visions of glory while on the isle of Patmos, John was made to see a “great multitude” of saints which no man could number. Asked by one of the elders, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands, and whence have they come?” John answered, “Sir, you know.” And the elder said to him, “These are they which have **come out of great tribulation**; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:13-14). Each of these white-robed saints had to experience *great tribulation*.

It seems to me that these are the very people who had been followers of Jezebel, the false prophetess, the false ministry of the church systems, who committed spiritual fornication and ate spiritual food that was defiled by idols — doctrines corrupted and contaminated by false images and conceptions of God. Were we not all there at one time? To these the Lord Jesus said, “Behold, I will cast her into a bed (of trouble), and them that commit adultery with her into *great tribulation*, except they repent of their deeds” (Rev. 2:22). The Lord said of Jezebel, “I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not” (Rev. 2:21). Thank God! He gives us space to repent! He sees the depth of our being. He reveals what He sees to us. Like a parent correcting a child, He gives us space to repent. He doesn’t just slap us around! If we will not heed His warnings, then come His feet of brass that burn as a furnace! Can we not see? Do we yet understand? He casts her into a bed of trouble rather than pleasure, He throws all who fornicate with her into great tribulation, He kills her children. This is the judgment which comes. This is the judgment which will redeem Zion! This is the judgment which washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion and the blood of Jerusalem! This is a revelation of judgment from the Lord which begins at the house of God (I Pet. 4:17) and then flows out from that house to all creation!

It is interesting to note that the term “great tribulation” appears only twice in the book of Revelation, and neither time does it apply to the *world*. In both cases it has to do with the Lord’s own people! What elaborate and fancy fictions men have written and preached about the so-called great tribulation that is supposed to come upon the whole world! Jesus said He would cast the spiritual fornicators of the church age into *great tribulation*, unless they *repented*. What do you suppose would be the purpose of the great tribulation? Why, bless your heart, would it not be to influence and motivate them to *repent*!

Our English word “tribulation” comes from the Latin word *tribulum*. The tribulum was a hollowed out rock where they poured their wheat or other grain with the husks still upon it — the chaff was still attached. There was another rock suspended above it which was connected to a lever. The lever was used to make the rock crash down upon the wheat. When it struck the wheat with force it broke the chaff loose from the kernel. Bellows were then employed to blow the chaff away from the grain, after which it was gathered for a future burning. The kernels were gathered into the barn. This process was called *tribu-lation*! The great truth revealed to us from this concerns the great *purpose* of tribulation. The work of tribulation is specifically designed by God to *separate the chaff from the wheat*. That is the mystery! God’s people have been passing through the fires of tribulation all through the centuries. All who will be purged and purified, all who will wash their robes and make them white, all who will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God **must** pass under the relentless blows of the *tribulum* (Acts 14:22). This is the process our all-wise Father has ordained to separate the precious from the vile in the life of every saint of God. The sons of God are now experiencing this work of tribulation and are being perfected through the trials and testings they suffer. But the “great multitude” of the nominal church world have yet to pass through the fires of the great tribulation!

Every time you see the twenty-four elders, or the four living creatures, or the hundred and forty-four thousand — God’s king-priest ministry — immediately afterward you see a vast throng of people praising and glorifying God because they are free! That’s what the overcoming company, the sons of God, the Melchizedek priesthood, is all about! These are God’s prepared instruments to release and restore creation, and the *great multitude* is the first group out of all the nations that is released and restored! John was a great mathematician, and he managed to count up to 144,000 footstep followers of the Lamb standing upon mount Zion. But that was only a representative number for the company of the manifest sons of God. As for the church of God, gathered out of all the tribes and tongues and peoples and nations of earth, he gave up all idea of computation, and confessed that it is “a number that no man can number.” That would be a lot of people, because even if there were *billions* they could still be numbered! Even the population of the whole world today has been numbered! But the construction of this statement in the Greek is most revealing. I quote from the Emphatic Diaglott which says, “*After these things I saw, and lo a crowd great, which to have numbered no man was able.*” What that means is — IT IS A MULTITUDE GREATER THAN WE COULD HAVE EVER DREAMED! It staggers the imagination of man that God could have, from one man Jesus, and a handful of fishermen, tax-collectors, and the like, brought forth such a work in the earth!

There is still a deeper meaning beyond this. “To number” in the spiritual sense signifies to *know the quality*, because a number in scripture does not signify a literal number, but the quality of a thing. For example, twelve is the number of divine government. One hundred and forty-four thousand is twelve squared by itself times one thousand (which stands for the day of the Lord). Therefore, we can know that there will not be exactly 144,000 sons of God, but the sons are those in whom the government of God finds its highest expression, bringing the day of the Lord! The number reveals their *quality*, not their *quantity*. All the numbers in the whole book of Revelation bear that significance! A whole book could be written just about that. Therefore, by John’s estimation of “a great multitude *which no man could number*” is meant in the spiritual sense that no one but the Lord alone knows their quality! The Lord alone knows where each has come from spiritually, some from Baptist, some from Methodist, some from Pentecostal, some from Roman Catholic, some from the Mormons, some from Episcopalian, some from Jehovah’s Witnesses, some from Seventh Day Adventist, etc. Oh, yes! Don’t let it dismay you that I include some groups that by many are considered cults. Men look on the outward appearance, but God knows the heart! Whoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved! It doesn’t say, “He that believeth and hath all his doctrine straight.” Oh, no! God has people everywhere! And only He knows their spiritual state, only He knows their ultimate place in Him! The Lord alone knows the quality of their affection after Him, and arranges all into order according to it.

God has a precise order for every man and every thing to be set free and restored into the truth, the life, and the purpose of God. Here it is clear that the religious realm of Christianity (Jezebel) is released *first!* This is a great harvest! The 144,000 are the *firstfruits* of Christ’s full redemption (Rev. 14:4). This harvest principle reveals the order of God in the restoration of all things — God has an order and there is a progression in His great program of redemption, reconciliation, and the restitution of all things. The next part of the harvest (after the firstfruits) is the big harvest, not the full harvest in the end of the year, but the complete “wheat” harvest that comes after the waving of the firstfruits. These are people uniquely His “out of” every nation, kindred, people, and tongue. The Greek word is *ek* meaning *out of*. This is the full redemption of the church which is God’s “called out” people out from among the nations (Acts 15:14). God will restore His people who have been held

captive in religious Babylon! And that is the *first thing* on His agenda following the manifestation of the sons of God! The firstfruits of His redemption are the sons of God. Next in order is the church. Then the salvation of all nations. After the salvation of the nations shall come the gradual resurrection and restoration of every man who has lived and died from Adam all the way through the ages. And finally, the restoration of all spirits and all worlds and all realms throughout the endless vastnesses of infinity!

John described the great multitude of saints this way: *“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have **washed their robes** and **made them white** in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they **before the throne** of God, and **serve Him** day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is **in the midst of the throne** shall **feed them**, and shall **lead them unto living fountains of waters**: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”* (Rev. 7:14-17).

Surely this passage describes the blessing of God to come upon His people! They are coming out of great tribulation, which is in this case the judgment sent upon the woman Jezebel presented in chapter two of the Revelation. They are being chastised of their Father for their spiritual harlotry in the land of spiritual Babylon, and through this process their “robes” are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Thank God, John sees a great multitude that has *come out of great tribulation*. A wonderful transformation has taken place in them through the process of the great tribulation! They have now “washed their robes” and have “made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Their robes weren’t always white! Before their “great tribulation” their robes were soiled, stained, spotted, dirty, polluted, and filthy! They were truly God’s people, but were not yet washed from the *defilement of religion* and *religious systems*! As a result of their going *through* that great tribulation, God’s purpose is accomplished in their lives.

These are the redeemed of God who have washed their robes from the defilement of the false doctrines, empty rituals, blinding traditions, fleshly methods, and carnal programs of the church systems of man. White robes in the book of Revelation denote “the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:8). It is the righteousness of Christ with which they are clothed, resulting in righteous, truly *spiritual acts* manifested out of their lives upon this earth. All of them have endured the strippings, purgings, prunings, threshings, refinings, and purifying dealings of God and have been thoroughly chastened and corrected by the Father. They are seen coming out of this great tribulation waving palm branches of victory and praise to God! They are now a righteous people, and they are a joyful, praising people! The Lord has led them through the processings of His Spirit, separating from them all the garbage of religion, making them pure and righteous in the sight of God.

Cleansed and purified by the Lamb, they are transformed and brought very near to His throne of love, grace, and power! By this work of spiritual cleansing, they are given access to the throne zone — not to sit on the throne, but to stand “before” the throne where they do not reign, but they “serve” God by worshipping Him day and night in His temple. He that sitteth on the Father’s throne (the overcomers) dwells among them. Because the Christ body dwells among them, these delivered saints from the old order church systems of the world shall never hunger or thirst again, for the Lord will now feed them and fill them with true spiritual food, the heavenly manna they were deprived of at the tables of Babylon; and they shall drink from the fountain of full and abundant life. There is now a flow of life, a reality of life, which has satisfied the very depths of their being. They do not look for

another. They do not fantasize about another. They have found Him whom their soul loveth and He is more than enough!

Neither shall the sun smite them anymore, for they are now called out of the outer court where they formerly dwelt, where the sun shines, into the secret and covered place of the most High, in the inner sanctuary of His presence. God will eliminate all sorrow and wipe all tears from their eyes; no more travailing and weeping for more of God, for they shall now at last be *satisfied!* They no longer have any inner turmoil, for all the tears are gone. As Ricky Evans has pointed out, “The word ‘tear’ comes from *dakru* which means ‘an inward cry that cannot be heard audibly, inner turmoil.’ It speaks of those dissatisfactions, those longings, that warfare which goes on within us, while we keep a smile on our face and don’t let anyone know our deep dark secrets. God’s life, His presence, the reality of His person, wipes away those cries, removes the inner turmoil.”

Some may think that because this multitude stand “before the throne” they must be up in heaven someplace, instead of being a people upon earth. We must remember, however, that the scene is symbolic and spiritual, and therefore has nothing to do with physical location! If it is on earth that they wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, why should it not be on earth that they wear them? If they come out of great tribulation on earth, why should they not carry their palms on earth also? The palms bespeak of *praise!* They are “before the throne” and it is here on earth that the apostle says, “Let us therefore come boldly *to the throne of grace*, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

The great multitude is a people, the Lord’s people, long held in the dark clutches of horrible darkness in religious Babylon, the carnal, man-made church systems, now set free through the ministry of the manifest sons of God, and ushered out of the feasts of Passover and Pentecost, on into the glory of the feast of Tabernacles. One point indeed ought to be carefully kept in view. The great multitude all has “*palms in their hands*” (Rev. 7:9). The palms in the hands of the great multitude are not the palms of victory in any earthly contest, but the *palms of the feast of Tabernacles*, and it is upon the thought of that feast the scene is molded. The feast of Tabernacles, it will be remembered, was at once the last, the highest, and the most joyful of all the festivals of Israel! It fell in the month of October, when the harvest not only of grain, but of wine and oil, had been gathered in, and when, therefore, all the labors of the year were past.

Even this was not all, for we know that in the later period of their history, the house of Judah connected the feast of Tabernacles with the brightest anticipations of the future as well as with the most joyful memories of the past. They beheld in it the promise of the Spirit, the great gift of the coming age; and that they might give full expression to this anticipation, they sent on the eighth, or the last and great day of the feast, a priest to the pool of Siloam with a golden urn, that he might fill it from the pool, and, bringing it up to the temple, might pour it on the altar. This is the part of the ceremonial alluded to at the point when the joy of the people reached its highest point, and we read that “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers of living water*. But this spake He of *the Spirit*, which they that believe on Him should receive” (Jn. 7:37-39). These words rang and echoed down the streets of Jerusalem as the crowds gathered around the priest when he brought the water from the pool, and they waved their *lulabs* — small branches of palm trees, the same palms referred to as being waved by the great multitude! The courts of the temple vibrated with their glad song, “With joy shall ye

draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. 12:3). Ah, the great multitude wave the palms of joy and praise unto God! They draw living water out of the wells of salvation, out of the depths of the Spirit which they have received! This is the Spirit *beyond Pentecost*, this is the church, the vast multitudes of the redeemed, through the ministry of the sons of God, brought into THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES! Oh, the wonder of it! Isn't it wonderful!

Chapter 102

Ministry From The Golden Altar

“And when he had opened the *seventh seal*, there was *silence in heaven about the space of half an hour*” (Rev. 8:1).

What we have in the words of the text quoted above is indeed a most beautiful and also a most meaningful passage of the book of Revelation! It is significant to note that the first seal opens with the noise of thunder, but at the seventh seal there is *silence in heaven*. A trumpet voice announces the opening of the unveiling, whereas great silence marks the consummation! When you look at the chapters preceding this passage you find that there were six seals that had been broken. When the first seal was opened there was a great voice from the throne that said, “Come!” When the second seal was opened another voice cried, “Come!” At the opening of the third and fourth seals the command was again given, “Come!” Each time a seal was ready to be opened there was a coming forth of the Christ in greater glory and great and mighty events unfolded before the wondering eyes of the prophet of Patmos. John saw and heard marvelous things in the heavens of the Spirit that staggered the imagination and left him dumbfounded with awe and contemplation.

Finally the seventh seal was opened, a seal unlike any other, for it was the last of the seals. When the Lamb opened the seventh seal there were not great voices, there were not thunderings and lightnings, there were not mighty commotions, movement, activities, and events. **THERE WAS SILENCE IN HEAVEN FOR ABOUT THE SPACE OF HALF AN HOUR. SILENCE!** One half hour of silence! What is that silence? Obviously, according to verse two, the seven angels were prepared to blast away on their trumpets: they were alerted and at attention, prepared and expecting to go into immediate action. But the word in power had gone forth: “Hold that blast!” Time crawls by, half an hour passes; then the first angel receives the word, and he sounds forth his trumpet.

In this dramatic scene all heaven is hushed! For about half an hour the twenty-four elders kneel in silent wonder. The living creatures fold their wings, stilled and speechless in awe. The saints before the throne are breathless and unable to utter a word. Angelic choirs put away their hymnals, the harps are laid aside; there is not a sound from anywhere throughout the vast celestial world. All is hushed. Why? As our thoughts ascend upward among divine mysteries we see that it is because the seventh seal has been broken! At the breaking of the seventh seal all creation beholds with astonished wonder the beauty and perfection of the *completion* of God’s work in His many-membered Christ! Christ in His glorified body is fully unveiled! This new priesthood of the sons of God after the order of Melchizedek is about to minister on behalf of creation in the spiritual temple of God in the heavenlies! As you read the verses that follow in chapter eight you see that the indescribable silence has something to do with PRAYER! It has to do with INCENSE! It has to do with holy FIRE upon the altar! It has to do with the ROYAL PRIESTHOOD! The time has come for God to bring to the golden altar **every prayer** of His elect. And He will add to them the anointing and power of the omnipotent Spirit! And they will be a sweet smelling savor — not the stench of the flesh, the foul smell of soulish zeal and emotion, the

offensive odor of carnal religious exercise — but the sweet fragrance and pleasing scent of a priestly ministry that is in the Spirit and by the Spirit!

Then John saw the angel take the censer and fill it with fire from the altar of incense and cast it into the *earth* — into that earth which *we are*, into the world of humanity; and “there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” — great commotions, intense dealings, powerful words, marvelous unveilings, deep revelations, fearful manifestations, fiery processings, and judgment of such intensity and severity that the soulical mind and emotions, the natural human constitution, the fleshly will, ways, and desires, and all the wisdom of this world reel to and fro, shaken to their very foundations. This is the ministry that shall break forth from the golden altar in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord when the Christ of God is fully formed and unveiled within all the holy sons of God!

Talk about judgment unto victory! God is bringing forth His “firstfruit company” who are undefiled before God. These are they that have repented of sin and every work of the flesh. With Christ Jesus, their victorious Head, they have died to all the desires of the flesh and mind, and all the vain religious platitudes of the church systems of man. They have fixed all their hopes in Christ the Lord! Their hearts cry not for the tinsel of the world, nor yet for the trinkets of popular religion, but their prayer ascends to God day and night, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” Purged of all pride, self-interest, filthiness of the flesh, and of all soulish works and worship, these shall be accounted worthy to reign with Christ as kings and judges from the spirit realm, and those who rule from henceforth are a royal priesthood like unto their Lord, after the order of Melchizedek, which is the order of the Son of God.

The implication of such a momentous event as *silence in heaven* is staggering to the imagination. But the implication it holds, not only for God’s elect in this present hour, but for the entire creation in the age and the ages to come, is beyond human comprehension. But I tell you the truth when I say that there can be no other result when GOD’S FINISHED WORK IS SEEN IN ALL ITS BEAUTY AND GLORY IN THE MANIFEST SONS OF GOD!

There have been many explanations of the “silence in heaven” and most commentators simply pass swiftly over it with the admission that they don’t understand what it signifies. Some interpret it in the light of various scriptures that speak of “let the *earth* keep *silence* before Him.” But it is not the *earth* that is silent here! The silence is in *heaven*! We must keep in mind that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual drama* and the breaking of the seven seals denotes *revelation* — the *unveiling* of the Christ life within us. The Father has also designed that in the opening of the seven-sealed book, there would be a careful process connected to exposing the contents. Christ Jesus possesses every power that the Father has, for the deity of Jesus **is** the almighty Father! However, the full glory and authority of the Christ has been hidden beneath the veil of **our flesh**, for we are the body of Christ and the temple of God. The restoration of all men and all things to God requires the full disclosure of Jesus Christ **in and through His body on earth**. There are seven seals upon this book. The number seven denotes that contained within this book is the totality of God’s character, the fullness of His power, and the complete revelation of His mind, will, and purpose. So, the opening of each seal is connected to a brighter and clearer revelation of all that Christ is, which is all that God is! Awesome beyond human words to articulate is the divine wonder of the work of God in the lives of His called and chosen elect as He removes all that hinders and obstructs, releasing the glory of the living Christ, the fullness of God, within! We are living in momentous times! The Lamb is opening the seals of that book

which we are, to bring forth the revelation of Jesus Christ within us! Can you not see the mystery?

As the seven seals are loosed in God's people they progressively experience 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, His body, the completion of Him, that has been sealed unto the day of redemption, and when God has loosed within them all the seals there will be brought forth in the earth a many-membered expression of the Lord at the same level of GOD'S FULLNESS. We will know Him no longer by measure, we will receive no longer merely His gifts, we will see Him no more through a glass darkly, or as a reality beyond or outside of ourselves. We will know Him even as we are known by Him and will see Him face to face. And all creation will be able to see His face *in us!*

Oh, the wonder of these things! It should not seem strange that when the seventh seal is opened, denoting the completion of the wonderful work of God to bring forth the fullness of Christ in us and out of us, there should be "silence in heaven" for the symbolic brief period of "half an hour." Here is what silence in heaven means to me. It means a revelation or an expectation that is so awesome there are no words to be said about it! We must think about these things in terms of Old Testament shadows. John is writing to people who think that way, for the only scriptures used by the early church were the books of the Old Testament. When we read that they "searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so" it was the Old Testament scriptures they were searching out. The imagery of "silence in heaven" is drawn from the book of Psalms where at the end of a profound proclamation of exalted truth and revelation, we find the word *Selah* which means, "pause, and think," or "pause, and behold." How often king David reminded those that read him, "Meditate — pause and think about that!"

In the twenty-fourth Psalm (and numerous other passages) we find the famous word *Selah*. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. *Selah*" (Ps. 24:7-10). And again, "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. *Selah*" (Ps. 48:8). Typically in scripture readings, we include this word as though it were saying "amen" or "hallelujah." But "*Selah*" is not intended to be a spoken word in Hebrew. Instead, it is a musical notation used just as *crescendo* and *ritardo* are in modern manuscripts. It means "to pause." It is not a word to be spoken, it is a word to be *obeyed!*

It will be noted (as in the passages quoted above) that the word *Selah* usually occurs at a place where a very significant statement has been made, making that a good place for a break or pause, and therefore evoking contemplation or emotional response on the part of the hearers. Spiritually, it bespeaks of the contemplation and response of those who receive the revelation of truth and behold the majesty of the Lord! Here, the "silence in heaven" is the "*Selah*" at the end of the loosing of the seals! It means, "Pause, think, meditate, consider, behold, contemplate within yourself *who you are*, what great things God has done, the beauty of His plan and the wonder of His purpose! Consider, contemplate THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST IN YOU! Observe, behold THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST IN MANY SONS BROUGHT TO GLORY!" Finally, the little word "about" is most interesting. "There was silence in heaven *about* the space of half an hour." It certainly

does not denote a *literal* time period! In its symbolism it is undetermined, indefinite, left open to the unique response in each of us to the awesome inworkings of the Lord! Isn't it wonderful!

MINISTRY FROM THE GOLDEN ALTAR

“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And *another angel* came and *stood at the altar*, having a *golden censer*; and there was given unto him *much incense*, that he should *offer it with the prayers of all saints* upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the *smoke* of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, *ascended up before God* out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and *filled it with fire of the altar*, and *cast it into the earth*: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” (Rev. 8:2-5).

To understand the mysteries written above is of eternal importance, for until we do understand them we will be ineffectual in our ministry as the priesthood of God. I would draw your attention to seven specific items set forth in this wonderful vision. There is an angel, an altar, a golden censer, incense, fire, prayers, and smoke. We must be very certain about the identity of each of these objects! The setting is the “holy place,” the location of the golden altar within the typical tabernacle of Moses, or later the temple in Jerusalem. It was stationed just before the veil of entrance into the “most holy place” of the throne of God over the ark of the covenant from whence proceeded God's mercy — the throne of the mercy seat.

The golden altar of incense was made of wood, overlaid with pure gold. It was three feet high and one and one-half feet square. It was the tallest piece of furniture in the holy place and speaks of the highest act of worship possible, that of praise and prayer and priestly intercession. On the top of it rests a pan-shaped vessel, called the golden censer, on which coals (pieces of burning wood taken from the brazen altar in the outer court) are burning. There is no chimney for the smoke to escape by, so the room is full of it; but the smoke is so pleasant that every priest of God ministering in that holy place would not like to be without it; the fragrance is sweeter than anything ever smelt before! But it is not the wood which gives forth such a sweet odor when under the action of fire; it is the incense which the high priest has put on those burning coals that smells so pleasant, and which feels so refreshing to the spirits of those who minister there. This incense was made of four sweet spices, which gave forth their fragrance by burning. Their sweetness is not known till they are submitted to the action of fire, when the odor is sent forth in the smoke. The ingredients are enumerated in Exodus 30:34-35.

The high priest would fill his censer with fresh coals, and put on incense every morning and every evening, so that day and night there would be the sweet odor going up to God. It was called “a perpetual incense before the Lord” (Ex. 30:8), because night and day it was ever burning, and the smoke was ever ascending before the veil, and going through the veil, and passing under it, and by the sides of it, into the holy of holies before the Lord, who dwelt there on the mercy seat. And on the tenth day of the seventh month, when the high priest went into the holy of holies to make atonement for all the people of Israel, he carried the golden censer in his hand, and placed it on the floor of the holiest of all; and as he stood in the presence of God and before the majesty of His power, and sprinkled the blood seven times on the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat, he would be enveloped in smoke; his garments would smell of sweet incense, and every part of the room would be filled with it, and the glory of the Lord would be softened by it (Lev. 16:11-14).

The “angel” John saw standing by the altar, having the golden censer in his hand, administering in the whole procedure, is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ, for this angel occupies the place of the high priest in the temple worship, who alone was the one to carry the golden censer beyond the veil into the presence of God and His throne. The writer to the Hebrews identifies our heavenly high priest with these words, “Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man...Christ becoming an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this material creation...” (Heb. 8:1-2; 9:11).

There are those who teach and preach that Christ Jesus is **now** the high priest for all the peoples of the world, but that is not true. Throughout this age of the formation of the Christ-body He is the high priest of His redeemed, blood-washed, spirit-begotten elect — **only!** “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing **many sons** unto glory, to make the captain of **their** salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all **of one**: for which cause He is not ashamed to call **them brethren**...wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto **His brethren**, that He might be a **merciful and faithful high priest** in things pertaining to God” (Heb. 2:10-11,17).

Here we see clearly that Christ is the great high priest for “the brethren” — the sons of God, kings and priests, partakers of the heavenly calling! He is the great high priest over the house of God made of living stones, the habitation of God by the spirit! “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil...and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near...” (Heb. 10:19-22).

The high priestly intercession of the Christ is a dual ministry, as is all priestly ministry, both Godward and usward. In its Godward aspect we hear His own words: “I pray **not** for the world” (Jn. 17:9). There is no need of making any mistake about it! With all the grace and redemptive inclusiveness we may attribute to Him it is an outstanding fact. Christ does not **now** pray for the world, for those who are not yet awakened to Him. This is what He says: “I pray not for the world, but — FOR THEM WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME” (Jn. 17:9). What a mark of separation from the world and separation unto Himself there is in that statement and the truth of it! Oh yes, there is a ministry which shall yet touch the whole world and all of mankind through the body of Christ, but the high priestly ministry of Jesus during this age of the selecting, calling, and perfecting of the many brethren, is uniquely on behalf of the church which is His body. The world shall yet be blessed and restored through that people that is **perfected in Him**, as Jesus also said, “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be **one in us: THAT THE W-O-R-L-D MAY BELIEVE THAT THOU HAST SENT ME**” (Jn. 17:21). When the Lord turns His hand to save the world and deliver the whole creation it will be a glorious day indeed! But the work of God today is with **us** — the firstfruits of His redemption, His kings and priests for the age and the ages yet to come!

What an amazing fact it is, that He who is the Master of the heavens and the earth prays for US — and prays in heaven on the throne of the Highest! It is not that He is praying for just the things we wish, nor even such as we dream we need, but the fact that He is praying for us is beyond definition and demonstrates the deep mystery of His grace, His love, His care, and divine purpose for us. There is a priesthood arising to rule over the earth and reign

over the nations, but our Lord Jesus Christ is now high priest on behalf of those who are called to share His sonship. It should not be necessary to enlarge on this thought. Nothing could be more reasonable and just than the great truth that Christ is a Son and High Priest over **His own house**, “whose house **ye are**” (Heb. 3:6).

Notice the pronouns in the following verses: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of **our** profession” (Heb. 3:1). “Which hope **we** have as an anchor of the soul, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for **us** entered, even Jesus...” (Heb. 6:19-20). “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands...but into heaven itself, **now** to appear in the presence of God **for us**”(Heb. 9:24). Ah, all is now for **us**, not for the world! “Seeing then that **we** have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let **us** hold fast **our** profession. For **we** have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of **our** infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as **we** are, yet without sin. Let **us** therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that **we** may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16).

“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). Just what does it mean to “save to the uttermost”? This phrase is given by Phillips as “He can save fully and completely.” Young’s Literal says, “He is able to save to the very end.” The Amplified Bible reads, “He is able to save to the uttermost — completely, perfectly, finally, for all time and eternity.” As one has pointed out, “The Greek words used here are most interesting, *eis to panteles*, or INTO THE ALWAYS. It is only used twice in the New Testament, here, and one other time. The Greek points out that He is able to save COMPLETELY. He is able to save ALL THE WAY, even unto the valley of the shadow of death, saving into incorruption and immortality, or *into the always*. He is able to save altogether, NOTHING LACKING — complete salvation with no flaw, complete as only a holy, omniscient, and omnipotent God knows completeness and perfection. This “salvation unto the uttermost” is a complete salvation of spirit, soul, and body reserved for those who “come unto God *by Him*” — those who follow all the way into the Holiest, within the veil, to know Him in ALL His glorious and eternal reality!

There is nothing ordinary about our Christ. As someone has written, everything about Him is superlative. His perfection is far beyond all question. Our Christ is the most powerful among the powerful, the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty. With His nail-pierced hands He has lifted empires off their hinges. With the same nail-pierced hands He has lifted prodigals out of the hog pen. Our superlative Christ has turned the stream of time into new channels. HE MAKETH ALL THINGS NEW! Whatsoever He touches, whatsoever touches Him, becomes new. Our Christ governs the ages of the ages, and when we look unto Him we are changed from glory to glory into the very same image. The *love* of Christ is unknowable (Eph. 3:19). The *riches* of Christ are unsearchable (Eph. 3:8). The *joy* of Christ is unspeakable (I Pet. 1:8). The *ways* of our Christ are untraceable (Rom. 11:33). The *grace* of Christ is inexhaustible (II Cor. 9:8). The *peace* given by our Christ is unfathomable (Phil. 4:7). The *power* of Christ is unlimited (Mat. 28:18). CHRIST HIMSELF is unsurpassable: “Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Ex. 15:11).

Ah, my beloved, does it seem that you shall never overcome the flesh, the carnal mind, and the world, never live the abundant life, never arrive at perfection or come into the image of God’s Son, never be filled with God’s fullness, never be changed from the mortal to the

immortal, never be a manifest son of God? Be encouraged, dear one, for we have a *great high priest* who can **save to the uttermost** because He is **ever living** to make intercession for us — there is never a single moment in which His priestly action, His watchful care, His loving sympathy and succor, His working in us in the power of His endless life, is not in full operation. Therefore HE CAN SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST — COMPLETELY, PERFECTLY, ALL THE WAY, FLAWLESSLY, AND ETERNALLY! There is no bondage He cannot break, no weakness He cannot undergird, no fear He cannot calm, no sickness He cannot heal, no pain He cannot alleviate, no sorrow He cannot assuage, no trait of Adam's nature He cannot slay, no victory He cannot gain, no lack He cannot supply, and no death He cannot conquer. Blessed be the Lord! My earnest prayer is that God shall make this a living hope in the hearts of all who read these lines!

The symbolic *angel* standing at the golden altar is our great high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. The *fire* upon the altar is the energizing, quickening, presence and power of God Himself who “*is a consuming fire*” (Heb. 12:29). The purpose of the fire was to consume and transform every sacrifice placed upon the altar. At the institution of the Aaronic priestly ceremonies, God Himself sent fire **out from Himself** to consume the first offering (Lev. 9:24) to show His acceptance. The fire flashed from the Holiest of all like a bolt of lightning and lit up the fresh sacrifice upon the brazen altar in the outer court. From whence originated that fire? It proceeded from the blazing Shekinah Glory which dwelt upon the mercy-throne of the ark of the Lord between the Cherubim! The fire was God Himself! This same fire, divine fire, was to be kept burning continually (Lev. 6:9), so that every burnt offering was consumed by the very fire of God! This fire, started by Yahweh, was kept burning by the priests, and was carried from place to place so it could be used to start other holy fires (Lev. 16:12-13; Num. 16:45-50). That is why it was such an abomination when Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, lit a fire by their own hands and offered “strange fire” before the Lord so that He destroyed them. Thus, it is GOD HIMSELF who consumes the sacrifice!

The *golden censer* represents each member of God's elect, for the fire of God resides in the life of every man and woman who has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

The *prayers* offered at the altar are the effectual prayers of those saints who minister as priests in the Spirit and by the Spirit. From of old God had among His people intercessors to whose voice He listened and gave deliverance. As someone has pointed out, on one occasion it was strangely said of God, “He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor” (Isa. 59:16). Here we read of a time of trouble when He sought for an intercessor, but in vain. And He *wondered!* Think of what that means — the amazement of God that there should be none who loved the people enough, or who had sufficient understanding of God's will and faith in His power to deliver, to intercede, on their behalf! If there had been an intercessor, He would have given deliverance; without an intercessor His judgment came down (Isa. 64:7; Eze. 22:30-31). But when it was said of God that He wondered that there was no intercessor, there followed the words: “Therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him. The Redeemer shall come to Sion” (Isa. 59:16,20). God Himself would provide the true intercessor, in Christ His Son, of whom it had already been said, “He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12). And now, “He ever liveth to make intercession *for us!*” Christ the Head is intercessor in heaven; we, the members of His body, are partners and participators with Him in the earth. Because there was no intercessor, God has Himself raised up His INTERCESSOR COMPANY to bring deliverance!

This brings us to the *incense*. On many occasions incense is the symbol of prayer. David cried, "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense" (Ps. 141:2). As the burning of incense produces a fragrance, so the prayers, combined with the high praises of the saints, brings forth a sweet-smelling fragrance to the Lord. After the close of the giving of the Old Testament Canon, heaven was silent for about four hundred years. Then the silence was broken by the intrusion of the presence of an angel at the time of incense: "And it came to pass, that while he (Zacharias) executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of the incense" (Lk. 1:8-10).

Here in John's vision of the ministry at the golden altar, however, there is a difference! The incense is *not* the prayers of the saints, but is offered up *with* the prayers of the saints. This concept is most interesting. It suggests that the prayers of the saints were lying on the altar and the angel came with incense to cense the holy things. Incense mingled with the prayers of the saints can only be ***prayer mingled with prayer!*** PRAYER OF A HIGHER, PURER TYPE INTERMIXED WITH THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS! All of this declares to us that the incense is the activity of the Holy Spirit in our praying, for we are exhorted to pray "with the Spirit" and "in the Spirit." This "with our prayers" activity of the indwelling Spirit is seen so clearly in Paul's admonition wherein he says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself *maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He *maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God*" (Rom. 8:26-27).

The *smoke* of the incense, which ascended up with the prayers of the saints, bespeaks of the *fragrance* of our prayers which ascends up before God as a sweet-smelling savor — that which is well pleasing and acceptable unto the Lord. If we have prayers without fire and incense, they aren't going to ascend any higher than our heads! The aroma is produced *from the incense that is quickened by the fire!* The apostle James tells us that "the *effectual fervent prayer* of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). The words "effectual fervent" are from one Greek word, *energeo*, which is the word from which is derived our English word "energize." A better rendering would be "The ***energized*** prayer of a righteous man availeth much," which means a prayer within a prayer, a voice within a voice. It is only the prayer that is offered on the golden altar of incense, ***energized by the fire of God within our spirit***, that will ascend as a fragrant odor into the presence of the Lord!

The message is clear — prayer is *not* priestly prayer unless it is *in the Spirit* and *by the Spirit!* Ah, yes, anyone can pray, the meanest sinner can cry, "God be merciful to me!" and the Father will hear that cry. Believers on all levels of spiritual maturity pray, most often for *blessings* and *things*, and God hears and answers, meeting many needs. But none of these constitute PRIESTHOOD PRAYER. Priesthood prayer is prayed by an order of saints possessed of a priestly nature and a priestly heart, those called and chosen by the Lord to be kings and priests to reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10). Any kind of prayer may secure a blessing from God, but only priesthood prayer can bring the kingdom of God to pass in the earth! Priesthood prayer reconciles men to God! Priesthood prayer sets the captives free! Priesthood prayer delivers creation from the bondage of corruption! Priesthood prayer restores all things back into God again! Priesthood prayer is the ***ministry from the golden altar!***

All the various works of God know their appointed times. The wise man said, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven” (Ecc. 3:1). Everything in nature sets the example of precise order and patterns, and so it is also in the realm of the spirit. Every spiritual activity has its appointed time and season. There is a time to be a babe in Christ, a time to grow, a time to learn, a time to mature. There is a time to give oneself to prayer, a time to devote oneself to the word, a time to share and witness, a time to work and bless, a time to heal and encourage, a time to correct, admonish, or rebuke, and a time to simply BE the expression of God in the earth. But while I am asserting the necessity of *seasons* for prayer and all other spiritual activities, let no one think that I am suggesting that we should *carnally* determine these seasons, for instance, “I will pray for an hour every morning between 5:00 and 6:00,” or “I will study the scriptures each night just before I go to bed.” While such resolutions sound logical and appear laudable to the natural mind, they are usually *soulical* determinations and ***spiritually they just don’t work!*** Spiritually, such self-efforts are mere rubbish! There is a “spiritual time” for the sacrifice at the golden altar, and there must be the fire of God burning upon the altar, and the incense given from the hand of the high priest to offer *with* our prayers, or they are just so many words! Can you not see the mystery?

The *seasons* for spiritual work are *spiritual seasons*, not natural. They have nothing to do with the position of the hands on the clock or the date on the calendar — they depend solely upon the leading and moving of the Spirit of God, the flow of His life, the discernment of His mind, the unction of His will! Are you familiar with the legend of Chanticleer, the rooster? Chanticleer thought that his crowing caused the sun to rise. He even felt that if one day by accident he should fail to crow, the sun would not rise at all. Of course, the universe is quite different from what Chanticleer imagined. For in fact it was the sun with its soft rays of dawn that awoke Chanticleer. He was only a herald, the announcer of all the light and warmth contained in the sun. It is so with God and us! We do not move God by our efforts and prayers — it is God who moves us *to pray!*

There are times when I have “decided” to spend time in prayer, but when I turned aside to give myself to it, no matter how I labored there was no sense of His presence, no flow of His life, no quickening of His Spirit; the heavens were brass and God seemed a million miles away! I could get nowhere and the whole time proved unproductive. But there are other times when I found myself praying, I found myself desiring to pray, deeply moved and compelled to pray, and that was the Holy Spirit urging me to do what was necessary to enable things to happen the way they were supposed to happen. It’s a mystery I don’t fully understand, but there are times when I have to pray, there are times when the altar of my soul is full of clouds of holy incense as I send up petitions, as I decree a word, not for myself, but for others and for the manifestation of the kingdom of God. This is the spiritual “season” of prayer of which I speak determined, not by my carnal understanding or soulish effort, but set by the Spirit Himself!

Ah, my beloved, discern the “mood” of the Spirit, be sensitive to the “times” of the Spirit, find the “stream” of the Spirit, and FLOW WITH IT! Pray when the anointing for prayer comes! Pray when the coals of fire are in the censer! Pray when the incense is mingled with your prayers! I do not hesitate to tell you that more will be accomplished in ten minutes in the flow of HIS LIFE than can be wrought in many hours of praying or ministering after the flesh. Learn this and you will understand a great secret: If a person is not moved to pray by the unction of the Spirit he can hardly succeed in prayer. Except we be quickened inwardly, we cannot pray in the Spirit or by the Spirit. When we pray “in season” we touch the throne of the Most High, and just as the apple tree bears its apples “in season,” just so will our

prayers bring forth a mighty harvest when they function in season! We mount above the stars beyond creation's limit, and the soul is alone with God. The electric current which thrills every fiber of the human frame, is but a faint image of that spiritual force that comes forth at this contact with the celestial and the divine. At the golden altar we touch, in union with Him, all things that are lawful and high in His eternal dwelling place!

If we would fulfill the divine function of the kingdom of God on earth let us cherish the motions of God's Spirit in our hearts. The mariner may spread his sails, but the ship cannot go to its destination without a gale of wind; so we may spread the sails of our endeavor, but we cannot bring the kingdom of God on earth without the moving wind of God's Spirit! How vital then becomes our sensitivity and yieldedness to the motions of the Spirit, motions to prayer, motions to intercession, motions to praise and worship and thanksgiving. "When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry tress, then thou shalt bestir thyself, for then shall the Lord go out before thee" (II Sam. 5:24). So, when we hear the voice within us, the secret inspiration stirring us up to pray, we must hasten to move with God. It is the power of His kingdom in manifestation! While the Spirit works in us, we should work with the Spirit. Oh! make much of the motion of the Spirit — it is the energizing of the fire of God within to accomplish great and mighty things for the kingdom!

God is bringing a great and wonderful change in the lives of His sons in this realm of prayer! If you are still living out of your human consciousness you will believe that your prayers will influence and convince God to do things. That is still part of the carnal, human, religious nature to believe that whatever **we want** God will accede to and give us if only we pray loud enough, fast long enough, make enough promises to God, or something else to *force His hand*. Now don't misunderstand what I say! I'm not saying we shouldn't pray, nor am I saying there is no power in prayer to move the hand of God and change things. What we need to do is change our understanding of prayer and our concept of God! We get into this religious thing where we think that if we ask enough we can somehow influence God to grant whatever it is that **we think** is good or needful. Don't we understand yet that God **is God**, and God is going to do what God is going to do! No amount of praying, pleading, begging, beseeching, or reminding God of His promises is going to **force the hand of God** to do something **for us**. The great truth is just this — the only prayer that will ever be answered is the prayer that God puts in our hearts to pray! The high priest must put the incense upon the coals with our prayers in order for them to ascend — He's not going to answer anything else! That's why we must pray "in the Spirit" and "with the Spirit." It is only in and by the Spirit that our prayers can be "according to the will of God." As we pray out of the mind of Christ instead of out of our own carnal understanding and desire, our prayer becomes effectual — energized — for such prayer is the very word of the Lord going forth to proclaim and creatively accomplish His redemptive plan and purpose! Isn't it wonderful!

The broad scope of the wonderful ministry of prayer is given us by the apostle Paul — yet even in this it must be as we are prompted and guided by the indwelling Spirit. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSIONS, AND GIVING OF THANKS be made for A-L-L M-E-N...for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a RANSOM FOR A-L-L, to be testified (proven, demonstrated, fulfilled) IN DUE TIME" (I Tim. 2:1-6).

You will note that the command to pray for all men is rooted in the fact that God **will have all men to be saved!** We must ever distinguish between the *fact* of the ultimate salvation of

all mankind and the *manner* in which God brings it to pass. He condescends to work through human instrumentality. Since God purposes to save all men, He has a **plan**, a **process**, and an **instrumentality** by which to accomplish this! Part of the process is **the intercessory prayers of the saints!** An intercessor is God's strategist — he sees what God is after, and goes along with Him. The men of the Bible always understood their specific commission. So do the sons of God! That all men be saved is God's **purpose**. Intercessory prayer is part of the **process**. The manifest sons of God are His ultimate **instrument**. That is why this ministry from the golden altar is revealed immediately following the opening of the seventh seal. Christ is fully revealed in the many sons brought to glory! The whole earth shall be impacted by the ministry of God's Royal Priesthood! The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ! This is a scene in the heavenly temple of God which we are! As the sweet odor of our prayers and praise and worship ascends before God from the golden altar within us — there is produced an effect! To say that since God will save all men we need not pray for them, is to say that God has a **purpose** to save them, while we reject the **means** by which He chooses to accomplish it! That would be like saying that a contractor is going to build a skyscraper and, since HE is going to build it, there is no need for nails, hammers, saws, heavy equipment, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc. How ridiculous! All those things are necessary instruments and means for the accomplishing of his will and plans!

The prayers of the saints! The prayer of God's elect in the heavenly realms of God's Spirit is not a useless exercise, it is part of God's cosmic purpose. Many of the Lord's people have missed the importance of prayer in the redemptive, reconstructive, and restorative processes of God! Our prayers **are** important! As we walk in the mind and Spirit of our great high priest we will find ourselves praying, for there is a relationship between the decrees of God and the response of God's people! God created all things by a **word**. God **said**, "Let there be...and it was so." That's a CREATIVE WORD! Prayer is a participation in the creative processes of God by which the new creation is **spoken into existence**. It is a mystery I don't fully understand, but as I stand at the golden altar there is that deep inner consciousness that somehow I am participating in the great tableau and drama of history.

Once when the Lord was walking this earthly sod there came unto Him a Roman centurion whose servant was sick. "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus said unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but SPEAK THE WORD ONLY, and my servant will be healed" (Mat. 8:5-8). Jesus spoke the word and the servant was healed in the same moment. The Lord wasn't near the place, but He spoke and a healing took place. How did this happen? When He spoke His spirit went forth and did the work! God speaks, His Spirit goes forth and things are created! Christ speaks, His spirit goes forth and people are healed, the dead raised, the blind see, the lame walk, lives are transformed, and great and mighty things are accomplished for the kingdom of God! The Lord speaks and mighty empires rise and fall. Did you ever notice that the Lord never did any great works without *speaking*. To the man with the withered arm He said, "Stretch out your hand." To the paralytic He said, "Arise, take up your bed and walk." To the dead He said, "Come forth!" And at the tomb of Lazarus He said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always..." When Jesus spoke marvelous things happened! He had already rehearsed it with the Father, and had heard from the Father. We are to do the same.

When we speak, whatever kind of spirit we are speaking by, we transmit it to others. When we pray in the Spirit we are not just asking God to do something He is reluctant to do, we are sending forth His Spirit to do the work we are presenting before the Father. We are actually answering our own prayer by releasing the Spirit within us to do the work, for it is by the Spirit of the Lord that all things are accomplished. We are beginning to understand what it means to speak the word! We can only speak that word with authority WHICH WE HAVE HEARD FROM OUR FATHER! That is the secret. If we hear nothing, we speak nothing. What we do hear, that we speak. The firstborn Son of God said, "I do only those things which I see my Father do...I speak what I hear from my Father." When we pray and speak by the Holy Spirit tremendous things will take place! We have experienced this only by measure at the present time, but soon, very soon this old earth is going to see something it has never seen before when God has His sons ready and sends them forth speaking the word by His Spirit!

We can't take the golden altar out of God's temple! Prayer is irreplaceable. Nothing can take its place! Substitutes are readily available for almost everything else. A prosthesis is a good replacement for a lost leg. A hearing aid is an excellent device for the hearing impaired. Organs of the body can be replaced by man-made gadgets and machines. If telephone communications break down, the fax machine, overnight express mail, the automobile, or the airplane can serve in its place. One could even carry the message on foot. A poor substitute is better than none. Not so with prayer, however! It has no replacement. There are no substitutes. Some have tried to substitute "meditation" for prayer. Even that won't work. It would be like sitting silently in the presence of your spouse, or your boss, expecting your unspoken love or attention to satisfy. The whole world moves by *words!* Your spouse needs to communicate, your boss has to communicate! Ask God to form afresh the Lord Jesus in all His beauty and power in your innermost being, that you might think His thoughts, desire what He desires, love as He loves, and pray His prayers! This is the secret of sonship prayer, which is priesthood prayer. Oh! God is raising up a mighty army of priests after the order of Melchizedek who are so able to cooperate with the high priest of this divine order that He shall be able to perform His perfect will and work through them. As our great high priest intercedes for us, let us intercede for creation!

Chapter 103

Ministry From The Golden Altar

continued

“And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand” (Rev. 8:3-4).

So many truths come pouring into the soul from this wonderful vision, and the understanding of these mysteries is of eternal importance, for until they are fulfilled experientially within us we will be ineffectual in our ministry as the priesthood of God. I would draw your attention to seven specific items in this beautiful scene. There is an angel, an altar, a golden censer, incense, fire, prayers, and smoke. We must be very certain about the identity of each of these objects! The imagery is drawn from the typical tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness. The setting is the “holy place,” the location of the golden altar in the tabernacle. It was stationed just before the veil of entrance into the “most holy place” of the throne of God upon the ark of the covenant. Here it is viewed as standing before the throne of God in the heavens of God’s Spirit!

The scene opens with John announcing that “another angel came and stood at the altar.” More literally the Greek indicates that “another angel came and took his place at the altar,” indicating that he had the right to be there, that it was his appointed place to exercise authority. This symbolic angel John saw standing by the altar, having the golden censer in his hand, ministering in the holy things of the altar, is none other than our great high priest of the heavens, the Lord Jesus Christ; for this “angel” occupies the place of the high priest in the temple worship (Heb. 8:1-2; 9:11). This is not a created angel as some contend, for a created angel is never portrayed as a priest. But this angel stands before the altar and officiates as a priest! A mere angel has nothing to do with our prayers, but our blessed Lord has, for our prayers are offered in His name. Nothing can be plainer than this!

The fire upon the altar is the energizing, quickening, transforming presence and power of God Himself who “is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29). The purpose of the fire was to consume and transform every sacrifice placed upon the altar. The fire was God Himself! The golden censer represents each member of God’s elect, for the fire of God resides in the life of every man and woman who has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

The prayers offered upon the altar are the effectual prayers of those saints who minister as priests in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Now there are multitudes of prayers that are daily offered up to God. You can go to any church and hear many prayers. People pray under all kinds of circumstances. In times of distress, trouble, and crisis, everyone prays! Not every prayer is prayed in the Spirit and by the Spirit. There are all kinds of prayers, Roman Catholics chanting their “Hail Marys,” Moslems on their faces on their prayer rugs five times

daily, repeating their prayers to Allah, prayers going around and around on a Tibetan Prayer Wheel, and written prayers pushed into the cracks between the stones of Solomon's temple at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Let us stand assured of this important fact: If there is not some other ingredient added to all those prayers, they have no value as priestly prayers, no spiritual power whatsoever, they will never get off the altar they are offered upon, they will never ascend any higher than the head of the person offering them, and they can not penetrate through and beyond the veil into the throne-room of God! Apart from the unction of the Holy Ghost they are merely words!

This brings us to the incense. In a number of places in scripture incense is used as the symbol of prayer. David cried, "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense" (Ps. 141:2). Here in John's vision of the ministry at the golden altar, however, there is a difference! The incense is not the prayers of the saints, but is offered up with the prayers of the saints. This concept is most interesting. It suggests that the prayers of the saints were lying on the altar and the angel came with the incense to cense the holy things. Incense mingled with the prayers of the saints can only be prayer mingled with prayer! PRAYER OF A HIGHER, PURER TYPE INTERMIXED WITH THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS! Can we not see by this that the incense is the activity of the Holy Spirit in our prayers as we pray "in the Spirit" and "with the Spirit," for "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered...He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26-27).

When the Holy Spirit comes to our aid, moving mightily within our spirit, is when the incense is added to our prayers! The anointing of the Spirit gives life and adds power and efficacy to our prayers! Let us consider these significant words, "And there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints." Not just a little incense, but a full and abundant anointing that is sufficient for every need — not only for our situation and calling, but for all creation. The incense-anointing offered upon the altar of our hearts is the power of the Spirit which animates, motivates, enlivens, activates, instigates, and energizes every prayer that is prayed in the Spirit and by the Spirit.

There in the holy place the high priest burned the incense which ascended from the altar and wafted its way through the veil, permeating the presence and throne of the Lord. Those who work in our office here in El Paso understand how easily incense penetrates from realm to realm, because there is an incense shop two doors down from our offices, and those people burn incense for hours at a time. They are two doors away with another business between, but the incense so penetrates through the ceiling and the walls until some days it is almost suffocating in our office. Incense permeates! When the incense was burned in the holy place nothing could keep it out from the most holy place. The incense, before it was crumbled over the live coals was a cold, hard substance; but the fire transformed it into a spiritual essence that penetrated through the veil, under the veil, and around the veil, entering right into the presence of God and the majesty of His throne in the Holiest of all! The deep spiritual meaning of this is that when our prayers are offered by the quickening of the spirit and power of God, nothing can keep those prayers from their destination, and nothing can prevent them from being answered!

Finally, the smoke of the incense, which ascended up with the prayers of the saints, bespeaks of the fragrance of our prayers which ascends up before God as a sweet-smelling savor — that which is well pleasing and acceptable unto the Lord! The message is clear — prayer is not priestly prayer unless it is in the Spirit and by the Spirit! The power of God as holy fire is that which energizes the prayers of God's Royal Priesthood! Now anybody can

“pray.” Anyone can utter words and make requests of God. But God pays no attention to many prayers! Prayer is a spiritual activity! There must be a spiritual operation in prayer, an anointing, a quickening, an energizing that comes out of the very spirit of the high priest within us, which also gives unction, force, validity, authority, and power to the prayer! Without the fire and the incense of the altar the prayer is essenceless, cold, hard, lifeless, barren, sterile, spiritless, dead, meaningless, and unprofitable.

One of the greatest truths ever revealed concerning sonship prayer was penned by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans. “LIKEWISE the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities (weaknesses, lack of understanding): for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom. 8:26-27). It seems to me that for centuries our eyes have been kept holden to many of the great truths of scripture. Without a doubt, very few who have read these beautiful words of Paul have truly understood what they read. Generally, it is taught that the Holy Spirit will cause us to intercede in prayer, praying for our own or other’s needs, when we lack the understanding of just what we should ask for. There is certainly a measure of truth in that, however, the intent of this passage is to show that the Holy Spirit will cause the saints to make intercession, not for their own earthly needs, or the physical and natural needs of their brethren and friends, **BUT FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF BOTH THE SONS OF GOD AND THE WHOLE CREATION FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION!**

The word “LIKEWISE” in verse twenty-six is a conjunctive adverb which joins the subject of true intercessory prayer with the subject preceding it. The subject of the entire eighth chapter of Romans is the manifestation of the sons of God and the deliverance of the whole creation. Paul explains that the creation is in a sort of universal travail for the manifestation of God’s sons, because that is creation’s hope for deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of corruption, sin, and death. Then he shows that we ourselves, who have and enjoy the firstfruits of the Spirit, which is but a foretaste of the blissful things to come, do groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from the power of corruption and death, which will reveal our adoption, our placement as sons, or our manifestation as the sons of God with power to deliver creation. The underlying theme is the groaning! Creation groans! We, the future manifest sons of God ,groan! Then follows the little conjunctive adverb — LIKEWISE! “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities...the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (by man)...because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Oh, the wonder of it! Creation groans, we groan, and likewise the Spirit Himself groans for the same thing on a plane beyond our ability and understanding!

The prayer which the Holy Spirit would pray through all the elect is that prayer which corresponds to the groans and travail of every created thing! Most of us spend much of our prayer time praying for our own temporal needs, rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through us with groanings which cannot be uttered, the transcendental prayer for the manifestation of the sons of God and the deliverance of the whole creation. A very basic and fundamental truth is stated when Paul says, “...for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” It would indeed be a gigantic step forward toward maturity and perfection in Christ if all of us would allow the truth of this to permeate our beings. This truth would unquestionably revolutionize our spiritual life, for the fact is that **WE KNOW NOT WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR AS WE OUGHT!**

Oh, we think we know! Even when we think we don't know, it is often because we are in a quandary between two or more things. "Should I keep my present job, or change to another?" "Should I buy a new house, or remain where I am?" "Is it God's will to heal me now, or does He have an unknown purpose in my suffering?" It is nearly always about natural things! It is evident that with so much pettiness and self-centeredness in our praying, we do not know what we should pray for as we ought. I dare say not one believer in a million truly knows what he should be praying for! The truth is that in about ninety-five percent of our praying we are praying wrong, we are missing the mark — we don't really realize the high and holy things that are important to the heart of God and His great purpose of the ages, and therefore consequential for the whole creation that groans in bondage — so we continue to pray for things that are trivial in contrast to the transcendent purposes of our Father! Armed with this understanding of the truth that we do not know what to pray for as we ought, we will yield our wills to the will of God and allow the Spirit to pray for us, making intercession "with groanings which cannot be uttered." And the Spirit travailing through us would intercede FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD with the resultant deliverance of the whole creation! There is no other subject in Romans eight!

When it is asserted that the Holy Spirit makes intercession "FOR the saints" and "FOR us," this is construed by many to mean that the Holy Spirit prays for us to the end that God will bless us and meet our needs, or the needs of those about us. But there is another meaning more consistent with the subject of the chapter. If you were to say, "I am going to the hospital to pray for Sister Jones," and I were to respond with, "I will go FOR you," — what would I mean? Obviously, my intention would be to make the visit to the hospital IN YOUR PLACE, and pray for Sister Jones IN YOUR STEAD. In like manner, if the whole creation is groaning and travailing for the manifestation of the sons of God and the deliverance of creation from corruption that will come through them, and if we ourselves are groaning within ourselves for this very same manifestation and deliverance, surely it follows that if the Holy Spirit, too, is making intercession FOR us with that kind of groanings which cannot be uttered, such intercession is IN OUR PLACE, that is, the Spirit is interceding IN OUR STEAD, lifting the whole cry and groan and travail of both creation and ourselves INTO THAT HIGHER DIMENSION OF SPIRIT! Oh, how He "helps our weakness!" But dispossess yourself, my beloved, of the notion that the ministry of the high priest before the altar and the work of the Holy Spirit in our prayers is an outward scene in some far-off heaven somewhere. Oh, no! The spirit of our heavenly high priest is right here within each of us! These are inward realities! This wonderful ministry takes place right here within the holy place of our soul and the most holy place of our spirit, IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD WHICH WE ARE!

On the plane of spirit the groanings are not able even to be uttered, for they are in some marvelous way the groanings of spirit rather than the cry expressed verbally out of our natural understanding. He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, that is, there is communication on the plane of mind, in that wonderful realm where mind communes with mind and spirit communes with spirit, beyond utterance. Thus the deepest desire and longing of the physical universe, the saints on earth, and the spirit realm are ONE! Creation groans, and we groan, audibly, and the blessed Holy Spirit groans on our behalf and in our stead with those unutterable groanings of divine mind, for we know not how to pray for this glorious deliverance as we ought. Oh, the mystery of it!

People write to me all the time and say, "Bother Eby, pray for this, pray for that, pray for the other thing." We used to call those "prayer requests." In our meetings in former days we always "took" prayer requests. Some folks didn't want to reveal what their prayer requests

were, so they gave in an “unspoken request.” We had no idea what we were praying for, so we just asked the Lord to “meet the need.” I’ve come to the place in my walk in the Spirit where I have had to turn from all that! I have discovered a greater reality and a higher order in the Spirit, and I simply cannot pray for everything people ask me to pray for. Sometimes brethren don’t understand that. “You’re a son of God, and you can’t pray for me?” they question. Well, Mary and Martha sent for Jesus when Lazarus was sick and He couldn’t go. While Lazarus lay dying Jesus stayed another three days in the place where He was, restrained by the Spirit from going to minister to Lazarus or even to pray for him. You see, Jesus could only pray for those things the Father directed Him to pray for, and He could only minister to those whom the Father showed Him! He couldn’t pray according to the desire and request of Mary and Martha, nor could He pray according to His own will and desire. As a manifest son of God He could only do those things He saw the Father doing, and He spoke only those words He received from His Father. That is so different from the old-order church way of doing things!

The following words by George Hawtin bear eloquent testimony to the truth of which I now speak. “How often have you heard Christians dreamily say, ‘I wish the Lord would send us a revival.’ ‘I wish the Lord would save my husband.’ ‘I wish the Lord would heal my body.’ ‘I wish the Lord would send us a good rain,’ or some such thing. Then they will make request in the congregation desiring people to pray that these wishes of theirs, which they call prayer requests, will be answered. Then when such requests go unanswered for years we wonder why the Lord did not hear us. Why should He hear us when the request is born, NOT OF HIS SPIRIT, but OF THE NATURAL MIND? There is far too much rushing into God’s presence with our boots on, far too much lifting up of unholy hands, far too much stepping where angels fear to tread, and far too little preparation of the heart in waiting for the Spirit of God to put the YEARNINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY in the spirit and on the lips of man” — end quote.

There must be an administration of the Spirit in prayer. When we pray apart from the anointing we are as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. The anointing is the incense that is added to our prayers! Within ourselves we are weak and helpless. With our carnal understanding and desires we know not what we should pray for. It is certain that many times we have prayed for what seemed good to us, but was actually contrary to the mind of the Lord and the will of God in the matter. We will never understand the ignorance of the carnal mind by which men ask God for all the worldly things their carnal hearts desire. Well did the apostle James write, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (carnal desires)” (James 4:3). That’s why I rarely ask for things! I have said to the Lord, “Father, if it would please you, I would thank you for providing such and such.” If it would please the Father to give me a million dollars I would be very blessed! But I leave all such carnal desires in the hands of my Father. Sometimes He has been pleased to bless me with wonderful things, and often He withholds things that He knows would be to my detriment. The simple but powerful truth is just this — we know not what we should pray for as we ought!

Every called and chosen son of God is learning in this significant hour that if we pray a prayer, speak a word, or do anything that is not energized by the holy fire of God upon the altar, and mixed with the incense of the Spirit’s supplications Himself, it is all vanity of vanities. This is beyond any chance of contradiction the central truth in intercession! Learn, O man of God, to fellowship with Christ, rejoicing in the Holy Spirit, communing with the Father, becoming one with Him in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, hearing His voice and beholding His works in and by the Spirit, walking in His will and doing His bidding,

and you will then be qualified to enter upon that precious ministry of priestly intercession as a KING-PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD! We can accommodate, placate, and please the people by praying for all the things they request, but that does not mean there will be any smoke ascending up before God, nor does it indicate that it will produce any results! Spiritual prayer originates with God in our spirit. It is His word in our spirit that ascends from the altar of our souls — He lights the incense by the energy of His quickening life — all this activity takes place within the temple of God which we are!

The same truth applies to our praise and worship! What ignites real praise and worship is the fire upon the altar of God in our hearts! There was an unspeakable glory manifest in the spirit of worship that came to the Lord's people at the time of the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit in the late 1940's and the 1950's. There was the living stream of the song of the Lord as the people stood at the golden altar of incense and worshipped the Father in the Spirit and by the Spirit for untold hours at a time. What glory rested upon the people of the Lord! What power flashed forth from the Holiest of all! There was the fire of God that energized and empowered the worship, it came from the altar of God out of the holy fire, and there was a divine fragrance that ascended with it!

But you know, my beloved, the day came when we didn't need the fire any more. We learned how to do it! It mattered not whether the high priest was standing in the holy place by the altar; it made no difference whether there was any fire in the censer, or any incense added to our worship. We knew how to worship and we could just turn it on and turn it off any time we wanted. Soon there was no fragrance ascending from our worship, it had become just another form that we knew how to perform by rote. I must be perfectly honest with you! I have heard much so-called "spiritual worship" through the years that was not generated by the fire of the Holy Ghost and there was no fragrance, no glory attending it whatsoever. At times, though the people felt blessed by the performance of it, in my ears (and I believe also in God's) it sounded more like the braying of donkeys or the yelping of coyotes, than the celestial sound of the Spirit.

Jesus was the firstborn Son of God and He knew the Father in a measure and on a realm no man had ever known Him. He has taught us, His younger brothers, that "they that worship the Father must worship Him in spirit." Then He added, "For the Father seeketh such to worship Him." John beheld this same Christ of God standing at the heavenly golden altar in the realm of spirit and He held a golden censer, and there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar that was before the throne. Oh, what divine wonders are these! The incense was offered with the prayers of all saints, not just those on this side of the veil, but those on the other side as well! There is a deep and mighty cry arising out of the hearts of all God's chosen ones in both realms, the visible and the invisible, for the fire of God that has quickened us in the depths of our being to be cast into the earth-realm and reveal the glory of God to creation. The smoke that John saw ascending before God is something which is energized by the fire of God upon the altar of our hearts. It is divine! It is spontaneous! It cannot be worked up! It cannot be instigated by man! Only the fire of God can release it! There is no need for us to do anything. It is that which is sovereignly ignited by the blazing Holy Ghost fire of God from the inner sanctum of being!

FIRE CAST INTO THE EARTH

"And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake" (Rev. 8:5).

It must have been a tremendous revelation to John to see the scene which immediately followed the ascension of the spiritual prayers of God's elect! When you read the book of Revelation, you will find that it is based on a pattern that first something happens in heaven, and then as a consequence, certain events take place on earth. Here the angel (Christ Jesus) takes the censer (our lives) and fills it with fire (the Holy Ghost fire of God) from the altar (the place of spiritual praise, worship, and prayer), and casts it (the fire-filled censer) into the earth (the souls or human identity of both believers and mankind). What a picture that is! May the blessed spirit of wisdom and revelation from God grant us eyes to see what is happening here!

As our prayers, praise, and worship ascend in the Spirit, the very coals from the altar that released the fragrance of the holy incense of our spiritual ministry is CAST INTO THE EARTH! The spiritual and divine fire of God which takes the cold, hard substance (incense) and transforms it into a spiritual fragrance that wafts its way to the throne and brings pleasure to the very nostrils of God, is cast into the earth-realm and mighty powers are released in the earthlies! There are voices as the word of the Lord is released, there are thunderings as the power of God is manifested, there are lightnings as the illumination of divine truth flashes within the consciousness of men, followed by a great earthquake as the carnality of man, and the kingdoms of man, are shaken to their very foundations. Oh, yes! The earth-realm of our own life, and that of the world of mankind about us, is powerfully changed and transformed by the activity of the Spirit that is cast into their midst out of the heavens of our spiritual ministry in the heavenly temple of God! Oh, the wonder of it! As God moves us to minister unto Him in the Spirit He is urging us to do what is necessary to enable things to happen as they are supposed to happen in the earth-realm. As we pray in the Spirit, the fire from the censer of our lives is cast into the earth! That fire produces the day of the Lord! As we learn the holy purpose of our ministry in the high realm of the Spirit in these significant days, there comes that deep inner consciousness that somehow we are participating in a tableau and drama of history! We are bringing the day of the Lord upon the earth!

The fire in the censer which the high priest carried was put there to reveal the great truth that it is the fire of God that brings change in any realm. The fire of God brings the spirit of purification and transformation into the lives of men. This is not an action of judgment, as we think of it, but rather an action of purification! It recalls the action of the angel in Isaiah's inaugural vision, taking burning coal from the altar and touching Isaiah's lips (Isa. 6:6-7). Beholding the manifest glory of the Lord Isaiah cried, "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." But the coal placed on Isaiah's lips does not mean Isaiah's judgment or destruction; instead it is good news, for the angel says, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Purification does not come easy! Hot coal burns, as does the cauterization of an infected wound. Surgery might take away a part of us in order to make us well; we may not want to lose anything, but pain and loss may be necessary in order for us to experience actual healing.

Most commentators, when viewing the fire cast into the earth, interpret it as divine judgment or punishment. They tell us that fire bespeaks wrath, torture, and destruction of the wicked. Those who tell us this say that fire is the common and exclusive figure of divine terribleness toward the guilty, the chief torment of the lost. If the action of the high priest at the altar of prayer, praise, and worship — casting fire into the earth — is a prophecy of the pouring out of the wrath and vindictiveness of God upon the world of mankind, then the type is incomprehensible! If the fire is vengeance, the one pouring it out upon the earth should be

represented as a warrior or a judge — not the compassionate, merciful, interceding HIGH PRIEST! The fire of the altar is the very fire of God Himself! It is the fire of His glory and majesty! It is the fire that purifies, transforms, and glorifies God! What fire is in the natural world, the Holy Ghost fire of God is in the spiritual world of men. Fire warms, beautifies, protects, glorifies, refines, purifies, and consumes. Purification is neither judgment nor punishment — purification brings SALVATION! Aren't you glad!

Before ascending back to heaven, Jesus said, "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!" (Lk. 12:49). To which He added: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it be accomplished" (Lk. 12:50). Just what Jesus meant by this fire He did not explain. However, He did say that as yet it was not kindled, even though He longed for it to be kindled, and that before it could be kindled He would first have to undergo a baptism of suffering leading to His death. Now by the Spirit we know what Jesus meant! He was speaking of the pouring out and release of the Holy Ghost fire, glory, and power of God in the world following His death, resurrection, and ascension. It began on the day of Pentecost! "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come...suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 2:1-4). This is where the Holy Ghost fire of God was first cast into the earth by our great high priest at the golden altar in the heavens of the Spirit! When Jesus said that He came to "cast fire into the earth" He was alluding to the very thing John saw in his wonderful vision on Patmos! The firstborn Son of God initiated this fiery, purging, refining, empowering, and transforming work of the Spirit in the earth, and the body of Christ, the "many brethren," the "many sons brought to glory," shall consummate this great ministry of reconciliation, redemption, transformation, and restoration!

I don't know who penned the following words, but I found them recently among my papers and found sweet confirmation in them. "Jesus is speaking (Lk. 12:49) of our own little inward earth and world. He longed for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It is the fire of the Holy Spirit within that burns up the chaff and tares of our own natural and carnal mind. Every wicked thought and injected imagination shall be cast down and destroyed. Everyone shall be salted and purified with fire! All mankind goes through judgment, now or in the ages to come. Fiery judgment is God's method to bring to perfection that which was saved by the blood and life of Christ. When God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness! Such judgment is for instruction, correction, and revelation. By the work of God's Holy Spirit fire all things will be set right!"

Throughout the book of Revelation we see our God as a consuming fire! God's action in fire, like His action in grace, is pure, harmonious, balanced, directed towards the purging that leads to transformation and wholeness. The eternal fire is the Truth, the Righteousness, the Love of God; in a word, it is the nature of God. Any careful reader of the Old Testament will be aware that fire is often used therein as a symbol for the presence and manifestation of God! Moses beheld Him as the fire in the burning bush, which burned but was not consumed! He came down upon mount Sinai in the midst of the people of Israel as a blazing, burning fire that scorched the mountain! He dwelt as fiery majesty upon the mercy seat in the Holiest of all! "Our God is a consuming fire," says the scripture, and the apostle adds, "God is love." God IS! God is fire and He is love. He is light and life. Fire represents the divine process of cleansing. Divine judgment by fire is not unto destruction, but unto redemption! Fire appears terrible only to the man who is unprepared to pass through it. Yes, our God is a consuming fire, and there is comfort and hope and blessing in

the thought! When we yield to God's love, and open our hearts to Him, He enters into us, and becomes within us a consuming fire; not to ourselves, but to the carnality within us. So that, in a very deep and blessed sense, we may be said to dwell with the devouring fire, and to walk amid the eternal burnings. Nothing is more certain than the fact that the fire of God has already been cast, and shall yet be cast, into the world of each of us! Not to destroy us, but to purge our land. Only the dross must be removed!

Now that fire — the very power, the anointing, the divine energy in the heat of our spiritual prayers, praise, and worship is cast into the earth-realm — into the soul life, into the carnality, natural consciousness, and human identity of mankind. The Christ within does this! It is truly the Christ! The censer is our life as a vessel, placed upon the altar of the Lord. The fire is the power of God transforming the sacrifice. The incense is the ministration of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual ministry of prayer, praise, and worship. The high priest is the Christ within His temple performing all this wonderful work in our lives. And by the power of God we, the members of the Christ body upon earth, are fulfilling this same ministration on behalf of all who “dwell in the earth-realm.” We pray in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord and the power of God is cast into, and released in the earth!

With these truths fresh upon our minds let us look at the work of fire throughout the book of Revelation. In the very first chapter we find the glorious Christ standing in the midst of the churches and “His eyes are as a flame of fire” (Rev. 1:14). The Christ's eyes of fire, and the eyes of fire of every son of God who shares His glory, are eyes of the very same fire that is revealed throughout the Revelation. There are not two or five or ten different fires! There are His eyes of fire, and there is gold that is tried in the fire (Rev. 3:18), and it is the same fire! The fire of the golden altar which is cast into the earth is the same holy, refining fire of God and when it is cast into the earth mighty commotions take place! By that fire all carnality is consumed from the sons of men, that God may be glorified in the earth-realm even as He is in the heavenlies! There are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God (Rev. 4:5). These seven spirits of God are “sent forth into all the earth.” Is it not clear that the work of the seven lamps of fire sent into “all the earth” is but another picture of the fire from the altar that is “cast into the earth”? It is the same fire! It's activity is in the same sphere! It accomplishes the same thing! The Lamb has seven eyes and the seven eyes are the seven-fold spirit of God, thus they are likewise the eyes of fire which are also the seven lamps burning before the throne! (Rev. 5:6).

You see, it is all the same fire of God in different administrations! There is a sea of glass mingled with fire (Rev. 15:12), a people who have become within themselves an untroubled sea of tranquillity, peace, and transparency, made so by the processing fire of God. All the restlessness and agitation of the carnal mind and the flesh have been burned out of them! There is fire that is cast upon the earth and burns up the trees that grow out of the earth (Rev. 8:7), consuming the carnal manifestations and works that grow out of our earthly, fleshly nature. There is a fire that destroys the religious sham of Mystery Babylon (Rev. 18:8), not consuming the people, but destroying the apostate system that enslaves them.

Then we are shown a great lake of fire for all the adversaries of God — death, hell, the beastly fleshly nature, the soulical false prophets, and all who do iniquity (Rev. 20:10-15). What are we meant to understand by this lake which burns with fire and brimstone? We know only too well the use the church systems have made of this conception through the ages! It has been given some horrific connotations and given a distorted view of the character of God. The crude idea that an all-wise, all-knowing, all-righteous, and all-loving Creator would decree endless torture in undying flames for any of His creatures does

dishonor to the name and glory of our precious Lord Jesus Christ, and it is incredible that the compassionate Saviour of mankind could ever have intended us to read into His words the notion that He will use that wonderful Holy Ghost fire of His glory to torture billions of souls throughout eternity!

The consuming fire of God is as eternal as God Himself; it is, because He is! It is that which was from the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Our Father dwells in the light that no man can approach unto. No man! That is, no carnal, fleshly nature or being! Who shall stand when He appeareth, for He is like a refiner's fire! Oh, if there be one thing for which we ought to rejoice and praise God without ceasing, it is that eternal fire which will burn up all the foulness and rottenness, all the wickedness and cruelty, all the deception, shame, and wrong from which our souls have ever suffered. It is not evil which will have the last word, but righteousness; not sorrow, but joy; not hate, but love; not death, but life; not damnation, but salvation. When the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, heaven is there. When any other spirit is dominant, hell is there. It is not God who changes when we pass from one to the other, it is we who are changed by the eternal fire! When all that has held us captive in chains of darkness is consumed by the fire of His love, we see Him as He is and reality breaks forth!

Do you long to truly affect and impact the earth-realm, my friend? Do you want to hear voices and thunderings and lightnings and see a mighty shaking and change in the earth? Does your heart yearn for God to move in mighty spirit-power to bring forth the word of God in such authority and with such illumination that it will shake all the kingdoms of the flesh and all the soulical powers of man, bringing a glorious change and transformation? How our heart cries for this!

Our Lord Jesus has taught us to pray that great sonship prayer in which are included these words, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Is it possible — faintly, vaguely, possible for God's will to be done in earth in the same totality and completeness as it is done in the heavens of God's Spirit? In heaven the will of God is done absolutely, totally, completely! But on earth — you know about Osama bin Laden, of course, you know about Fidel Castro, the Islamic Fundamentalists, the Chinese Communists, the gangs, pedophiles, drug lords, and godless humanists. If you take the terrorists into account, and all the vulgar movies, the divorce rate, the crime rate, the sexual immorality, the crooked politicians — do you still think the will of God can be done in earth as it is in heaven? I'm going to tell you something. You're dreaming; it's wishful thinking; you're whistling in the dark; you've got your fingers crossed hoping for the best — unless you know which earth the Father's will has to be done in first, completely! It is significant to note that neither Luke nor Matthew records Jesus as asking for the Father's will to be done ON the earth, but rather, IN earth. "In earth" does not mean the outer world of mountains, hills, valleys, rivers and oceans, nor yet the outer world of governments, organizations, institutions, cities, farms, and buildings. Man himself is the earth! "The first man is of the earth, earthy...as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy...and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:47-49). "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels..." (II Cor. 4:7). "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return."

My interest is not "Thy will be done in earth..." and earth is that which is outside of me, farthest away from me, over which I have no control. The cry of my heart is, "Thy will be done in this earth that I am" with the same totality and completeness and absoluteness as it is done in heaven. And when God's will is done in this earth that I am, and that earth which

you are, and the other earth that your family, friends, and neighbors are, soon it will take care of the whole earth, within and without!

We've heard all our lives that "prayer changes things." But do you know that's not really true? Do you see what the prayer did? "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand" (Rev. 8:4). The prayers went up before the presence and the throne of God! They became a sweet-smelling savor in the nostrils of the Lord! That means that the prayers were pleasing and acceptable to God, both an expression of His very own heart, and a proper participation in His great purpose of the ages. That's what the prayers did! That's all that the prayers did! But now notice. These prayers are not only answered, but answered in full. The censer which held the incense and the prayers is the same vessel which now is filled again with fire from the altar, and in equal measure, to the brim. As the prayer has risen from the earth, so descends the fire! Mount Carmel becomes the universe, and every member of God's elect a prophet Elijah. The fire is cast into the earth, into the souls of men! It is not the prayers that change things on earth — it is the fire! As a result of the prayers being accepted by God, the same fire that energized the prayers is the fire that is cast into the earth-realm of men's souls! It is the power of God to change men! The prayers do not change them, but the fire sent in response to the prayers!

I have shown with great detail earlier in this series how it is that in the book of Revelation the "earth" is the symbol of the world of mankind's soulful life. Collectively it is in the soulful works of man, especially in the religious realm, where the expression of the soul is confused with the life of the spirit. Our vision of heavenly things has been so distorted due to our looking through physical and soulful eyes! You have sometimes seen a window made of fluted glass, and you know that if you look at the street through this window everything will be distorted. The passers-by and the automobiles will appear to be warped and distorted in absurd and ugly ways. Nevertheless, you know that these things are really quite alright in themselves, and that the distortion arises from your seeing them wrongly. In like manner, the pure eyes of our regenerated spirits have had to filter through the fluted shell of our carnal minds, and the marvelous things of the realm of God's Spirit have been distorted into myriads of carnal doctrines, traditions, rituals, concepts, interpretations, methods, and religious systems and exercises.

This distorted vision of heavenly things is really what we know as "Christianity" and "the Church." It is a seeing, but a false seeing. It is a knowing, but a false knowing. Over the hearts of all unquickened and untransformed men and woman, as well as vast multitudes of the Lord's own people who have not truly been transformed by the renewing of their minds, there hangs an impenetrable veil of carnal understanding and spiritual darkness that keeps men blinded to the glory of Truth and Reality in the Spirit. Even in the reading of the scripture the veil is over their eyes, and they sit in blindness and outer darkness until their minds are completely renewed by the quickening, energizing, purifying fire of God! Then and only then does the light shine upon them! Then and only then do they begin to see all things as they really are and discern all spiritual things! Then and only then do they understand the incredible darkness and dreadful void of the carnal mind with all its delusions and distortions!

No greater tragedy can overtake a man than that, after he has been illuminated by the light of Christ, and made a partaker of the life of the Spirit, he should then mingle his affection with the emptiness of earthly things and not set them entirely on things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. The children of God are so occupied and busy

with soulish zeal and carnal efforts! They are running here and there, busily initiating religious activities of all kinds, as though the Lord could not get along without their officious help. One would think that the Lord is not as interested in His own Vineyard as they are! They are organizing, and bringing together all kinds of machinery to run the Lord's business; they are inventing intricate and clever systems to get men saved, and to entertain them so that they will remain saved! Everybody feels that they should be "doing something for God." This sounds reasonable to the natural mind; so men mingle the thoughts, schemes, ideas, plans, purposes, ambition, skill, and zeal of the carnal mind with the new inclinations and affections of the spiritual mind; consequently Christians rush about in every direction like ants on an ant hill, doing this and doing that, going here and going there, organizing this and organizing that, promoting this and promoting that, praying, preaching, scheming, planning, toiling, giving their money, working themselves into nervous wrecks, even neglecting their families and homes, cultivating the vineyards of others while letting their own experience remain shallow and on the surface. They find no time to wait on God in earnest, to sit at His feet in intimacy of fellowship and vital union, to *learn of Him*. They spend little or no time in coming to *know* the Lord of the Vineyard! Without exception, this barrenness and void in our lives is sure proof that we are in need of God's dealing hand. Therefore, let us leave everything that we can leave, and let us get still before the altar of God that He may speak to us and work in us, and for us, and through us, to His glory. Then shall we go forth with the presence and power of God upon us, and while we shall be used of Him with those around us, we shall have learned to watch for His movings and dealings upon our souls, and to always yield to Him to work in us first. Then shall our hearts become truly pure, unmixed with soulish zeal and scheming of the carnal mind. Then shall we be sons indeed, kings and priests of the Most High God!

Chapter 104

Ministry From The Golden Altar

continued

“And the angel took the *censer*, and filled it with *fire of the altar*, and *cast it into the earth*: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” (Rev. 8:5).

There can be no doubt that we are living in an hour when the Lord is revealing many things that concern the coming to pass of His kingdom in the earth. Long centuries ago the beloved apostle John saw in vision an angel, who is none other than our great high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, standing at the golden altar of incense in the heavens of God’s Spirit. He was given much incense, which is the anointing of the Spirit, and offered the incense with the prayers of God’s elect upon the golden altar, the place of prayer, praise, and worship. The fragrant smoke of the incense ascended as a sweet-smelling savor with the prayers, indicating that they were well-pleasing and acceptable to the Father.

As John beholds the scene, he sees the angel take the live coals from the altar, put them into the golden censer, and pour them out upon the earth. Immediately there begins a procession of stupendous convulsions, overturnings, and changes. There are *voices*, as the word of the Lord is released in the earth; there are *thunderings*, as the power of God is made manifest; there are *lightnings*, as the illumination of divine truth bursts within the consciousness of men; and these are followed by a great *earthquake*, as the carnality of man, and the kingdoms of man are shaken to their very foundations! All the symbolic forces of nature are divinely affected! The vision reveals the great truth that in the outworking of God’s kingdom purposes, *first* something happens *in heaven*, and then as a *consequence*, certain *events* take place *on earth*. As the prayers, praise, and worship of God’s *priestly people* ascend in the Spirit, the ***very coals from the altar that released the fragrance of the holy incense of our spiritual ministry is CAST INTO THE EARTH!*** The prayers start forces working in the heavenlies that ultimately release mighty powers in the earthlies! As God moves His spiritual kings and priests to minister unto Him in the Spirit on behalf of creation, He is urging us to do what is necessary to enable things to happen as they are supposed to happen in the earth-realm. As we pray in the Spirit, the fire from the censer of our lives is cast into the earth! It is this fire of the divine energy and power of God that quickens, energizes, purifies, changes, and transforms the world of men! By the fire of God we bring the day of the Lord upon the earth!

Bill and Elaine Cook shared the following testimony which graphically illustrates the truth of which I now speak. Several high-ranking church leaders from Europe, visited a pastor in Hong Kong who took them to visit some churches. They found them inspiring, and uniquely Chinese, but they wondered aloud if they were seeing the *real* church. At their last stop, the pastor discovered that two young women had just returned from their mission station for a short visit, so he asked them to come to the hotel late, to meet the visiting leaders. These young ladies had become believers as teenagers while listening to the radio, and they each

had felt the call to be a missionary. The pastor had tried to convince them to witness right where they were but they said, “No. The Bible says Jesus said to go into all the world. We will go.”

The pastor protested, “You have only been Christians for six months, and you are so young.” They replied, “Pastor, we have read everything Jesus said and nowhere does He ask people how old they are. We want to go.” The pastor replied, “Very well. We need some workers on Hainan Island. But it is very rough. The people there are fishermen. There are no Christians there. For young ladies it might be dangerous.” Excitedly they responded, “How soon can we go? We will go to this place.” They had been there for two years and were now back for a short period of time to try to get Bibles for their new churches. The pastor had not seen them since they insisted that they “go now!”

The pastor went to the lobby that night at the appointed time and waited for the ladies to arrive so he could escort them to meet the visitors. While he waited, he watched the bellboys in their crisp, tailored uniforms, and the tourists who attempted to be casual in their designer clothes. “Oh, no!” he thought, as the girls walked in. Their black pajamas and broad-brimmed fishermen hats stood in stark contrast to the appearance of the sophisticated hotel. Tourists ogled them with that “*how quaint*” look so often directed to nationals. Several people stood staring as he greeted them as politely as possible without drawing too much attention. “Come, we will go to my room to meet some people from Europe.” The women looked at each other, then apprehensively followed behind, looking down at their bare feet sinking into the carpet. They attempted to step more lightly, as though they were afraid they would sink into this beautifully colored “mud.” The pastor pushed the elevator button, keeping his head down and afraid to watch any of the many eyes staring in his direction. The elevator arrived and the door slid open, and the women greeted it with a look of astonishment.

Several tourists smiled at them as they stepped on. There were more “how quaint” looks. The elevator operator pretended not to notice his passengers as he asked for the floor number. The women’s wonder changed to fear as the doors closed and their first elevator ride began to ascend! Once in the room, the two European church officials graciously greeted them and motioned for them to sit down. The pastor pulled chairs toward them, so they would not sit on the floor.

The European brethren began, “Pastor, ask them how many churches they have Established on Hainan.” They put their heads down and answered, “Oh, Pastor, we have only been there two years. Not many. Not very many.” Their voices were apologetic. “How many?” “Oh, not many, not very many. We have only been there a short time. The people were not very friendly. Sometimes they became very vicious. Yes, sometimes they told us they were going to drown us in the ocean. Several men threatened us. Oh, my, and because we were so young, even some of the ladies did not like us. Yes, some even called us terrible names...so, not many churches...no, not many.” The pastor interrupted and slowly repeated the words, “H-o-w m-a-n-y?” There was a moment of silence, then one of the women looked up with embarrassment and anguish, as though confessing to a crime, “Only thirteen.”

The pastor looked astonished and interpreted for the guests. “Thirteen.” One of them repeated the number, “Only thirteen! Oh, my, goodness, I haven’t planted that many churches in my lifetime!” One of the pastor’s assistants interrupted, “No, Pastor, she did not say thirteen, she said thirty!” The pastor looked at them and asked, “**Thirty?**” “Yes, yes,

not many. We have done very poorly. Only thirty.” “How many people are in the churches?” Again both heads went down, apologizing for their failure. “Not many.” Finally, the pastor looked like he was ready to shake them and practically yelled, “**How many?**” “Only two hundred and twenty people. Not many, no...not many.” Quickly multiplying in his head, the pastor said, “Two hundred and twenty in thirty churches?” “Oh, no, in only one, but that one is a very small church, very small. There are bigger ones...” The guests repeated the numbers, “Two hundred and twenty is small? Dear Lord, I wish I had some that large. Ask them how many are in the big churches.” With a more reverent manner the pastor inquired, “And how many in the big churches? I mean, the biggest one?” They began again, “Oh, not many...” when he asked them, “Please, ladies, *how many?*” “Oh, less than 5000. Only 4,900. Yes, less than 5000. We have just started.”

From behind the pastor came the sound of weeping. “Dear Lord, forgive us! What did they do? How did they do it? Ask them what they did!” When asked, they looked astonished. “What did we do? Why, nothing. Yes, we did nothing, nothing.” “You did nothing? You have thirty churches; the smallest with two hundred and twenty people, the largest with almost five thousand new believers! And you did *nothing?*”

“No, nothing. We just prayed.” “I know you prayed, but what else did you do?” “***After we prayed, the Holy Spirit would tell us exactly what to do. We would keep praying and He would tell us what to do, and we would do it. Then we prayed and then He would tell us what to do. We would do it and keep praying...***” “Dear Lord, they **just** prayed and the Holy Spirit told them exactly what to do and they prayed...” The pastor laid his hands on the shoulders of the two sisters. Behind him his two guests, on their knees, weeping, joined as they *just prayed*. (Conclusion).

Ted Martin shared the following accounts. Imagine a community where 92% of the population claim to be born again; where the last of four city jails has been closed for lack of crime; where agricultural productivity has reached biblical proportions. You are in ***Almolongo, Guatemala*** (population 19,000) where just a few years ago poverty, witchcraft, idolatry, alcohol addiction, and violence ruled, ***until a few intercessors began praying and fasting***. Conversions, healings, and deliverances from demonic oppression followed. Almolongo has been transformed into a city of *churches* instead of *bars*.

Now, imagine a city where 60,000 believers jam the soccer stadium (provided rent-free by the city fathers who want to encourage the Christian influence in their city) for ***all-night prayer vigils every ninety days***, where a multi-billion dollar drug cartel has been brought to its knees. A few years ago ***Calle, Columbia*** was the ***drug capital of the world***. This large city, controlled by cocaine drug lords, was full of violence, corruption, and homicides. In 1995 ***a few believers came together and began interceding for unity among believers, and for the overthrow of occult influences and the drug cartel***. Soon, believers from all over the city converged for an all-night prayer meeting at the soccer stadium. That weekend, the newspapers headlined that there had been no murders for two days, where before, there was an average of fifteen a day. A few days later the head drug lord was arrested. Before the summer was over, six out of seven of the drug lords had been arrested. Corruption throughout the city was reduced dramatically. As the believers continued to come together in serious intercession, the kingdom of God continued to descend upon their city where thousands continue to be converted!

Now, imagine a town where local bars have been transformed into church houses; where ancestral shrines have been destroyed; where entire family clans have come to faith in

Christ. In **Kiambu, Kenya** (a suburb of Nairobi) rape, violence, corruption, alcohol addiction, and spirit of witchcraft had made this town one of the most undesirable places to live in all of Kenya. The few believers were impotent, that is, until ***round-the-clock intercession resulted in the overthrow of the communities' leading witch, and a dramatic increase in conversions.*** Now Kiambu has one of the lowest crime rates in all of Kenya! (Conclusion).

Commenting on the prayers and the high praises of the saints ascending to the Lord, followed by the angel taking the censer, filling it with fire of the altar, and casting it into the earth, producing in the earth-realm voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake, brother Paul Mueller wrote these beautifully confirmatory words:

“From reading this passage, it is clear that every Divine action that affects the earth begins in the heavenly, spiritual realm. As soon as the prayers and praises of the saints ascended to the Father, the angel took fire from the altar and cast it into the earth. Thus, the presence and power of God was sent to earth to fulfill our Father’s sovereign purposes. The spiritual ministry or service of the saints at the heavenly altar *caused things to take place on earth!* All that is necessary to fulfill our Father’s plan of the restoration of all things must begin with the saints of God, who are seen interceding and praising the Lord at the heavenly altar.

“The fire of the Lord from the heavenly altar shall first purge and purify our prayers so that they shall become His will. When the prayers of the saints ascend as a sweet-smelling odor before the Lord out of the angel’s hand, they shall then be fulfilled by the omnipotent power of Him who rules and reigns in all the earth. The casting of the golden censer to the earth, containing fire from the altar, undoubtedly initiates the answers to those prayers. Our loved ones, for whom we have prayed many years, shall then come to know the Lord! All our prayers shall be fulfilled, not in a weak or mild manner, but with a mighty and glorious display of the power of God in ‘thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.’ We are truly entering a wonderful period! We should believe God and expect the utmost of Him! When we see these truths by the mind of Christ, our faith and trust in Him increases. We then know that He will be our habitation and strength through every difficult situation, and our Saviour unto the fullness.

“The most important and significant truth we are learning today is that all spiritual action necessary to change the world for the better must begin with us in the realm of the Spirit! Nothing in this world will ever change for the better without an initial move of the Spirit beginning in the heavenlies. When we use the word ‘heavenlies,’ we are referring to the realm of the Spirit. All earthly, worldly changes for the better must begin first in the realm of the Spirit! Only the Light of Christ can dispel the darkness in the world! And His Light must come to us from the realm of the Spirit! Only by the Spirit of God can this corrupt world be changed into that new earth, wherein dwelleth His righteousness. And the Spirit of God, that shall bring forth that new earth, is the fire of God from the spiritual altar. Only as the fire of the Spirit of God is cast from heaven to the earth shall the knowledge of the glory of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. And God is that Fire (Heb. 12:29). He is the Spirit-Fire that must come from the presence of the Lord to do that glorious work in all the earth! God’s way of changing things in the world is, *‘not by might, nor by power, but BY MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord of hosts’* (Zech. 4:6).

Our new kingdom ministry, or our service to our King and Lord of all, is not only a future ministry or service; it is a present reality! We are called to minister to the Lord NOW! We are called to bow in humble obedience and submission to the will, the plan, and the purpose

of God NOW, not sometime in the dim, distant future. We are called to minister to the Lord NOW, by offering praise, honor, and glory to Him! We are called to pray the Lord's prayer NOW, not with mere lip service, but with total and absolute commitment and abandonment to the will of our Father. All that we do NOW, in the Spirit and by the Spirit, shall bring the eternal benefits and blessings of the kingdom of God to earth. Our spiritual action as from the heavenly altar shall bring heaven to earth! The New Jerusalem is coming down from God out of heaven, or out of the realm of the Spirit, to the earth, because of our spiritual action in the heavenlies (Rev. 21:2)" — end quote.

You see, my beloved, when we pray in the Spirit upon the altar of God, our prayer becomes a **word of the Lord!** And the word that ascends to the Father evokes a release of the fire-power of God which is cast into the earth where it brings forth transformation in that realm. It is the fire that does the work! It is the sovereign move and power of God! I can't do anything myself. Oh, how I long to set creation free! But I have come to the end of myself. If I could run out and change the world and deliver the groaning creation, I would lay my pen down and be out there tomorrow doing so. I really would. God knows I would! I've told Him a thousand times. Oh, yes, I'm ready for a change! I'm excited about the new order of the kingdom of God that is now at the doors! I am divinely anxious to see the kingdom of God come in power, not just in me, but in every son of God, and upon all the earth-realm!

We often talk about the new order of the kingdom of God that is coming upon earth. That new order, however, *begins* in God's elect! It is the new life of the kingdom within ourselves! God is raising up His righteousness, peace, joy, mind, heart, love, will, and the sovereignty of His dominion in our hearts and lives. He is searching out the inward parts of our belly, He's discerning all things, penetrating all things, quickening all things, illuminating all things, and transforming all things. He's changing everything within us! He's peeling away from us layer after layer of all the carnal stuff that has concealed the beauty and glory of the pure life of Christ within. He's separating us from everything we have trusted in, all that we have been taught, all that we have believed, all that we have practiced, all that we have been associated with, all that we have participated in, that the nature, glory, wisdom, purpose, and power of Christ alone might be revealed in us. Yet all that He is doing in us must be "cast into the earth!"

God knows the deep prayer that is in my heart, upon the altar of the Lord. It's a cry out of the depths of my being for the manifestation of the sons of God and the deliverance of all creation. The fire of God is soon to be poured out into the earth-realm on a level the world has never seen. But first it must happen within all of God's elect! The fire is being cast into *our earth* — from the altar of the heavens of the spirit within us, into the earth of our outer life. The only thing that can change anything about me, or about you, my beloved, is the fire of God from the altar! I can't change myself! You can't change yourself! I cannot save my own soul or redeem my own body from death! Neither can you! And just as certainly as we can't do it for ourselves, neither can we do it for creation! My heart sings a thousand hallelujahs, for we are standing on the threshold of a mighty, stupendous, incredible, dynamic, unprecedented, supernatural, sovereign *intervention of God*. The spirit of the high priest within us is casting fire into our earth, and mighty things are beginning to happen! Oh, yes! We are being changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. And creation is standing on tip-toe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own! For the creation also shall be visited by the consuming, illuminating, purging, transforming fire of God from the altar of God within His sons! Aren't you glad!

VOICES, THUNDERINGS, LIGHTNINGS, AND AN EARTHQUAKE

“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and there were *voices* and *thunderings*, and *lightnings*, and an *earthquake*” (Rev. 8:5).

What happens next is amazing: when the golden censer of fire is cast into the earth, this is followed by “the sound of voices and peals of thunder and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.” These phenomena, of course, should be familiar to every student of the scriptures as the normal accompaniments of the divine Glory-Cloud! “So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound...now mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently” (Ex. 19:16,18).

One of the key words in the book of Revelation is “voices.” It is important to note in each case what the voices are, what the circumstances are, where they come from, and what they say. Here in our text the voice bespeaks the ***word of the Lord*** spoken out of the mouths of His kings and priests! It is the one Voice of the Lord becoming many voices, as the sound of many waters, issuing from the many sons brought to glory. If you ask me today, “How do you perceive God? What do you see in your mind? Do you see a great man with a white beard, piercing eyes of fire, with lightning bolts coming out of His fingers?” No! “Do you see some kind of a figure?” No! There are times when I see a face. It is a mental concept of Jesus. If I see a body in my mind, it is the body of Jesus Christ, the corporate, composite body of many members. How do I conceive of God? As a body? No. As some spirit who flits about disembodied with a lot of force and energy? No. I conceive of God as a *voice*. That is how I conceive of God. That’s how I experience Him. The first thing we read of God is that “God *said*...” He spoke! And the only manifestation of God Adam knew in that long-ago Eden was simply “the *voice* of the Lord God walking in the midst of the garden in the cool (spirit) of the day” (Gen. 3:8).

Early in the Revelation John heard a voice as of a trumpet speaking to him, and he turned to see the *voice*. That voice was the manifestation of Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. It was the revelation of the glory of God’s Christ, Head and body. Later John was shown the throne of the Lord, and one sat upon the throne; there were four living creatures in the midst of the throne and twenty-four elders round about the throne, and “out of the throne proceeded *voices*” (Rev. 4:5). What are the voices out of the throne? Jesus had previously promised, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). It should not be difficult to understand that the voices proceeding from the throne are the voices of *those sitting in the throne!* The word “voices,” from the Greek, means a saying or a language that reveals or discloses something. Since it is God’s voices that are sent into the earth, it is the Lord revealing Himself, His truth, His ways, His will, and His glory to many people. The voices are the ***word of the Lord*** proclaimed by God’s kings and priests who reign with Christ upon His throne! The voices represent the sending forth into the earth of the authoritative word of the Lord!

Then there were “thunderings.” Thunder is always the symbol of the ***power of God***. Job understood this truth when he said, “Lo, these are parts of His ways...but the ***thunder of His power*** who can understand?” (Job 26:14). When God made bare His holy arm in the midst of the Egyptians, to deliver His people Israel, He revealed His awesome power. “And Moses stretched forth His rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent *thunder* and hail, and the fire ran along the ground...and Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them...Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more *mighty*

thunderings...and I will let you go” (Ex. 9:23,27,28). We have already read how mount Sinai was shaken by mighty thunderings when God came down upon it in power and great glory! No one who has heard the claps of thunder in a summer thunderstorm can think of anything except the awesome **power** it personifies! The thunderings of the Spirit indicate that the voice of the Lord is roaring or thundering the reality of His kingdom in *great power* to many people. “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory *thundereth*. The Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is *powerful*; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty” (Ps. 29:3-4). The *thunder* is the *power* of the Lord’s voice! It is the majesty of the Lord going out to creation!

The word of God is a word of **power!** Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, was “anointed with the Holy Ghost *and with power*: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). Jesus was Himself the demonstration of the power of the kingdom of God on earth! After being filled with the Holy Spirit the disciples of Jesus went forth speaking boldly in the name of Jesus, proclaiming the kingdom of God, doing mighty signs and wonders among the people, and the scripture says that “with *great power* gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 4:33). The kingdom of God, Paul tells us, “is *not in word, but in power*” (I Cor. 4:20). That in no way belittles or depreciates the value of the *word* of the kingdom. The power of God is in His word! But to have a word without power simply means that it is not the word of God, nor is it the word of the kingdom. Jesus had a word with power, and that is why the people exclaimed, “Never man spake like this man!” It wasn’t His beautiful sermon, but the demonstration of the kingdom of God with power. Jesus’ own disciples were exceedingly amazed and marveled when He commanded the wind and the waves of the sea and cried out, “What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!” That was a word with power, and it was the word of the kingdom and the power of the kingdom!

In our day, the truth of the power of the kingdom needs to sound like a trumpet. Men’s hearts are failing them for fear in looking after the things that are coming upon the earth, and many of the Lord’s people are also filled with fear. The elect of God, those who are walking in the Spirit and following on to know the Lord, are beholding HIM before whom all nations are as a drop in a bucket — who with infinite care and divine purpose created the vastnesses of the limitless universe and the wheeling constellations and calleth them all by name. For who has yet arrived from the Other World to announce that God has been outsmarted by the devil, or that His kingdom is in danger or disarray? Only One has come, and He has come with *great power and glory*, and with a word that the kingdom of His Father ruleth over all!

Jesus was Himself the demonstration of the power of the kingdom of God on earth! The miracles that Christ wrought while He walked the earth in flesh were His Kingdom Credentials. His signs, wonders, and miracles announced to the Jews that He was the promised Messiah, the One of whom the prophets wrote. After John the Baptist was arrested and imprisoned he sent messengers to Jesus to inquire, “Art Thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” Jesus told the inquiring disciples, “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Mat. 11:2-6). The signs and wonders wrought by Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, were tangible evidence of the *power* that would reside in the kingdom — power that could be seen and felt!

Jesus was the firstborn of God's vast family of sons. He came into the earth to reveal the *glory* of manifest sonship and the *power* of the kingdom of God! The power of God came first in the life of Jesus to raise up within Him all the nature, wisdom, glory, and power of the Father, *before* showing it forth through Him to bless and restore men to God. God's power worked in the life of Jesus for thirty years, bringing forth in Him the maturity of sonship, before ever it was manifested outwardly before the eyes of the people. In this hour, we, His younger brethren, are experiencing the power of God within and God is working mightily in our lives to finish the work of perfecting and maturing His sons, before showing them forth to creation. The truth we should now know is that when God's sonship company is ready, fully developed, prepared, and matured, this kingdom power will flow out from them unrestrained and uninhibited — power to the full extent!

There were also "lightnings" that flashed throughout the earth! Undoubtedly we have all seen, when clouds turn the sky into terrible blackness, how there suddenly flashes forth from their awesome darkness almost terrifying streaks of lightning that light up earth and sky. Lightning is a powerful discharge of atmospheric electricity. Benjamin Franklin knew that lightning and electricity are the same thing. Spiritually, there is a word and revelation of the Lord that flashes within our consciousness like a bolt of lightning! When man's darkness seems impenetrable and unbearable, then suddenly we behold the brilliance of a stream of moving charges as God's lightning flashes and the Lord breaks through the darkness of the carnal mind by the illumination of His Word and His Spirit. His glory is seen in the "lightning" and we discover where we are in His great purpose! This declares to us with unspeakable clarity that lightning is the symbol of ***divine illumination!*** These symbolic lightnings are spoken of in Psalm 97:4 wherein we read, "His *lightnings enlightened the world*; the earth saw, and trembled." The lightnings of God bespeak of the illumination of men when the Lord moves by His Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and revelation! They are vivid, spiritual displays of the light and glory of God, without doubt through the manifestation of the sons of God!

Divine quickening and revelation raise us up to a higher perception of truth and reality. Spiritual illumination is that lightning which flashes brightly again and again when the fire of God is cast into the earth! It is a sudden, brilliant, almost blinding burst of divine energy which in one spectacular instant miraculously breaks upon our consciousness and lightens our world with divine truth and understanding. In this very hour, as we approach the manifestation of God's life through His son company, the spirit of revelation is breaking forth so gloriously that we can hardly take it all in! Flashes of "light" or "enlightenment" are bolting all around us in ever increasing brilliance, glory, and splendor, just before our final metamorphosis. Isn't it wonderful! Finally, John tells us that there was an "earthquake." Earthquakes are mighty shakings! Earthquakes in the natural are powerful events! Probably the most violent land-based earthquake was the 8.7 smasher that devastated the Himalayas in 1950. The Alaskan earthquake with 8.5 magnitude — with its thousands of aftershocks, released the equivalent of 500,000 Hiroshima-type atomic bombs. At least, this was the estimate of Frank Press, well-known seismologist. According to Dr. Richter (the Richter Scale), the largest earthquakes release the energy of "only" TEN THOUSAND atomic bombs! We are rocked by earthquakes.

On the physical level, an earthquake occurs where the cooling of the earth has caused two layers of earth to overlap rather than to come together flush. As they try to settle into a more natural position, they release energy. Spiritually, this is fulfilled within each of us in those areas of our lives where the flesh and the spirit, the carnal mind and the spiritual mind, truth and error, or our will and God's will *overlap within ourselves*, causing intense

pressures to be formed! We have these places deep within us where things do not fit together properly, for soul and body have not been synchronized with the spirit, so that they do not “mesh” together. The flesh *wars* against the spirit, and the spirit *wars* against the flesh! When both the spirit and the flesh want to dominate great pressures are created. When we meet a situation that begins to trigger this conflict, we cannot help but experience the rumbling! The “earthquake” touches the fault-lines of our lives, not just surface things, but the very depths of our being where the foundation is defective, imperfect, and unsound. When there is a shaking from deep within there is a change on the surface, not from outside in, but from inside out! It should not be difficult to understand that no man can be conformed to the image of God apart from spiritually devastating and destructive earthquakes! In order for creation to be reconciled and restored into God everything of the natural constitution, the human mentality, the Adamic consciousness, the carnal mind, the flesh life, and our own will and ways must be utterly demolished.

When the earthquake comes there are great commotions within and we react and feel in a spiritual way exactly like those people experience naturally who are victims of physical earthquakes. Cars in the streets roll back and forth, trees thrash about, broken like toothpicks; buildings collapse, the terrain moves violently, bridges collapse, hospitals are rendered useless, water supplies are broken, communications are cut off, highways and railways are split asunder, and there is great suffering and death. Oh, yes! When the spiritual earthquake occurs within us, the old world of our carnal understanding and the powerful citadels of the flesh are wiped away! This is the awesome work of the fire of God when it is cast into “our earth,” or into the earth of all mankind!

I am thankful for the divine order in our Father’s working. Aren’t you glad that you hear the voices, feel the thunder, and behold the lightnings *before* the earthquake strikes! Ah, the Lord sends His word, manifests to us His power, and gives wonderful illumination before proceeding to shake our old human nature and identity to pieces. Should He have sent the earthquake first, we would simply have disintegrated into oblivion! There would have been nothing left. But we have a wise and wonderful Father! He says, “I’m going to come and awaken the Christ-life within you, I will quicken you to the life of the spirit, I will raise up my presence in you, reveal to you my glory, show you my power, and put my word in you — after all this has been firmly established within you, with the fault-lines clearly delineated, I will *then* shake that old realm of the earth-man, and the old creation that you were will fall, never to rise again! Oh, the wonder of it!

In closing this message, let us look a little further into the depths of this mystery. The Greek word for earthquake is *seismos*. While the word *seismos* is often used of conventional earthquakes, it also is used in different ways. *Seismos* has three primary shades of meaning: (1) commotion (2) gale (3) earthquake. In Matthew 8:24 *seismos* is translated as the “tempest” of a storm. “And, behold, there arose a great *tempest* in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves...” Was this “tempest” an “earthquake”? There certainly was great agitation, motion, movement, shaking, and potential devastation! But Jesus didn’t rebuke the “earth-quaking” — He rebuked the *winds* and the *sea*!

This reveals that the *seismos* had something to do with the storm. The fact is that storms, cyclones, hurricanes, typhoons, deluges, whirlwinds, gales, and tornadoes are all words that can be described as a *seismos* as well as the shaking of the earth. *Seismos* means the shaking or the quaking of anything! The root word from which *seismos* is taken is *seio* and is used in Matthew 21:10 and several other places. “And when He (Jesus) was come into Jerusalem, all the city was *moved* (*seio*), saying, Who is this?” Here *seio* is rendered

“moved.” Do you suppose Jesus was so powerful that when He entered the city it caused an earthquake, and the buildings collapsed and tumbled into the streets? Not at all! The *people were shaking* — perhaps not even physically, but emotionally. It wasn’t the ground — it was a shaking *within themselves!* Can we not see by this that the shaking and quaking of *aseismos* is not necessarily the shaking of the literal ground of the earth, but can be the shaking of many things both literally and metaphorically. One thing is very clear — the earthquakes in the book of Revelation are not required to be something that can be measured on the Richter Scale!

Now I would draw your attention to one other interesting fact. “And there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” Notice the order here Voices... thunderings lightnings...and an earthquake. The question follows — do we connect the “earthquake” with the thunderings and the lightnings, or do we disconnect it from them and see it only as a shaking of the ground? It is clear that when the fire is cast into the earth it produces a great storm there! We know that there is a storm because of the lightnings and the thunderings! We also know that storms are generated by the coming together and equalizing of two areas of different temperatures and other atmospheric conditions. Storms are caused by the action of large, rapidly moving air masses in which, very often, *heated air* containing large amounts of water vapor meets *cold air*. The clashing of the masses of water vapor against each other causes electricity to be formed. When enough of this electricity has been formed it jumps from one part of a cloud to another, or from one cloud to another, or from the cloud to the ground. This is *lightning!* As the lightning flashes, it heats the air around it, causing it to vibrate. This makes the noise of *thunder!* At the height of a thunderstorm, with the lightning flashing and the thunder booming, the rain comes down in torrents. The rain brings blessing to the earth! It purifies the atmosphere and gives refreshing and life to everything on earth!

The “storms” of the book of Revelation are interesting. They can be seen throughout the book! Here something symbolically represented as “fire of the altar” is cast into the earth and becomes a disturbing element in the earth causing great disturbance there. When the Lord comes in His Holy Ghost fire it always creates a disturbance! The fire of God *heats up* the “atmosphere” of Adam’s world, quickening the spirit within man, and that heated atmosphere of the spirit meets the *cold atmosphere* of man’s soulical life, and a great storm is generated! God *speaks* out of the storm, and there are heard voices! In the storm God manifests His *power* in the thunderings! He gives *revelation* and *illumination* by the lightnings! By this storm He *shakes* everything of the old carnal understanding, the old natural life, the old worldly system of things, purifies the atmosphere, pours down the rain of His Spirit and Life, and MAKES ALL THINGS NEW! Isn’t it wonderful!

Whether the earthquake is a deep-earth quake, or the tempest of a storm, in no way changes the outcome. It may be either, or it could be both! There is nothing more important in this hour than the manifestation of the sons of God. The ministry of God’s priesthood at the golden altar of the heavens of the Spirit is God’s *purpose* for the deliverance of all creation! “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,” speaking of the Christ of God, “thou art a *priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*” (Ps. 110:4). The word “order” in the phrase “order of Melchizedek” is something like the word “order” we use when we speak of certain worldly religious orders, such as the Franciscans or the Dominicans, or the orders of various secret societies or lodges. The scripture affirms that God’s Christ is a priest after the “Melchizedekian” Order. Christ is not called to be a priest after order of Aaron, the priesthood under the law (Heb. 7:11-22). Here you may see, Melchizedek the priest was not made WITHOUT AN ORDER. The fact of the “order” reveals the great truth that the

Melchizedek priesthood is not composed of one person, but a community of persons fulfilling the same type of ministry. Our great high priest was not made a priest without an order, but is after the order of Melchizedek; and His *royal priesthood* (for Melchizedek was both *king* and *priest*), who offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, are in His spiritual order, which is the order of the Son of God, for they are the *sons of God*.

The Melchizedek order of priests is not yet complete, for Jesus, the forerunner into that Order, must be joined by those who are to follow after to make up the entire Melchizedek Order. There are many others, God's called and chosen remnant, who are to be joined to Christ in this Melchizedekian ministry, *after the power of an endless life* (Heb. 7:16). Until that incorruptible and immortal Order is completed, the remainder of our Father's redemptive and restorative plan of the ages cannot be consummated. This is the truth the writer to the Hebrews proclaimed when he wrote, "Wherefore, holy brethren, PARTAKERS OF THE HEAVENLY CALLING, consider the Apostle and High Priest of **our profession**, Christ Jesus, MADE AN HIGH PRIEST FOR EVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK" (Heb. 3:1; 6:19-20).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the MEASURE OF THE FULLNESS OF THE STATURE OF CHRIST" (Eph. 4:13). There is the order of Melchizedek! God is making a new man, a perfect man. There is being formed in the earth a new man after a new order. This new man will be in the fullness of the perfection, maturity, attainment, and power of the Son of God! That's God's purpose in calling us, in giving us the firstfruits of the Spirit, in dealing and changing and transforming us from glory to glory into His own image and likeness. And here is what this new many-membered man is for: A NEW MAN FOR A NEW AGE.

Through our many years in the pews of religious Babylon all we ever heard was "the end of the world, the end of the world, the end of the world is coming!" So we grew up looking for the end of the world. Now I am going to tell you something folks — there isn't going to be any end of the world! You might as well stop packing your bags, testing your wings, polishing your halo, and praying God to whisk you away into the clouds. We have far too many Christians in the world today with dying faith, but they don't have any *living faith!* They are so anxious to die, and go off to heaven to be with the Lord. That is, until they get chest pains or a stomach ache, then they rush down to the hospital, and spend their very last dime to keep from flying away to be with Jesus! It gets rather ridiculous. Ah, something is wrong, very wrong, somewhere!

God is raising up a people in this hour with a vision for *living*, not so they can stick around to see their great-grandchildren, or take another cruise, or raise another garden — but because of the inner consciousness of the mind of Christ that our Father doesn't want us out there in the blue somewhere — He wants us right here on earth, raised up into incorruptible nature, life, and glory, to bring in this NEW AGE! There will be no end of this world, only the end of an age. The end of an age in which Satan in the carnal mind and wicked heart of man has been ruling over the world, and the bringing in of a new age in which God's many-membered man is going to be ruler over all this world that our glorious Father created for the sons and daughters of God *right here!* This new man will live in the heavenlies, but he will walk on the earth. And when God has fully prepared this man, and restored him to incorruptibility and immortality after the power of an endless life, which is the power of the order of Melchizedek, which is the order of the Son of God, He will turn the dominion of the world over to this new man for the new age!

The great truth I would emphasize in closing is just this: This **new man** is going to be after a **new order!** I want to drive this point home to every believing heart — what new order means. All across the land for many years we have heard these terms, “old order,” “new order,” “divine order.” And many saints have not the foggiest notion what “order” means! They hear the words “new order” or “divine order,” and they think it’s just a new message coming forth. That’s all it means to them — a new revelation, a new perception, a new terminology, something for everyone to preach and sing and shout about. Ah, beloved, if that’s all you see in God’s new order, you’re going to miss it! An order means a **system of things, an arrangement.** Things aren’t like they used to be, and things don’t work the way they used too, and we don’t live, move, act, or have our being on the plane we did before.

Divine order is that order which God reveals He is going to put this new man into. This **new man** must be after a **new order!** The order is the order of Melchizedek! Jesus wasn’t a priest after the order of Melchizedek until after He came out of the tomb in the power of resurrection and ascended into the heavens of the Spirit of God! This new man will be a priest for the ages. He’s going to be the mediator through which God meets all of His creation forevermore! Many saints don’t understand this mystery, but the truth is that in this age now closing there has been only one man who has risen out of the bonds of sin and death and the limitations of the physical realm to be seated in the Melchizedekian Order — the man Christ Jesus. So there is now **one** mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. But in that glorious age and ages to come all the other sons, His many brethren, sons of the resurrection, shall be “*priests of God and of Christ, and shall **reign on the earth.***”

Priests *mediate!* Priests *reconcile!* Priests *deliver!* Priests *restore!* This new man will be God’s priesthood for the ages after the order of Melchizedek!

When the fire of God from the altar of this glorious priesthood is cast into the earth there will be “*voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*” Glorious changes are coming to the earth-realm! It is indeed wonderful!

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).