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FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Book Six

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

By J. Preston Eby

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Chapter105

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour...and the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound” (Rev. 8:1,6).

This vision reveals the great truth that in the outworking of God’s kingdom purposes, first something happens in the heavens, and then as a consequence, certain events take place on earth. John sees seven angels standing before God. It is a heavenly, celestial scene! There in the high and holy presence of God and His throne seven trumpets are given to the seven angels, and they prepare themselves to sound. As each trumpet sounds there are solemn and marvelous events that transpire in the earth, the sea, upon the rivers and fountains of water, and in the heavens that govern the earth man. Every divine action that affects the earth realm begins in the heavenly, celestial realm! The sounding of the trumpets heralds and initiates the next step in God’s great redemptive and restorative program!

The central portion of the book of Revelation to which we now come, may be likened to a drama in three acts — the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Vials. Each act of the drama brings to us a view of the same landscape, but every time we come afresh to it the view is widened by the fact that we regard it from a greater height and further stage of development. With the breaking of the seventh seal we expect the end, the final consummation, for now the book of life within us is fully open and all the seals are broken! We would suppose the work of God is now fully accomplished, yet the end does not come. John pauses but for a moment before launching on a new series of visions introduced by the seven trumpets, which in turn are followed by the pouring out of the seven vials and the events which follow. As we look at these three acts of the drama it is clear that each in some measure touches and affects the same realms — the heavens, the earth, and the sea. So here we too pause, and ask what we are to make of this unique scheme of things!

We would deprive ourselves of infinite treasure should we refrain from investigating the deep meaning of the three series of visions — the seven Seals, the seven Trumpets, and the seven Vials. Does series follow series merely for emphasis, or can some difference be discerned between them? There is a remarkable difference! The breaking of the seals is an unveiling, thus denoting revelation. It should be observed that with the breaking of the respective seals, nothing is said about reading anything from the book which is being opened. The events which accompany the breaking of the seals one after another are not represented as being read — they are dramatic scenes vividly enacted before the Seer’s vision opening to his mind and spirit the revelation of how, the revelation of the process by which the Christ is brought forth into full manifestation in and through each member of God’s called and chosen elect. Thus the Lamb in proceeding to break the seals begins His work as a Revealer!

Can we not see by this that the seals are the revelation of how the Lamb progressively brings forth the manifestation of the Christ life in the experience of each member of the body of Christ. Actually, as I see it, nothing really happens when the seals are loosed except the dawning of spiritual understanding within ourselves. Here the revelation, the blueprint, of God's great and glorious purpose in us is made known to us! This is purely revelation! Nothing ever happens in our lives until first we receive a quickening, an understanding, a revelation! No man can come to Christ and trust Him as Saviour until first he has received by revelation (spiritual quickening, awakening) the awareness of his need and God's gracious provision of reconciliation, redemption, and transformation through Jesus Christ. Very few have received healings, miracles, answers to prayer, baptism in the Holy Spirit, gifts, or any other blessing and benefit until first the revelation divinely broke within their consciousness of the availability of these wonderful provisions. All things are received by faith, and faith comes only by hearing the word of God. The principle is clear — the man who has received no revelation of sonship to God cannot become a manifest son of God! God has a beautiful plan for everything. Revelation is the prerequisite for initiation, as initiation is the harbinger of consummation!

The breaking of the seals is to reveal things that have been concealed, or unknown to us; trumpets, on the contrary, are to announce new things, summon armies, initiate movement of the camp, call the Lord's people to His great feasts, and in all things to give the signal for change and transformation. No more delay! The hour has come! When the trumpets sound, the Lord sets His hand to commence the accomplishment of all that was revealed through the loosing of the seals!

The seven seals then give us the introduction to the Lord's work in us — all that was revealed by the opening of the seals of revelation now, as the trumpets sound, begins to be inwrought and accomplished experientially in our lives. Beyond the seals lie the trumpets, and beyond the trumpets lie the vials which also may be contrasted with the seals and the trumpets. The opening of the seals is the key to the book, for when they are opened, the book is. Yet we have merely seen by revelation what God is going to do! The seals break to us the revelation; the trumpets then usher in the initiation, inauguration, and accomplishment of the work, raising up within God's elect the reality we have so clearly seen by revelation, conforming us to the full stature of manifest sonship. Finally, the vials bring the result of God's work in us to and upon the whole creation of God, producing the FINISHED PRODUCT! Therefore we may say that John beheld the seals of revelation opened; he heard the trumpets of initiation and accomplishment in God's firstfruit company, sounding their herald; and then the vials of consummation bringing an end in all realms to everything that opposes the kingdom, establishing the nature, life, wisdom, glory, and power of God from the lowest sea to the highest heaven. What a mighty God we serve!

Many commentators on the book of Revelation teach that the seven trumpets are contained in the seventh seal — in other words, the seven trumpets proceed out of the seventh seal and are, therefore, the events of the seventh seal. They further teach that the seven vials are contained in the seventh trumpet, or proceed out of the seventh trumpet and are, therefore, the events of the seventh trumpet. I see no ground for believing that. On the contrary, the vision of the seven seals was finished before John saw the seven trumpets, and the seven trumpets all sounded before he saw the seven vials. The same is true in their spiritual fulfillment within us! If we can insert the seven trumpets into the seventh seal and the seven vials into the seventh trumpet then all are the contents of the seventh seal. In my mind that destroys the whole scheme of the revelation! What

would be the object of having the seven trumpets and seven vials if they are not different from the mere contents of the seals? Why not make the rest of the Revelation also come out of the seals? Yet the real truth of the matter is far deeper than this!

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

It is odd what strange notions some people get concerning the meaning of scriptures they read in the Bible. As a young boy I was brought up in a church system that taught that every word in the Bible was to be taken literally, and that the word “trumpet,” where it appears in the book of Revelation, referred to a literal angel blowing an actual trumpet at the end of this age, announcing terrible judgments to be poured out upon the world. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth than such a crude and carnal notion. When Jesus said that He was the Vine and His disciples were the branches, He certainly did not mean that He was a literal vine growing out of the earth and that they were literal branches. When He told His disciples that they were the “salt of the earth,” He certainly did not mean that they literally were sodium chloride! The Bible is full of symbols and figures of speech, and Jesus spoke in such allegorical, parabolic, and spiritual terms that it is said of Him, “without a parable spake He not unto them” (Mat. 13:34). The term “trumpet” is a symbol of victory, battle, warfare, movement, feasts, deliverance, and a number of other meanings. The word “trumpet” appears approximately one hundred times in the Bible. In the Old Testament the word is found about eighty-five times, while in the New Testament it occurs only about fifteen times. The first mention of trumpets is recorded in the book of Exodus, the last in the book of Revelation.

Multitudes of the Lord’s people throughout the earth are filled with fear and dread when they read or think about the events connected with the blowing of the trumpets in Revelation. Because they read the scriptures and understand them only with the natural, carnal mind, they miss the wonderful and deeply spiritual message that can only be understood by the spiritual mind. When they read of hail and fire mingled with blood being cast into the earth, burning up the grass and the trees, the seas turning to blood, the waters made bitter, the sun, moon, and stars smitten, locusts swarming out of the abyss tormenting men so that they seek death but cannot find it, they are completely overwhelmed with anxiety, consternation, and foreboding.

There are many who feel that every earth-shaking event that shocks the public must be a sign of the “end-time,” and we must make certain that we are prepared for the “doom day” which is upon us. Millions of Christians suffer from a malady called “Doomsday Syndrome.” They constantly fear what the future holds, believing that the “great tribulation” or the “end of the world” is upon us. Hardly a day goes by that we don’t hear some doomsday disciple pronouncing imminent judgment and damnation. Babylon’s preachers and teachers continually have a hey-day with sensational world events, trying to make them fit the fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies, speculating about their meaning, projecting, predicting, and even prophesying about their outcome, and never apologizing for all their past mistakes and erroneous conclusions. Almost every year another super-disaster hoax is perpetrated upon gullible Christians.

No matter what you have been hearing about the dark and dreadful things to come upon the earth, let me tell you something about the doomsday prophecies that keep coming year after year and decade after decade. Sherlock Holmes once solved a famous murder case by noticing what did not happen. He observed that the victim’s dog did not bark on the night of the crime. Therefore the dog — and hence the victim — must have known the

assailant. The rest was easy. So it is with the so-called “end-time” events! What hasn’t happened is significant. For instance, a great economic crash mindlessly foretold by the parrots of pessimism year after year has tremendous significance by its very absence! Despite all the prophets of gloom and doom the communists have not taken over the world, the Roman empire has not been revived by a ten-nation European Union, America has not been invaded, California has not fallen into the ocean, the new currency printed by the United States Treasury proved not to be a conspiracy to confiscate everybody’s money, the mark of the beast has not come via a cashless money system, the government has not declared martial law, the churches have not been closed, Clinton was not our last president, the Antichrist (as people think of him) is nowhere to be seen, communist Russia did not invade Israel, we have not been laser-tattooed with 666 on the forehead, Y2K went the way of all flesh and the folks who fled to remote areas with their generators, out-houses, guns, and stockpiles of food had plenty to eat for a while before creeping back into civilization — and the sons of God continue to be processed and matured for the Day of Unveiling! Only the word of the Lord has stood! All the false prophets have been proven liars, and God alone is true!

In my files over the past thirty years I have purposely saved booklets and papers in which people have set dates for devastating tidal waves, killer earthquakes, the collapse of the money system, the fall of America, the so-called “rapture” of the church, the appearance of the antichrist, and a host of other ominous events. I refer to these prophecies and predictions from time to time, and with the passing of time their falseness is starkly evident, for not one single prophecy of gloom and doom has come to pass! Ah, Sherlock Holmes, what hasn’t happened is significant! All these doomsday apocalyptic pictures of the end of the age, the antichrist, the great tribulation, etc., are based upon carnal-minded interpretations of certain prophecies in the Bible which have nothing whatever to do with the unfolding of the kingdom of God in the earth, are completely irrelevant to God’s great purposes in this hour, and simply do not enter into the equation at all. They are founded upon a confusion of thought — a failure to understand the scriptures by the Spirit!

You cannot teach the book of Revelation as doctrine. It is not a book of doctrine! It is a book of spiritual pictures and experiential realities! The book of Revelation is not meant to be preached, it is meant to be experienced! That is the only way to really understand and know it. We truly grasp it as it happens within us! We must read and keep (fulfill within ourselves) the words of the prophecy of this book, in order to receive the promises in it (Rev. 1:3). Remember that Israel was armed too with seven trumpets which they sounded against their enemies in order to inherit the land of Canaan (Josh. 6:13,20). In this hour God’s elect are called to act like Joshua and Caleb who had faith in the promises of God made to Israel and did not look to their weakness and to the strength of their enemies before them, as did the unbelieving spies.

Through the unbelief of the ten spies the whole congregation of Israel was turned back from the onward march of victory, and had to retreat and fell into shame, punishment, and death. These ten spies were men of high honor. They were rulers chosen by the Lord for His tribes, but they forfeited their high calling to conquer their enemies in the land and raise up the kingdom of God in the earth, because of their sin of unbelief. They refused to sound the trumpets of God’s command and march forward in the sound of those trumpets to attain the promises. This experience of Israel is the lesson now laid out before us in the sounding of the trumpets of the Revelation, through which we must believe the word of our Father unto us in this new day of the kingdom, pressing on in to conquer all our enemies within and without which prevent us from inheriting the promises of the Father to those

apprehended to become the manifest sons of God, being conformed to the image of the firstborn Son, putting on the mind of Christ, thus inheriting the power, authority, dominion, and glory of rulership with Christ in His kingdom!

REPARED TO SOUND

Now consider the scene! Seven angels are prepared to blow seven trumpets! Seven trumpets are about to sound! In chapter five of the Revelation we find a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth (Rev. 5:6). Then we find that “out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God” (Rev. 4:5). Take note that the horns and the eyes are in the Lamb that is in the throne. The seven spirits of God originate from the Lamb in the throne! But they are “sent forth into all the earth” (Rev. 5:6). Thus there is an emanation out of the throne of the seven-fold spirit of the Lord, that radiates out until it penetrates and fills all the earth and every dimension of creation. The seven lamps of fire which burn before the throne are the first aspect of that emanation! Let us grasp the picture! The horns and eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven spirits of God, are in the throne. By this we can understand that the seven spirits of God issue out of the very nature and authority of God in the Lamb! But the light of the seven lamps or candlesticks, which are also the seven spirits of God, burn before the throne. There has now been movement, for both that which is in the throne and that which is before the throne are the seven spirits of God — which eventually are sent forth from before the throne “into all the earth!”

In consideration of these beautiful truths it will be instructive to look again at the significant scene in chapter eight of the Revelation. “And I saw seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets” (Rev. 8:2). Before God! Before the throne! Is it not clear that the position of the seven angels is identical with the position of the seven lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits? The great truth is that these are the same seven angels of the seven churches! Therefore, the sound of their trumpets is a sound that comes out of the midst of God’s elect! Consider this, my beloved. Seven lamps of fire are burning before the throne. And now there are seven angels, and they are standing before the throne. Furthermore, the seven angels are given seven trumpets — a seven-fold message. They are sounding forth a word! As you study chapter eight you will see that these trumpet sounds go forth into three dimensions — the sea, the earth, and the heavens. Oh, yes! These are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth!

Can you not see by this that the seven angels are also the seven spirits? The seven trumpets they blow are the seven-fold creative word of God which issues forth out of the spirit in the Lord’s apprehended people. Oh, how wonderful are these things! As you follow these seven angels all the way through the book of Revelation, you will find that their relationship is to everything that happens to the three realms men live in upon earth. They sound the trumpets that affect the earth-realm. These same angels pour out the vials that affect the earth-realm. Follow these seven angels and you will see how they are identified with every activity of God that affects the earth-realm! The sound of their trumpets is the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth in the power of a creative word! Oh, the wonder of it!

We are told that these angels “prepared themselves to sound.” In what did their preparation consist? In that preparation, as John saw it in the picture, we would have to include the erecting of the figure, the standing upon the feet, grasping the instrument, the

bending of the arm, and adjusting of the head, the inflating of the lungs, the swelling of the cheeks, and the pressing of the trumpet firmly to the mouth. All of this, and much more, were necessary to the production of a clear, far-reaching, and reverberating sound. Without that preparation there could not be the intelligent and effective blowing of the trumpets. Oh, yes! The trumpeting of a message requires preparation. Today I hear many saying that there is nothing more to do in order to become the manifest sons of God — just wait upon the Lord, they say, and one day, when God's hour arrives, we will be magically changed, glorified, and manifested. There are others today who are trumpeting messages who have not prepared themselves! If you have ever heard a high school band play you know that they are amateurs.. There is often a bit of discord in the sound of the music. I have heard many "trumpet messages" across the land that spiritually sounded worse than any high school band I ever heard! I have heard trumpet messages, even among those who profess to be the sons of God, which to my spirit were naught but a raucous, screeching, clamorous, discordant noise.

Those who played in the Big Bands of the early and mid twentieth century were accomplished musicians. Do you think they got there automatically? Those men and women spent years practicing, every day staying true to their craft, and to the talent God had invested in them. They perfected that gift through exercise, going beyond the ordinary effort and toil of everyone else that picked up a musical instrument. They became masters of their art through discipline, through struggle, through hours of dedication and unswerving commitment to that which God had placed in their souls. When the concert opened there was no uncertain sound! There were no discordant notes, no dissonance! Those who blew the horns and bowed the violins had prepared themselves to sound! They had practiced the music until it became a part of them — they were in fact themselves the music! That's what it means to prepare to sound — the messenger becomes the message. When we become the message, then, and only then, are we truly prepared to sound! When we finally blow the horn we have something to say and we say it by what we are, more than by what we speak!

The trumpets are sounded within us by the seven-fold anointing (angels) of the spirit, and we hear them, not with our external, fleshly ears, but with those greater and more meaningful "ears" of the spirit! And if Father has given us "hearing ears," or spiritual ears, to hear the sounds of His trumpets, then we will hear them indeed and be empowered to experience within ourselves all they call us to! Seeing that the trumpets are spiritual trumpets sounding first within our spirit, later through us as the Lord's trumpet people, it follows that the preparation for their sounding is likewise something that takes place within us by the spirit. The preparation comes as Christ is raised up in our lives in the power of the Holy Spirit! It is the word of the Lord finding a lodging place and responsiveness in our lives, becoming established as the law of our life. It means separation from all other voices, heart-felt consecration and commitment to the ways of our Father, and the inflating of the whole personality with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit!

With a simple knowledge like this we should have no trouble at all in understanding that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the Logos of God, is Himself the seven-fold trumpet, the message, the revelation, and the power! In type Jesus is the trumpet of God, delivering a clear sound, a living word, introducing us to the reality of the perfection and incorruptible life of which He is the beginning. Praise God, it is the Lord Himself who comes in the trumpet-message, and at the sound of His voice we are changed with Him to share the glory of His sphere of life. Remember — it is the Lamb in the throne who has the seven spirits of God, which seven spirits are also the seven lamps of fire burning before the

throne and the seven angels standing before the throne sounding the seven trumpets! Oh, the mystery of it! The Lord Himself descends out from the highest realms of our heavens (spirit) into the lower realms of our earth. We are the creatures God is creating to express His nature, power, and glory unto creation. His purpose for coming out of the realm of spirit into our earth (soulish realm) and into our sea (body realm) is to catch our whole being up into the realm of spirit, to swallow up all death into HIS LIFE! And He accomplishes this by coming to us in a trumpet-message, the Living Word of God! It is the living, creative word that changes us!

SEVEN TRUMPETS

Let us look a little deeper into the meaning of the seven trumpets. The figure of the trumpets is taken from the Old Testament, and hence we must go back to the Old Testament for a full understanding. There were different kinds of trumpets under the Israelite economy. There was first the trumpet of God's law, when God manifested Himself in awesome righteousness, in terrible majesty and power. When Yahweh appeared on the summit of Sinai, there was "the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud," so that all the people in the camps trembled (Ex. 19:16). There was a military trumpet which summoned the armies of Israel to battle against their enemies (Num. 10:9; Jer. 4:19). There was also the musical trumpet which, like all the other trumpets, was a wind instrument, which formed a part of the temple orchestra (Ps. 98:6; 150:3). This trumpet was never used in the synagogue service, but always in the service of the holy temple. In addition to these, there was the sacrificial trumpet which was blown over the burnt offerings and peace offerings while they were being presented, announcing to the people outside that reconciliation with God was being established (Num. 10:10; Lev. 23:24; 25:9). Further, there was the royal trumpet which was only blown when a new king was anointed and crowned. When Solomon was made king the trumpet was blown and the shout went up, "God save the king!" (I Kings 1:34,39; II Kings 9:13). The trumpet of jubilee was also a significant trumpet in Israel, but only once in every fifty years. Those who were privileged to hear that trumpet were blessed indeed, for it proclaimed their liberty from all debts and servitude (Lev. 25:8-12). At the sound of that trumpet all shackles fell from the arms and feet of the prisoners, and all who had been in bondage returned to their possessions and their families. During the year of jubilee the people ate of the increase of their fields and rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

Another important trumpet was the trumpet of solemn assembly which called all the representative men of the whole assembly of Israel to the door of the tabernacle, to receive the instructions of the Lord. Then there was the trumpet of forward movement which was blown when it was time to break camp and move on to another place at the word of the Lord (Num. 10:3-7). There was also the festal trumpet which called the Lord's people to each of the seven great feasts of Yahweh. There was another trumpet used in Israel, and it might be called the trumpet of the seventh month. It was blown for one day only, and that on the first day of the seventh month, and then the whole day was given up to it. That trumpet called the people to rest, for on that day they ceased from all their labors and kept holy sabbath. The blowing of these trumpets announced the beginning of the civil year. It corresponded to our New Year's day. It also ushered in the seventh month of the religious year with its three feasts of trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles. It is claimed by many that the seventh month trumpet was the most significant of them all!

With these facts before us, what is our conclusion concerning the meaning of the seven trumpets in the book of Revelation? They are truly a figure from the types and shadows of

Old Testament economy, and in the light that the Spirit now brings they are not difficult to understand. Are they the trumpets of the law? Then they call us to be awakened to the law or nature of God which He is putting in our minds and writing upon our hearts!

Are they the musical trumpets of the temple worship? Then they call us to prayer, to the high praises of God at all times and every situation, to worship in spirit and in truth, and to the new song that springs forth out of the hearts of the overcoming sons of God! Men have done all sorts of things and called it worship, and many have even enjoyed the ecstasy of a realm of spiritual worship where, because of the thrill, release, and glory of it, rather than truly worshipping the Lord in spirit and in truth have instead worshipped worship! Those who experience the deep work of this trumpet rise above all fear, frustration, doubts, depression, and unbelief, recognizing the hand of God in all that happens in their lives, acknowledging that our great and glorious Father is absolutely in control of everything that comes our way, and that He divinely, purposefully, and wisely directs all our steps according to His infinite plan and purpose. The Lord's called and chosen elect who have spiritual ears to hear this trumpet have come out of the old order religious systems of man with their programmed and controlled "worship" to now worship the Father freely in the high places of the spirit! No longer is it the command of men to raise the hands, clap, dance, and praise the Lord, but it is a deep, awesome reverence that springs from the spirit and flows forth unto God. This worship no longer draws attention to the worshipper, nor yet to the beauty and glory of worship itself, but glorifies the Lord alone, always. In the lives of God's apprehended ones in this great Day of the Lord, the Father is cutting off everything we thought to be worship and leaving us void that we might really recognize true worship as it is spontaneously energized by the Spirit of God!

Are the trumpets of Revelation the festal trumpets? Then they call us to follow on to know the Lord in His feasts! How precious the knowledge that we have a God who hungers, thirsts, deeply desires to feast with His people! The feast means that God and man are brought together, the Lord appears unto man to associate Himself with him in an intimate manner, in an extremely close relationship. There were seven feasts given to Israel, just as there are seven trumpets in the Revelation. The three primary feasts were the feast of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. A feast involves an appointed day, a public assembly at a fixed time or season. The feast days were times when Israel kept divine appointments; times when they assembled before the Lord; times when they met with God in the revelation of His great purposes. All their worship centered around these religious festivals. Our Father has also set some appointments for us, and He expects us to keep them! Only by keeping all these divine appointments can we meet with Him or know and experience Him in all His glorious and eternal reality. The sublime truth is not merely that we are called to appear before Him in His great spiritual feasts, but that HE COMES to the feasts! HE APPEARS in the feasts! In Passover we meet the Saviour; in Pentecost we meet the Spirit as the firstfruits of our inheritance; in Tabernacles we meet the Father in all the fullness of God! There is a complete salvation that God has ordained for His sons, in spirit, in soul, and in body. These feasts provide it all! All the feasts of the Lord are necessary for a full salvation! Ah, as we hear the trumpets blow spiritually in our walk with God they will call us to His feasts, and as we appear before Him in all His feasts we are transformed in His presence, they are bringing us to our full sonship to God!

Are the seven trumpets of John's vision the military trumpets? Then they call us to battle with every enemy of the Christ life, to warfare against the carnal mind, all fleshly desires, every vestige of self-will, the bondages of religion, the limitations of the natural man, and

every cunning working of sin and death. Our enemies are not outside of us, my beloved, they are not the world, the church systems, our boss, our spouse, our neighbor, or the government. Oh, no! The only enemies any of us have are right here within us, and it is here that the Lord's chosen people are learning to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge (knowing) of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:5).

Are the seven trumpets the royal trumpets? Then they proclaim the fact that a new King is on the throne of our lives and that a new reign has begun within us! The kingdom of God is being raised up within a people who are called and are being perfected, matured, transformed, and prepared to rule and reign with Christ over the nations! Are the trumpets of the Revelation the sacrificial trumpets? Then they reveal that those who are pressing on into the fullness of God have now presented their bodies as a living sacrifice unto God, holy and acceptable unto Him. Are they the trumpets of forward movement? Then they proclaim the great truth that in our journey into our promised land of fullness of sonship to God we have not ever, nor do we now, settle down in any religious system of man, nor in any calling, ministry, revelation, order, or any spiritual realm of attainment we have come to in God. There are people who claim to be in this walk of sonship and the kingdom, but the sad truth is, they're not! At least they are not in the message and dealings of the Father that we have received and are experiencing! They are too comfortable. They are too content. They are too satisfied. They are too relaxed. They are too set in their ways, too settled down in an order that is even now ready to pass away! And you can't get them to move even if their life depends upon it! I tell you, my beloved, wherever we are camped at this moment in our spiritual experience, we must have our spiritual "ear" tuned for the sound of the trumpet, ready at any moment to break camp and press forward into the next move of God!

Are they the jubilee trumpets? Then they proclaim liberty to the captives, health to the sick, strength to the weak, comfort to the sorrowing, joy to the sad, sight to the spiritually blind, healing to the spiritually lame, understanding and wisdom to all who lack, liberty to every prisoner of sin, limitation, and death, and glory, authority and overcoming power to every man who rises up in the spirit to return to His former estate and full inheritance in God!

Are they the trumpets of the seventh month? Then they announce that just as the Lord's people have experienced the spiritual feasts of Passover and Pentecost, the hour has now come to celebrate the last feast, the feast of Tabernacles, and all that it speaks of. The feast of Tabernacles is a further realm and a higher dimension than has been apprehended by any except the firstborn Son of God! Pentecost is only the firstfruits of the Spirit, but Tabernacles is the full harvest — FULLNESS! Oh, yes, our gracious Father shall surely give unto the elect sons of God the FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD which rested and now rests upon our resurrected, glorified, ascended, and enthroned forerunner. Blessed are they that are called to this great feast, that which supersedes Pentecost, that which is the balance of the meal of which Passover and Pentecost were merely the first courses. This Tabernacles feast, being the last, shall bring perfection! It will bring the consummation of our salvation, spirit, soul, and body! As we leave this feast in great strength, those who will be in control of this planet from that time forth will be abiding in the fullness of RESURRECTION LIFE — it shall mean a new day of hope and deliverance and glory for the whole earth as the Lord moves through His body of manifest sons to deliver the entire creation from the bondage of corruption — the tyranny of sin, sickness, sorrow, limitation, and death. Aren't you glad!

It is abundantly clear that the seven trumpets of the Revelation embody within themselves ALL that the trumpets of God signify throughout the entire word of God! All the trumpets in the scriptures are models, prophetic pointers to the heavenly and spiritual trumpets of the new covenant. In these trumpets we see God's perfect number, His complete, all-inclusive number — SEVEN. All that God will say to His elect, and do in His elect, as we walk with Christ and grow up into our full spiritual stature as sons of the Father, will be sounded from these trumpets! At one time it will be the call to true spiritual prayer, praise, and worship, while at another time it will be the trumpet calling the camp to war, to rise up in the might of God to defeat all our enemies! In years past we heard the sound of the trumpets calling us to the spiritual feasts of Passover and Pentecost, and now in this new day of the Lord we are hearing the seventh trumpet calling us to arise and gather unto the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of His fullness! Oh! There are so many trumpets, and in the seven trumpets of the Revelation we hear them all line upon line, precept upon precept, until we are changed into His likeness, for they each call us onward to the very fullness of that life which He is!

THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPETS

If you make a study of trumpets in the scriptures you will discover that the sound of a trumpet represents the word of the Lord. It is His voice communicating a specific word to man. The trumpets blow a specific message. It is not a general word, nor an uncertain sound, nor yet a trumpet sound swallowed up in the harmony of the various instruments of an orchestra, but a specific and clear word from God. That's the main thought with trumpets — the word is clear! The sound pierces the air with the sense of awesomeness. It's a clear, resonant sound, it comes in power, with enlightenment, opening a revelation in your spirit, and producing the effect of that revelation in your being. Just one word from the Lord can change our life forever! It is an announcement, a creative purpose of God proclaimed, put into action, to bring about a certain transformation within us. Remember that the messengers were "given seven trumpets." They are given the trumpets from the Lamb upon the throne! Those who have received their trumpet-message directly from the Lamb on the throne will not blow an uncertain sound, for they receive their word directly from Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life." Such is the trumpet sound we are hearing in these days, and have been hearing for a number of years, as the word of the Lord is sounding forth clearly and powerfully in the message of sonship and the kingdom of God! Isn't it wonderful!

Let us take heed how we hear, and how we speak, and what we speak! The order of man is passing. How? BY THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS! By the very word of our mouth, because of HIM who speaks out of us! We might compromise the message and bear a message of appeasement to the old order of the religious systems, but what would that accomplish? If a trumpeter blows an uncertain sound, how will you know to prepare yourself? If the trumpeter has no message, how is he going to speak? If he has a weak or false message, the truly spiritual "ear" will detect the screeching, discordant note and reject the sound. I have had to reject many sounds that I have heard among God's people!

The seven trumpets are like the seven eyes, seven horns, seven stars, and seven spirits — they are the seven-fold fullness of God's trumpet-message, the declaration, proclamation of the process of His victory wrought out experientially within each of us! Seven angels sound the seven trumpets. Who are they? THEY ARE THE LORD! It is

the Lord in His people, of course, but it is the Lord! Know this, and you will possess a great key to the book of Revelation. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ! So when someone shows up under a symbol, doing something that originates with God, who do you suppose it is? Why, bless your heart, IT IS THE LORD! The Lord Jesus said in chapter one, "Behold, I come quickly." And throughout the book He comes, and He comes, and He comes, and He continues to come! He comes as a trumpet-voice. He comes as a Lion. He comes as a Lamb. He comes as seven spirits. He comes as seven angels, messengers. He comes as a mighty angel, or messenger. He comes as the Son of man. He comes as horses galloping out of a seven-sealed book. He comes as a star coming down out of heaven. We could go on and on. But when an action originates out of God and out of heaven, under whatever symbol is used — IT IS THE LORD! It is the Lord coming to purge us, refine us, thresh us, instruct us, enlighten us, perfect us, change us, transform us, mature us, and conform us to the image of the Son! As the trumpets sound within the lives of God's elect we begin to 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 our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the firstborn among many brethren. But now there is a people that has been sealed unto the day of redemption, and as God begins to sound the trumpets it will bring forth a many-membered expression of God at the same level of God's fullness. THIS IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

Our Father loves us with an everlasting love, and He has a plan that will change, perfect, mature, and transform us into the image of His firstborn Son. This order, plan, and purpose of God will come into fulfillment in our lives as we hear the sound of the seven trumpets within ourselves, respond whole-heartedly to each sound, and begin to "walk" through the events they inaugurate in our lives. Do not let anyone ever tell you that our omniscient and omnipotent Father does not have a precise order, process, growth, and development to bring us to the fullness of Christ. The God whom we love and serve knows the end from the beginning, for He planned it all, and He would never awaken within us the revelation and hope of sonship unless He already had in motion an order, plan, and purpose by which to accomplish the reality of our call within ourselves. He knows where we are in our walk with Him today, for He called us to walk in this wonderful new Day! We are not on this journey as a result of wishful thinking, for we have heard His voice and we have beheld His glory! He has had a plan and purpose for our present and future attainments in Him that have existed from before the foundation of the world. And even were we to stray and make our bed in hell (Ps. 139:7-10) our all-wise Father will be there with just the right plan and dealings to bring us out of it in a better spiritual condition than when we made that "bed." Further, our loving, merciful, and faithful Father has a plan, order, and purpose that will bring us to the very throne of God!

The sounding of the trumpets is fulfilled in us spiritually as we hear the Voice of the Lord! Every time the word of God comes to us in and by the Spirit and changes us we are experiencing the mighty power of the seven trumpets. We cannot go on with God unless there is one clear sound after another that blasts with power in our spiritual consciousness. We can only do the will of our Father by hearing His Voice. God's will is also declared in the Bible, but there must be a word beyond the sacred page, spoken by the very breath and mouth of God, before that word can change and transform us. To try to fulfill the written word by the obedience of the natural, carnal mind is folly. But to fulfill the living word of God, spoken out of the mouth of God by the Spirit, by the mind of Christ within, will surely raise us up to live in His sight!

"A THIRD PART"

The seven angels with the seven trumpets are divided into two groups. The first four, which we shall consider first, announce God's dealings or judgments upon the "world" of the carnal man. In the symbolism of John's vision the first judgment falls on the earth, the land mass. The second falls on the seas and oceans. The third falls on the rivers and their sources. And the fourth affects the light-bearers — the sun, moon, and stars. In each case, a third of their power is destroyed. The expression "a third part" occurs as many as twelve times in this passage, surely indicating that the Lord would have us pay special attention to this particular feature. A third part of the trees are burned up; and though it literally reads that all the green grass is burnt up, we take it to mean all the green grass that grows on the third part of the earth, as would be most natural. A third part of the oceans becomes blood so that life cannot exist in them; a third part of all ships on the seas are destroyed; a third part of fresh, flowing water becomes so bitter that it cannot be drunk, and men die of thirst; and a third part of the light of the heavens is darkened.

Surely, there is reason for the question: What is indicated by this "third part" occurring so often in the text? One third! Three is the divine number and four is the earth number. Now, as I have pointed out, under the first four trumpets, we read the words "a third" twelve times! And twelve is God's governmental number concerning this earth. Let us see what the picture means at this point. THERE IS NO PART OF THE WORLD OF THE CARNAL MIND, THE NATURAL MAN, THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS, OR THE ADAMIC LIFE THAT IS BEYOND THE REACH OF OUR FATHER'S DEALING HAND, AUTHORITY, AND DOMINION! Within me, within you, my beloved, there is a "sea realm," the outer man of the body. In our intellect, in our soul life, there is an "earth realm." And in our spirit there is a "heaven realm"! There are things that are true in each of these realms, in each of these dimensions of our life. Every man on earth fits into one of those three categories — every man! There is not a man on this planet who is not living out his life from one of those three realms. Billions of people live in the consciousness and power of the sea or body realm (desires and sins of the flesh); vast multitudes more live in the consciousness and power of the earth or soul realm (intellectual, moral, and religious); and a little flock of the Lord's elect live in the consciousness and power of the heaven or spirit realm (Christ life).

I have mentioned previously that John saw three series of dramas, each with seven parts. There is the drama of the seals, that of the trumpets, and finally the vials. As we meditate upon these great truths, surely we can see that the opening of the seals is the revelation of Jesus Christ! A revelation is an unveiling, and it is Jesus Christ who is unveiled unto us and within us as the seals are loosed. The further truth is that all our glorious Father wrought out in Jesus in order to reveal the fullness of God in Him, must now be wrought out also in God's firstfruit company of "many sons" brought to glory. God's elect, grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, is the second company to be brought to full and complete redemption, restoration to the life and glory of God! The third company to be restored back into God again comprises all the rest of creation. The point I wish to make is just this: As the loosing of the seals brings the revelation of Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son, so the blowing of the trumpets accomplishes the very same work of God in His called and chosen elect, the many-membered body of Christ, or the manifest sons of God. And just as the trumpets show the work of our Father in His chosen elect, so the pouring out of the seven vials reveals the deep and awesome dealings of God with the rest of mankind! Thus the seals represent the work of God in and through Jesus Christ, the trumpets show the work of God in His many-membered son company, and the vials reveal the work of God in all creation. Three series of dramas, each with seven parts! Three is the number of completeness, seven the number of perfection. These three dramas with their seven parts reveal the great truth of God's complete redemption and restoration of all

things, bringing perfection! There are three stages in the redemptive program, and a full and complete redemption wrought in each stage. Jesus has already been resurrected, glorified, and enthroned! Multitudes who read these lines are even now in the process of full redemption and restoration! And our Father has a wonderful plan and purpose to restore all things and all men back into the perfection and glory of God! Isn't it wonderful!

It is my deep conviction that the "third part" mentioned so often in connection with the trumpets bespeaks of the work of God in His elect in contrast to all the rest of the Lord's people and the people of the world. When this "third part" has been thoroughly purged, when the work of perfection and maturity has been fully accomplished in the sons of God, there remain yet multitudes of the Lord's people who are still babes in Christ and slaves to the man-made religious systems of Babylon, and millions more of the peoples of the world who do not even know God.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

To me, the greatest evidence that the ministry of the seven angels through the seven trumpets finishes our Father's great work of bringing many sons to glory is found in the fact that at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is necessarily also the "last trump," John is explicitly informed that "in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Rev. 10:7). This statement gives the meaning and purpose of the vision of the trumpets, and therefore we know what the work of the trumpets accomplishes and we have the interpretation of the vision! The "mystery" of God which is "finished" is the mystery of CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY! (Col. 1:26-27). Yet here, Christ in us is no longer a hope — HE IS BECOME THE GLORY! The mystery is finished, completed, fulfilled, realized, attained, accomplished, concluded, perfected, and consummated! Isn't it wonderful!

The truth of the statements we have made will be clearly demonstrated by that which is to follow. The Holy Spirit has not left us without a witness to all these glorious things! He testifies unerringly that "the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever...and the nations were angry, and Thy wrath (passion) is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints...and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God (sons) was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament (His presence, glory, and power): and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Rev. 11:15-19).

Just as soon as the seventh angel begins to sound his trumpet-message and the mystery of God formed as Christ in His sons is finished, the very next scene is the birth of the manchild who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron! The manchild, or the manifest sons of God, is "caught up unto God and His throne." Oh, yes! When the seven trumpets have fully performed their work in the lives of God's elect, the "one third" company, immediately there appears a great wonder in heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Rev. 12:1-2,5). And further, before the seven angels pour out the seven vials of

the last seven plagues, which completes the work of God in creation, the 144,000 sons of God are also seen standing with the Lamb upon mount Zion — the mount of kingship, rulership, and dominion! The work in them is truly finished, for John describes their glory in these wonderful words, “And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads...these are they which were not defiled with women (religious systems); for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Rev. 14:1-5). ALL OF THE ABOVE IS THE RESULT OF THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH TRUMPET! Without doubt, then, the seven trumpets bring full redemption, perfection, maturity, immortality, and kingship dominion to God’s called and chosen elect. That is the mystery!

FIRE!

Another truth clamors here for our attention. At the sounding of the trumpets several things are cast into the heavens, earth, and sea of man’s carnal, mortal existence. There is hail, blood, a great mountain, stars, angels, and a dragon. There is one other item, however, which appears alike in the sounding of each of the seven trumpets! Whatever is poured out under a given trumpet, this one ingredient is part of the mix — fire! There is fire and hail mingled with blood, the great mountain burning with fire, the star from heaven burning as a lamp, the sun is a fire, there is smoke from the fire burning in the bottomless pit, fire from the horses’ mouths, and finally, under the seventh trumpet, there is the fire of lightning. Ah, can we not see by this that the seven trumpets bring the purging, refining, purifying, cleansing fire of God into the religious carnality of our soul-life, and into the bestial nature of our body-life! When our Father wants to change and transform us, in the totality of ourselves, He commissions His seven angels, the seven spirits of God, who are the fullness of the Holy Ghost fire of God, to descend as the fire of His all-consuming glory into every area, part, facet, crevice, dimension, realm, height, and depth of our being! What happens when these blessed seven spirits of God cast into the earth and into the sea this fire which produces such holy blazes? Through this fire He brings total destruction — destruction even as far as the natural consciousness, the carnal mind, the self life, the fleshly desires, and the human identity of the man of earth! Then are we able to say of a truth, “It is no more I that liveth, but Christ liveth in me!”

Never forget, my beloved, that the book of Revelation reveals the processes that God takes His people through so that the bride can make herself ready, arrayed in linen pure and white; the manchild can be birthed and caught up to God’s throne of authority, power, and dominion; and all creation redeemed, purged, and transformed by the fiat of the almighty Creator and Redeemer: “Behold, I make all things new!” (Rev. 21:5). ALL THINGS NEW! Ah, that is the mystery! Ah, that is the purpose! Oh, yes! That is the work! In former times we supposed the book of Revelation was about God’s vindictive, implacable vengeance poured out upon the inhabitants of the world, and we felt sad for them, or perhaps some felt glad, feeling that mankind deserved what they would get! Only now, in the light that the Spirit brings, can we say with the beloved Seer of Patmos, “Blessed, happy, to be envied is the man who reads the word of this prophecy!” (Rev. 1:3). Isn’t it wonderful!

Chapter106

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound” (Rev. 8:1-2,6).

If you make a study of trumpets in the scriptures you will discover that the sound of a trumpet represents the word of the Lord. It is His voice communicating a specific word to man. Each trumpet blows a specific message. It is not a general word, nor an uncertain sound, but a specific and clear word from God. That’s the main thought with trumpets — the word is clear! The sound pierces the air with the sense of awesomeness. It’s a clear, resonant sound, it comes in power, with enlightenment, opening a revelation in your spirit, and producing the effect of that revelation in your being. Just one word from the Lord can change our life forever! It is an announcement, a creative purpose of God proclaimed, put into action, to bring about a certain transformation within God’s elect.

God is preparing a people in this hour for a new sound! The old church order of man is passing away. Within God’s called and chosen elect He is quieting everything from the previous realms of His purposes. God is causing the heavens from which the word of the previous orders sounded to become as brass. The dimensions that we once operated in are failing — the anointing has lifted from those orders. The gifts and ministries God used us in, and which we gloried in, are now dissipating and will diminish until there is no life in them at all. As long as we are content and happy to function in the machinery of a passing order we will never be able to make the distinction between sounds — to discern that which pertains to the new order of the kingdom of God! But our Father will not allow those called to sonship to remain in the lower orders, for He is taking us “two of a city and one of a family” and bringing us to Zion — the place of fullness of authority, dominion, and power in the Spirit!

We are not yet prepared to sound the trumpet, to proclaim the message, to initiate, effect, and compel the movement and manifestation of the new and greater thing God has prepared for us. We know how to continue issuing the sounds of Passover and Pentecost, but I would rather sit still in the absolute, awesome silence of God than to keep on blowing the trumpet of a dying age. The hour is upon us for a mighty change, things shall be different, and the hour has come for the silence of God in which we make the paradigm shift from the old into the new. The new will never sound forth until the old has been brought to its conclusion! There has come a deep and wonderful preparation for transition in the Father’s apprehended ones, and the new move of God will break forth within us when the silence is absolute. Many things are being hushed within us because the Lord will not permit the new sound of the kingdom to be mingled and mixed with the old sounds

that are passing away, thereby giving an uncertain sound out of confusion. This sound shall maintain its clarity, it shall be a certain sound in the ears of God's elect!

Creation is indeed standing on tiptoe, waiting with bated breath for this sound! And God is raising up a people not content to remain in the old, any more than Jesus could have been content to stay in Nazareth. What will the manifestation of God's sons be like? I don't fully know what it will be like, anymore than the early disciples knew what the day of Pentecost would be like when they filed into the upper room in obedience to the Master's command. I DO know what it will NOT be like! It will not be like any move of God, any revival, any experience, or anything we have seen in our life-time! The move of God on the day of Pentecost and the new order of the church age was as different from the old order of Israel and the law as any thing could be! I do not hesitate to tell you that the new order of the kingdom will also be just that different from all that we have known and experienced during the church age! It is a new sound and the sons of God are on standby, waiting in the wings to hear the sound. Because there is silence in their heavens, they have been given the wisdom and understanding to distinguish the sound and to move at once with its proclamation!

Most of us have been blessed to hear many of God's trumpets, we have heard the trumpet of salvation, the trumpet of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the trumpets of gifts and healing and miracles and deliverance and praise and worship and revelation. There is great blessing but also a hidden curse to that — for God charges us in this Day to make a distinction between the sounds, to hear what the Spirit now saith unto His apprehended ones. We don't like the silence — after only a few minutes of silence in a meeting saints begin to become edgy, nervous, uneasy, tense, and apprehensive. "Somebody get up and do something!" is their response to the silence. Sing a song, give a testimony, share a revelation, pray, worship — do anything except be silent! Some years ago I was in a meeting when the Spirit began to speak through various ministries that we should get quiet before the Lord and wait upon Him. The brethren began to exhort about being quiet, someone prophesied that we should be quiet, another sang about the holy quietness; for the rest of the meeting the brethren did everything except SHUT UP AND LISTEN FOR GOD! There is more to it, of course, than being quiet for a few minutes or a few hours in a meeting, but it takes the silence of God in this hour to set His sons apart from the passing and prepare them to hear the sound of the fresh word and the new move of the new Day from out of the throne of God!

The silence does not end until the seven angels are prepared to sound! When the inner preparation is complete in the Lord's people and the conditions are right for the seven spirits of God to be revealed out of them, the silence will be broken. It will be broken by a mighty blast of the breath of God! That is what the word "sound" in this passage means — "to trumpet, to blast." It is not a gentle sound, not a quiet murmur, not a whisper. When the fullness of the revelation and glory and power and triumph of the Lord breaks out within the sons of God, it will come as the sudden blast of a trumpet! There will be a great sound from heaven that will change, transform, and empower the sons of God and it will also startle the world of mankind and reverberate through all the kingdoms of men!

Is it not written that God will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. I have no hesitation in telling you that as the hour of manifestation approaches there shall be a great gathering together of God's sons! The sons are now scattered, isolated,

separated in remote areas of the land and distant corners of the earth. But God will soon gather them together by the sovereign work of His divine power!

THE TRUMPETS AND THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT

The background of my present thought is the first fifteen chapters of the book of Exodus. Recall the catalog of plagues sent upon the land of Egypt — all were the call of God to the worldly system of this world: “Let my people go!”

The religion of ancient Egypt is without doubt one of the most difficult religions to analyze. The Egyptians were among the most polytheistic people known from the ancient world. Even to this day Egyptologists are unable to say for certain what was the total number of the gods which they worshipped. Most lists include somewhere in the neighborhood of eighty gods. The dedication of the Egyptians to their gods is very obvious even to the casual observer as he walks through the sands of Egypt. Beautiful temples and long colonnaded roadways are the expression of deep piety and sacrificial work. In spite of all the beauty and grandeur, however, as an idolatrous form of worship it was morally and spiritually degrading. Almost all of the lower life forms, whatever their habitat, and even inanimate objects were considered the embodiment of some deity. To the Egyptians the lion was sacred, and also the ox, the ram, the wolf, the dog, the cat, the ibis, the buzzard, the falcon, the hippopotamus, the crocodile, the cobra, the dolphin, different varieties of fish, trees, and small animals such as the frog, locust, and other insects. Images were also believed to embody the deities. In addition, there were also living men in the prime of life who were considered gods, such as Amun, Atum, or Osiris.

This is the world that Moses was raised and lived in! It is against this background that we view and gain an understanding of the true significance of the ten plagues that Moses and Aaron brought by the hand of Yahweh against the Egyptians. It is apparent from Exodus 12:12 that the ten plagues were directed specifically against “all the gods of Egypt!” Furthermore we find in Numbers 33:4 that all the plagues were directed against the deities of Egypt, for we read, “the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments.” The plagues were designed to point out to the Pharaoh and to all the people of Egypt the absolute impotence of their gods, and the obvious inability of their priests to exert any authority or power to turn the tide of the calamities sent by the God of the Hebrews. The prayers, the sacrifices, the counsel of all the wise men of Egypt were incapable of reversing the disastrous situation the whole land of Egypt, together with their gods, found themselves in!

Let us notice how the plagues discredited and brought judgment upon the Egyptian deities. Serpents, objects of worship, were devoured by Aaron’s rod. The Nile river, one of their chief gods, was turned to bloody abomination. Heki, the god responsible for driving away frogs, was helpless. Beelzebub, the lord of the flies, was powerless. Various cattle and animals revered as gods were killed by the plague of disease sent by the hand of Moses. Moses took ashes from the furnace of Typhon, the god to whom human sacrifice was offered to keep evil from the land, cast them into the air and they became the source of boils and blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. Serapis, protector from locusts, was shown to be strength less, as the plagues of locusts covered the land of Egypt, devouring everything that grew. Isis and Osiris, representing the sun and moon chief gods, were completely discomfited during the three days and nights of supernatural darkness. These nation-wide afflictive judgments of Yahweh were so ordered as to strike, malign, and judge in an ascending scale all the false gods of the Egyptians!

But the great purpose behind this was to so break the power of the gods, the priesthood, and the Pharaoh, that they would LET GOD'S PEOPLE GO! The primary issue was the deliverance of the Lord's elect people from the bondage of every power and shackle that held them from going forth to possess their true and full inheritance in God!

The seven trumpets in the Revelation are a striking spiritualization of the plagues the Lord sent upon Egypt! As we look at these plagues we see that they are likened unto the literal plagues upon Egypt, but we know that the book of Revelation is a spiritual book of spiritual truths and spiritual experiences addressed to a spiritual people which can be perceived and received only by the spirit! Can we not see by this that the spiritual plagues come upon the spirit of Egypt within each of us to bring the release of our spiritual man from the dominance of the carnal mind that we may march out of the bondage of the flesh, the Adamic nature, the human identity and consciousness, the spirit of the world, and enter into the full realization of our inheritance in our promised land — Christ! Is that truth not infinitely more blessed and meaningful than literal plagues falling upon the nations of earth! Truly these plagues bring THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

The plagues of Egypt were sent upon the people, spirits, and kingdom that held God's people, Israel, in servitude. The plagues in the book of Revelation are, therefore, related to God's spiritual people — for the message is sent to the church! It is the Lord Jesus talking to His body! The Egyptian typology is an emphatic way of saying that these “judgments” or “dealings” of our Father are but a prelude to His great deliverance of His elect from all their enemies! The plagues in the Revelation represent those dealings God sends into our lives to break the religious bondage of spiritual Egypt, the spirit of this world, the controlling of the flesh, the dominance of the soul, the ruling of the carnal mind, and the whole realm of sin, limitation, and mortality! God is breaking the power of every kingdom within that rules us, usurping the life of the spirit. In each of the heavenly trumpet blasts God is saying to the “Pharaoh” of our own personal “Egypt” of bondage, “LET MY PEOPLE GO!” Referring to the plagues of Egypt the Psalmist said, “He gave also their cattle over to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts”(Ps. 78:48). The “cattle” is the symbolic figure for the whole bestial nature and system of man! Our Father is bringing us out of our Egyptian bondage by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm! And what mighty shakings, judgments, hail, earthquakes, thunderbolts, and cataclysms take place in our earth as He does this! He judges, discredits, humiliates, and destroys everything that is contrary to the life of sonship. He is bringing us “out” in order to bring us “in” to the fullness of our inheritance in Christ!

The admonition of George Hawtin is still a vital word for every man and woman who treasures the beautiful hope of sonship. “There can be no tenacious hanging on to the things of the past. There must be a clean break away from all of Egypt's bondage and every relationship with the drunken harlot of Babylon. We must forsake even the things that seem to be pleasant, good, and harmless that we may attain, and for my part nothing short of attaining will satisfy. We must attain without counting any cost. We must sell all that we have that we may buy the pearl of great price. We must buy the truth, but sell it not. It will mean the loss of friends. It will mean misunderstanding among our relatives and often the closest members of our family. That is why Jesus said, ‘I am come not to send peace, but a sword’ (Mat. 10:34)” — end quote.

THE FIRST TRUMPET

“The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burned up, and all green grass was burnt up” (Rev. 8:7).

I must call your attention to the parallels between the events of this first trumpet and the seventh plague God sent upon the land of Egypt by the hand of Moses. “And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast, and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field” (Ex. 9:23-25).

When the first trumpet sounded immediately hail and fire mingled with blood were cast into the earth. That this is not a natural judgment traceable to natural causes is evident from the fact that the hail and the fire mingled with blood were “cast upon,” the earth, not falling from the heavens in an ordinary way, but impelled by an unseen yet powerful arm. They were cast, in fact, by the angel sounding the trumpet! The seven angels are the seven spirits of God! This is not the work of any man, for this is the work of God by the Spirit!

The elect of the Lord should be aware that water, especially rain falling from heaven, is used in the scriptures as a type of God’s word and God’s spirit combined, that is, the living word of God! Usually it indicates that He is sending a blessing in the time of drought. When God sends the rain that refreshes, sometimes it has come to us as a prophetic word. The Spirit speaks words like these, “Yea, my son, thou art mine, thou art precious in my eyes; I have called thee, I have chosen thee before the foundation of the world unto a high and holy calling. Yea, thou shalt be a great one, a mighty one in my kingdom! My goodly spices shall flow out from thee and thy fragrance shall fill the earth in the day of my moving! I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, I will be with thee in all of thy ways, yea, my hand shall bring thee unto thy appointed place, saith the Lord!” Oh, yes, we all love a word like that, and in days past the Lord has spoken in just such endearing, encouraging, and faith-inspiring promises to us! But not so when He sends His word that comes as hail!

Water flows, and also it becomes sometimes hard as ice and hail. When it falls as hail it is not a blessing, as we think of blessing. When it falls it always brings destruction, depending on its size and duration. Hail is water, but it is frozen water, thus it bespeaks of a hard word from the Lord! It is the word of God that strikes us and knocks the carnal mindedness out of us! It is the word that rebukes, chastises, and corrects us! It is not an easy word, not a flowery word, not a sweet, soothing word, but a word that devastates our field and beats down the carnal mindset, ways, and works that grow out of our earthly nature. When Israel was walking after the flesh and corrupting the ways of the Lord, the word of the Lord came to them declaring, “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies” (Isa. 28:17). What hailstones of a “hard word” fall from the heavens of God’s Spirit into our land as He smashes our religious idols and all the things we treasure more than His will and way! The “refuge of lies” speaks of all the false ideas, false concepts, false doctrines, and false ways of the Lord’s people! Today there are many who speak only a word of blessing. They proclaim the faith message or the prosperity message. According to these messages the Lord’s people should never have any sickness, poverty, pain, trouble, pressures, adversities, calamities, or judgments in their lives, for God is a loving Father who wants only to give good things to His children — high paying jobs, fine homes,

expensive cars, swimming pools, money in the bank, and the finest and best of everything this world has to offer! But that is not a true word of the Lord! It may be true for some, whom the Lord according His own purpose moves to so bless, but it is at best a half-truth, and at worst a refuge of lies.

You can be a good Christian and embrace such a word, but you'll never be a son! Manifest sons of God are not spoiled brats who have an indulgent Father who doesn't want them to ever lack or suffer or endure anything, but lavishes upon them every carnal thing they ask for! "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as sons, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And if ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement...then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:5-8). Oh, yes, the Father will give us His glory, His nature, His wisdom, authority, and power, and raise us up to judge the world and rule the nations with a rod of iron. But before He entrusts into our hands such awesome responsibilities He will put His finger on every aspect of our lives, He will bring training, discipline, order, and judgment to our house; He will send the hailstorms into our lives to beat down and destroy all the refuge of lies, all the false messages, doctrines, opinions, ways, and every false thing in which we trust and every tree and all the grass that grows out of our carnal mind and earthy nature!

It is instructive to note that not only does our Father cast down the hail into our earthly life, but swiftly He follows it with fire mingled with blood, and it is the fire that burns up the trees and the grass, making the purging work complete. The fire that purifies us is mingled with blood, and the life is in the blood! God is both life and fire! The blood is mingled with fire — God mingles His life with His purifying fire so that we are not destroyed, just changed and transformed! Oh, the wonder of it!

TREES

TREES represent those deeply rooted things that grow out of our human nature. Some time ago in a letter from Linda O'Neill she shared the following experience. "Last night as I was drifting off to sleep, I was led by the Spirit to a wooded area. I sensed the Lord speaking to me, saying, 'Linda, go walk in these woods!' 'What do you see?' the Lord asked. I saw a small forest bereft of trees, everywhere my eyes looked was barren, brown with dead stumps here and there, as though a fire had swept through this wooded area and wiped it out. I sensed the desire of Father was for me to behold this now empty and barren forest, where once many trees had flourished. At first after waking I thought, 'Oh, no, another catastrophe headed America's way,' as I'm aware that in scriptures trees represent men. But for once I was left alone and didn't jump the gun, but waited for Father to confirm or say what He wanted to reveal to me through this experience. Well, at the end of your latest teaching something just jumped right out and grabbed my heart! I knew that I knew this was what Father was showing me. The whole paragraph met me in the depths of my being, but for lack of time I will write only one line that pulled my understanding into a deeper insight of what Father is doing today. 'The trees that are being burned up are those manifestations that grow out of our own earthiness.' All of our own understanding, carnal reasoning, self efforts, etc., are being destroyed" — end quote.

Nowhere are the "trees" that grow out of man's earthiness more evident than in the religious world. The so-called "gospel" in this hour is fashioned to appeal to the carnal mind, offering men blessings, prosperity, instant solutions to all problems, a miracle a day,

ease and comfort and all good things, rapture out of tribulation, golden streets, harps, and wings to flit about a celestial Disney World with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in. Men do not have to climb very far heavenward to pluck the fruit from these earth-bound bushes, for the benefits are all natural, physical, and earthly, not spiritual or heavenly! I do not err when I say that if all the prayers and faith that are exercised daily for earthly things, blessings of money, cars, homes, clothes, physical healing, comforts, and luxuries that pamper the flesh were stripped away from most believer's prayers, their prayer lives would be reduced by at least ninety-eight percent!

The so-called gospel of popular religion is glamorized as Hollywood stars and popular night club entertainers intone with their unsanctified voices the sacred hymns given by the Holy Spirit to saints who walked and talked with God in the secret places of His presence. They give glowing testimonies of what Christ has done in their lives, yet they go right on with their Hollywood acting, entertaining the ungodly in the midst of the filth of the devil's strongholds. Then, if you would engage them to give their testimony at your gathering for the glory of God, you must sign a contract with their agent guaranteeing them many thousands of dollars for their brief appearance. Cursed fruit! Fruit borne too close to the earth to lift men heavenward!

As the shallow-minded worldlings applaud the smooth words with which they are entertained, the hallowed things of the heavenlies are dragged down into the deepest mire of the earth-realm as fruit to be plucked by unsanctified hands, which contains no power to lift them out of their carnal minds into THE MIND OF CHRIST. Corrupted fruit! Corrupted fruit borne by trees that grow out of the earth! Though they reach up to heaven and flourish with green leaves and bear fruit which is delectable to the earth men who eat of it, it is truth mixed with error, the holy with the unholy, the heavenly with the earthly, light with darkness, until men are unable to distinguish one from the other, and they do not. All carnal, man-made church systems, programs, rituals, ceremonies, outreaches, and efforts are trees that grow out of the earth! You see, my beloved, there are two kinds of trees in the book of Revelation! In the earth-realm there is a multitude of "trees," but in the heavenly city of God there is but one tree — the tree of Life! This glorious tree does not grow and bear fruit out of the earth, it grows by the river that flows from the throne of God! This is an incorruptible, immortal, eternal tree of divine and heavenly life, whereas the trees that grow out of the earth are destined to be burnt up!

Through the years we have received a steady stream of letters in the mail telling of this great program and that great endeavor for God, with their pleas for financial help. With glib tongues and plausible programs by which the world is going to be won for Christ, well-meaning people are urged to give to further grandiose programs hatched by kingdom-building preachers who live in wanton luxury upon earth, which programs are not the plan of God at all, but merely the product of an imaginative, scheming, and avaricious mind. Through long centuries billions of dollars have been squeezed from God's precious people, including the poor and the widows, to build huge temples, cathedrals, and church buildings; to promote innumerable programs and methods to do this and that for God which, not only did God not ordain, but were in all truth a stench in His nostrils and an abomination before His face.

When all these good religious fleshly works are brought into the blazing presence of God who is a consuming fire they will one and all go up in smoke! What a bonfire that will be! I declare to you that the fire of that judgment shall be beheld from the farthest extremities of the universe so that every creature in heaven and in earth may come to know once and for

all the eternal truth that “Except the LORD build the house, they LABOR IN VAIN that build it!” Those of God’s elect who now read these lines know this quite well, for the fire of God has already been cast into our earth! Ah, all the “trees” that grew out of our earth, all the religious fleshly works that appeared to have life and bear fruit, but sprang up from our carnal minds and soulical zeal, along with all the hay, wood, and stubble, have been burned out of our earth by the fire of the Holy Ghost! Oh, how naked, how desolate, how stripped and utterly vulnerable we felt at first when God set our forest on fire! Yet now, how eternally grateful and thankful we are for that tall, stately, ever-blossoming and fruitful tree of life that is springing up out of the river of living water that flows from the throne of God within our spirit!

In the prophetic mysteries of the book of Revelation we see a significant distinction between the “trees” that are burnt up and the “grass” which is also burnt up. Trees are tall, strong, and deep-rooted, whereas grass is small, low, and fragile. This explains the imagery of transience which haunts the writers of the scriptures. “For they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb...in the morning they are like grass which grows up. In the morning it flourishes and springs up; in the evening it is mown down and withers...my heart is smitten like grass and withers...as for man his days are like grass...for the wind passes over it and it is gone...all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it.”

GRASS

GRASS represents those surface coverings and masks in our lives which hide the nature beneath from being seen for what it is. So what is the fire of God poured out upon? The outer covering of our flesh! Isaiah says that “all flesh is grass,” and just as men and women try to dress up their bodies with designer clothing, makeup, perfume, and well groomed hair, so that men do not see us as we really are, so the flesh-nature creates its own facade of respectability, morality, intellectualism, and religiosity to hide the corruption that lies beneath it in the heart. This facade of the flesh has to be dealt with in every son of God! The flesh man must be destroyed! I have seen that man destroyed by the fire of God! They weren’t killed as people, there is no grave in any cemetery where you will find their headstone, but those fleshly men were burnt up, they simply don’t exist anymore! Their fleshly, natural, human identity went up in smoke, and now they know that they are not Adamic men, but truly a new creation in Christ Jesus! It’s not about this flesh of our body that we walk around in, rather it’s about the image of the earthy in our minds in which we think out of a fleshly mentality. Once we see this wonderful truth by the Spirit, we begin to think and live out of a new spiritual, supernatural, divine identity! When the fleshly mindset that governed our view of ourselves and our actions has been burnt up by the fire of the Spirit, the wonderful work of God has begun to bring forth the life of the Son of God as our only reality! It is indeed wonderful!

FIRE

Let us consider the work of the divine Holy Ghost fire of God. When “fire” is mentioned most believers think of hell fire, not heavenly fire. This fire, however, is cast out of the heavenly realm, the realm of the spirit, and is cast into “our earth” or that earth which we are. Throughout the Bible we find this glorious element of Godfire. The fire that accompanied the people of Israel through the wilderness was the holy fire of Yahweh Himself! He descended in the fire of His glory upon mount Sinai. He was the pillar of fire

that led them, and from His fiery presence He lit the fire of the altar in the tabernacle in the wilderness. The only light in the most holy place of the tabernacle was God's shekinah glory, brighter than the sun. That holy and divine fire, which was God Himself, was used to purify and sanctify the holy vessels used in the service of the Lord, as well as to consume the burnt offerings and sacrifices. It was used to burn the incense in the tabernacle and the temple — the fire was hallowed.

When Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire (fire that was not the fire of God) before the Lord, the fire of God leaped out and consumed them (Lev. 10:1-2). Korah, along with 250 others, offered incense when they raised up against Moses and Aaron, and they were all consumed by the fire that came out from the Lord (Num. 16:1-35). Out of this holy flame came the glorious word of the Lord! It was by this holy fire that the people were led unto their promised land! This was the glory of the Lord revealed in the midst of His people! Yet our God is a consuming fire, and all that is not holy and pure is consumed by that fire!

The New Testament manifestation of God as a consuming fire began on the day of Pentecost when tongues of fire rested upon the waiting disciples. They were accepted, approved, transformed, and anointed when God's spirit-fire baptized them. They would never be the same again! They were themselves the sacrifice, God sent the fire and they (their carnal state) were consumed. What a refining came to the apostles on that glorious day! How full of self-seeking they had been up to the very last supper! At the last supper they had a dispute as to who should be the first in the kingdom of heaven, but after Pentecost they no longer thought of self, but Christ. How weak and cowardly they had been right up to the crucifixion! They all forsook Him and fled, and Peter denied Him, at the accusation of a servant maid, with oaths and curses. But after the day of Pentecost, that same Peter that cursed and swore and denied Christ, faced the very council that condemned Him, and said, "If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:9-10). What a cleansing the baptism of fire does in a moment! The "tongues of fire" in Acts 2:3 were not seen by the multitudes. Such a strange phenomenon would have been recorded. It was the "vocal tongues" that amazed them and not the "tongues of fire." Apparently, they were not seen, they were felt. John the Baptist said Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. The obvious change in the disciple's lives after Pentecost proves John's prophecy. Peter's change of nature is outstanding. He met the glory of God and tasted the fire of God! A coward became a conqueror! Keep in mind, beloved, the fire of Pentecost is merely the "firstfruits" of the Spirit! It is but the firstfruits of the holy fire of God! That fire produced holy men who became apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. That fire has not, however, produced any manifest sons of God! There is a greater dimension of the fire of God revealed throughout the seven trumpets of the Revelation, and this fullness of the fire of God, when its work is complete in the called and chosen elect of God, will produce A MANCHILD UPON THE THRONE AND 144,000 SONS OF GOD UPON MOUNT ZION! Oh, the wonder of it!

Jesus was baptized with the baptism of fire (Lk. 12:50) that nailed Him to a cross, buried Him in a tomb, raised Him from death into immortality and glory, and caught Him up to the throne of His Father. That is the fire that leads to sonship! Having passed through that fire He now reigns in heaven; He reigns on earth; and He will establish His Father's kingdom over every heart, and every spot of ground. Because He lives, we shall live also! We have received the spirit of adoption or placement as sons, and the same holy fire that made

Jesus the firstborn Son of God is now working in our lives to purify and perfect us and make us the sons of God with power. Let us live it, so that we can then carry the fire that will consume every unclean desire in every heart, in every home, in every city, in every nation, until the earth is purged with the purifying power, and Christ our King has come to reign; until the time when every foe is vanquished, and He delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father. The apostle Peter wrote of the time when the whole earth, indeed the whole cosmos, would be judged and purified by the fire which is God, and which in union with Him we also shall be! Isaiah prophesied of the establishing of the new order in these words, "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. 65:17). What a wonderful thing that God will so thoroughly cleanse our own little world and the whole vast order of things, that even our minds, and the minds of all mankind, will be purged from even the remembrance of it! Wonder of wonders, to be able to forget that sin, sorrow, limitation, and death ever existed! The Lord will make such a good job of His work through His son company that the past will be completely obliterated and never thought of anymore. And He is doing it first in us, His firstfruits! Isn't it wonderful!

In the natural world using fire was an important step in the process of civilization. The ancients learned to make bronze with fire, and later iron. Today we make high-grade steel in huge blast furnaces. If properly controlled, fire purifies the elements it touches. Different heat levels are needed to purify certain elements. If there's not enough heat, the element remains impure, but if there's too much, the element is consumed. We, too, are like the elements that need to be refined! What are the impurities in you that need to be burned off — pride, lust, anger, intolerance, impatience, greed, foolishness, fear, doubt, negativity, hatred, unforgiveness, self-seeking, desire to control and dominate? How much heat will it take to purify you — a red flame, a blue, a white? Would you be able to "take the heat," or would you be burned up? Malachi doubted that any of us could withstand the heat of God's fiery presence and power! "Who shall stand when He appears? For He shall be like a refiner's fire..." (Malachi 3:2). What fires are ignited in our souls as the Lord comes to His temple and sits in His temple as a refiner's fire! The natural man can't stand! Thank God, the outer man of flesh is not pure enough to handle the all-consuming fiery presence of God! Our purification means the annihilation of our carnal, human consciousness! No matter how good we think our human life is, getting close to a holy fireball will consume us. That is good news! Adam is being consumed! Every impurity of our old natural, human identity is being burnt out of us, going up in smoke! God is burning up one realm, cutting off a realm from us, so that we cannot live there any longer. THAT IS WHAT THE FIRST TRUMPET PROCLAIMS!

OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE! I understand not why fire has been represented to us as something so terrible, so frightening, so hideous that we should try to avoid it. If our approach back to God is through fire, as revealed by the flaming sword placed at Eden's gate, why do we always try to get out of the fire? Why do we evade the fire? Why expend such energy and effort to try and pray ourselves out of the fire? Fire, in the scriptures, symbolizes two things — judgment and cleansing. But God is not schizophrenic in His nature — one side of His character disposed to forgive, heal, save, redeem, deliver, and restore, while another part of His nature is bent on vengeful destruction and sadistic torture of His enemies. His action in fire, like His action in grace, is pure, harmonious, and balanced, directed towards the purging that will lead to restoration and perfection. His fire cleanses the believer that He may qualify for God's highest! His action of fire towards the unbeliever is to the same end, conditioning and preparing that one for good results, when, having been broken and purged from pride and rebellion, he bows low before the Saviour,

humbly and penitently receiving the gracious gift of life. The fire does not save him, but it removes the hindrance that separates him from the kind mercy of the Lord. Yet the preachers rant and rave, threatening unbelievers and dangling sinners over the flames of hell fire, when in fact, if they are truly incorrigible, that would be the best thing that could happen to them!

Chapter107

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed” (Rev. 8:8-9).

The second angel sounded! A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea! “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” Jesus once declared, “ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast into the midst of the sea — and it shall be done.” In fire and flame John beheld such a mountain hurled into the sea!

The seed of the kingdom of God is planted within each of us to change us into the image and likeness of Christ. As firstfruits today, we are the first to be changed! It is within us that the seven trumpets are sounding, bringing wonderful and powerful processings and transformations in our lives. When the second angel sounds, “As it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea (of mankind): and the third part of the sea became blood.” It does not say that a literal mountain burning with literal fire was cast into the literal sea. Oh, no! However, if we can understand the language used in its literal sense, we can then gain a clear conception of what it is intended to signify when used in its figurative or spiritual sense. A “burning mountain” would be one in volcanic eruption, emitting flames, smoke, and lava. The casting of this into the sea would produce a violent commotion of the waters, stirring them to unfathomed depths. Clouds of steam would ascend and the surface of the water would be agitated into fury. Billows would rise mountain high, engulfing the ships within range of the disturbance, and the natural result would be that fish and other sea animals would be killed. When we get a picture of the absolute awesomeness of the scene John beheld in spirit, and understand the language in its proper figurative and spiritual meaning, we are better able to grasp the ideas involved. The things represented, however, must be suggested by the things seen in the picture. A “mountain” in scripture represents a kingdom or a power.

Notice the words, “As it were a great mountain...” “As it were” reveals that this is a parable, a symbolic picture, a metaphor, a figure of speech, an allegory, a likening or a comparison. It signifies that there is a happening within us that can be compared to, or understood by, a burning mountain being cast into the sea, causing a third part of the sea to become blood. Without doubt this “great mountain” which is “burning with fire,” the fire of God, is the heavenly mount Zion, the power and glory and dominion of the rule or kingdom of God coming cataclysmically into our experience. Consider the symbolisms in the following scripture and hear the word of the Lord! “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem, from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning, the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day,

and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense” (Isa. 4:4-5).

When we understand that mountains in scripture represent kingdoms, governments, or rulerships, we will understand John’s vision! This is the entrance of HIS KINGDOM, burning with fire, cast into the “sea” of our lives, the body realm, which is the seat of all the gross sins of the flesh and the bestial nature of the natural man. This fiery kingdom comes to cleanse that which has been so utterly corrupted and defiled. The great truth of this is revealed in king Nebuchadnezzar’s dream which was interpreted by Daniel. Daniel said to the king, “Thou sawest until a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces...and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain that filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:34-35). There is but one great mountain — the triumphant kingdom of our Lord! This kingdom begins in the lives of God’s elect, and it is here that it must first cleanse, change, and transform all of our being, spirit, soul, and body. Ultimately it will smite all the kingdoms of man, and fill the whole earth! Truly this is redemption’s outworking in beautiful portrayal!

There can be no doubt that this “great mountain burning with fire” is the mountain of the dominion of the kingdom of our great and glorious God! The kingdom of God is the authority, power, glory, and dominion of God by the Spirit! The word “kingdom” is a contraction of the term “king’s domain.” The term “kingdom of God” can mean no other than the domain over which God exercises rule as King. It is God’s declared purpose therefore that His people, His holy nation, His peculiar treasure, should be the domain over which He would rule as King, and ultimately all the earth and every creature and all things. The Lord’s greatest dominion at this time is in the lives of His elect and chosen ones! We are now becoming ruled and governed by the Lord totally and absolutely. He has extended the dominion of His kingdom to our hearts and lives, and now the Lord will rule us with complete and undisputed dominion! And He will continue to rule and reign in our lives until every enemy within us is made subject to Him. This is the present truth of the kingdom of God!

The kingdom is not the reign of God as such, for God is ultimately reigning as the King eternal and the Lord of the universe at all times. The kingdom is the gracious action of the sovereign God of heaven by which His reign is recognized and revered and entered into by those men whom God had previously permitted to walk in their own sense of “self-hood.” The kingdom is the gathering together of all things into one in Christ. The kingdom is reconciliation. The kingdom is regeneration. The kingdom is deliverance. The kingdom is salvation. The kingdom is transformation. The kingdom is every man presented perfect in Christ Jesus! The kingdom is God All-in-all!

The kingdom of God is limited to that domain where God’s saving, transforming power has defeated all opposition, broken down every wall, transformed all that is contrary to God’s nature; mind, will, emotions, and desires have been brought into oneness and harmony with God’s nature and authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the kingdom of God! Where hearts are changed, where sin, and error, and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where life and light and love hold sway, where the will and ways of the Father are raised up as reality and life in a people, where the mind of Christ rules out of union with God — there the kingdom of God has come and is advancing! In the kingdom of God it is no longer God ruling over you by an external law and sovereignty, but the life, mind, heart, nature, power, wisdom, knowledge, and will of God entering into you,

becoming your very own reality. And THAT IS THE PICTURE JOHN SAW OF THE BURNING MOUNTAIN OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD BEING CAST WITH MIGHTY POWER INTO THE SEA OF OUR LIVES!

The seven trumpets portray the work of God in transformation in His elect! When the first trumpet sounded the Lord sent the hail of a hard word and the fire of His divine power to “burn off” from our soulful earth realm the religious fleshly works that had grown up out of the earth of our carnal minds. Is that not where God starts with His chosen and apprehended ones as He sets about to conform them to the image of Christ? He first sets His hand to deliver us from the outward works of religious Babylon. But now, this great spiritual mountain of the Holy Ghost fire of God is cast into the sea of mankind! This happens, my beloved, as the power, authority, and glory of God by the Spirit is raised up in the lives of God’s elect! The “sea” is the realm of the sinful, fleshly, earthly, deceitful, and wicked Adamic nature of the natural man. The sea is turned to blood, thus showing the destruction of the fleshly and corrupt Adamic nature within!

SEA CREATURES

The third part of the creatures in the sea that had life, died, revealing that the unbridled emotions, the fleshly passions, the ungodly desires, and the wickedness of the Adamic heart are brought to death within the Lord’s elect. “One third” reveals that God is not at this time doing this in the whole race of men, but only in the “one third company” — His elect! Fishes are among the lowest order of animal life. The creatures in the sea represent the various aspects of the beastly nature in us all, the passions of the flesh that swim about in the consciousness of those who live and walk after the flesh. Usually an emotion or desire does not have “life” unless it is stimulated or stirred up in some way. That happens in temptation! When “made alive” such emotions and desires have great power unto either good or evil. Many a child of God has fallen into sin and failure, and many a preacher has had his ministry discredited and ruined, because of the awesome power of the “fish” or passions and desires swimming about in his lower, outer flesh nature. No one type can express them all, so there are creatures great and small, powerful, cunning, ugly, menacing, viscous, poisonous, sometimes even beautiful and apparently wise and highly intelligent in their own way, but all feeding off of each other, inhabiting, living, and manifesting in the lowest realms of man’s being.

How we praise God for the sacred knowledge that the all-consuming power of the Holy Ghost fire of God and the authority and dominion of His kingdom within “kills” everything that swims in the “sea” of the bestial nature of the outer man of earth! Here, only one third is dealt with, which can also indicate a partial victory, the initiation of the triumph of the Christ within, but when the last trump has sounded the mystery of God will be finished (Rev. 10:7). All the elect of the Lord will stand whole, perfect, mature, and triumphant in the holy and glorious image of their Father!

SHIPS

“And the third part of the ships were destroyed.”

Ships are that which cross the sea, and transport the necessities which supply the natural man all that assists him to fulfill his desires, aims, and purposes. Ships are vehicles of commerce — goods, food, wealth — by which the desires and ambitions of men are fulfilled and find expression. Ships sail on the sea, but are not the sea — as, for example,

a gun is not a murderer, but merely a vehicle often used by murderers. It is something without by which the carnal or evil intentions, desires, and plans of men are carried out.

Let me illustrate. Suppose for a moment that I am the teacher of a sixth grade science class. I have in my mind a vast storehouse of knowledge about things scientific which I wish to convey to my students — actually to transfer from my mind into their minds. I must find a vehicle, an instrument by which I can transmit this knowledge. The vehicle will be not just one thing, but a number of things. The first will be words. By words I can transfer knowledge from my intellect into the intellect of the students. Another vehicle could be a blackboard and chalk. Another might be movies. And, of course, more important than all — experiments! None of these things are me, but they are vehicles used by me, vehicles of transference — answering to the ships of the sea! Just as ships carry produce, raw materials, and merchandise from one country to another, so the words, object lessons, movies, and experiments transfer ideas from one person to another. Metaphorically, they are like ships!

Governments use many metaphorical “ships” or “vehicles.” A government is an authority, a rulership. But in order to rule, there must be various agencies of that rule which transfer the power from the governing body to the governed. Some of the “ships” of man’s government are taxation, laws, police, judges, bureaucracies, government agencies, and politicians. Armies also have many “ships,” ships of tanks, airplanes, aircraft carriers, submarines, bombs, guns, etc. None of these are the army, but they are vehicles used by the army to transfer the will and power of the government upon the enemy!

In the religious realm there are many “ships,” ships of organizations, buildings, programs, radio and television programs, schools, ceremonies, hymn books, prayer books, confessionals, candles, incense, and a thousand more. The natural mind is ever seeking something visible and tangible. Throughout the centuries the church systems have accumulated a vast number of traditions, rituals, methods, and techniques, each of them supplanting something of the living reality and power of the Christ within. These things have become so universal in the churches of the world, and in the lives of their members, that there is no thought of ever being able to “run” the church and its business without them! Generation after generation, people have been raised up from childhood in this atmosphere and have absolutely no knowledge of anything else or another way. It never even enters the minds of these people that THE CHRIST is the Head of the church, He is the Life of the church, and the whole sufficiency for the church, its people, its work, and its needs.

John saw the destruction of all these religious ships later on in his visions and recorded it thus: “And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her (religious Babylon), shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come. In one hour so great riches have come to naught. And every shipmaster, and all the company of ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate” (Rev. 18:9-10,17-19). The devastation of religious Babylon includes not only the destruction of the system itself, but the burning up of all its “ships”!

The great lament of the sailors of Babylon is that Babylon's means of commerce is ruined! This limits their ability to be about the things that they do, their activities and way of life are impacted, devastated. Ah, my beloved, this has been and is being fulfilled in the life of every son of God! The spirit of truth has come to us as the burning mountain of the Lord's authority in our lives and has stripped away and purged from us all the old-order methods and religious practices of the passing systems of man!

Yet — these religious “ships” of the Babylon systems of man are not the same “ships” that are destroyed at the sounding of the second trumpet, by the burning mountain cast into the sea! The sea is not the soulical, religious realm, but the lower body realm, the bestial nature of the natural man. Does not the flesh utilize a thousand things to fulfill its desires and passions? The message is just this — when the Lord comes in His kingdom authority to establish His rule in our lives, one of the first things He begins to put His finger on is the sins of the flesh. But not only does He deal with the sin nature, He also wipes away all the outward things and activities which we utilize to fulfill its lusts, to entertain the flesh, to pander to the flesh, to promote the flesh, to indulge, satisfy, gratify, satiate, wallow and revel in the flesh. When the burning mountain of God's holy fire has consumed the “ships” in the “sea” of our lives, we no longer go to the places we used to go to, nor do we do the things we used to do! Father cleans up our walk, He purifies our life-style, establishing righteousness in all the outward expressions of our life. Aren't you glad!

THE THIRD TRUMPET

“And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter” (Rev. 8:10-11).

As the trumpets blow we see actions that originate out of the heavens of the spirit and enter powerfully into the earth and the sea of our natural lives. The seven angels “stood before God” — the same location of the “seven spirits” which are “before the throne” and are “sent forth into all the earth.” The “heavens” of God are within our spirit! It is the realm of the spirit where God dwells and from whence He moves to redeem and transform us in soul and body! The trumpets sound out of the heavens, or the realm of the spirit! The hail and fire mingled with blood come out of the heavens of the spirit within us, and are cast into our “earth,” or our soulical life. The great mountain burning with fire comes out of the spiritual heavens within and is likewise cast into our “sea,” or the bodily, fleshly, lustful, and sinful dimension of our being. And now a great star falls from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and falls upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters!

There is a very important truth which we should all learn in this connection, and we will explain it as well as possible here. How many times throughout the scriptures the life of God is spoken of as a flowing stream of water! “How excellent is Thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men...shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life”(Ps. 36:7-9). The Lord Jesus tells us that the water that He gives will become a fountain of living water within us, springing up unto eternal life (Jn. 4:14). He says again that whoever is thirsty may come to Him and drink, and whoever believes into Him will have rivers of living water flowing from within him (Jn. 7:37-38). All these words relate to one thing — that God Himself has flowed out and is still flowing out on this earth into humanity AS LIFE!

On the day of Pentecost the Lord poured Himself out as the Holy Spirit. "This, Jesus, God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this which you both see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33, New American Standard). Notice the word "poured" in these verses. He "poured out" the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit became the flowing stream of the divine water (spirit and truth) of life! For twenty centuries since that time, the Holy Spirit has been flowing in this world. This flowing has never stopped and it shall flow throughout all the ages! It shall flow until there is no place in the whole universe that has not been bathed in its life-giving waters! God has poured out His Holy Spirit, flowing with His divine life and His living word! There is now a river, a flowing of God's life, and this flowing is the Spirit of God Himself, poured out by the resurrected, ascended, and glorified Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah the prophet: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1). This fountain is naught but the "head waters" of the glorious river of life which in that long-ago beginning flowed from Eden's lovely garden, and now flows from the throne of God within our spirit!

In nature there is water in every part of the atmosphere, but a "river" is a concentrated and channeled current or stream of water. A river is a large stream of water that flows downhill through a channel, within banks. Without a "channel" you can have no "river"! While God's presence, life, light, and love, enfold and embrace all things, the river of life is the flowing of God's concentrated life, intensified and magnified as it were a thousand times, flowing through a restricted area, concentrated in all its fullness within the banks of that channel. This concentrated stream of the absolute fullness of God's divine life is the wonderful river of life which holds the power of cleansing, renewal, restoration, and transformation for all unto whom it flows! The powers contained within these waters of life are incomprehensible to the natural mind, for they are the powers of heaven's own divine and incorruptible life! These celestial waters contain the divine, wondrous ability to wash away the very power and effects and results of sin and death!

Every child of God should seek that the Lord would open his eyes to show him that we who drink deeply of Him BECOME THE CHANNEL by which God flows out unto humanity! God Himself is the wellspring, the eternal source of incorruptible life and glory; Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, is the fountain, the reservoir of this glorious life; and the sons of God are the river by which His life and glory shall be communicated to all the arid barrenness of the earth-realm! That is the mystery. "And He showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). On the highest peak of the universe there is a throne, one throne, it is the throne of GOD, and on that throne the blessed Lamb is sitting. The Lamb is the firstborn Son of God who stands on Zion's holy hill, followed by 144,000 redeemed ones who have put on the MIND OF CHRIST and the NATURE OF THE FATHER. Mount Zion is but another figure for the throne of God and the Lamb! And yet the 144,000 overcoming sons of God are with the Lamb upon mount Zion! As I mentioned above, God is the source of this water of divine and incorruptible life and glory; the Lamb is the fountain or the reservoir of this glorious life; and the 144,000 with the Lamb on mount Zion are the channel, the river through which His life flows out. How can mankind experience and know the divine and incorruptible life of God? Why, only in the river! The incorruptible body and the divine life of the manifest sons of God shall constitute that channel through which the stream of the fullness of God's divine life is destined to flow out unto all mankind and to the entire creation of God! Is that not why the whole creation is standing on tiptoe, watching with bated breath to behold the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own! The entire

creation expectantly waits for the manifestation, the unveiling, and the outflowing of God through His sons! Isn't it wonderful!

Oh! This is the river of God which flows out of the throne! I would remind you, however, that the rivers and fountains of waters which, at the sounding of the third trumpet, are made bitter by the Wormwood, have nothing whatever to do with this great river of God! That is the great truth revealed in our text! These are not heavenly, celestial waters flowing out of the throne of God — instead, they are the rivers of earth. Not the literal springs and rivers where people swim, boat, and fish, of course, but the rivers of man's human life and man's fallible word rather than God's divine life and heaven's living word! Just as the Spirit of God and the living Word of God make up the wonderful river of life in the kingdom of God, and flow out from God, so the "spirit of the world" and the "word of man" comprise the carnal "rivers" and "waters" of the earth-realm which flow out of the carnal minds and hearts of natural men. No symbol of our human experience is quite so suggestive as that of a river! Our very consciousness is only a changing current, moving onward toward some distant and hidden sea.

The creeds, doctrines, teachings, and philosophies of the church systems are not pure rivers of the water of life from the throne of God. They are polluted waters! Sometimes they are not the truth at all, other times they are half-truths, misunderstood truths, misapplied truths, or truth on a lower level. The church systems teach, for example, that December 25 is Christ's birthday, but it is not true. The preachers constantly chatter about the imminent "rapture" of the saints — yet it is not true! The church systems insist that every man who has lived and died on this planet without a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ is eternally doomed and damned to the unending torments of a fiery hell. Another lie of enormous proportions! In sermons and songs they hold out the hope of a planet called heaven where the Lord's people will live in literal mansions, strum harps, and dance up and down literal streets of gold forever, but with carnal minds they mistake the symbol for the reality! Some teach the awful heresy of what is called "limited atonement," others teach "baptismal regeneration," others claim that there is no salvation outside of their church or movement; even some in this message of sonship and the kingdom of God have proclaimed that if you are not submitted in their particular group or order you can never be a son of God! There are even those who teach polygamy as the divine order of God, while others continually set dates for the coming of Christ or the end of the world. God help us! There are "rivers" and "waters" of so-called truth that flow out of Mormon springs, out of Scientology springs, Christian Science springs, New Age springs, Spiritist springs, Buddhist springs, Moslem springs, Roman Catholic springs, Hindu springs, Humanistic springs, and a thousand more. These are, one and all, but the rivers of Babylon! Can we not now hear the profound lament and deep sob of the prophet who wrote the words of the Psalm, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Ps. 137:1-4).

Let us return now to our text. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." The epithet "great" is attached to the star that falls or comes down from heaven. It must now be made clear to our hearts that this "great star" is none other than the Christ who dwells within our spirit! He has descended out of the heavens of God's Spirit! "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout...with the trump of

God” (I Thes. 4:16). He descends at the sounding of the third trump! And He burns as a lamp! He is the Word of God! “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my pathway” (Ps. 119:105). The “great star” is a burning word of authority and power! It is Christ Himself, the Word of God, who descends out of the heavens of the spirit to fall upon the soulical rivers and upon the well-springs of imaginations, carnal knowledge, and worldly wisdom that flow within our earthly, natural, human life and identity. These constitute the word and spirit of a carnal realm- Christ falls upon these with His blazing word of Spirit and Truth and turns them to wormwood- bitterness! By that bitterness death is brought to that realm! Can you not see the mystery?

The Old Testament ends with the glorious promise of the arising of the Sun of Righteousness. But the New Testament does not begin with the Sun of Righteousness. Wise men came from the East and walked down the streets of Jerusalem and said, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east.” Not the sun, but the star. God hung in the heavens something supernatural, something new, something divinely glorious — a star. Many foolish theories have been espoused as to what this star was. Some think it was a flying saucer! Others say it was a conjunction of the planets! I must remind you, however, that the star moved from east to west, the wise men followed the star, and finally the star came to hang right over the house where the young Christ child lay. There is no conjunction of planets that can do any of those things! And out of the East, these men who had been studying the stars, began to converge on Jerusalem. And if you think there were just three little old wise men there, you need to read the story again. There were probably three hundred! I don’t think for one moment that three men from Persia could have caused such a commotion in Jerusalem. Matthew says that at their appearance king Herod was troubled — greatly disturbed — and THE WHOLE OF JERUSALEM WITH HIM. They came from every direction. They came from all the countries of the mysterious Orient. And they said, “We have seen His star, and we’ve come to worship Him.”

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

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

God's elect. "And, behold, I come quickly...I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last...I am THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR" (Rev. 22:12-16). "And he that overcometh...I will give him the morning star" (Rev. 2:26,28).

Oh, yes! The elect of the Lord in this hour have been given eyes to see this star and hearts to receive this star! What is the star? The star is the LIVING REVELATION, the QUICKENING VISION of the Christ wrought in the heart by the illuminating activity of the Holy Spirit! The star is not the dead letter of the word, nor the outer shell or husk of the truth. Every man and woman who has received the call to sonship has now passed beyond the knowledge of static creeds and lifeless traditions, beyond empty ceremonies and impotent programs, beyond man-made religious activities, and has been given the heavenly vision, the celestial glow and gleam, the holy brightness and brilliance of THE STAR, the vision of the glory and majesty of God in Christ that carnal concepts can never reach!

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

The Morning Star is promised to all who "overcome" and who walk with Christ in blessed submission to the will of the Father. Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus declared Himself to be "the Morning Star," and He promised to give this Morning Star to all who overcome, it is obvious that something unique and special of Christ is imparted to the Lord's faithful overcomers. This is a "coming" of the Lord you will seldom, if ever, hear about from the teachers and preachers of the church systems. The television evangelists, who love to flaunt the "rapture" before their undiscerning audiences, know nothing of this coming of the Lord as the Morning Star! They know not what it means to us when the great star falls from heaven upon the rivers and the fountains of waters of that earth which we are! But the giving of the Morning Star involves an impartation of the Christ! The Morning Star is a glory of the Christ within, as He burns like a lamp, shining in the darkness of our natural consciousness, human reasoning, carnal ideas, imaginations, concepts, beliefs, human reasoning, understanding, and mind-set, GIVING A VISION OF AND HOPE FOR THE DAWNING OF THE NEW, FULL DAY OF THE MIND OF CHRIST AND THE GLORY OF THE FATHER. During our spiritual growth unto full stature, the Christ within has been developing from understanding to understanding, from experience to experience, from strength to strength, from hope to hope, and from glory to glory. And now He comes to impart to a people the glorious hope of the new day — THE TOTAL VICTORY AND COMPLETE TRIUMPH OF THE CHRIST LIFE WITHIN!

The "great star" which is Christ, comes as a burning lamp! This burning lamp is a burning word! The presence, glory, and word of Christ falls into our carnal rivers and fountains of waters. These rivers and fountains of waters are not in the "sea," the lowest dimension of our nature, the passions and motions of sin in the body. Rather, the rivers and fountains of waters flow through our "earth," the realm of the soul — the intellectual realm of knowledge and understanding. The star that falls upon the fresh water of earth results in the

contamination of the waters! Not only the third part of the world of rivers, but also the “fountains of waters,” that is, the water sources are polluted. Men often get their water supply from the rivers of earth, which originate out of the “fountains of waters” — which sometimes flow from the snows and glaciers of the mountains, and sometimes are the underground springs and wells which flow out of the earth. To contaminate or cut off their “water supply” is to render men desperate and helpless, and even to insure their sickness and death!

The “fountains of waters” represent the sources of ideas, concepts, philosophies, teachings, precepts, creeds, doctrines, traditions, observances, customs, and laws — all the intellectual, moral, and religious influences of this world which are the sources from which men draw their life, their natural joy and refreshment, their ways of thinking, their understanding of the world, their vocations, life-styles, and relationships. “Rivers” suggest the flow of these ideas and beliefs as they are taught, propagated, promoted, and assimilated into the minds, hearts, and behavior of men. These waters flow through school and college classrooms, seminars, television programs, books, court rooms, political propaganda, church pulpits, cultural traditions, and a hundred other places. Different belief systems moving in intellectual, moral, and spiritual channels constitute the outflowing of these “waters” as “rivers.” If ever a purging was needed, it is here! The fact that Christ comes upon these earthly streams of worldly wisdom and carnal knowledge and embitters them to the consciousness of His people is indeed good news! Ray Prinzing once said it so well: “Bitter as the wormwood might be that is used to purge out the error of tradition, carnal concepts, the false images, etc., yet when He has finished this tremendous judgment, ‘The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea’ (Hab. 2:14). God has appointed HIS CLEANSING AGENTS and they shall be most effective in their working, and though bringing death to the old, it also bespeaks of the preparation for the birthing of the new. Praise God!”

Where there are rivers there is a flow of life with vegetation, trees, crops, food, birds, and animals of many kinds. Religion is a flow of life in the soulish dimension of man. There was a time in our life when it was a blessing to us to live in that realm, it was a lamp unto our feet, and important to us in our progress from the Egypt of the world to our promised land of the fullness of Christ. We received a certain level of life from that realm! We were encouraged, strengthened, and edified through the preaching, teaching, singing, clapping, worship, sacraments, programs, concerts, activities, ceremonies, traditions, etc. But as we follow on to know the Lord there comes a time when the Father shines a greater light upon our pathway and soon we find that all the streams and fountains which once gave us life, are turned to bitterness and death for us! In the light that the Spirit brings we are enabled to truly see the religious systems of man for what they are! It is the Lord who does this! Notice — “And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and...the waters became wormwood (bitter)” The star is Christ! It is Christ Himself who causes the streams of our natural life, human understanding, worldly wisdom, and man’s religion to be made bitter! “And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.” Oh, yes! The very thing that was once life to us has now become death! That is the wise way and effective processing of the Lord in the lives of His elect!

Oh, yes, the Lord governs even in those realms that He brings to an end within us. The government of man is not the purity of the kingdom of God, yet we know that “there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God...” (Rom. 13:1). God governs from that level, nothing is out of our glorious Father’s control or beyond His power or purpose. Our human identity, the knowledge of this world, history, science, mathematics,

technology, psychology, medicine, government, politics, law, religion — all is ordained of God as steps and instruments in the unfolding of His wise plan. There was a time when many of those things meant much to us, there was a time when we followed the political scene, supposing that democracy was God's ordained system of government, and that if we could just elect a president and congress with godly, Christian values, it would somehow bring the kingdom of God in our nation. Well, at times we got the leaders we thought God had sanctioned, but things got worse and the nation continued to morally slip into hell! At last the political waters became so bitter to us, and so polluted with death, as our Father revealed the utter carnality and stupidity of man in it all, that we turned from those waters with disgust. There was a time when God blessed us through religion, it met a need in our lives in the early stages of our walk with God, and we thought that was the way to reach God and serve God. Religion had a great influence in our earth as its streams flowed through our land with blessing, encouragement, and excitement! But one blessed day a great star from out of the high realms of the heavens fell with mighty force upon the rivers and the fountains of waters of the kingdom of Babylon within us, and in an instant of time they were filled with wormwood and became terrible bitterness and death to us! This has also happened in the life of every apprehended son of God!

Can you not see the mystery? There is an ascending scale in the Father's dealings with His sons as one by one the angels blow and the trumpets sound! At the sounding of the first trumpet, hail and fire mingled with blood were cast into our "earth," and the trees, those deeply rooted things that grow out of our earthly nature, and the grass, those surface coverings and masks in our lives which hide the nature beneath from being seen for what it is, were burnt up, consumed by the passion of God. This was the beginning of God's work in His called-out ones! When the second trumpet sounded, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into our "sea," the sea became blood, and the lustful passions and gross sins of the flesh (fish and sea animals) began to be destroyed. Even the ships, those things we employed to indulge our flesh, were taken from us. And now the third trumpet has sounded and the Lord is striking at the source of all the carnal streams of the spirit of this world which have fashioned our lives according to man's wisdom, but not after the mind of Christ or the nature of God. It is an on-going work, from experience to experience, from dealing to dealing, and from glory to glory! When all the seven trumpets have sounded their message the mystery of God will be finished and all the holy sons of God will stand in the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, truly manifest before creation as the sons of the living God!

Chapter108

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter” (Rev. 8:10-11).

As the trumpets sound we see actions that originate out of the heavens of the spirit and enter powerfully into the symbolic earth and the sea of our natural lives. It is the realm of the spirit where God dwells and from whence He moves to redeem and transform us in soul and body! In the passage above a “great star” falls from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and falls upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters! Not the literal springs and rivers that flow through earth’s mountains, plains, and valleys, of course, but the rivers of man’s human life and man’s fallible word rather than God’s divine life and heaven’s living word! Just as the Spirit of God and the living Word of God make up the wonderful “river of life” in the closing chapters of the Revelation, and flow out from God, so the “spirit of the world” and the “word of man” comprise the carnal “rivers” and “waters” of the earth-realm which flow out of the carnal minds and hearts of natural men.

The “great star,” burning as it were a lamp, is a burning word of authority and power! It is Christ Himself, the bright and morning star, who is the Word of God, and descends out of the heavens of our spirit to fall upon the soulical rivers and upon the human well-springs of imaginations, carnal knowledge, and worldly wisdom that flow within our earthly, natural, human life and identity. “Rivers” suggest the flow of these ideas and beliefs as they are taught, propagated, and assimilated into the minds, hearts, and behavior of mankind. These constitute the word and spirit that flow out of a carnal realm — Christ falls upon these with His blazing word of divine Spirit and heavenly Truth and turns them to wormwood — bitterness! By that bitterness, death is brought to that realm! Not only a third part of the rivers, but also the “fountains of waters,” that is, the water sources are rendered undrinkable. The “fountains of waters” represent the sources of the ideas, concepts, philosophies, teachings, precepts, creeds, doctrines, traditions, ideologies, observances, customs, laws — all the intellectual, moral, political, and religious influences of this world which are the sources from which men draw their life, their natural joy and refreshment, their ways of thinking, their image of themselves, their understanding of the world, their vocations, life-styles, their hopes, dreams, and ambitions, and their relationships. If ever a purging was needed, it is here!

The “great star” is Christ! “And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and...the waters became wormwood (bitter).” It is Christ Himself who causes the streams of our natural life, human understanding, worldly wisdom, and man’s religion to be made bitter! “And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.” Oh, yes! The very thing that was

once life to us now becomes death! That is the divine wisdom and effective processing of the Lord in the lives of His elect!

The river of God is spiritual, the rivers of earth are soulical. The river of God is the spirit of the word, the rivers of earth are the letter of the word. The river of God is essence, the rivers of earth are form. The river of God is living reality, the rivers of earth are lifeless shadows and deceptive illusions. The river of God is truth and life, the rivers of earth are cold, dead facts in which there is no life! There are many things that are true, but they are not the truth. They are cold, dead facts, but they are not quickening life and power! And now may I exhort you to flee from those things which are true but not Truth, as surely and swiftly as you would flee your home if you discovered it to be a den of rattlesnakes!

We have a whole crop of doom-casters in the land today who spend their time and energy in nothing else but informing the Lord's people of all the negative situations which are going to overtake our nation and the world! Many of the Lord's precious people are being fed a steady diet of messages, articles, books, and tapes about world conditions, politics, the situation in the Middle East, oil crisis, economic collapse, one world government, conspiracies of the Illuminati, Council on Foreign Relations, World Trade Organization, World Bank, European Common Market Beast Government, the Antichrist, the mark of the beast, cashless society, strikes, riots, war, terrorism, the great tribulation, supposed "safe areas," food storage, living off the land, planetary conjunctions, pestilence, tsunamis, erratic weather conditions, wickedness, catastrophes, the end of the world, and a whole catalog of other fearful and frightening events which they imagine fulfill the prophecies of the book of Revelation, some of which will undoubtedly happen, just as they have happened historically through the ages, but many of which I tell you now are nothing more than wild and sensational speculations conceived in the darkness of the carnal minds of men who masquerade as end-time teachers and prophets of God, bewitching the saints. The natural mind, my beloved, is certainly one of the well-springs and sources of the earthly "fountains of waters" from whence flow the "rivers" of carnal ideas, concepts, teachings, and imaginations of which the "inhabitants of the earth" drink and find a certain level of excitement, refreshment, and fulfillment.

Let every child of God who has had birthed within his bosom the beautiful hope of sonship turn the searchlight of sincerity and truth upon his pure heart and ask this one important question: Do any of the above mentioned things minister LIFE? Does the knowing and study of them cause you to be more filled with the Spirit? Do they enable you to put on the mind of Christ? Do they work deliverance and overcoming power in your life? Do they transform you into the image of the firstborn Son of God? Do they flood your life with peace and joyful expectation in Christ? Do they imbue you with spiritual wisdom and understanding, with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Do they inspire you with ever-increasing faith by which you shall conquer every enemy and lay hold upon life and immortality? Are they TRUTH, quickening, life-giving Truth, or are they, one and all, merely things that are true, or, perhaps, may be true, or may not even be true at all! I have no hesitation whatever in telling you that all these streams of teaching are naught but carnal rivers flowing through the earth-realm!

MARAH

"And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood" (Rev. 8:11).

Wormwood simply means “bitter” or “bitterness.” This is reminiscent of the children of Israel when they were dying of thirst in the desert! It was only three days after they had crossed the Red Sea. When Moses led out the people of Yahweh, he led them to the wilderness of Shur and for three days they found no water. At last they came to the waters of Marah, and the people cried out against Moses, for the waters were bitter and they could not drink them. Therefore they cried, “Marah! Marah!” which means Bitterness! Then Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree, and when he had cut it down he was divinely directed to throw that into the waters of Marah, and the waters became sweet (Ex. 15:22-26).

Here in the Revelation there is one significant difference. In Israel’s experience in the desert the waters were bitter and by the word of the Lord they were made sweet. Here, however, the waters seem sweet, but by the word of the Lord they are made bitter! In both cases it is the Lord Himself who changes the waters! Yes, IT IS THE LORD! This “star” which is Christ, descends upon the earthly rivers and fountains of waters as a beaming ray of brilliancy; but to the carnal mind it is poison — Wormwood! Wormwood is the bitterest shrub known to botanists. Several varieties are found in the Middle East. Wormwood has a bitter, nauseating taste. When it is used freely, it produces convulsions, paralysis, and death. In the Hebrew language its name means “to curse,” and rightly so, as it is listed among the curses given by the Lord to Moses.

The presence of the Lord and the anointed word of God have a way of poisoning man’s word, so far as man is concerned. That the rivers and fountains of waters represent the flowing of a “word” through our land, which the Lord Himself embitters with wormwood, is wonderfully clear in the prophecy of Jeremiah. “And I have seen the folly in the prophets of Samaria: they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies...therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with the bitterness of wormwood, and make them drink the poisonous water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land” (Jer. 23:13-15, KJV & Amplified).

“And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter,” signifies the extinction of our desire to partake any longer of the polluted waters of earth, for a man is called “alive” when he desires, seeks, trust in, or responds to the environment around him. When one is separated from a world of “life,” or what is counted as life, he is considered dead. Many saints have become “dead” to the world they used to live in! The things that once were life to them have now become death. Truly, we who have been apprehended to the high calling of God have died to the world, we have died to sin, we have died to various religious realms, and we have died to so-called “truths” we once held as sacred. “Because the waters were made bitter” indicates that God has brought us to the place of maturity in the spiritual life of Christ where all the philosophies, methods, ways, and spirit of the world, as well as the multiplied religious activities of the old-order church systems have lost their appeal, attractiveness, and glamour — none of them hold anything for us anymore! Not only do they not hold anything for us, but they have become to us repugnant, repulsive, unpleasant, unpalatable, insipid, and nauseating! Truly, all these “waters” have been made wormwood unto us! And our wonderful Lord in His great mercy and love has done this for us! Because of His great purpose for us, predestined before the foundation of the world, He now calls us away from the rivers of earth that we may live only and always by the river of life that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb! Isn’t it wonderful!

How powerfully we see this in the life of our blessed forerunner, the firstborn Son of God! Though Jesus was “made of a woman,” and “made under the law,” being raised in the synagogue with all the practices of the religious life of the people of Israel, by the sovereign revelation of His Father, when His sonship was revealed to Him, He saw the law for what it was — bondage and vanity. And He could never redeem us from the bondage and curse of the law unto the liberty and glory of sonship until He Himself once and forever REPUDIATED THE LAW and stepped forth to live only and wholly by the Father! He had to abandon the righteousness of the law in order to reveal the righteousness of God by the Spirit! That is precisely what He did when He came to John the Baptist and was baptized unto repentance. That means Jesus repented! He was the only man who ever lived that kept perfectly every precept of the law. He was the blameless, spotless, pure, holy, and undefiled Lamb of God, the only sinless One of humanity! Other men came to John’s baptism repenting of sin. But Jesus had done no sin, therefore He could not repent of sin. Yet — He was baptized unto repentance!

Jesus repented! What a thought! The only thing He could repent of was the old covenant His Father had subjected Him to. It was a hindrance to His sonship, for it was an inferior order that was ready to pass away. As long as He was a child He was subject to the tutors and governors of the law, but when the hour arrived for the unveiling of His mature sonship He walked down to the river Jordan and was baptized unto that repentance, or turning from the law, and came out of the water in the power of the Spirit of His Father! He buried the law, and all the old order of the old covenant, and was invested upon by the glory of the new order of His Father! He stepped forth with the public recognition by His Father. He was recognized as the SON OF GOD for the first time when His heavenly Father spoke out of the open heavens proclaiming a Son who was no longer under the tutelage of the schoolmaster of the law. He had turned from being ruled by the law to being ruled by the Spirit of Life! He turned from the natural to the spiritual! He turned from the human to the divine! He turned from the earthly to the heavenly! He turned from being a channel, a riverbed for the waters of a carnal, lifeless, earthly word, to becoming the spring, the fountain, the reservoir of that living water which flows from the heart of God! From that time on He was filled with the Spirit and led by the Spirit. The waters of eternal and incorruptible life flowed from His innermost being! His life changed dramatically! He did all these things to deliver us from the limited waters of the earth-realm and bring us to the unlimited celestial waters of the kingdom of God! It is indeed wonderful!

The flowing streams and fountains of waters of the external form of truth in the law were made wormwood — made bitter, even poisonous, so that the Son of God would turn from them and drink of them no more! It was the Father Himself who turned those “waters” of Old Testament truth and revelation to wormwood! And because of the bitterness of those waters to the pure, Holy Spirit of sonship within Jesus, He died to that realm once and for all! The firstborn Son of God understood this very clearly by the mind of the Father! Out from under the curses of the law He never condemned the prostitute, the fornicator, the tax-gatherer, the thieves, or murderers. He never demonstrated holy anger against the Romans, the world, or the wicked. It was the religious leaders that He denounced! His anger was focused on the hypocrisy of the so-called carriers of God’s word! He condemned those who laid heavy burdens upon the people, yet they themselves could not keep the laws they tried to enforce! They appeared clean on the outside, but inside were full of greed and wickedness! Those who gave tithes and fasted and prayed and loved the best seats in the synagogues to be seen of men, He rebuked! Those who distorted the word of God, who turned the truth of God into a lie, who misrepresented the nature of His

Father, and loaded people down with religious burdens and obligations, He called a generation of vipers — a brood of snakes! (Mat. 23:2-7,13-15).

What an astonishing word for Jesus to deliver to those lettered doctors of the law and chief priests who had studied the scriptures and were esteemed leaders of the religion of the past! Just as those religious leaders could not discern the day of their visitation and refused to relinquish the old in order to apprehend the new, so are there multitudes in this new kingdom day who will fail to make the transition by repentance, and will reject the new thing God is about to do in the earth. Those who drink from the corrupted, polluted streams of man's religion will reject the river of God that flows from the manifest sons of God in the hour of God's unveiling!

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation (judgment, processing). Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves” (Mat. 23:13-15).

I do not for one moment doubt that this is what Jesus would say about the leaders of the church systems of our day! If Jesus was walking among us today, as He once was with a body of flesh and blood, He would utter the same denouncements against the carnal church systems today! And He is walking among us now, not as Jesus in the flesh, but as Christ, the Spirit! Jesus had no fear of the multitudes who heard Him rebuke and chastise the scribes and Pharisees that day for their useless, empty, vain, pompous, carnal religious practices! Much of what the Christian leaders do today only appears to be spiritual, but all of it is totally religious. In many cases it is done to cover up their hidden agenda, which is to deceive their unsuspecting followers, to gain a following, to build a kingdom, and to take from them for their own prestige and gain. Father is leading His elect onward and upward spiritually, from the low lands of Christendom's infantile experiences, to the more mature high places of relationship with Him. He has called us to ascend the heights of mount Zion, that here we may grow spiritually, step by step, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. And in that process of growth, our Father is delivering us from the lifeless doctrines and static creeds of the past! He has turned all those “streams” into wormwood, and we are no longer able to drink of those waters! And Father is doing a very strong and sure work of cleansing us within to deliver us, once and for all time, from all the earthly rivers and fountains of waters of man's carnal and corrupt religious systems. He does this, first of all, by giving us a revelation, causing us to see Babylon for what it is! Within us, within our minds, hearts, and nature, He comes into our world in the power of His Spirit and makes all the rivers of Babylon bitter to our taste!

How well I remember when the Spirit of the Lord in my life began to turn the waters of Babylon to wormwood! I sat in the same pew where the word coming forth had seemed life to me, it was exciting and satisfied my soulish understanding, emotions, and desires. Yet suddenly that same word and those same activities that had blessed me became repulsive and abhorrent — I could stand it no longer, I wanted to throw up! The waters were made death to me! They became poison! When I drank of them they made me sick! If I would have continued to drink of them they would have killed me! Oh, yes! IT WAS THE LORD WHO DID THIS! The star from heaven, burning as a lamp, fell upon my rivers and upon my fountains of waters, making them wormwood!

Every member of God's elect can testify that the things we once loved we now hate. Things that were important to us, now appear insignificant and worthless. The pleasures of sin, the allurements of the world, the priorities of society, the vain traditions of religion all become a weariness and stench in our nostrils. Someone once asked, "If I become a Christian can I still get drunk?" A wise believer responded, "Yes, you can get drunk all you want to!" He knew that once the higher and more glorious life and reality of the Lord was raised up in that man, Christ would take the "want to" out of him! And let me tell you, my brother, my sister, I am perfectly free to attend, join, support, and be active in any religious system of man that I want to. Oh, yes! But I testify to every man who reads these words that long ago the blessed spirit of wisdom and revelation from God purged my ransomed soul from any desire to enter the harlot's house.

There is a truth that is deeper yet than this. I must confess that I have often been distressed by the lack of understanding among the Lord's people. Somehow so many seem to miss the point. And nowhere is this more true than when we come to the harlot church systems of man! Let me make this point as clearly as I can. The mother of harlots is not the Roman Catholic Church. The mother of harlots is a lot closer home! The mother of harlots is still birthing her children! The mother of harlots is the soulish dimension of man's life that through her carnal sense- consciousness and human logic and reasoning births what she believes is pleasing to God, what she feels is the worship of God, what she perceives to be the work of God, and what she determines to be the way of God. The mother of harlots is our very own soul — our own religious mind, will, emotion, and desire! Where did the Roman Catholic Church, with all her false doctrines, pagan practices, and carnal rituals, come from? Did it not proceed out of the carnal, soulish heart of man? You see, beloved, carnal church systems are not really birthed out of other carnal church systems at all — they are, one and all, birthed out of the mother of them all — the soulish heart of man! Viewed from this vantage point, it could well be said that the systems constitute the "rivers" whereas the carnal soul of each of us is the fountain-head or the head-waters from whence they flow! Ah, it is even here within us that the fountains of waters have been made wormwood! It is a marvelous wonder of God's grace that the waters which were once so sweet and satisfying to us have been made bitter, and as we drank of them death was worked in us, and at last that realm died within our hearts, and the waters of religion no longer flow through our land! We now stand on the banks of a vast reservoir and the artesian fountains of the deep of Christ's incorruptible and immortal life have sprung up within us and out of our innermost being, from the inner sanctum of our spirit, flow rivers of living water! "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High" (Ps. 46:4)

"Have this mind in you," says the apostle, "which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). To be a son of God is to do just that, to have the spirit of Christ and to learn to think and act out of the reality of sonship to God. We no longer see ourselves after the childish mentality that calls us "sinners saved by grace." No more are we to be called after the much maligned, generic term, "Christian," which can mean almost anything ! Beloved, now are we the sons of God! Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. We are now laying aside our own mentality, conditioned as it is by the spirit of the world and the foolishness of religion, and accept the instruction of the Christ within. As our minds are exposed to the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, our thoughts, understandings, and beliefs undergo a marvelous change. Our fallacies, misconceptions, errors, ignorance, and illusions lose their power over us and we begin to know the truth that makes us free. The power and glory of our sonship to God cannot be revealed through

us as long as we are in bondage to any realm of knowledge or false conceptions about God, about ourselves, or about our glorious Father's purposes in us and in creation. In order to completely deliver us and truly make us free, the star that Christ is, is falling in power upon all the streams of our natural, human lives and turning them every one into bitterness! Oh, the wonder of it!

Blessed be His name! God has provided some better thing for us and now we can return — the way has been opened into the presence of God, into the life of God, into the kingdom of God, into the city of God where flows the pure river of the water of life! That's what this journey is all about, and that's why the trumpets are sounding their blasts in our land — it's calling us to a return to the Lord. It is our return to the heavenly; our return to the spiritual; our return to the mind of Christ; our return to the image of God; our return to Eden; our return to the kingdom; our return to the incorruptible; our return to the Elohim; our return to the throne! There's a call within us, and deep calleth unto deep. I tell you, my beloved, there is something within me, an inner compulsion, and I know I have passed the point of no return. There is no turning back from this Quest for God! The trumpets are sounding and I must arise again and again to march forward into my promised land! There is no turning back because my heart has returned to the Lord! **THE FOURTH TRUMPET**

“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for the third part of it, and the night likewise” (Rev. 8:12).

This is the fourth angel to sound, and it is significant to note what happened on the fourth creative day as God arranged the cosmos in that long-ago beginning. “And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night” (Gen. 1:14-18).

The truth of the great lights in the heavens includes many wonderful examples of that which is taking place in the realm of the spirit. The sun, moon, and stars of the heavens exist in a realm where God is absolute Sovereign and Lord, far above the sin, confusion, sorrow, strife, pain, and death of earth. Therefore, in their highest meaning, in their spiritual meaning, the sun, moon, and stars are used to represent HEAVENLY, SPIRITUAL RULE AND DOMINION. The prophet said, “The heavens do rule.” That is the great truth revealed when at the moment of creation the almighty Creator proclaimed of the lights of the heavenly realm, “Let them be for light upon the earth...the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.” The primary thought is that of rulership and dominion! The God of heaven rules over all, and can we now open the eyes of our understanding to behold the wondrous truth that God's elect sons are destined, with their sovereign and glorious Father, to become the CONSTELLATIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL HEAVENS, THE LUMINARIES AND RULERS IN GOD'S SKY! As the glory of the Lord arises upon His chosen ones they pierce the gloom of earth's dark night of sin and sorrow and bring deliverance, life, and order out of the chaos of man's failure and despair. “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan. 12:3). Can we not see by this that those who rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom are indeed THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS IN THE HEAVEN'S OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD!

The sun in prophecy is the most exalted ruler in any order. We find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the scripture a "sun." "For the Lord thy God is a sun and a shield" (Ps. 84:11). Also, our elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, is called "the sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2). Furthermore, we find in reference to men, "He that ruleth over men...shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth" (II Sam. 23:3-4). David the king was called "the light of Israel" (II Sam. 21:17). This same meaning is found in II Kings 8:19 where we read, "Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David His servant's sake, as He promised him to give him always a light." This is exactly the same promise we find in Jeremiah 33:17 where the Lord says, "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." Our Father has told us, "heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool" (Isa. 66:1). Heaven is His throne, or may we say, His throne is heaven! "Heaven" bespeaks of rulership and dominion, the lights of the heavens are the individual rulers who occupy the heavenly thrones of authority and power! The earth is that which is ruled by the heavens — that which looks to the sun, moon, and the stars for its light and direction. Thus, the heavenly bodies are here viewed solely in relation to the earth-realm and those who dwell in the earthlies. There is an order of human government now, but all these are soon to pass away, as those heavens pass away with a great noise, and the lights thereof are darkened, fall from heaven, and a new order shall be inaugurated.

It is interesting that on the fourth day of creation God ordained the lights of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; and when the fourth trumpet sounds it is the heavenly bodies that are the object of the Lord's work. It is of further interest to note that in Christ's message to the fourth church the promise is that the overcomer shall receive the morning star and become a ruler! Finally, in chapter sixteen of the Revelation it is the pouring out of the fourth vial that brings a final judgment upon the sun!

The divine pattern in all these things becomes clear once we understand the great truth that there are revealed in this wonderful book of Revelation two heavens and two earths! The blessed Seer of Patmos beheld these in rapt vision and recorded what he saw in these inspired words, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1). There is an old heaven and there is a new heaven! There is an old earth and there is a new earth! The old heaven and earth pass away but we look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (II Pet. 3:13). It should be clear to any thinking mind that the old heaven with its sun, moon, and stars, is the old world of human consciousness, worldly society, and man-made religion with all its luminaries — the "lights" that governed, controlled, dictated, constrained, inspired and directed our thinking, understanding, ways, will, desires, ambitions, and conduct in the world of humanity. It is a source of wonder to me that very few believers perceive the contrast between the "rivers" and "fountains of waters" under the third trumpet, and the "sun," "moon," and "stars" of the "heavens" of the fourth trumpet. Let me make it very clear. The "rivers" and "fountains of waters" under the third trumpet represent that which we partake of, which we willingly appropriate to ourselves because of the perceived benefit received thereby. People drink water because they are thirsty and the water meets the need of their life. But the heavens rule! This is more than refreshment, my friend, it points to the authority, power, and dominion exercised upon us by realms which impress themselves upon us!

Each of us has at some point (again and again) received a new understanding, revelation, quickening, and dealing of God in our lives. Gladly we embraced what Father was showing and doing, and we separated from former ways of thinking and walking as well as from

previous associations. We stopped drinking from those fountains! For instance, there came a day when we no longer saw ourselves as “merely human,” or “sinners saved by grace,” no longer were we trying to “reform old Adam” and make our flesh or natural man conform to the righteousness of God. We now knew that we were not human beings having a spiritual experience, but indeed we were spiritual beings having a human experience! We saw clearly that we are the offspring of God, with the seed of divine life within, truly sons of the living God! For the first time we understood that we cannot make our flesh better, that only by nurturing and growing up the spiritual man within could the old mind and nature be overcome. The errors of religion and our old mind-set and understanding of ourselves and God’s plan and purpose for us and His whole creation were radically changed! Though we fully and gladly embraced these and many more truths, and did our best to make a clean break from all the false concepts and beliefs and from all the old orders that dominated our lives, still many were “haunted” by the old ways of looking at things, apprehensive that maybe they were now mistaken or deceived, and troubled that they no longer attended the former church orders they had been a part of, plagued by a residual guilt that they were not still “doing” all the things they used to do “for” God! Though they were convinced of the truth of the new, the old continued to come in and try to lay a claim upon them, plaguing them with apprehension, fear, and sometimes even torment! Many have vacillated back and forth for a season, torn between the old and the new, between religion and Christ, between error and truth.. Oh, yes! Their “rivers” and “fountains of waters” had been turned to wormwood, and they had fled from those waters to drink from the river of God. Yet — the sun, moon, and stars of that old order — the powers of their old heavens continued to shine upon them, asserting their authority out of that old heavenly realm, trying still to control, dictate, dominate, govern, rule, and subdue them! Can you not see the mystery? The third trumpet had done its work, but the fourth trumpet was yet to sound! The lights of the old heavens must be darkened until there is no more pull or power over us in any way. Only then are we truly free!

These two heavens — the old heavens of man’s order, and the new heavens of God’s rule by the Spirit, are both presented throughout the book of Revelation and we must be keen in discernment to understand which is in view in any scene. Let me put it this way. One way to recognize whether it is the old heaven or the new heaven is to observe the action taking place. The heavens that are being darkened, smitten, falling, rolled together as a scroll, and passing away with a great noise certainly are not the new heavens, for only the old heavens pass away and the new are established in righteousness and glory and power forevermore! It is the heavens of God’s kingdom where sons reign upon the throne and from whence the seven spirits of God are sent forth into all the earth! It is the new heavens of the Spirit of the Lord from which the holy city, New Jerusalem, descends (Rev. 21:2)! It is out of the heavens of God that the great voice is heard saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev. 21:3). All through the book of Revelation grand and glorious things take place in, and out from, the heavens of God’s Spirit! The seven angels that blow the seven trumpets sound forth their messages out of the heavens of God! Can we not see by this that it cannot be the sun, moon, and stars of the heavens where we dwell that are smitten and darkened!

Oh, wonder of wonders! It is my deep conviction that in our text it is the third part of the sun of the old heavens, a third part of the moon of the old heavens, and a third part of the stars of the old heavens that are smitten, and the lights (rulerships, authorities, dominions) of that old world of man, of man’s thinking, man’s economy, man’s politics, man’s philosophies, man’s orders, man’s religion, and all the rest, are smitten and darkened in

our lives. It is not just our desire to imbibe of those things that is taken away, as under the third trumpet, but now their rule — their authority — their power over us is broken! What we see here is the doing away with the old creation and the bringing forth of the new. This is happening within the life of every overcomer, for “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!” (II Cor. 5:17). It is the dominion of God’s government coming and being established in His elect which evokes the darkening of the old heavens within us! The prophet Isaiah spoke of this wonderful reality of the darkening of the heavens of man’s world when he prophesied, “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously” (Isa. 24:23).

The type for this was first seen in the land of Egypt when God sent the plagues for the deliverance of His people. “And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings” (Ex. 10:21-23). Is it not remarkable that while there was dense darkness over the whole land of Egypt, yet there was light in all the land of Goshen where the children of Israel lived! Do not fear the darkening of the old heavens you have lived under, my beloved, for while thick darkness covers the old past orders of our lives, so that nothing of that realm can function or exert authority over us anymore, yet our gracious and wise heavenly Father has provided wonderful light — a new mind, a new consciousness, a new understanding, a new heart, a new spirit, a new identity, a new nature — the scintillating light of truth, life, and reality in the spirit! Oh, yes! There is light in all the dwellings of the new creation that we are! There is the pure white light of the glorified Christ in our spirit! Just as the darkness over the land of Egypt was designed by God as an instrument to deliver His people out of the bondage of Egypt, so the darkening of the old heavens of our natural lives, all those things, people, systems, and realms which exerted authority and dominion over us, is the hand of God moving to deliver us from the bondage of the Egypt of this present world system.

One strange phenomenon appears in John’s vision of the darkening of the celestial bodies — the fact that it is only “one third” of each that is darkened. Stranger yet is the statement, “and the day shone not for the third part of it, and the night likewise.” Certainly this is not the natural result of the darkening of a third part of the literal sun, moon, and stars! Should one third of the sun be darkened we would have less light during the day, but the effect would not be that our day would be one-third shorter. Yet, if a third part of the sun of our physical heavens was darkened we would see it, feel it, and the whole earth and every living thing would be affected by it! The temperatures would drop, crops would fail, food would become scarce, and great distress would come to mankind. Should a third part of the moon and the stars be smitten it would have various negative effects also. Those who are guided by the stars would be thrown into confusion!

So what is the solution to this mystery? It reveals, first of all, that we have not here a literal phenomenon, but a symbolic representation of spiritual things! The “one third” of everything under the first four trumpets stands for the elect of God! As the work represented by these visions is accomplished within us we are being prepared for the unveiling of Christ in us, and the manifestation of Christ through us, in all His fullness and glory! The rest of the world is not being dealt with in this way nor on this level at this time, but the “one-third” company is! While the systems of man and the delusions and tyranny of the carnal mind still control the nations of earth, they no longer control the overcomers!

We make up the “one-third”. The sun of man’s order no longer shines in the realm we live in, for we live as the new earth, under the rule of the new heavens, therefore man’s day, symbolically, is one third shorter than it was when all the people, including the Lord’s people, walked under the dominion of the earthly, carnal systems of man! The moon and the stars of man’s order no longer lighten the world we walk in, therefore the “night” of man’s world is one third shorter than before!

Furthermore, the natural sun, moon, and stars were the light of the outer court of Moses’ tabernacle. There was no other light. The outer court had no covering, so its light was the sun, moon, and stars. In the inner court of the holy place lamps were used as the source of light. In the most holy place, however, there was no light of the sun, nor any light of the moon, nor the light of the stars. Those lights were completely eclipsed, and the glory of God alone was the light! As the sons of God come to perfection and the fullness of Christ, the lights and luminaries of the old heavens truly become darkened, so that the word of the Seer of Patmos is fulfilled in us — “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like the light of a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal: and the city had no need of the light of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: FOR THE GLORY OF GOD DID LIGHTEN IT, AND THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF” (Rev. 21:10-11,23).

The New Jerusalem does not need the light of the sun, moon, or stars (outer court), nor the light of any lamp (holy place), because in this Holy of holies dwells the eternal presence of the almighty Father and the Lamb who are the light of it. The city has no outer court or holy place! Those holy sons of God who dwell there have no need for the outward light of creeds, doctrines, laws, ceremonies, rituals, ordinances, baptisms, organizations, programs, or any other work of man, for the very presence, life, mind, and nature of God Himself within is their illumination! The holy place of Moses’ tabernacle was oblong in shape, being thirty feet in length, fifteen in width, and fifteen in height. The Holy of holies, on the other hand, was fifteen feet in length, width, and height, or a perfect cube. The only other cube described in the scriptures is the holy city, New Jerusalem! The perfect cube of the Holy of holies now finds its fulfillment in the city of God! “The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal” (Rev. 21:16). Now a cube is the most perfect figure, being equal on every side — finite perfection. It has what you call finality, it is the most comprehensive, and it holds the most — nothing contains as much as a cube — and therefore, it is given here as the expression of perfection and fullness. It is divinely inwrought perfection and fullness — the very glory of God — and therefore it is spoken of as a cube. The message is clear — one can never know the glory, illumination, and power of this city in the outer court of popular religion, nor yet in the holy place of Pentecostal economy. Only those who by faith enter in beyond the veil into the glorious and eternal reality of the most holy place can ever begin to touch and know the surpassing glory, perfection, and fullness, of this realm of God’s life!

When God reveals this New Jerusalem people in all His fullness the world will know this wondrous fact, that “the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them.” The glory of God is the light of this great city! Not only is it the light of the city, but it shall become also the light of the whole world, for “the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it” (Rev. 21:24). The light of God is pure light, total white light, for “in Him there is no darkness at all” (I Jn. 1:5). All through the scriptures we find that light has been a symbol for both the Spirit and the Truth. When the Bible says of the holy city that her light shall be like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, it simply reveals God’s called and chosen elect as having

come to all light, perfect light, all truth, purest truth, absolute understanding, walking and living in absolute light and truth — the perfection of the mind of Christ within.

The following words by Ray Prinzing put the cap-stone on this beautiful truth: “With the extinguishing of earth’s lights, comes the forth-shining of God’s luminaries of the new creation order. HE IS ‘the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world’ (Jn. 1:9). And He is also ‘The Father of lights...’ (James 1:17). He births after His own kind. ‘Now ye are light in the Lord’ (Eph. 5:8). To the new order He speaks, ‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people (as earth’s lights are diminished), but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising’ (Isa. 60:1-3). Turn to see the fading of the old order, and your back is to the dawning of the new. Turn to see that new light arising, and your back is to the diminishing former lights. O, to behold Him, and with a single eye to follow on, for ‘the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day’” (Prov. 4:18) — end quote.

Chapter 109

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

And I beheld, and heard an eagle flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" (Rev. 8:13).

In the passage above, as quoted from the King James Bible, we have the word "angel" – John sees an angel flying in mid-heaven, crying Woe, woe, woe, to all who dwell in the earth realm. The word "angel," however, is not supported by the original text. Most, if not all, modern translations give us the word "eagle," not "angel." John both heard and saw this eagle flying through the upper air proclaiming a message of woe to all the carnal-minded people who inhabit the earth-realm, those whose hearts and hopes are set upon earth, those who, in the language of the apostle Paul, "mind earthly things." That eagle was visible, audible, heavenly, and intelligent, showing that he represents a word from the Lord! With his great and far-reaching voice he was solemnly giving warning of the judgmental dealings of God to fall upon the natural man, the carnal mind, the human consciousness, and the Adamic identity. It will be seen at a glance that the judgments of the "woe" trumpets are of a very different character than the four trumpets preceding them.

The eagle has some very significant characteristics, and by noting these together with what a host of other scripture passages have to say about the eagle, we will be helped to a clear understanding of the symbol before us. The eagle is, first of all, a kingly bird. It stands preeminently at the head of the feathered families, just as the lion does among the beasts. Many nations, on account of the royal dignity of this bird, have chosen it as their governmental insignia. The eagle is also famous for its exalted, and exalting instincts. They prefer the heights both when at rest, and while flying. They build their nests among the highest crags, and outstrip all other birds in their lofty ascensions. It is said that the eagle is the only bird that can look the sun in the face. The eagle is famous also for its keen, far-reaching sight. "The eagle eye" is a common expression. They have a quick, clear, penetrating vision. So quick and sharp is the sight of the eagle that it is almost impossible to surprise or deceive it. The eagle is known for its strength. Its swiftness and power are so astonishing that the ancients used it as the symbol of omnipresence, and omnipotence.

John saw a great eagle flying through heaven, and warning the earth-dwellers of the great truth that our heavenly Father is set to destroy the last vestiges of our old, earthly, natural, human consciousness and identity. This was not a real eagle that he saw, of course, but the image of one in his vision. The eagle, though, represented a great reality! It was not a predatory bird hastening to pounce upon its prey, but an intelligent heavenly messenger bearing a powerful and irresistible word from God!

Our text speaks to us of three woes. Woe, woe, woe! There are seven trumpets, and the last three trumpets are woes. This marks a difference between the first four trumpets and the last three trumpets. In like manner, in the original creation in chapter one of Genesis, we see the very same principle. The first four days and the last three days of creation are separated by something of great import. The last three days, the fifth, sixth, and seventh days, are the only three days God mentions as being blessed. A blessing was conferred upon each of the last three days – but none upon the first four days! Subsequently Adam falls, bringing upon all humanity the curse of sin, sorrow, and death. We follow the story of that wretched curse through all the pages of God’s Book. Finally, we come to the closing book, the book of Revelation, and the last three trumpets are woes. Instead of blessings they are woes! The message is clear – in the book of Revelation God is doing away with the old creation! These are woes upon the old creation, upon the old Adamic thinking and understanding, upon the flesh nature, upon the carnal mind and the whole domain of sin-consciousness and death. It is woe to the Adam of the fall, and the bestial nature of man, and restoration again to the blessedness of the man created in the image and likeness of God! It is woe to the ignorance and insanity of natural thinking and worldly understanding, and restoration to the sanity and wisdom of the mind of Christ! It is woe to sin, and restoration to righteousness! It is woe to the natural man, and restoration to the blessedness of the spiritual man! It is woe to darkness, limitation, and death, and restoration to the blessedness of the glory and power of incorruption! It is woe to the chains of religion, and restoration to the blessedness of the liberating light of Christ! Oh, the wonder of it!

The voice of the eagle brings not a limited woe, but a complete woe to all who dwell in an earthly realm. By “woe” is signified lamentation over the wickedness in anyone, it is woe to the heart of the natural man, the man of sin. And by “woe, woe, woe” the most intense lamentation is signified; for the triplication makes it superlative, because three signifies that which is full and complete. Isn’t that good news! God sends a word and that word is woe, woe, woe to the earth-dweller! Can you not see that we are being changed by the word! It is the kingly, authoritative, discerning, piercing, penetrating, powerful, and transforming voice of God out of a heavenly realm proclaiming the destruction of the Adamic life that we might be transformed! That heavenly realm is within ourselves – out of God in our spirit – uncovering the reality of who we really are, causing us to live more and more out of our true nature and identity and less and less out of the natural flesh man. The lights of lesser realms are being turned out, woe to those realms, and woe to that man within us that dwells in the earthlies! When the woe comes to us it reveals to us that we are living in the wrong realm. We are then called to “come up hither” to a higher place in God! We begin to hunger and thirst after something deeper, fuller than we have known hitherto. There is a cry in our hearts for greater reality!

THE FIFTH TRUMPET

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit” (Rev. 9:1).

Anyone who attempts to explain that which he does not understand can accomplish but one result: the complete and glaring display of his own ignorance. I know very little concerning electricity. The extent of my knowledge of it is just about comprehended in three statements: namely, it bites; to press on a button turns on a light or any number of electrical gadgets; and if the lights go off, one can usually remedy the situation by inserting a new fuse in the proper receptacle, or switching the circuit breaker. Briefly, I am grossly

ignorant concerning electrical science. But now, just suppose that I took it into my head to write a book on electrical engineering. That book, if ever completed, would be a fanciful tale indeed! If I were possessed of sufficient natural ability, I might be able to make the book interesting from the very fact that it would be ludicrous enough to be entertaining. But woe to the man who would attempt to construct electrical apparatus according to my specifications!

Today men and women who are in greater ignorance of God's truth than I am of electricity are writing books, preaching sermons, teaching scholars, and editing papers on religious topics, that are more fanciful, misleading, undependable, and dangerous than would be my book on electrical engineering! But the horrible feature is, that while no one would think of listening to my electrical delusions, yet the whole church world has gone wild and is glorying in, in varying degrees, delusions, misrepresentations, and lies which have a direct bearing on their spiritual welfare. Only fools are supposed to have license to indulge in foolishness. All reasonable men are supposed to subscribe only to sound and sane and sensible beliefs. Therefore when we can show reasonable men that they have been tricked and led into spiritual ignorance and foolish beliefs, even though it may be a hard blow to their vanity, the only reasonable course is for them to forthwith forsake their folly and come on up to higher ground. And we all, every one of us, have been victimized. We might as well admit it! But, thank God! a "little flock" has been awakened, and has left the defiled and corrupted religious way. These are now marching up the heavenly mount Zion where the glorious and eternal reality of God's Christ is revealed!

Nowhere has there been more ignorance manifested than on this subject of the "bottomless pit." As we take up this ninth chapter of the Revelation we have the FIRST WOE or the SOUNDING OF THE FIFTH TRUMPET. The fifth trumpet brings the vision of another star fallen to earth. The star is a person, called in Hebrew "Abaddon," and in Greek "Apollyon," meaning "the destroyer." He holds the key to the bottomless pit. When he lifts the lid there issues forth billows of dark smoke, and out of the smoke proceeds a swarm of locusts. Though they are called locusts, because in their general appearance, and in the ravages they commit, they resemble them, yet in fact they are imaginary and metaphorical beings, and combine in themselves qualities which are never found in reality. They have bodies like horses, faces like men, the hair of women, the teeth of lions, crowns of gold, breastplates of iron, and the tails of scorpions. They are commanded not to kill, only to torment those who have not the seal of God. The life of these pests is limited to five months, that is, they are permitted to inflict men for a limited period of time.

This message would be very simple and quickly told if we were to take everything in chapter nine literally. We would just say that John saw in vision a swarm of weird-looking locusts that came up over the earth and stung all the unbelieving people who didn't leave the planet in the "rapture"! And should you be one of them, you're going to get it! That would be the simplistic response of a naturalistic interpretation out of the darkness of the carnal mind. But once the blessed truth dawns that this is really a picture of Christ, that this is truly the revelation of Jesus Christ, and how He comes and transforms His people into His image, at once we take the shoes from off our feet and with head bowed low before the grace of Him who has shed the light of heaven upon a truth, we humbly beseech Him to instruct us in it. How beautiful to have the Holy Spirit paint us a picture of the Lord Jesus from every verse of every chapter in this wonderful book!

Speculation about, or inquiry into, the future are favorite pass-times of both saints and sinners. Among believers, it often takes the form of a fascination with, and search for, the

“signs of the times” – outward signs of the approach of the end of the age or the dawn of the Millennium. These signs are often of a political, social, or judgmental kind – events in the State of Israel, the threat of world Communism, New Age religion, New World Order, world atomic war, conspiracy theories, natural disasters, the decay of public morals, etc. Popular books which claim to recognize or interpret the signs, to identify the Antichrist, or to unveil the date of Christ’s second coming, sell in great numbers today. Other people become excited with each passing comet, or every natural disaster, seeing in each some mystical omen portending the imminence of the “rapture,” the beginning of the Great Tribulation, the end of the world, or something else.

The church world is literally filled with sign-watchers, though I dare say most of them have missed the meaning of the signs altogether, for they read with the carnal mind, having the understanding darkened. We can be so taken up with natural “signs” of wars and rumors of wars, violence, political intrigues, of earthquakes and disasters, until we totally miss the real thing that is happening in the realm of the Spirit, or hearing His voice within, that He might bring us into complete union with Himself, that we might become His salvation unto the ends of the earth! We watch the evening news and suppose that we are watching for His coming or His kingdom. We hear of the hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, droughts, crime, wars, the rise and fall of governments, the loss of liberties, the attempt at world government, and our perspective becomes distorted, and fear and doubt seize hold of our souls, until we become more conscious of the darkness of “this world,” than we are of the light, glory, and triumph of the INDWELLING CHRIST! Any time we are troubled by, or anxious about, the outcome of an election, fuel shortages, or a thousand other things coming to pass upon the earth, it is obvious that we are watching the realm of darkness rather than beholding the glory of Christ! We are of those who “dwell upon the earth” instead of those “caught up unto God and His throne.” The kingdom of God can only be discerned by the spirit – it does not come by outward observations!

It is significant to note that the events we now consider take place at the sounding of the fifth trumpet. Five is the number of grace! The natural mind will be incapable of finding any grace in these scenes, just because the natural mind is enmity against God, nor does it understand the things of the spirit! The great and eternal truth is, my beloved, God is not out to destroy us, He’s about the business of saving us with a full salvation! And here He sounds forth His grace by which we are saved! Most people entertain the idea that the scene in chapter nine of the Revelation is one of great darkness, unbearable distress, and terrible hopelessness, but that is not the case at all! It is a redeeming message of hope, deliverance, and transformation! But first, let us consider the awesome scene John beheld in and by the Spirit.

A STAR HAD FALLEN

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key to the bottomless pit” (Rev. 9:1).

A star is the symbol of height of knowledge, understanding, and revelation in God. Stars, sun, and moon in the book of Revelation are always symbols! They are used in various ways and with different applications, but they are all lights and bespeak of a height of knowledge and understanding – a word, if you please – out of a heavenly or spiritual realm. Gazing into the heavens at night we behold the majesty, beauty, and wonder of the starry heavens, and rejoice in the knowledge that our heavenly Father placed each star in its fixed place in the universe. He has given to each a name, revealing His great purpose

for them as they shed forth light in the darkness. The sun and the moon likewise are put in their places by the divine counsel and purpose of God.

There is a vast difference between descending from heaven and being cast out of heaven. The King James Bible tells us that John saw “a star fall from heaven,” but that is not the way it reads in the Greek text. The verb “fall” is not in the present tense at all, and does not denote an action taking place in the present, or at the instant that John beheld it, but something that has already transpired in the past. The Emphatic Diaglott, along with various modern translations, more correctly translates the passage, “and I saw a star having fallen from the heaven to the earth.” But even the words “having fallen” need some clarification also, for they seem to carry the connotation of something plunging down through the atmosphere, like a meteor, in an unimpeded and uncontrolled manner. Furthermore, there is no sense of why the star is falling – was it pushed, or did it jump? However, the expression comes from a Greek word which is akin to another word meaning to fly, and its use indicates something that is flying in a prescribed pattern and then alights on the earth. That is the precise use of the Greek word in this passage! The great truth that the Holy Spirit would teach all who have ears to hear is that Christ, the firstborn Son of God, is the star that alighted on the earth and set in motion the correctional and transformational processes by which mankind is transformed from the image of the earthly into the image of the heavenly! Oh, the wonder of it!

When the Christ “descended” He did far more than merely leave one place and go to another. Since heaven is not a “place” but a spiritual realm of life and dominion, to “descend” does not speak of a change of location, rather, a change of being. The Spirit of God makes no mistake about this! “From the beginning He had the nature of God. Yet He did not regard equality with God as something at which He should grasp (hold on to). Nay, He stripped Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, He humbled Himself and even stooped to die; and then that too a death on the cross. It is because of this also that God has so highly exalted Him, and has conferred on Him the name which is supreme above every other name, in order that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in the highest heavens, of those on the earth...” (Phil. 2:6-11, Weymouth Translation).

Yes, Christ descended, not geographically, but He descended in rank, in form, in substance, to become a man! The Mighty God became a man! And becoming a man He identified with all that was common to man. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham” (Heb. 2:14,16). Yes, my beloved, CHRIST DESCENDED from the high and holy realm of the Eternal Spirit into the depth of totality of the human experience, into the depth of what man is, into an identification and participation with the whole dreadful realm of darkness and death into which mankind had fallen. This was the Son of man, the Son of God, a member of the Divine Family, the Elohim, having changed Himself into a tiny collection of human cells, growing to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem, and living human life as it had never been lived before. He became obedient in this walk even unto death. With the coming of the Christ into this world of ours the STAR HAD FALLEN (COME DOWN) FROM HEAVEN UNTO THE EARTH!

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

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

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

The Lord Jesus Himself is the Morning Star! I do not hesitate to tell you that to see Christ is to behold the Morning Star. To know Christ is to know the Morning Star. To experience Christ is to experience the Morning Star. How do we see and touch and experience Christ? This is the same problem that confronted the wise men of old! One thing is certain. To find Christ is a matter of life and reality; it is not by a knowledge of the Bible or doctrines or church traditions. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. There is no doubt about this – it is an historical fact. The strange thing, however, is this: far away from the so-called Holy Land, far away from the religion of the Jews, far away from the glistening walls of the temple, far away from the sacred books of the law, far away from the bleeding sacrifices, far away from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and all the fervent and incessant religious activities, there appeared a star bearing the revelation of Christ to men who were looking

for Him! It did not appear to the Pharisees or the priests or the scribes or even to the king of Israel, but to men outside of everything that represented God to the people, and the revelation came to them by the sovereign act of God and by the illuminating power of His Spirit! Today, all the churches, all the preachers and teachers tell the people that they must find Christ by the Bible, or by the ministers, or by the religious activities of the church. But the first case of finding Christ in the world was not by any of these! The wise men were not reading the Bible, nor were they listening to a preacher, nor were they attending a church service as they rode along the way to Jerusalem. These men had seen something that no man before them had ever seen. Their eyes and minds and hearts had received the sweet sound of a message so transcendently glorious that it compelled them to make a journey that lasted for two whole years.

You see, precious friend of mine, merely to hold the Bible in your hand and try to believe all that your natural mind can understand of it will not bring the true revelation of Christ. Christ is a living reality, and the reality of Christ who is spirit, truth, and life is only known in the spirit and by the spirit! We may have read all the prophecies and all the promises and all the great statements of God's wonderful plan and provision and purpose. We may confess after we have read it that we have got it. We may name it and claim it, but we have not seen it, touched it, or experienced it until we do so in the spirit and by the spirit! The chief priests and scribes in Israel knew the scriptures forward and backward, and could quote you every verse telling about the coming of the Christ. But the Lord did not appear to them! He went far away to a heathen land to reveal the Christ to some heathen, not through the scriptures, not through the priesthood, not through the synagogue, not through the sacrifices and ceremonies and rituals, but through something no human hand can ever touch – a heavenly star! To go through the motions of religion is easy, but to look unto the star is something more! Like so many Christians of our day, those priests and scribes rejoiced in and revered the things they read in the Book, but their hearts could not comprehend nor were they able to recognize the vital truth and reality of the message. They had the record of the words of God, but their eyes had never seen the star – the illumination and revelation of God in and by the spirit – so they could not find the Christ! No one knows just when or where or how the star will appear. But I can assure you of one thing – you may attend the greatest seminary and understand all the theology and receive the highest degree conferred upon one in that, and never see the star or find the Christ. We may think the star should have appeared to the priests praying in the temple, but it appeared to pagans in a distant land.

Oh! How my ransomed soul exults and shouts a thousand hallelujahs, for I have seen the star! All of God's called and chosen elect in this hour, those called according to His purpose, those apprehended to the high calling of sonship to God, have seen the star and are following the star, and have found the Christ! What is the star? The star is the LIVING REVELATION, the QUICKENING VISION of the Christ wrought in the heart by the illuminating activity of the Holy Spirit. The firstborn Son of God is the bright and the Morning Star! He is the star that fell into the earth, that flew down, as it were, from the high realm of the heavens of God's Spirit, and alighted on the earth in the sight of men. Today He is the Living Star, the bright and Morning Star, announcing within us the dawn of God's new Day! Only as HE is revealed unto us by the Spirit do we see Him as He is, to know what sonship is, and to know who and what He is, and thereby who and what we are as sons of our Father! We are no longer clinging to the dying embers of yesterday's revelation and yesterday's move of God, but we are following the on-going path of the Living Star! Aren't you glad!

There is a wonderful admonition which pertains specifically to all who have received the call to sonship. The apostle Paul by inspiration wrote, "Do nothing from selfishness or deceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus who, though He was in the form of God, did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:3-8, RSV).

There is presented first Christ's wonderful divinity: "in the form of God," "equal with God." Then comes the mystery of His incarnation, in that word of deep and inexhaustible meaning: "He emptied Himself." The cross follows, with the humiliation, and obedience, and suffering, and death, even the death of the cross. "He humbled Himself." Oh, the wonder of it! And all is crowned by His glorious exaltation: "God hath highly exalted Him." Here we see the awesome journey of the star that fell from heaven into the earth! We behold the star, Christ as God, Christ becoming man, Christ as the first manifest Son of God upon earth, Christ as man in humiliation working out our redemption, Christ as the firstborn from the dead, Christ as the firstborn among many brethren, and Christ in glory as Lord of all – such are the treasures this passage contains.

Two striking statements stand out: "He emptied Himself," "He humbled Himself." The most startling thought of all is that GOD HUMBLLED HIMSELF! We can hardly conceive of such a thing. The high and holy One, the omniscient and omnipotent Creator and Lord of the universe HUMBLLED HIMSELF! Yet, it could not be otherwise. Let me state it this way: God is humble! Have you ever thought about that? If God were not humble there could have been no babe in Bethlehem's manger, no Son growing up in dusty Nazareth, no Redeemer dying in agony upon the cross. If God were not humble there would be no indwelling Spirit, no habitation of God in temples of clay. If God were not humble it would mean the destruction of God Himself, for He either could not, or would not, uphold all things by the word of His power and fill all things everywhere with Himself! He would then have almighty power without the balance of mercy, love, compassion, and identification with creation. Thus, He would be a tyrant, and tyranny holds within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

Furthermore, our Father requires humility of each of His sons! "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" (James 4:10). "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God..." (I Pet. 5:5-6). And now hear this, O elect of our Father! "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved...HUMBLENESS of mind..." (Col. 3:12). The question follows: Does our heavenly Father require an attitude of mind and state of being of HIS ELECT SONS which He does not Himself possess? Nay! "He humbled Himself." In Jesus Christ we behold the humility of God! Isn't it wonderful!

And now comes the word: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God...emptied Himself, and as a man humbled Himself." Every son of God must be like Christ in His self-emptying and self-humiliation. The first great act of self-abnegation in which as God He emptied Himself of His divine majesty, glory and power and laid it aside, was followed by the no less wondrous humbling of Himself as man, to the death of the cross. And in this amazing two-fold humiliation, the astonishment of the universe and the delight of the Father, the Holy Spirit with utmost simplicity tells us we, His younger brethren, must, as a matter of course, BE LIKE CHRIST.

As one has pointed out, people have great difficulty understanding an abstraction or a force. It must be personalized and that is why God has come in the person of Jesus Christ, so that we might see Him and see what God is like. The first-begotten Son, He hath revealed Him! God has been personalized first in our Lord Jesus Christ, and this personification, the embodiment of God Himself, HUMBLED HIMSELF! That One who walked by blue Galilee and through the dusty roads of Palestine was none other than the Living God, the Creator who emptied Himself and humbled Himself and came into this world. Humility, self-abasement, serving, laying down our life to pour it out to others – these are the identifying marks of sonship! “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven!” (Mat. 18:4). “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; but he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Mat. 23:11-12). Ah, THIS IS THE STAR THAT HAD FALLEN FROM HEAVEN BRINGING THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD!

When heaven came down to earth one day there was no room in the inn. God was left out in the cold! The only one ever to be born king was sent to a bed of straw, while earth slept on feathered beds. But really, should there have been room? Did God expect a Conrad Hilton Hotel? Did God care that shepherds came to the stall rather than dignitaries to the suite? Was it really God’s plan for His firstborn Son to be born in a stable? All God wanted, and all He ever wants even today, is that people open the rooms of their hearts and lives to Him so that He might become the king of their lives! It wasn’t the Son of God who said, “If a man loves me he will make room for me in his inn, he will build for me beautiful cathedrals, and he will take me down from the cross and put me on a throne.” But it was the Son of God who said, “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him” (Jn. 14-23).

Someone has described the life of the first Son of God in these words. “Today, Nazareth is a noisy city with a population over 200,000. But in Jesus’ day, Nazareth was just a quiet ridge. Here, Jesus grew to manhood like any other boy. From the age of twelve to about the age of thirty, Jesus’ life is known as the Silent Years. We know little about those eighteen years, except from the writings of a Jewish rebel leader Josephus Flavius, who wrote a history of the Jewish people. His writings vividly describe the cultures, events, people, and places upon which Jesus gazed as a young man. The roads from north to south, from east to west, crossed through little Nazareth. Jesus surely saw the occupying Roman soldiers, sailors, merchantmen, and trade caravans that brought goods from far-off lands. He saw harlots, zealots, rebels, philosophers, and priests and priestesses of the foreign Roman cults. The people who passed by His tiny town of Nazareth brought news of events from great cities around the vast Roman Empire. The town provided a young man a window to the whole world. Jesus did not grow up behind a window of obscurity, but saw face to face all the world had to offer – its best and its worst.”

So ordinary was His life that the people of Nazareth said, “We know him. His family lives right here.” That’s what the hometown folks thought about this native son. When Jesus returned to His own country, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing the sick, the response was not enthusiastic. “Is not this the carpenter’s son?” people asked skeptically as they listened to Him. Perhaps they just couldn’t understand how someone they remembered as having an ordinary upbringing could be a manifest Son of God! If you and I had met Jesus on the streets of Nazareth, we probably would not have believed that He was the first manifest Son of God! He lived and looked like any other ordinary human being. Perhaps in Jesus’ case, many of the people of Nazareth just couldn’t accept that He

really was the Son of God because they were sure they already knew Him. They indeed knew Him after the flesh, but precious few of them knew Him after the spirit! Things have not changed in two thousand years! Beloved, now are we the sons of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not! No one can know the Son except the Father, and he to whom the Father reveals Him! And the world will not know us until we are revealed not only in the full glory, majesty, and power of our sonship, but also the veil is removed from off the minds and hearts of all mankind that they may see and know us by the revelation of the Spirit! Not everyone saw the star, but Jesus was truly THE STAR THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH!

God said, "I will invade humanity and come down in the person of my Son, limit myself to a human, physical body like man has, with all its appetites, emotions, possibilities of suffering hunger, weakness, temptation, and death, and I will demonstrate the character, the life, the love, and the power of God on the human level." The incarnation was God manifesting Himself within the limitations of a human body and personality. A tiny baby. A young man learning to say "Mama" in the Aramaic tongue. An obedient, bright Hebrew boy learning His father's trade in Nazareth. A mature, hard-working provider for the family for the next eighteen years until He was thirty. A strong, average-looking, average-sized young man who wore everyday clothing, and who grew in depth of understanding through each human trial. Christ could not fly, He could see no further than anybody else, He could not run faster than the other young men of His day, He got tired as anybody else, He got as tempted as anybody else, He got hungry, fell asleep, they could spit on Him and finally kill Him. Yet in Jesus Christ you have the perfect expression of God! The meaning of the incarnation is that God could drink out of a bottle if Jesus drank out of a bottle, God in Him learned to crawl before He learned to walk, God learned a language and stumbled over the words before He got it straight, His mind could increase.

When God invaded humanity in the body of Jesus Christ, He took upon Himself human nature and limitation, was made in the likeness, not of glorified flesh, but of sinful flesh, and for thirty-three and a half years lived, walked, slept and died in that body, manifesting God in the scope of humanity. Being mocked, God was living in Him. Asleep in the boat, God was living in Him. Hungry, and He goes to a tree and finds nothing to eat on it, God is living in Him. When He was weary, pressed, persecuted, hated, spit upon, His back beaten, His brow crowned with thorns, His hands and feet nailed to a cross, His side pierced, His soul exceedingly sorrowful unto death, dying on the cross in agony with the spittle running down His face, GOD WAS LIVING AND MANIFESTING IN HIM. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself! Oh, the mystery of it!

Do you see what God did? He made it possible for Himself to be at home in human bodies and to fully manifest His nature and glory in man. "The tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev. 21:3). Not with angels, with men! "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). It means that God can, by His Spirit, Jesus can, by His Spirit, come in and live in these human bodies of ours, grow in the fullness of His nature, mind, and power within us, loving in us, and manifesting Himself in us until with the Christ we can say, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father; I and the Father are one."

Paul grasped the full reality of this when he said, "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). He didn't say, "For me to speak in tongues, dance in the Spirit, fall out under the power, heal the sick, cast out devils, be spiritual and get into the 144,000 is Christ." Oh, no! He said, "For me to LIVE is Christ." Living for Paul did not mean those obviously supernatural

moments when he was seeing visions and hearing voices and being caught up into the third heaven. It meant for Paul to walk from one town to another on the dusty roads with Christ walking in him. It was for Paul to sew tents, with Christ making tents through him. It was for Paul to be shipwrecked on the razor-edged reef of a savage island, with Christ shipwrecked with him. It was speaking to people and manifesting the love of God, the heart of God, the glory of God, with Christ manifesting through him. The everyday living out of his life in the nitty-gritty of human experience – WAS CHRIST!

So now God can feel at home in us, He has humbled Himself, He can live and work and manifest Himself without any abnormality or strain. The Son of God can live in us, manifest His life in us in the office, in the shop, among the ungodly, in the home, in every relationship of life. Some people think that there are areas, particularly to do with our bodies, our appetites, our functions, with which God does not have anything to do, but God made us that way. Christ was made that way, and He demonstrated God in every facet of His life – spirit, soul, and body. In Jesus the light and glory of the eternal Father first came from heaven into the earth to shine among men in the union of God and man. Oh, yes! THIS IS THE STAR THAT HAS COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND ALIGHTED UPON EARTH IN THE MIDST OF MANKIND BRINGING THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD! That glory was and is seen in the face of Jesus Christ!

The word was made flesh and dwelt among us and those who walked with Him in the days of His flesh beheld His glory, the glory of sonship to God. They beheld Him and perceived that He was not like other men. He was totally like one born of God. They heard Him, they saw Him, they observed Him, they discerned Him, they touched and handled the Word of Life. Hear what they said. “For the life was manifested – and we SAW IT!” (I Jn. 1:1-3). The life of God was manifested right before their eyes! How did they know, what did they see, what was it that Jesus did that revealed the glory of God? Here was this man Jesus who looked like you and me, and really He could do anything He wanted. But no, He went about preaching the kingdom of God, and doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. How did they observe His life? How did they know Jesus was the Son of God? Was it because He came up to them and said, “I’m He!” Do you think they believed Him because He claimed to be God’s Son? No! A thousand times, No! They saw His power, they beheld His glory, they touched the Life! Dearly beloved sons and daughters of God – so must it be with every one who attains to sonship to God! I have met people through my life who were quick to tell me that they were sons of God. I remember in one community of “kingdom people” this man who saw me walking through and he hastened to step out to meet me, shook my hand and said, “Meet a son of God!” But the only clue I had to his sonship was his word for it! “If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.” That is what the firstborn Son declared! At the Jordan and on the holy Mount it was the Father who bore witness of Him, “This is my beloved Son – hear Him!” Today the Father in us will bear witness to our sonship as He walks, speaks, and acts through us in the power of His Life!

Jesus, the star that came from heaven, was the firstborn of God’s vast family of sons. He came into the earth to reveal the glory of sonship and the power of the kingdom of God. In Him we see what it means to be a manifest son of God! As we grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ the day is even now approaching when the power and glory of sonship shall be expressed through us, Christ’s younger brothers, in a measure not seen on earth since Jesus walked among men. There was not a sickness He could not heal; there was not an evil spirit He could not cast out. They were all subject to His command, and they had to obey Him, even though they didn’t want to. He never spent

hours in wrestling, fighting, struggling, shouting, or commanding the spirits to come out. He didn't practice today's insipid methods of so-called "deliverance." Oh, no! When He spoke, the spirits obeyed! When the storm on the sea was great, and the winds were violent and the waves contrary, all He had to do was speak, "Peace, be still!" and the wind ceased and the waves went to rest in the bosom of the deep. Like a mother quieting her fretful child, saying, "Hush, my child, and go to sleep," and with her hand upon the child, the little one stops crying and goes to sleep; so all Jesus had to do was speak to the storm, "Hush, be quiet," and like a fretful child it quieted down and went to rest. When He needed money to pay taxes, and had none, He sent Peter to get it out of a fish's mouth. There was never a need that He could not supply! There was never a circumstance or situation He could not handle! He always had the power, the wisdom, and the means to take care of them all. This is the power of the kingdom manifested in the Son of God, and it is the power of the kingdom to be revealed through all the sons of God. For this we do even now travail and groan within ourselves, and for this all creation earnestly and expectantly waits!

Chapter 110

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star having fallen from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key to the *bottomless pit*” (Rev. 9:1).

The next mystery that we need to understand, in order to grasp the vision that John saw, is the meaning of the term “bottomless pit.” Let me illustrate: “He’s a liberal.” “He’s a conservative.” “He’s a radical.” “He’s a capitalist.” “He’s a socialist.” “He’s a terrorist.” “He’s a freedom fighter.” “He’s religious.” “He’s spiritual.” What do these words mean? To one person they bear one meaning, while to another person they may mean something else altogether. That’s why we have dictionaries which endeavor to define terms. But even with a dictionary at hand, we all have our own ideas about what particular words mean. “Spiritual” probably means something very different to many who read these lines than it does to a Buddhist or a Spiritist! Often discussions and arguments end in confusion because we use the same words but invest them with different meanings. When we do this we cannot properly communicate with each other because we are not on the same “wavelength.” For the student of the scriptures one of the toughest word nuts to crack is the term “bottomless pit”!

Now, what do we mean by a *bottomless pit*? The Greek word for bottomless is *abussos* which is derived from a root word meaning “depthless.” In Greek it is called the “pit of the *abussos*” from which we derive our English word *abyss*! Perhaps it would be better translated as the “pit of the *abyss*” or the “pit of the *unfathomable depth*.” “Bottomless” is a good translation of this word, for the thought of the Greek is that it is that whose depths are immeasurable. As soon as one attempts to suppose a physical or literal reality corresponding to this picture-image, he falls into endless difficulty. My impression is that we have here a *spiritual picture* of a character and nature. It is true that righteousness and truth are related not only with *light*, but also with *height*, and evil and error are associated not only with *darkness*, but also with *depth*. Tracing backward to the root of the word *abussos*, it is interesting to note that *abussos* is a variation of *buthos* which means “profundity.” It becomes, then, a **profundity** which in its spiritual meaning signifies a **thought** or a **nature — so deep** as to be beyond the comprehension of the natural mind!

Armed with these meanings of “bottomless” “depthless,” “unfathomable depths,” and “profundity” it is revealed as a pit which has no bottom! Therefore, there is no substance, no foundation, no ground to stand upon. What that really says to us is that it has no **reality** — that is, no basis in fact. Now, it *appears* to have a bottom, a foundation, for does not every pit have a bottom? Yet it does not. Therefore the pit represents a **lie!**

The next thing we need to remember in order to understand this great mystery is that Satan is a liar and the father of lies. Jesus said it so plainly and powerfully, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the

beginning, and *abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it*” (Jn. 8:44). What is a lie? A lie is error. It is an untruth. It is an *unreality*. It is that which appears to have substance, but in fact is an illusion or imagination. It’s a mirage. It looks like something, but is actually nothing. That’s a *lie!*

A study of the scripture passages in which the *abyss* is mentioned will reveal to us that it is always associated with the waters of the earth. At the dawn of God’s creation darkness was upon the face of the *abyss*. Then the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the *waters* (Gen. 1:2). The deep springs of the *abyss* were broken up at the great flood (Gen. 7:11; 8:2). Again we read of the *waters* of the great deep, or *abyss* (Isa. 51:10). And in our text (Rev. 9:1) the word “pit” comes from a word meaning *well*. It could be translated “the *well* of the *abyss*.” It indicates an im-measurable depth of water! The *abyss* is portrayed as the farthest extreme from heaven and the heights of the mountains (Gen. 49:25; Deut. 33:13; Ps. 36:6). In other passages it is used as a reference to the deepest parts of the sea (Job. 28:14; 38:16; Ps. 33:7). In other places it is pictured as subterranean rivers and vaults of water (Deut. 8:7; Job 36:16). The crossing of Israel through the depths of the Red Sea is repeatedly likened to a passage through the *abyss* (Ps. 77:16; 106:9; Isa. 44:27; 51:10; 63:13). Looking at the natural *shadow* or *type* of the higher spiritual truth, we find that the ocean covers seventy-two percent of the earth’s surface. Its average measurable depth is 11,500 feet. Its greatest measured depths are the *Nares Deep*, 28,200 feet in the Atlantic and the *Nero Deep*, 36,614 feet in the Pacific. Off the coast of Japan, there is a spot so deep...they just gave up, marked how much line they had dropped and logged it “deeper than that.” That, my beloved, is a truer picture of the *abyss*!

Bear with me as I repeat again the great truth that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and like everything else in the book the scenes John beheld in chapter nine are all *symbols* standing for spiritual realities, both positive and negative. As we progress from trumpet to trumpet there is an ascending scale in the depth of our Father’s dealings in the lives of His elect! When the first trumpet sounded hail and fire mingled with blood were cast into the *earth*, the soulical realm of mind, will, emotion, and desire. This dealing of the Lord is with the “good” of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The natural mind, while appearing intellectual, moral, sophisticated, and even religious, is really “enmity against God.” At the sounding of the second trumpet a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the *sea*, the body realm, with all the gross sins of the flesh. Then the third trumpet sounded and a great star from heaven fell upon the *rivers* and the *fountains of waters*, turning them to wormwood — *bitterness*. The judgment of God came into our lives and made bitter to us all the “streams” and “fountains” which flowed through the surface areas of our earthly, soulical lives, streams of man’s wisdom, politics, business, religion, and all the worldly concepts and ways which supply refreshment, or a sense of knowledge, understanding, direction, accomplishment, entertainment, and well-being to the natural man. As the fourth trumpet sounded a third part of the sun, moon, and stars were darkened, signifying that those dominating things, movements, people, ideas, and powers from *without* — the rulers in the symbolic heavens of the old creation — begin to lose their authority and hold over our spiritual lives. Can you not discern the progression as we move from trumpet to trumpet?

Now, as we come to the fifth trumpet we are faced with an *abyss* — something deeper, more hidden, and profound than any of the four realms that preceded it! The *abyss* is deeper than the earth, deeper than the rivers, deeper than the fountains of waters, and deeper even than the sea! It is the *lowest realm*, and it is locked up — unseen, unknown,

and only a mighty angel or messenger with the key is able to open it! Therefore, the great mystery and the great truth that the Holy Spirit is seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that there is a dimension of man's being which is not a result or a manifestation of anything else, but lies so deep within us that it is indeed the secret and hidden *root* and *cause* of all that pertains to the natural man. This is the realm of which John the Baptist spoke when, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, he said, "*Now also the axe is laid upon the root of the trees*" (Lk. 3:9). The bottomless pit or the abyss is downward, lower, in those regions beneath anything that can be observed or understood in our human lives. It is lower than heaven, lower than the mountains, lower than the plains, lower than the rivers and fountains of waters, and deeper than the deepest sea! It is within this abyss that Satan finds his abode in mankind. In this subterranean region of darkness abides the bestial nature of man and the lying spirits of the false prophet. While it is a dark, evil world within us, it is also a *religious world*. That is the mystery!

Now, what is this pit? It is a bottomless pit. A great many persons laugh at the idea of a bottom-less pit! They say, "How can there be a pit that has no bottom to it?" Well, now, I can simply give you a natural illustration of a bottomless pit. Suppose the earth was hollow, as some scientists think it is. Now suppose you could bore a hole in the earth, and drop something right down in the middle of this world, and there was a great cavity inside. Will you tell me where the bottom of that place would be? The exact center of that hollow space would be the center of the world. Should you drill the hole all the way through the earth, if you go up on this side of the world, you are on the top of the pit; if you go to the other side of the world, there is the top; and where is the bottom of a conclave surface, like the hollow earth? Gravity will meet in the center, and nothing will be able to fall out of the hole in either direction. It is indeed a bottomless pit!

But do you know that in its spiritual meaning there is a higher and greater significance to the term "bottomless pit" that comes closer home, and that is our *own selves*! Man is a sphere, the natural man is "earthy" and is a world within himself; he is a microcosm of the macrocosm; and when man falls from the life of the spirit and the consciousness of God, he naturally gravitates into his own self, and falls, falls, falls, deeper and deeper into the depths of his own human consciousness and earthly identity. That is what the "fall" of Adam was all about! He fell from God-consciousness into human-consciousness. He descended from life in the spirit and by the spirit into life in the flesh and by the flesh. He came down from the lofty wisdom and glory of the mind of Christ and took on the mind of the beast. The fall of man is not merely an historical event. Oh, no! It is that which happens every day. Man is forever gravitating to the center of his own being, and never finding it. And there is in man's natural constitution, just as in the hollow of a globe, a bottomless pit. It is the deepest depths of the bestial nature. Suicides find it, haters find it, murderers find it, psychopaths find it, alcoholics find it, melancholists find it, criminals of all classes find it, swindlers find it, and most mysterious of all, *religious racketeers*, deceivers, manipulators, cultists, and fear-mongers of all kinds find it!

Oh! to think of the awful horror of just simply devouring yourself, falling into self, discovering the darkest depths of yourself. Man can never find righteousness, peace, and joy within himself! You can never find a place of rest in your own natural constitution. Your natural life, earthly con-sciousness, and Adamic identity have no more place for a rest or for any worthwhile accomplishment than a hollow world has; and if you were tumbled into a hollow world, where would you find any light, and where would you find a place to put your foot on? The only way a human being can find rest is to find *reality*! When man ascends and gets out of himself he will find the life and light of God in the spirit! If like Adam, we cut

away from the life of God in our spirit, we are forever sinking down into our own self, into our own thoughts, our own imaginations, our own delusions, our own mistaken identity, our own bestial nature, passing the days like a piece of iron in a hollow world. We can never find rest! We can never see light! We can never be free! We can never touch reality! And so, my beloved, the worst hell is the pit that man carries in his own being — to be continually tumbling and falling into your own self, gravitating from God, without finding any rest, and peace, and satisfaction; going down, down, down, falling farther and farther away from the sanity of reality, from the light of truth, from the image of God, and from life full, abundant, and eternal!

THE HEART

Everything God has created consists of many “parts.” The geologist can explain to you the many “parts” of planet earth. The botanist is able to give you the names and functions of the various “parts” of a flower. The astronomer will point out the many billions of “parts” that make up the vast universe. God has also created man with many “parts.” These are not just the physical parts or organs of the body, but also parts of the mind or soul, and parts of the spirit. Do not think that the term “parts” in respect to our inner life originated with me! The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophet Jeremiah with this promise, “I will put my law in their ***inward parts***” (Jer. 31:33). He is not referring to the inward parts of our body, but to the innermost parts of our sense of *being*. God also says that He will write His laws in our ***heart***. The question follows — What are the ***inward parts***, and what is the ***heart***?

Jesus said that the very first commandment is this: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and with *all thy soul*...” (Mk. 12:30). Here we see two different parts of our being — the heart and the soul. Obviously each of these also has parts, for the command is to love the Lord with ***all*** (the parts of) our heart, and ***all*** (the parts of) our soul! These are both “inward parts” of our being and not outward physical parts of our body. The three main parts or divisions of man are *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*. Yet each of these has many parts! It is easy to realize that the body has many parts, but most people have not considered that the soul and the spirit must also have parts! And there are parts beyond these which are called the “hidden parts.” “Behold, Thou desirest truth in the ***inward parts***: and in the ***hidden part*** Thou shalt make me to know wisdom” (Ps. 51:6). According to the intent of this passage, and others, the word “heart” does not refer to the physical organ located in our chest that pumps blood through our body. A study of the use of this word in the scriptures will show this to be true. The heart in scripture is the interior portion of a person. In the Old Testament, the word “heart” comes from the Hebrew word *leb*. According to Strong’s Concordance, that word is used very widely for the feelings, the will, the intellect, and the nature. That word is taken from a prime root word meaning “to be enclosed.” It has reference to the deepest and most profound interior of a person!

As to the heart, it is deeper than the mere mind or soul. With my mind I can think about many things, both good and evil. All kinds of thoughts can present themselves in the mind! Often these thoughts do not represent the kind of person we really are. A wicked thought might pass through my mind, but that does not mean that I would seriously consider committing any crime or doing some evil. Many of our thoughts are mundane and can be easily dismissed. But when the “heart” thinks the wise man said, “As a man ***thinketh in his heart, SO IS HE!***” (Prov. 23:7). Many scriptures speak of the thoughts of the heart! The heart also has “purposes,” “intents,” “emotions,” and “conscience.”

One of the greatest mysteries in the word of God is found in Ezekiel 36:25-30 wherein we read, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A *new heart* also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the *stony heart* out of your flesh, and I will give you an *heart of flesh*. And I will put *my spirit* within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them...I will also save you from all your uncleannesses..." This wonderful passage teaches us that there is more than one heart. There is an *old* heart and there is a *new* heart! The old heart is the deepest part of being in the life of old Adam. The new heart is the deepest part of being of Christ in our spirit!

The old heart is the deepest and innermost sense of being, of the natural man. This heart is the root of all human expression and identity. It is also the well-spring of what is called "human nature." Of that nature Jesus said, "Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not **into his heart**, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? That which **cometh out of the man, that defileth the man**. For from within, **out of the heart of men**, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come **from within, and defile the man**" (Mk. 7:18-23). Our hearts are a bad neighborhood that we dare not walk around in alone! You don't think there is a wickedness of the human heart that lies **deeper** than the outward sins of the flesh? Then consider and meditate for a while on these significant words of Jesus, "I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her *hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*" (Mat. 5:28).

That the "bottomless pit" or the "abyss" in the symbolisms of scripture portrays the human heart is beautifully confirmed by the words of the prophet David. David, in describing the wickedness of man, says, "Hide me from the *secret counsel* of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity...they encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They *search out* iniquities; they accomplish a diligent *search* (plumbing the depths): both the **inward thought** of every one of them, and **the heart, IS DEEP**" (Ps. 64:2-6). The **heart** is a **deep!** The Hebrew word here for deep is *amoq* meaning not only something deep, but "deeper than" other things. It is used in Job 11:8 of that which is "deeper than hell." Again we find it used in this way, "He discovereth *deep (amoq) things* out of darkness" (Job 12:22). Then in Ecclesiastes 7:24 it refers to "that which is far off, and *exceeding deep*, who can find it out?" In all these passages there is a suggestion of both the words of Jeremiah and David that the heart of man is not only very deep, but that the depths are unfathomable — beyond the comprehension of any other than God Himself!

We must conclude, then, that the heart of man is the very lowest realm of man's being! Sometimes the Lord's elect fail to see that our natural heart is just like anyone else's Adamic heart, and every son of God must clearly see, understand, and overcome the very basest things and powers that lie hidden, concealed, and buried in the unseen depths of the old, natural heart. Thank God, Jesus holds the *key*, it is He who *opens the abyss*, and brings forth the revelation of all that is lurking there! As John in spirit beheld the scene, the Lord Jesus, receiving the key, opened the abyss and "there arose *smoke* out of the pit, as the smoke of a great *furnace*" (Rev. 9:2). That this bottomless pit is the heart of man is further confirmed by the words of Hosea who wrote of backsliding Israel, "they consider not in their *hearts* that I remember all their *wickedness*...for they have made ready their **heart**

as an oven” (Hos. 7:6). The word here translated “oven” is, in the Hebrew, “furnace.” We see, then, the bottomless pit identified as a furnace in the words of the apostle John, and the heart of man identified as the furnace by the prophet Hosea, and from this furnace of man’s heart rolls billows of smoke!

Yet, Jesus also said, “Blessed are the ***pure in heart***, for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8). Pure in heart! A heart that can see God! That certainly cannot be the same heart out from which arises all the evils the Lord enumerated to the Pharisees! So in order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in these statements, we need to understand the difference between the two hearts — the old heart and the new heart. The old heart is the heart of the natural man! The new heart is the heart of the new creation man! The old heart is the deepest consciousness and state of man’s natural life and human identity. The new heart is the deepest consciousness and state of man’s spiritual life and Christ identity. That which arises out of the old heart defiles the man. That which arises out of the new heart transforms the man into the image and likeness of God! All through the scriptures, when we read of the myriad expressions and activities of the heart we need to consider ***which of these two hearts*** is being spoken of!

Humankind has an enemy — a wily nemesis, an adversary, described in God’s word as ***deceitful*** above all things, and desperately ***wicked***. This enemy has adversely affected every generation of mankind from the blissful beauty of the garden of Eden to the present. Just who, or *what*, is this inimical deceiver? The prophet Jeremiah unmasked this enemy in these inspired words, “The HEART is ***deceitful above all things***, and ***desperately wicked***,” and he went on to ask the searching question, “***who can know it?***” (Jer. 17:9). To the enlightened mind of this prophet, the ***power of deceitfulness*** and the ***depth of iniquity*** of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of any man to comprehend! This heart of deceit and iniquity is buried so far down in man’s being that no one can search it out or ever find it! How many times have you heard it? Someone perpetrates an unbelievably ghastly crime, like the ax murders of an entire family by a young lad barely in his teens, or the brutal murder of a father and a mother by a teenager some years ago, who buried them in a shallow grave, and then repeatedly drove a tractor over the site, in an attempt to cover the crime — and yet relatives, close friends and near neighbors all said, in a state of bewilderment and shock, “But he was such a nice, quiet, decent boy!”

A motion picture some years ago portrayed the dual lives led by a judge who had two families some distance apart! He had “married” two different women, was actually living with each for a certain number of days each week; would then disappear under the pretense of some important responsibilities in a distant town, when in actuality he was going to spend the remainder of that week with his second family! Obviously, each wife thought she *knew* this man, *thoroughly!* After all, just how well do you *know* your own spouse? Interesting, isn’t it! We feel we truly *know* our husbands, wives, children; our closest and dearest friends. But according to the word of God we don’t even ***know ourselves!*** We, perhaps above all people, are often deceived by our ***own hearts!*** There is a *deeper part* to all of us — a part that *only God knows!* We should not find this so utterly astounding were it not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, “The heart is ***deceitful*** above all things ***except the devil!***” He stated in no uncertain terms that the heart of man is deceitful above ***all things*** — ***PERIOD!*** There can be no mistake, for Jeremiah wrote under the full inspiration of the Holy Spirit! If the heart is deceitful above all things, it naturally follows that there is nothing anywhere, not in heaven above, not in earth beneath, nor under the earth, nor in the lowest regions of all depths, that is more

deceitful. The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE UNIVERSE! A photographer has the most difficult profession in the world. He does his best to make ugly faces good looking, smoothing out all the ungainly, uncouth features and marks. But when the portrait is finished in a manner satisfactory to the customer, it is usually anything but a true picture. But when God makes a picture of the human heart, He portrays it just as it is! “The heart is deceitful *above all things*, and *desperately wicked*.” That is the mystery!

It should be clear to every thinking mind that we have fostered and taught for generations a concept that stands in stark contrast to this amazing truth. We have indeed declared that there IS something more deceitful and vile than the heart of man! We have called him Satan (an adversary), and so he is! We have called him the devil (slanderer), and so he is! We have called him a murderer and a liar, and so he is! We have read many scriptures about him and understood many things about him, but the one thing we have **not** known about him is his **LOCATION!** Can you believe, precious friend of mine, that Satan can work in someone right there where you are, and in someone in New York City, in someone in London, in someone in Moscow, in someone in Hong Kong, and in someone in Nairobi *all at the same time*? It is true — but *how*? Can he travel at the speed of light and be in that many people around the world at almost the same instant? Is he *omnipresent*? Absolutely not! The truth is, he dwells *in man*, for he is restricted, by the command of the Lord God, to the **dust realm** (Gen. 3:14), even that dust which the natural man *is*! No sooner had God told the serpent that he would from henceforth crawl in the dust, and have dust for his food, than he followed that sentence with this defining word to the man, “For dust *thou art*, and unto dust thou shalt return” (Gen. 3:19). “The first man is *of the earth, earthy*” (I Cor. 15:47). We thought Satan was a funny little creature in a red suit, with evil-looking horns and a forked tail, running around with a pitchfork in his hand, whose true home was in the underworld amidst the fires of Hades. We do know that he is the one who “deceives all nations” (Rev. 20:3) and “deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 20:9). Oh, yes! The human heart is DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS! And all the evils in the world arise FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN! There you have the two items — **deceitfulness** and **wickedness!** “The heart is *deceitful* above all things, and desperately *wicked*: who can know it?”

Do you suppose the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness as some kind of a dark, shadowy figure, with burning red eyes and a sinister, chilling countenance? How often with our childish and distorted understanding, have we pictured Jesus confronted with that legendary figure who looked something like Darth Vader! This is naught but foolishness, for Satan is spirit, and spirit is *invisible energy!* How many times have you been tempted by the devil? Can you count the times? How often has he spoken to you, enticing, suggesting, compelling? Have you ever *seen him*? Have you ever heard his *audible* voice? Certainly not! And yet — you *have* sensed his presence, you *have* heard his voice, you *have* felt his power! And it all came from somewhere **deep inside you!** And does not our Lord, the Spirit of Truth, speak to us in the same way? The spiritual consciousness, that still small voice, the inward *knowing*, the inner urging — all from a dimension beyond the natural senses! Because it is all from an unseen and unknown *depth within ourselves* does not mean that it is imagination or hallucination! Yet we recognize it as the voice of the spirit, truly the voice of *God!* Oh, no, my beloved, there was not some hideous spirit-being materializing before the eyes of Jesus at the hour of His temptation in the Judean wilderness. Remember — Jesus was not only divine, He was also human; He was not only the image of the invisible God, He was also made in the likeness of sinful flesh; He was not only the Son of God, He was also the Son of man. And being both He was capable not

only of hearing from God *within Him* (the Father who dwelt in Him), but hearing those things that be of man.

The apostle James put it this way: “But every *man* is tempted when he is drawn away of *his own lust*, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14-15). The Moffatt Translation reads, “*Everyone* is tempted as he is beguiled (deceived) and allured by his *own desire*, the Desire conceives and breeds sin, while Sin matures and gives birth to death.” The record states that after fasting for forty days, Jesus hungered. When you’re hungry, what kind of desire do you have? You want to eat! In that crucial moment the Tempter came to Him. He began to feel the physiological pangs of hunger, and then, out from the depths of His human heart, the *thought* occurred to Him. Jesus dropped down from the high and holy thought of God, into the deceitful suggestion of the human heart! He descended in consciousness from the Son of God, to the Son of man. He said, “I know who I am; I *can* turn these stones into bread.” Out of His human heart the voice cunningly suggested, “If you are the Son of God, go ahead and do it! Use your sonship to fill your belly! You can use this power for anything you want to! Use it now to satisfy your own needs and desires!”

Thank God, Jesus quickly discerned the voice of that wily devil and knew how to nip that idea in the bud before it had time to blossom. He got to it before it could conceive, before it could start making a baby of sin and religious perversion. Jesus answered out of the depths of His spirit, “It is written — man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Mat. 4:4). In other words, Jesus recognized the source of the words, the origin of the *voice*. It wasn’t that there was anything intrinsically wrong with turning stones into bread; only days later Jesus did His first miracle in which He turned water into wine! The difference was in the *voice*. The voice that enticed Him to turn stones into bread was the voice of Self; the voice that bade Him turn water into wine was the voice of His Father! Ah, there is the difference! Would He use His sonship power for His own gratification and ends, or would He do only and always those things He heard from His Father? That was the issue. That was the test. And that discernment ended the temptation! The battle lay not with some mythical personage outside of Himself. The conflict was *within*. The voice was an *inner voice*. The suggestion entered His mind out of the depth of the *deceitful heart* of the outer, natural man of flesh. Its power was in His emotions and desires!

God speaks to us out of our pure and undefiled *spirit*. Satan speaks to us out of the depth of the *deceitful* and *wicked heart* of the earthy man. There is no monster without. There are three things in this vast world, and only three — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 Jn. 2:16); briefly, appetite, avarice, and ambition. I do not think you will be able to avoid the conclusion that all the inventions, creations, and contrivances of man are in existence to cater to these three things. It is with these three things that mother Eve was tempted! She *saw* the tree was good for food (the lust of the eyes), a tree to be *desired* (the lust of the flesh), a tree to *make one wise* (the pride of life), and the temptation was not from without, but from within. How remarkably the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness parallel these three! Every temptation of the devil comes to us through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. There are no others. Not for Adam and Eve, not for Jesus, and not for us. And each of these three temptations are both **deception** and **wickedness**. What they promise is a **lie!** To heed them leads to **ruin!** For “the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God **abideth for ever!**” Oh, the mystery of it!

While it is true that the heart is desperately wicked, that is not the first thing the wise man says about it. He tells us first that the heart is **deceitful** above all things! There is nothing in the whole universe **more deceitful** than the heart of the natural man! What a thought! That means that not even the one we call the devil is more deceitful than our own human heart! The mind and body, contrary to popular opinion, do not initiate action; they are always subservient to something else, something deeper and more powerful than either! We are generated or birthed into minding the flesh, but only because the “flesh” is the outward response to, and expression of, the *heart*. However, Jesus demonstrated His obedience to the *spirit*! The spirit within us also has a heart — it is the heart of God, who is the Father of our spirit (Heb. 12:5-10). When this heart is awakened within us, it is called a “new heart” (Eze. 36:25-30). It is not actually new, but it is new to us, for human nature regenerates itself in human beings and we are born into this world with a consciousness of that outer, human life. Man’s understanding, intellect, emotions, will, and desires all stem from the “old heart” or the human heart. These are all in harmony with the outer world of creation, which is the realm of death. Everything of the natural creation grows old and finally dies or disintegrates. Everything! Thus we are born into a realm where we live in the death consciousness and sin consciousness of the soul and body.

Those who have been quickened by the Lord no longer live in the sin and death consciousness of the old Adamic man. We have been awakened to a consciousness that is beyond the human heart, for we have received revelation in our spirit! This new birth separates us from the old so that we can know God in our spirit and hear what the spirit is saying! As we walk after the spirit we grow in the realization and knowledge of our inner man, Christ — we learn that we are partakers of the *divine nature*, we now become righteousness-conscious and life-conscious and live and move and have our being in the life of our Father, God. The Holy Spirit brings us the knowledge of our sonship and we understand that we are members of the *family of God*, or the divine family which *is God!*

It is instructive to understand *how* death came into this world! God said to Adam that if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the midst of the garden, he would die. The serpent disagreed and said, “You shall not surely die.” Adam ate and he died. Can we not see by this that sin and death came through **deception!** Eve, or the soul, was the one deceived by the serpent of the human heart. “And Adam was not deceived, but the **woman being deceived** was in the transgression” (I Tim. 2:14). The next thing we need to understand in order to grasp this great mystery is that IN EVE’S DECEPTION THE MAN BECAME JOINED TO THE DELUSION THAT IS IN THE LIE! Adam did not separate from his wife in her deception, but remained joined to her. Adam’s consciousness of himself was now birthed in a lie, and joined in both mind and body to the creation instead of the Creator he became separated from God in his thinking.

No person is infected by the disease of sin and death until he has been led to believe the wrong thing first. The tyranny and death that sin brings start when a person begins to believe a false view about God, himself, life, or divine purpose. The devil’s doctrines are that ultimate set of false views which he constantly attempts to insinuate into men. Far more than witchcraft or magic, Satan uses “religious” and intellectual propositions to appeal to reasonable people. His most effective work is done, not in saloons and brothels, but in sermons preached from pulpits and in the minds of men. He is a destroyer of truth! He is a liar from the beginning! He is a pusher, not merely of marijuana or heroin, but of false propositions. He promotes an addiction to lies. Truly, he is DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS!

Because of the lie to which he was joined Adam now saw himself as a natural being, of the earth earthy, sin-cursed and sin-broken, sick, weak, confused, beset by troubles and sorrows, murderer and prostitute, proud and arrogant, mean and vindictive, and above all full of death and dying — all that is humanity! Someone says, “Oh, but God *made* Adam all that because he rebelled and sinned!” Not so! God warned Adam not to eat of the tree of the **knowledge** of good and evil, because in that **knowledge** he would die. Can we not see by this that sin and death are but the sad fruit of a tree of **knowledge**, that is, a **belief system**, an idea, a word, instruction, thought process, information, viewpoint, opinion, persuasion, conclusion, conjecture, assumption, or supposition. Oh, yes! It was the fruit of the tree of a certain kind of **knowledge**, a certain **view** and **belief system** that killed the glorious man that Adam was! But what Adam became, is that what man *really* is?

Most people on earth have forgotten their beginning. But the scripture is clear. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...and the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life; and man became a living soul. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him” (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7). What God actually did was that He imaged Himself in man. God imaged Himself in man by forming Himself in a man of earth. Thus man was created as a visible expression of the invisible God. Now that hasn’t changed! Long millenniums after the fall of Adam the great apostle Paul asserted, “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as **he IS the image and glory of God**” (I Cor. 11:7). What has changed is our perception of ourselves because of the fall! Our knowledge of God, ourselves, and divine purpose is all distorted, twisted, and warped!

Wonderful words were spoken at the very dawn of civilization, recorded in the oldest book of the Bible, which state simply and powerfully the reality of man. “There is a *spirit* in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8). It is something great in man, Elihu conceives, that he is *spirit*, and, because he is, is capable of being *inspired*. He is not here speaking of Adam as he was in the primordial glory of Eden, nor yet of regenerated man in this wonderful age of the Holy Spirit; but, speaking thousands of years ago in the present tense, he magnifies man as being able to be inspired, just because he *is spirit*. And it is God, who likewise is spirit, that inspires him! Does this not reveal to us that the very being of man has a Godward or divine side, being related constitutionally to Him. The testimony of scripture is incontrovertible that there *is a spirit in man*, or what is the same, the fact that *we are, as being spirit, permeable and inspirable by the Almighty!*

This reveals man’s capacity for God; to experientially know the presence of God, to let in the divine nature, to entertain the eternal Spirit witnessing with his spirit, to be energized by Him and filled with His glory, in every faculty, feeling, and power, being a vessel and channel for the life of God, to think His thoughts and do His works. Thus, “*the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children (offspring) of God!*” (Rom. 8:16). And “*because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts (spirit), crying, Abba, Father!*” (Gal. 4:6). “There is a *spirit* in man, and the *in breathing* of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” Only because *man is spirit* is all this possible!

What revealing light of revelation Jesus gave when He opened the truth about the origin of both man’s flesh and his spirit when on that star-studded night long ago He explained to the questioning Nicodemus, “That which is *born* of the flesh *is flesh*, and that which is *born* of the spirit *is spirit*” (Jn. 3:6). This in my opinion is one of the most profound and awe-inspiring statements in all scripture. According to Jesus, my earthly parents are the parents

only of my flesh, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh. That's all it is! On the other hand, God, and *only* God, is the Father of my spirit, for that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Spirit begets spirit! And God is the Father of the spirits of all flesh! How could we ever think of God as the Father of the flesh? He is the Creator of flesh, of the physical, but He is the Father of SPIRITS. "God IS spirit," so He could father nothing less than spirits. As Father He puts the same life-force into His children; and this life-force is that which animates the flesh so that the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). This is true of all men! What a glorious statement this is — "the Father of spirits"!

That is what redemption is all about! It liberates us from the flesh consciousness of the natural-minded man and restores us into the conscious awareness of *our Father* and that we *are spirit*, the offspring of God. It delivers us from the power of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and causes us to again eat of the tree of life! Both of these trees are in the "midst" of our garden! We are being made like Him because we are of His same substance. Speaking to His disciples and to the multitudes Jesus once said, "But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER, *which is in heaven*" (Mat. 23:8-9).

That is the **truth** about man! The great mystery of which God is now giving us an understanding is that sin and death came into the world of mankind **through deception**. Man is **deceived** about who and what he really is! Hear it! "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became *vain in their imaginations*, and their *foolish heart was darkened*. Professing themselves to be *wise*, they became *fools*" (Rom. 1:21-22). "This I say therefore...that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the *vanity of their mind*, having the *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God *through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart*" (Eph. 4:17-18). "Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do *alway err in their heart*; and they have not known my ways" (Heb. 3:10). All through the book of Revelation Satan is referred to as one who **deceiveth** "all nations" and **deceiveth** the "whole world" and **deceives** "them that dwell on the earth." "And the devil that **deceived them** was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Rev. 20:10). The natural man is separated from truth, for he does not know that "in HIM we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

Adam is the high priest of the lie! The lie originates out of his human heart which is "**deceitful** ABOVE ALL THINGS!" Our hearts are indeed deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Without the understanding of the Spirit, no man is capable of knowing the heart's falsity and corruption. Only by the revelation of the Spirit can we know the true condition of our heart! The Hebrew word "deceitful" means fraudulent, and is also translated crooked and polluted. And the Hebrew word translated "desperately wicked" means frail, feeble, and melancholy. That Hebrew word is also rendered as incurable, sick, and woeful. This is the true state or condition of our natural, human heart from the heavenly perspective! The truth of the matter is this — the heart is *wicked* just because it is **deceitful**! The lie that we are human beings living natural lives because of a divinely mandated separation and alienation from God and all that He is — *that* is the deceit, the lie, the delusion from which all sin and death proceed. Never were words more true uttered than when the wise man said, "As a man *thinketh in his heart*, **so is he**."

What is this saying to us? It tells us that all the wars, greed, abuse, illicit sex, sin, aids, thievery, and conniving that are going on in this world right now, are the result of man's

deception and blindness! No one, whether young or old, man or woman, educated or uneducated, has the spiritual energy to prevent himself from lusting after the things of this world. Freedom from natural desires and impulses and control of the flesh is not possible out of the old unredeemed mindset; it can only be obtained in Christ Jesus. Until we are quickened to know that we are sons and daughters of God, we do not have the spiritual energy to overcome! But the truth *does* make us free! The ransomed spirit is full of omnipotent, divine energy and its power is being raised up within all of God's elect, enabling us to overcome the world! We are first learning to overcome our own hearts!

All the suffering that is taking place in the human body today is due to our separation from God through the ignorance and blindness of our heart. Things are improving as we grow up spiritually into Christ! Wonderful changes are coming in us, even in our soul and body. We are not expecting everything to change automatically over night, as if by magic, for we are in the transition of "putting off" the old man, and "putting on" the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness! The foundation of a new dimension of life and reality is being laid in the lives of God's called and chosen ones! With our spiritual growth, the old ideas and consciousness are dropping off like dead leaves. This is happening today! The transition from death to life is taking place first in us! There is a resurrection, a new creation arising within us! It's all happening as more and more we put on the ***mind of Christ!*** Christ *knew who He was, and He lived out of the reality of the Father in Him!* That is the key.

God is not redeeming the old Adamic man, nor is He changing the old Adamic heart. Those who want to preserve their Adamic nature and identity, have it changed, blessed, and immortalized will be disappointed. This will not happen because God has not promised redemption for the carnal mind, nor for the deceptive and wicked heart. He is raising up within us a new heart, a new spirit, a new consciousness, a new understanding, a new mind, a new nature, a new life and power of divinity! Our redemption is ***from*** that Adamic man! It is from our wrong idea of God, our mistaken identity of ourselves, our wrong concept of life and of who we are, and from our desire to preserve our old self in any form or fashion. This is what we are redeemed from! This happens when we turn to the Lord and learn to hear the voice of the Son of God! They that hear shall live! We have to hear Him individually within ourselves even though we are members of a corporate body.

Sin came into the world, and death by sin, but deception was there before the sin, for only when Eve was deceived did she transgress. What a mystery this is! Therefore, living in the realm of death in Adam means living in a delusion — living in a lie! Man lives in the lie that causes him to be alienated from the life of God. I do not say, as some say, that men are not alienated from God, for mankind *is alienated*, though it is because of the ignorance that is in them, the blindness of their heart, and by wicked works. That is the testimony of scripture! The delusion and lies come from the father of lies, out of the heart of man! That is what death in Adam is, for in Adam all die.

Christ's life was lived out of the truth, for He repudiated the lie! First He told the devil, "It is written!" He lived by the word of His Father in Him. Then His death was a death to sin — the lie had no part in Him. All the men around Him lived in the lie, and were separated from the life, glory, and power of God in their minds by the lie. They could not think as Jesus thought, for they thought out of a different mind. They could not do the works He did nor speak the words He spoke, for their energy came from a different source and they spoke from the hearing of a different voice. In order to be free from that lie, Jesus had to die to the lie. He laid that old human life down! By His resurrection He proved that death was

caused by a delusion. Jesus is the truth; as He expressed Himself as the truth, He overcame the death into which He had entered. In expressing the truth and the true nature of His divine being, He overthrew death and exposed the delusion. This is His death! When we die with Christ and are dead with Him we have died to the lie and the delusion. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into *His death?*" (Rom. 6:3). The deceitful heart is removed from us and we are given (awakened to) the new heart! The death we have been put into separates us from Adam and the lie, and gives us a new heart which is not blind, but can see, which is the heart of *truth and reality*. It is not a deceitful heart; it is a *true (pure) heart!*

"Flee also youthful lusts: follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a *pure heart*" (II Tim. 2:22). "Let us draw near with a *true heart* in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). "Seeing that ye have *purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit...* see that ye love one another with a *pure heart*" (I Pet. 1:22). "But let it be the *hidden man of the heart*, in that which is not corruptible..." (I Pet. 3:4). "Blessed are the *pure in heart*: for they shall see God" (Mat. 5:8). We are now separated from the carnality and earthiness of creation! We have become a new creation in Christ Jesus because His word in us raises up a new creature in us. IT CREATES A NEW IDENTITY, A NEW SENSE OF BEING, AND PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINE NATURE! All this is the result of the new heart!

Chapter 11

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star having fallen from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key to the bottomless pit” (Rev. 9:1).

“Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living One; I was even dead, but behold, I am living for the ages of the ages: and I have the keys of death and hades” (Rev. 1:17-18, Diaglott).

To John on the isle of Patmos there came One who announced Himself as “the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.” At His girdle hung “the keys of hell and of death.” This One was our Lord Jesus Christ! When Jesus came into the world in the humiliation of the Incarnation, He started on a route of conquest that took Him through the lonely years prior to His introduction at the muddy waters of Jordan, when the bony prophetic finger of John the Baptist was pointed at Him and those significant words were uttered, “Behold, the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” (Jn. 1:29). These words were followed by the testimony of His Father in heaven as the voice spoke proclaiming, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mat. 3:17) For some thirty-three and a half years He overcame and lived an impeccable life so that it was said of Him, “He was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus’ flawless and fruitful life was followed by a decisive death. He went to Calvary to endure inexplicable and incomparable suffering: suffering of which we can only have a hint; suffering we can only look at curiously with a sob in our throats; suffering veiled in the mystery of the bearing of sin; suffering surrounded by torn rocks and a sun that refused to shine and an earth that writhed in agony. As He hung there alone, God reached down His giant fist and gathered the accumulated sins, weaknesses, sorrows, and death of mankind and placed them upon Him. In the awful agony of Calvary, Christ made His soul an offering for sin! The sin of the world was imputed unto Him. When He had become an offering for sin, He gave up the ghost and came down from the mystery of His sufferings, having finished that work. What men saw was a man hanging limp — every bone out of joint, a swollen tongue protruding from burning lips that cried, “It is finished!”

For centuries now Christians have supposed that when Jesus cried out, “It is finished,” that meant that His work of redemption was completed. Many refer to this as “the finished work of Calvary.” But there is too much stopping at the cross! If we stop at the cross we end with a dead Christ, and a dead Christ can save no one! Paul wrote, “If Christ be not **raised**, your faith is vain; **ye are yet in your sins**” (I Cor. 15:17). We must get our thoughts broadened about the redemptive work of Christ. Yes, He died for our sins, but never forget — He was also *raised again for our justification!* There is no “finished work” at the cross! There is not even a “finished work” at the resurrection! The redemptive work of Christ was not finished until He had *ascended up on High* bearing the precious blood of His

atonement into the Holiest Place of the heavenlies, as it is written, “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood **He entered in once to the Holiest Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.** For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into **heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us**” (Heb. 9:12,24). When the Christ cried, “It is finished,” it was the cup of suffering — the excruciating agony of the cross — that was finished, not the work of redemption! When He died He then entered the darkest night of death, and was ushered through the somber gates and behind the fearful bars of Hades, the unseen, imperceptible realm of the dead. “Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades” (Acts 2:31). The message is clear — the Christ not only died, He went to hell! It was imperative that Christ experience all that man experiences in the dread domain of sin and death, in order to take captivity captive and release mankind from the totality of the kingdom of darkness.

Then Hell itself in fear began to quake,
And, in alarm, thus to the devil spake,
“Jesus! Dost thou not fear that mighty Name?
And is this Jesus — Nazarene — the same
Who once cried, ‘Lazarus! Come forth!’ and swift
The bands of death were loosed, his fetters rift,
And through thy gates impassable he broke,
So soon as that almighty word was spoke?
Let but that Jesus once invade these halls,
And in that hour thy boasted empire falls!
What if the victim thou dost proudly claim
Shall as the Victor bring thy pride to shame?”

And then He arose the conquering Christ! What a marvelous turn of events! He took control of the situation as with one exultant shout He grasped the keys of death and hell from him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, stripped away the power of death, burst asunder the bars of hell, stalked boldly out in eternal triumph over all the dread powers of that unseen realm, entered back into His body in the garden tomb, passed through the walls of rock as water passes through a filter, ascended up far above all heavens, stepped up to the Father’s throne, and presented the tokens of His redemption. The Father said, “Sit down, Son, at my right hand until your enemies are made your footstool!”

Jesus has the keys; He proved that He has the keys of both death and hell; for He unlocked both and arose Victor. Death could not hold its prey! Hell could not hold its prey! Oh Christ! Thou Son of the living God! Thou art the resurrection and the life; Thou wast dead; and, behold, Thou art alive forevermore and in Thy nail-pierced hand dost hold in triumph the keys of hell and death. Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? Oh gates of hell, thou shalt not prevail, for the Redeemer of Israel and the Saviour of the world holds in His triumphant hand thy key!

Who now has the key of death? OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! Who now has the key to hell? OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! He also holds the key to the whole dread realm of sin and sorrow that leads to death and hell! He holds the key to everything, for He has been given *all power* in heaven and in earth! His redemption and His mighty power reach to the lowest depths of the bottomless, within and without. He alone is the One who opens and no man can shut, who shuts and no man can open (Rev. 3:7). No one can open or shut any realm apart from our Lord Jesus the Christ! No one passes through the gates of either

death or hell, or any other height or depth, except the Lord open or close those gates. Oh, the wonder of it!

Some suppose that it is the devil who is given the key to the bottomless pit. But now that Christ has the keys of death and hell it is not to be imagined that He is about to surrender or concede into the hands of Satan, or any of his emissaries, whether man or spirit, any portion of His own authority. We must not confuse the “bottomless pit” with Hades, nor should we think of a literal opening of a literal pit, and an eruption of the spirits of demons upon the earth. Fancies like these easily gain ascendancy over the minds of those people who only think carnally. The truth is so much more glorious! The “star” who has come down from heaven is Christ our Lord! We are helped to identify Him, for “the key of the pit of the abyss” is given to Him, and He unlocked this place. Also, He is “the angel of the abyss,” and He is “king” over the terrible swarm of locusts that fly out of the smoke from the abyss. The devil is not *king* over anything! Christ has overcome him, conquered him, stripped him, spoiled him, and destroyed him! Aren’t you glad!

When John relates his vision of the “key” to the abyss being given to the One called a “star” many people imagine that the prophet is speaking of a literal metal device hanging on a key ring like one uses today to unlock a door. In vision John may have seen such a key, but the key spiritually symbolizes something infinitely greater! Yes, a key does open or close something, but it can also be a word that releases some power that has been restricted, or binds some influence that has gone unrestrained; it can also be a word that opens a hidden mystery or a means by which something unknown is discovered. A key can also be the answer or solution to a problem, quandary, plight, or dilemma! A key also bespeaks of authority and power. In the natural, when one is given the key to his new car, he then has the authority to start it up and drive it away. Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth!” And spiritually He has been given the key to the bottomless pit or abyss which lies ***in the heart of man!***

Thank God, our Lord Jesus Christ has the key, the solution to every dark realm of bondage, sin, sorrow, pain, death, and hell that any man can know without or within. He has all the problems connected with man’s deliverance and transformation unraveled and solved! When on earth He worked out the problem for Himself, overcame in it, and now stands to proclaim to all men everywhere the GREAT EMANCIPATION. Through His sinless life of perfect obedience to the Father, and through His death and resurrection, Christ took away from the adversary every power of sin, death, and from hell its power of containment; no longer can negation claim the final victory over any man — CHRIST HAS THE KEY, and shall ultimately bring every man into the fullness of *His Life*. Christ has the *power* to deal with every issue in every man, and in every realm, and He holds the keys to everything every where!

OPENING THE ABYSS

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he *opened the bottomless pit...*” (Rev. 9:1-2)

Throughout the book of Revelation various things are *opened*. A door is opened in heaven, heaven itself is opened, the seven seals are opened, the ark of the covenant is opened, the temple of God is opened, the book of life is opened, the books of man’s soulful life are opened, and the bottomless pit is opened. The purpose of each of these “openings” is that

there may be a *revelation!* Each, spiritually, is an opening up, an uncovering, a disclosure, a revelation of a realm of consciousness, experience, and of a state of being! With the key to the bottomless pit the Lord opens the pit and brings forth a revelation of what is in the pit. We have all had God open up our life and reveal things out of the imaginations of our heart that even we never dreamed were there! A messenger, a word, a dealing of God came and revealed ourselves to ourselves, making manifest things that lurked in the darkness of our human heart. Often, when we see what comes up out of the pit we are horrified — we thought those things were dealt with, crushed, and crucified long ago! We didn't think we were like that anymore! Yet suddenly there it is in all its hideous deceitfulness and wickedness and we are shocked! This is especially true when it is the "abyss" that is opened! The abyss bespeaks of the very *lowest realm, the heart of the natural man*; and it is there that the *root* of all deceitfulness and wickedness lies. We may have cut off the branches of the tree, or even chopped down the tree, but until we go deep enough to lay the ax to the root of the tree, it will continue to spring up after we think we have eradicated it!

I have found that there is a tendency in each of us to try and place the carnal mind and human heart under law to make them submit. Any man who tries to discipline and control the flesh by laws, commandments, rules, or regulations, whether imposed from without or within, has not yet learned the important truth that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it *is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*" (Rom. 8:7). It is *impossible* to *subdue* the carnal mind, the flesh nature, or the heart of man! You cannot make the natural man submit. He may appear for a season to submit, but as long as there is any root buried beneath the surface, he will rise again. Those beastly impulses and desires on the inside cannot be harnessed and made obedient. They cannot be changed or transformed no matter what you do! You can restrain the man of sin by a law, or by sheer will power, and it will appear that you are doing quite well; but deep within, lower than your eye can see or your instincts can discern, the evil is still boiling, churning, bubbling, smoldering, and like a volcano, building up to erupt again in the moment when you least expect it. That is the law of human life! That is what it is, it has always been what it is, and it always will be what it is. "That which is *born* of the flesh, *is flesh*." But the flesh is ***not the real you!*** The real you is *spirit* — not soul, not body, not carnal mind, not flesh, not the old Adamic heart. The real you is the offspring of God, the real you is a new creation, the real you is the Christ life — that is the real you, and indeed, if we can comprehend the deep mystery of it, it is the ***only you!***

When the pit is opened and those ugly things of soulical deceit and fleshly wickedness begin to come out we are horrified and ashamed and run to hide as Adam did in the garden. But this is God's purpose — these things *need* to come out, be exposed for what they are, until the indwelling Christ can deal with them! What comes out of our pit does not define who we are, and we want to get rid of it. We must be very honest about the difficult places in our lives! We see things in us that we think are so awful, whether wicked or religious, and surely God can't have anything to do with us, we can never be worthy of His love or to attain to His great purpose and high calling in Christ Jesus. So we start looking for a king to govern us, for an authority to come into our lives and deal with those horrible things in our pit. We look for a law, a method, a technique, a man, a group of brethren, an order, a covering, an apostle, some external power that can help us control the monsters in our pit!

The procedure whereby the Lord brings His judgment into our lives is simple, but very effective. When He sets His hand to deliver us from any negative realm of our lives, He

“opens” that realm, bringing it into manifestation so that He can show it to us and begin His dealing in our life. God arranges the circumstances, places His child in a situation or circumstance where that which lies buried deep within the unconscious or in the depths of nature is brought to the surface — the inner condition uncovered, the secrets and intents of the heart made manifest. As it is written, “God shall bring *every work* into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:14). Notice what these “works” are — *good* and *evil!* These works are from the tree of the knowledge of *good* and *evil!* The good bespeaks of that which is moral, sophisticated, and religious! The evil speaks of that which is perverse and corrupt! But God will judge our “good” just as He will judge our “evil.” Neither is acceptable to Him, neither is of Him, and neither is fruit from the tree of HIS LIFE! Good religious works are just as far from Life as are adultery and murder!

“God shall judge the *secrets of men* by Jesus Christ” (Rom. 2:16). Let no one who reads these lines think that this will happen some fearful day out in the future before a great white throne out in space somewhere! Oh, no! These are *spiritual realities*, my beloved. They point to the dealings of God in judgment right now, today, in the life of every son of God who shall be conformed into the image of God’s Son, brought unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Ah, you will fear and shrink before God’s judgments until you clearly understand that God does not open your abyss to either embarrass or destroy you — but to *deliver you!* God brings no man to judgment apart from the exposing of his heart. That is the true *spiritual message* conveyed by these beautiful *symbols* in the book of Revelation! It is a divine law — God can never deliver you, or any man, until the deceitfulness and wickedness in your heart has been drawn into outward manifestation, exposed to be dealt with by God’s stern and tender hand. When the inner nature, whether a religious spirit or some secret sin, erupts in some outward uncleanness, do not despair! Thank God for exposing the deceitfulness and wickedness, cast yourself upon the tender mercies of the Lord who judges you with unconditional love and infinite goodness, and yield yourself under His mighty hand that He may bring forth victory *in your earth*. We must never be discouraged nor feel condemned when God *reveals* the man of sin who sits in the temple of God which we are, but neither should we become complacent about it! God will send forth judgment unto victory however long it takes and however severe the dealings. He will never abdicate His throne, He will never terminate His judgments until *every man* is presented perfect in Christ Jesus! It is indeed wonderful!

Ray Prinzing expressed the truth in these words: “Because God would *try* us and *purge* us, He must needs at times arrange for more of our FALL. However, ‘Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me’ (Micah 7:8), and in His time there is a coming forth out of the delusion, the error, the fall, what ever form it took. Praise God, He shall bring us to that place where there is nothing within us that responds to any allurements of this world’s system in any way. How we long to come to that place in God where we can truly say with Jesus Christ, ‘The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me’ (Jn. 14:30). That there will be nothing within us which gives the adversary a toe-hold that he can activate, use to beguile us, tempt us, and cause us to stumble. So while we weep to see one we love slip into some delusion or cultic doctrine, or some uncleanness, etc. we can stand by in prayer and belief, to *know* that after God has *tried* and *purged* them they shall come forth *as gold* — to be found to His praise” — end quote. Bless His wonderful name!

THE “AIR”

“And he *opened the bottomless pit*; and there *arose a smoke out of the pit*, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the *sun* and the *air were darkened* by reason of the smoke of the pit” (Rev. 9:2).

Now, let us reveal to you a great mystery; the mystery is that in its spiritual meaning “air” signifies the realm of SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING. It can also denote the SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERE — the spiritual environment, tone, tenor, mood, feeling, aura, or spirit — both within and without. With these two principles in mind, let us look at a statement of the apostle Paul’s wherein he says, “We...shall be caught up together with them...to *meet* the Lord *in the air*: and *so* shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thes. 4:17).

Several years ago, while meditating upon this precious passage of scripture, the Spirit unfolded within my consciousness the significant truth that our “catching up into the air” can never be properly understood apart from the apostle’s inspired words to the Ephesians, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the *prince of the power of the air*, the *spirit* that now *worketh in* the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1-2). There are several key words and terms that unlock the storehouse of truth contained in these verses. Consider — PRINCE, POWER, AIR, SPIRIT, WORKETH, and IN. According to these plain statements of scripture there exists a “*power of the air.*” Furthermore, the “power of the air” is a “spirit,” and this spirit is located “in” the sons of disobedience, wherein he “works.” Can we not see by this that the “prince of the power of the air” is not something or someone outside of us, but a spirit-power that operates right here WITHIN MAN! Then, too, this spirit-power that works within man also emanates from man, exerting an influence throughout the atmosphere of our lives, both individually and collectively, giving motivation to the myriad activities and events that transpire in the world. Because of its influence out from us and around us, it is called the “*power of the AIR.*”

Dr. Charles Price wrote a little book entitled *Made Alive* in which he shares this instructive information: “Every atom of matter — every piece of mineral — indeed everything which is the result of God’s creative intelligence is surrounded by an ‘aura’ or an emanation which is identical with and corresponds to the *nature* of the substance from which it comes. There is a sense in which personalities are possessed with this ‘emanation’ and ‘extension’ of themselves into their surroundings. It is a radiation which can be felt when someone walks into a room in which you may be seated. Our personality becomes affected by their personality. They have power to elevate or depress” — end quote.

I would like you to really get a grasp of this thought! We *all* know people who by their very presence can lift us up, and impart a sense of well-being, who can lift our spirits up to heights of peace, joy, confidence, and victory. Others can leave you feeling depressed just by spending a few minutes in their presence! The thought I want you to get is the fact that every atom of created material, in especially every living thing, has this aura surrounding them, which is a radiation of their mind, emotions, personality, and nature into their surroundings. It is an extension of themselves into their environment! This ‘aura’ or emanation corresponds to our nature, and *is* our nature and feelings radiating from us into our surroundings, and it affects everything around us. These emanations have *power* just as within ourselves we have *power*. It is a radiation that flows from our souls and spirits, and the stronger our souls or spirits are the greater the radiation. If you find it difficult to believe the very atmosphere or air waves are charged by the emanations of energy, positive or negative, then go directly from a worship service where the atmosphere is charged with the presence of God, and enter a night club where people are drinking,

cursing, lusting, laughing, and singing, and the difference you feel in a very real way is the difference between the emanation of the positive and negative life force. And this power which works in man, and flows out in the atmosphere from man, is the “**power of the air!**”

Grasp it! A hundred and fifty years ago we could not have understood as we do now how communication by sound and picture can be broadcast instantaneously **through the air**. Wherever you are as you read these words, there are voices, pictures, and music **in the air** around you. You cannot see them or hear them, but a radio or television set tuned to the right wavelength will make them audible to you. You may not have realized it, but both the soul and the spirit in every man are both a receiver and a transmitter. You may be tuned in on the wavelength of the Holy Spirit or you may tune in on the wavelength of Satan, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. You don't hear anything with your natural ears because soul and spirit do not broadcast in words or sounds. Soul and spirit broadcast in thoughts and attitudes, and the life force of the natural man broadcasts in thoughts and attitudes of self-will, pride, lust, vanity, arrogance, greed, jealousy, anger, envy, fear, competition, selfishness, intellectualism, strife, hatred, violence, religiosity, debate, bitterness, and a host of other things. Here is the real cause of all the world's evils! The people hear no audible voice, they do not see a visible Satan, and they comprehend not from whence come such attitudes, impulses, and desires!

Let us explore this thought of the **spirit** that **works in man**, which is also the **power of the air**. We must understand that the life force of every man (soul and spirit) is **energy**. This means that you as a person, a personality, **are ENERGY!** Many people confuse *soulical energy* with *spiritual energy*. This is particularly true in the Metaphysical and New Age movements. There are emanations of energy they have learned to channel which they suppose are *spiritual* when in fact they are *soulical*. These have not learned the difference between soul and spirit! Until our spirit has been joined to God's Spirit (I Cor. 6:17) man is incapable of emanating *divine spirit energy*. Just as fire ignites the coal, causing it to release its heat energy, so the Holy Spirit, as divine fire, ignites the spirit of man causing it to release divine energy. This truth reveals the great importance of the words of John the Baptist concerning Jesus, “HE shall baptize you with the **Holy Ghost**, and with **Fire**” (Mat. 3:11). I have been in the presence of those who operate out of soulical energy, not having been quickened by the Holy Ghost, and it is easy for one who walks in the Spirit of God to discern that there is **no spiritual life** in their ministrations!

Energy has many forms, but it is not something that you can see or hold in your hand. You can think of energy as something that can make things change. For example, a moving object has energy because it can change things by crashing into them. Heat is another form of energy. You could fill your house with coal or fuel oil and it would never heat your house; but cause the coal or oil to *release (emanate) the energy* within it and the temperature will rise! Heat energy can melt ice, changing it to water, and heat it more, changing it to vapor. It can run the engine of an automobile, jet plane, or rocket. There is another kind of energy, called chemical energy. This is in the food that nourishes your body and keeps you active. There is atomic energy which can be set free from the atoms of some materials. And then there is the energy carried by light waves, called electromagnetic energy. It is the electromagnetic energy in the sunlight that warms the earth. Light waves, streaming out of the sun, carry energy to us across nearly a hundred million miles of space. When the energy of the light hits the earth, part of it changes to heat. Just as the light waves emanate from the sun and bring energy to the earth to change things, so the soulical and spiritual energy of man flow out from our lives to affect and change things about us! That is the mystery.

Another kind of energy which we, the people of God, are aware of is SPIRIT ENERGY! The principles stated above show us that God, as a *holy spirit being*, possessing holy spirit characteristics, exerts holy spirit *influences*. The influences of God are no less God than is the personality of God. God Himself is supreme energy — able to influence and change **all things!** But the characteristics, attributes, virtues, power, nature, and mind of God are likewise energy, spirit energy. The Bible declares that God is LOVE. It doesn't say that God *has* love, but God IS LOVE! That is His nature. Did you know that love is energy? You won't have to think about that very long to realize that it is true. Love is a powerful force that can influence and **change things!** Love is invisible, like the wind, but it is powerful! And love can be transmitted, invisibly, from person to person, even as light rays are transmitted from the sun to the earth. The qualities of love can be received by those around us even as the life-giving qualities of the sun are utilized by every living thing on earth. Righteousness, peace, and joy are likewise emanations of the life force of God by the Spirit!

On the other hand, Satan is also spirit and possesses an un-holy spirit mind, disposition, nature, will, etc., and exercises an un-holy spirit influence through various channels and agencies. Therefore, Satan is **also energy** — mis-directed energy, negative energy, deceiving energy, destructive energy. I cannot over-emphasize the significance of this! Each characteristic of either God or Satan is a FORM OF SPIRIT ENERGY! This energy can be transmitted to our conscious mind, from either the regenerated spirit or the old human heart, to produce its power within us, just as electricity is transmitted from a battery to an engine to make it function in a certain way. When the “spirit of holiness” is transmitted to us we begin to function in our personality in the expression of God's holiness, thus becoming holy. When the “spirit of truth” is transmitted to us we cease our own natural reasonings and the deceptive teachings of our carnal heart and commence to act in accordance with the higher knowledge and wisdom of God. Oh, the mystery of it!

Never forget, my beloved, that all the attributes and characteristics of the Holy Spirit and the Un-Holy Spirit ARE SPIRIT, and therefore **energy — power!** As we walk in either of these realms of spirit-power there is ALWAYS A TRANSMISSION OF ENERGY! None of us is an island to ourselves, the emanations that flow out from our life affect the world around us and change things, consciously or unconsciously, visibly or invisibly, for the better or for the worse. There is constantly in this world a definite transference of spirit energy from person to person, from group to group, from religion to religion, from nation to nation, positive or negative as the case may be. The rise and success of false religions, communism, sexual immorality, rock music, drugs, humanism, and evils of every kind that are flooding our societies today, are the direct result of negative satanic spirit influences transmitted to the masses through faithful ministers of unrighteousness who have become filled with the UN-HOLY SPIRIT, and consequently transmitters of the same, producing a **SURCHARGED ATMOSPHERE!** This, my beloved, *is* “the power of the air,” the “spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience!” Satan has a large elemental power. He is named the “prince” of the power of the air, meaning he is the INVISIBLE RULER, which activity and authority he exercises **IN AND THROUGH MAN!** Truly, he is the spirit that “worketh *in* the sons of disobedience.”

The word for “air” in the Greek language is *aer* meaning “to breathe.” The “power of the air” is thus the ENERGY OF BREATHING! Thoughts from the unconscious realm **breathed out** — expressed in words in the conscious realm and lived out as deeds in the physical realm — go forth as energy, power, soulical and spiritual influences in the very atmosphere of the earth. These are not *merely* thoughts or *merely* words, for the soul and spirit of man

are tapped into the timeless sphere of eternity wherein is that which is called by the scriptures “the powers of the heavens.” This is the realm of **pure energy**, and the unconscious mind of man is tapped into this vast supply of energy, either positive or negative, and not only tapped in, but when the mouth is opened, or the body acts, the energy is brought forth through the conscious realm and released into the atmosphere of man’s physical world, carrying a very real power capable of either blessing or cursing mankind!

The great mystery and the great truth that the Holy Spirit would now reveal to all who have ears to hear is that there is a “catching up in the air” to “meet Christ in the air” and “so shall we ever be with the Lord.” The natural-minded Christian is looking to be suddenly snatched up into the air, away from the earth, to inhabit mansions on golden streets somewhere in the blue beyond. The spiritual-minded elect of the Lord, however, look to be LAID HOLD UPON BY A HIGHER POWER and lifted into a realm in the Spirit from whence they can do something for this world! These are looking to **become the power of the air** as God moves to bring down the dark powers of the heavens that have ruled over this planet. It means that when Satan is bound in man and thus removed from his sphere of operation “in the air,” THAT POSITION IS NOT GOING TO GO UNFULFILLED! ANOTHER POWER MUST BE RAISED UP INTO THAT VACATED REALM OF DOMINION TO BECOME THE ENERGY FORCE THAT INFLUENCES THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD, giving direction and motivation to every activity and event wrought upon earth. That, my beloved, is what it means to the **“caught up into the air!”** When the manifest sons of God flood the atmosphere with the vibrations and powers of redemption, righteousness, peace, love, joy, power, life, and glory, what changes shall be wrought in the earth! What deliverance and transformation will flow forth to the peoples of the nations! Oh, the wonder of it!

The glory of God is the emanation or radiation of His nature, and this glory surrounds Him wherever He manifests Himself. As we become partakers of the divine nature, we also radiate the glory of His nature. This is the real purpose of our calling, and the meaning of being caught up into the air! Recognize, O saint of God, the radiant glory that is even now vibrating from your being, and seek His presence, that the glory and power might be greatly increased and intensified for the sake of His body as well as a lost world. You can change the atmosphere about you, regardless of how dark or hopeless it may appear. You can radiate His power and glory, like a blazing light where darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. Arise and shine! Your light has come! The glory of the Lord is risen upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon thee!

As we militate upon these things we begin to comprehend the great truth, the great mystery that the spirit of revelation is now unveiling to us, the mystery that the “air” in its spiritual sense signifies *first of all* the **understanding** — especially our **spiritual understanding**. You see, my beloved, we can only fill the world with the glory of God as first we have put on the MIND OF CHRIST. It is His *mind* in man that changes everything! Understanding is an ability and faculty of the mind. Without mind there can be no understanding. A man’s understanding corresponds precisely to the condition, development, and quality of his mind. Every created life form possesses mind and the understanding of the creature is limited by the quality of its mind. For instance, a cat thinks like a cat simply because it has a cat mind. We used to have a cat in our home. This cat would come and sit in the room while I watched the evening news on the television. While I was very interested in the news, the cat had positively no interest at all! He couldn’t care less! It is not that he didn’t see the pictures flashing across the screen, or hear the words

coming out of the speaker. He both saw and heard, alright, but he didn't understand them — so he just curled up on the carpet and went to sleep! It is simply impossible for cats to understand things human. Humans are of a different and higher order than are cats. Cats may see men, observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. The cat has no comprehension of what it sees. It discerns only things pertaining to its own realm. If you want to get the cat's attention, turn a mouse loose in the house! Then the cat will get interested! Cat minds function on the level of cat nature, while human minds function on the level of human nature.

Likewise, God is of a different and higher order of life and nature than are humans. The mind of the natural man functions on the level of human nature, whereas the mind of God functions on the level of divine nature. There is no common ground of knowledge or understanding between the two! Therefore, the natural man is completely incapable of comprehending that which pertains to the realm of God. For natural minds to comprehend things spiritual is equally as impossible as for cats to comprehend things human! Yet — deep within every man there is a secret sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of his true being. Though the natural man does not function of that level, it is there, just as the beautiful butterfly that will one day fly through the atmosphere lies deep within the being of the earth-bound caterpillar. This inmost reality is that part of man which separates him from every other living creature and makes him uniquely mankind!

This deep-in human entity of which I speak is called in the scriptures *the spirit of man*. “For what man knoweth the things of man, save the *spirit of man* which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, save the *Spirit of God*” (I Cor. 2:11). As God's self-knowledge lies in the eternal Spirit, so man's self-knowledge is by his own spirit, and his knowledge of God is by the direct union of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man. I cannot overstress the importance of this in our forward walk into our destiny as sons of God! This truth denies that man is an earthly, physical being having a spirit and declares, rather, that he is *a spirit having a physical body*. That which makes man truly *man* is not his body but his spirit, in which the image of God originally lay.

Wonderful words were spoken at the very dawn of civilization, recorded in the oldest book of the Bible, which state simply and powerfully the reality of man. “There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8). It is something great in man, Elihu conceives, that he is spirit, and, because he is, is capable of being inspired. He is not here speaking of Adam as he was in the primordial glory of Eden, nor yet of regenerated man in this wonderful age of the Holy Spirit; but, speaking thousands of years ago in the present tense, he magnifies man as being able to be inspired, just because he is spirit. And it is God, who likewise is spirit, that inspires him! Can we not see by this that the very being of man has a God-ward side, being related constitutionally to Him. The testimony of scripture is incontrovertible that there is a spirit in man, and that we are, as being spirit, permeable and inspirable by the Almighty!

This reveals man's capacity for God; to experientially know the presence of God, to let in the divine nature, to entertain the eternal Spirit witnessing with his spirit, to be energized by Him and filled with His glory, in every faculty, feeling, and power, being a vessel and channel for the life of God, to think His thoughts and do His works. Thus, “*the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit* that we are the children (offspring) of God!” (Rom. 8:16). And “*because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts (spirit), crying, Abba, Father!*” (Gal. 4:6). “There is a *spirit* in man, and the *inbreathing* of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” Only because *man is spirit* is all this possible!

We will never, in this age, be fully able to comprehend the boundless power of the mind of man. It appears to be true that practically everything of good and evil in the world comes forth from the mind. Even the natural mind, though it understands not the things of the Spirit of God, is capable of astonishing wonders. All the marvelous inventions of the world have proceeded from the mind of man, yet the natural mind *receives not* any of the things of God! As heaven is higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's and God's thoughts higher than man's. The man who receives of God's life is renewed in the ***spirit of his mind***, that is, he takes on a new mind originating in a new Spirit Life, so that he thinks and acts as an entirely new creation, a new man, a new creature. The mind which is produced in the new creation is the mind of Christ, for, Paul says, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? But ***we have the mind of Christ***" (I Cor. 2:15). What is the mind of *Christ*? Christ came as a man whose human mind was brought into union with the mind of His Father. It is the mind of the Father expressed in and through and as our mind! It is the mind of *sonship*! Again the apostle exhorts, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and ***be renewed in the spirit of your mind***; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24).

The child of God who follows on to know the Lord will find that his darkened mind will completely give way to this new creation mind which is the ***mind of Jesus Christ***. Paul wrote, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The mind that was in Jesus was the Father's mind! Because He was fully possessed of His Father's mind, He was able to say, "I and the Father are one." The mind that was in Christ Jesus is freely offered to every man who believes into His name that he might be ***one with Christ*** and ***one with the Father***, sons of God in the true and perfect sense of the word. Let us never forget that in those glorious ages to come it will be the mind of our heavenly Father that will rule the universe! The Father has decreed that He will rule the universe by that man (the corporate Christ) whom He has chosen, and those sons, every one, will be possessed of the Father's divine mind. God the Father has given His mind to His firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, and He in turn has given that same mind to us, His younger brethren. As the hands and feet of a healthy body act in harmony with, and obedience to, the head, so every member among the sons of God, the corporate Christ, acts in harmony with, and obedience to, their glorious Head, even Jesus, because one mind dwells in us all! Isn't it wonderful!

All understanding is in the mind, therefore, the Understanding of God is in the mind of Christ, which is the mind of the Spirit, which is also the mind of the new creation man. We do not understand the spiritual realities of God with our natural minds! It is not the same mind that understands how to drive your car that understands the deep and eternal mysteries of the Spirit. Oh, no! It is the new mind, the mind of Christ within, that understands things spiritual. When Jesus received the seven spirits of God He received the Spirit of Understanding! (Isa. 11:1-2). This was not the same understanding of the same mind by which he built furniture in Joseph's carpenter shop! This Spirit of Understanding is one aspect of the fullness of the ***mind of God*** — to understand ***as God*** Understands!

"Wisdom is the principle thing," said the wise man; "therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, ***get understanding***" (Prov. 4:7). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the ***knowledge of the holy is understanding***" (Prov. 9:10). "It is sport to a fool to do mischief, but a man of ***understanding*** hath wisdom" (Prov. 10:23). "It is better to get wisdom than gold, and ***understanding*** is rather to be chosen than choice silver" (Prov. 16:16). "***Understanding is a wellspring of life*** unto him that hath it" (Prov. 16:22).

Hear it! **“Understanding is a WELLSPRING OF LIFE** unto him that hath it.” Certainly one reason so many millions of humans are lost and dying upon this earth today is because they neither know who, where, nor why they are. Truly a great darkness is upon the human family! This condition is explained by Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians. “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the *vanity of their mind*, having the *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God *through the ignorance* that is in them, because of the *blindness of their heart*” (Eph. 4:17-18). In this passage we learn, among other things, this one simple truth: **DARKNESS IS IGNORANCE**. In its spiritual meaning, to be in darkness is to be in ignorance! Ignorance is a condition of the *mind*, in which the mind **lacks understanding**. The inspired apostle tells us that men have their “understanding darkened” because of the “ignorance” that is in them! It means that either they don’t know much, or the information they have been given is incorrect! And it is this condition of **spiritual ignorance** that causes the whole world of men, and vast numbers of the Lord’s precious people, to walk in darkness, alienated from the abundant life that is in God! Oh! How many of the Lord’s people walk in spiritual darkness, or spiritual ignorance, because the teaching they have been fed by those who are supposedly the messengers of God is not the truth at all! Men are in darkness because the blindness of their hearts has kept them from the glorious Light of Christ penetrating into their lives!

The next time you stand ready to condemn men for their slowness to see the glories you behold, give place to the *spirit of understanding* that it may possess you; then you will surely know that men’s hearts are smitten by the terrible darkness of ignorance, causing their understanding to be darkened. This is the state of spiritual blindness! And the great truth is that GOD ALONE CAN OPEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND! We have a great pity for the man who has some awful handicap because of a physical defect from the time of his birth, for understanding has taught us that these afflictions come through no fault of his own. Just as the man Jesus healed was **born blind**, so have all men been born into this world **spiritually blind**! Why then do we cast aside the spirit of understanding by demanding that he whose spiritual eyes have never been opened should be able to see the mountains filled with the hosts of the Lord?

Ah, when Jesus healed the blind man outside of Bethsaida, it was not immediately a complete healing! After spitting on his eyes and putting His hands upon him, he asked him if he saw anything. The man looked up and said, “I see men as trees, walking.” After that Jesus put His hands again upon the man’s eyes, and made him look up. He was then made every whit whole and saw everything clearly! We would think that when men come to Jesus for salvation, and are born again, that their blindness, or spiritual ignorance, would be healed. Not so! They still see through a glass darkly because the gospel preached to them, in most cases, is not a pure word of the Lord! When we were first saved just enough Light shone in to reveal Jesus as Saviour. We joyfully embraced what became revealed unto us in that measure of Light, but what a great darkness prevailed even yet in so many areas of our lives! And then so many doctrines and traditions of men, so much “spiritual ignorance” and “spiritual foolishness” was fed to us by the church systems of man that we were never able to clearly see, and of the things we did see we could not tell for certain whether they were *trees* or *men*! Oh, yes! The Lord has had to put His healing hand upon every one of us *again* before we could begin to see as we ought to see! That is the mystery!

The mind is the understanding organ, and when the spiritual mind (the eyes of our understanding) is blinded, one is without spiritual understanding. That is what the “air”

represents in Revelation 9:2. "And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a *smoke* out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the *sun* (light of Christ) and the *air* (spiritual understanding) **were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.**" The "abyss" signifies the human heart. The "smoke" of the pit signifies the **deceitfulness** of the human heart! This smoke displays a movement, a tendency coming out of the abyss. It is that which comes forth from the heart, the **understanding of the carnal mind** which interprets the things of God on a carnal level and misses the deep **spiritual truth and reality** altogether! Oh! How the churches today are filled with the smoke out of the pit! All the dead, carnal church systems were built by men who were saved by receiving just enough Light to know Jesus as Saviour and Blessor, and then, out of the over shrouding gloom yet untouched in the vanity of their minds and the darkness of their carnal hearts they proceeded to build upon the foundation of Christ every kind of grotesque structure of tradition, ritual, form, error, legalism, fleshiness, and worldliness: great towering edifices of hay, wood, and stubble! The carnal and foolish interpretations of men put upon the word of God, out of the blindness of their hearts, has created a great ignorance among the Lord's people, and they are alienated from the glorious flow of divine, heavenly, spiritual, and incorruptible Life by the blindness that causes them spiritually to see men as trees, walking!

It has always, from the very beginning when the serpent whispered to Eve, been the adversary's policy to misrepresent truth, to distort and carnalize the word of God, in order to hinder mankind from seeing the great beauty and majesty of the purposes of God. The more absurdities the adversary can get interwoven into man's doctrines and concepts respecting God, the church, eternity, the final destiny of man, judgment, hell, heaven, the "end-time," and a hundred more, the better he will succeed in separating men in their consciousness from reality. Thus for centuries the great adversary has been working most successfully and has covered and hidden some of the most precious and glorious truths under the most specious and repulsive errors, and the progress of the Lord's people has been correspondingly stunted. But, thank God! we are now living in the time when the veil of ignorance is being dissolved, the blinding smoke from the pit is being blown away, and the people of God are being drawn by the Spirit to look away from the creeds and systems formed for their enslavement during ages past, and to open their hearts directly to the spirit of truth that leads to the living God! Therefore lean no longer upon thine own understanding! Judge neither after the sight of the eyes nor the hearing of the ears, but seek that Living Spirit of UNDERSTANDING that comes from God alone!

This is why Paul so fervently wrote to the saints in Corinth, saying, "Brethren, be not children in **understanding**: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in **understanding BE MEN**" (I Cor. 14:20). Paul prayed for the Ephesian brethren to this end: "The **eyes of your understanding being enlightened**; that ye may **know** (by understanding) what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:18-20). And again, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but **understanding what the will of the Lord is**" (Eph. 5:17). To the Colossians Paul wrote, "For this cause we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the **knowledge of His will** in all wisdom and **spiritual understanding**" (Col. 1:9-10).

Have you ever prayed that God would **open the eyes of your understanding** that you might truly and correctly and fully know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the

riches of the glory of His inheritance *in the saints*? Ah, how much better this would be than to pray for temporal blessings for the outer man, for the heart of the Father is truly pained when He beholds His called and chosen ones neglecting their devotion to His highest purpose while they diligently pray and seek for earthly blessings. Walk no longer in the *vanity* of your mind, having the *understanding darkened*, while alienating yourself from the *life of God* through ignorance! Never spend your days seeking the things of this carnal life, or a golden mansion in some far-off heaven somewhere, for they make themselves wings and fly away and have no power to deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption! Every son of God who is pressing forward to lay hold upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ is COMING OUT OF THE SMOKE FROM THE PIT, TO STAND UNDER A CLEAR HEAVEN WHERE THE SUN OF DIVINE LIGHT SHINES IN ALL ITS BRILLIANCE AND THE AIR IS PURE AND RAREFIED WITH THE LIFE OF GOD!

Chapter112

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit” (Rev. 9:2).

The “bottomless pit” or the “abyss” signifies the human heart! As soon as the abyss is unlocked it begins to belch forth columns of dirty blue-black smoke just like the smoke of a great furnace. This smoke displays a movement, a tendency coming out of the abyss. It is that which comes forth from the deceitful nature of the heart, for the heart of man is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9). There are indeed wicked, vile, and corrupt things that come out of the heart, as Jesus makes plain in Matthew 7:18-23. In this writing, however, we want to look at the deceit of the heart and the things that arise from that deceit. The deceitfulness of the human heart was first revealed amidst the mysterious mists of the long ago Eden. God had told Adam that if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would die. The serpent disagreed and said, “You shall not surely die!” Eve, Paul tells us, was deceived by the serpent! Adam then followed her in her transgression. Can we not see by this that the whole dreadful realm of sin, sorrow, darkness, error, and death came through deception! Satan was a liar right from that earliest beginning! The deception caused man to become joined to the delusion that is in the lie! Adam’s consciousness of himself, of God, and of the true nature of all things, was now birthed in a lie, and joined in both mind and body to the dust realm instead of the spirit realm he became separated from God in his thinking, speaking, and acting. A few of the many things that arise out of the deceitfulness of the heart are ego, thoughts, imaginations, desires, perceptions, attitudes, interpretations, ideas, concepts, suggestions, opinions, propositions, and divinations. All these, and more, constitute the smoke that arises out of the pit!

Smoke is a cruel enemy that fills the air with darkness and penetrates the lungs of men and women, filling them with deadly gases, cutting off the oxygen supply, and endangering their lives. It is the deceitfulness of the heart by which the truth of God is turned into a lie, and it was by that lie that man lost his life! The smoke ascending out of the pit is the lie! It is the lie about God, the lie about truth, the lie about reality, the lie about ourselves. It is the human consciousness, the natural man’s distorted perception, analysis, and definition of all things, pouring forth out of the abyss in thought, word, and expression.

THE SUN AND THE AIR DARKENED

So thick and murky is that smoke that it blots out the light of the sun of the glorious, illuminating truth of Christ, and darkens the air of our spiritual understanding, causing men to find themselves alienated from the life of God. The very atmosphere in which man moves is made fuzzy by the smoke, permeated with that negative energy which is borne

along with the thoughts, imaginations, perceptions, concepts, words, and actions and becomes an oppressive atmosphere for all who walk in that realm.

It is interesting to note that the pit didn't have real fire, only "strange fire!" It does not say that the smoke came from real fire, only that it was as the smoke of a great furnace. The smoke "appears" to be from a great furnace, a great power, but "as the smoke" denotes that it had characteristics like the smoke from a furnace, but it was merely a figure of speech, a parabolic comparison. The power behind the smoke is not what it appears to be, it is not real power, but a facade, an imagination, an illusion. This clearly reveals that the smoke is a deception, a false idea of the power of darkness. When the man of sin is revealed within us there arises a smoke out of the abyss of our heart as of the smoke of a great furnace. There is no furnace, but the smoke is a symbol — as of the smoke of a furnace. The sun and the air are darkened, the smoke clouds our perception of reality, the understanding of the spiritual realm of God's heavens is obscured by the smoke, it creates a "smoke-screen," creating the inability to think clearly or understand spiritually. It is the deceitfulness of the heart smothering the understanding until we cannot see the truth of Christ. The air is the realm of the firmament, or a dimension of heaven; therefore the air signifies the spiritual atmosphere, and the spiritual atmosphere of the realm where we walk in God becomes darkened by the smoke of the pit. The atmosphere or world of the carnal mind is darkened by the smoke, clouding the thinking, impairing the vision, veiling man's perceptions of spiritual realities until he can see neither where he is or where he is going. Simply put, it is carnal understanding! It is spiritual darkness!

If you go to a bar there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a brothel there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a rock concert there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a museum there is an atmosphere there. If you hike in the mountains there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a Baptist church service there is an atmosphere there. If you go to a Pentecostal church service there is an atmosphere there. The atmosphere at a Catholic mass is altogether different from the atmosphere at a Charismatic meeting. Every realm has its atmosphere! When you enter the presence of a son of God who knows the truth as it is in Jesus, who walks in the wisdom of the mind of Christ, who expresses the unconditional love of God, and dwells in the glory of God — there is a clear, powerful, victorious, confident, peaceful, transforming atmosphere there!

Plutarch, the great Greek biographer, once wrote, "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch than that they should say there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born." He preferred to have men deny his existence rather than have them hold an unworthy conception of his character. Carrying this thought into the spiritual realm we may raise the question as to whether it would be more pleasing to God to have His existence denied or to have men hold a distorted and unworthy conception of His character. We may not be able to answer that proposition with certainty, but the fact is that in this world far vaster multitudes of men hold distorted and unworthy concepts of God than deny His existence! There are fewer atheists in the world than religious folk who continually malign and slander the character of our heavenly Father!

It is helpful to understand how men in ancient times viewed their God; the way in which they conceived of Him who created them. Would that we could go back to those ancient days in India or China or Japan and see the hideous idols with their grimacing countenances, their devouring teeth, their many arms and sharp claws, something of the devouring, hateful nature of their deities — or go back to the cruel Assyrians or

Babylonians or Egyptians and the monstrosities, the tyrannies, which they worshipped as gods. The people of Israel knew that there was only one true and living God — Yahweh. But the idea that God was a loving God was alien to them for the most part. Until Jesus came even they did not know the heart of the Father! They knew God according to the Law. To them God was Yahweh, the Law-giver; harsh, demanding, and vindictive, throwing lightning bolts off of Sinai. Yet, there was a reason why God did not reveal the fullness of His nature to them at the beginning! In the day when God called Abraham the world was mad, licentious, idolatrous, intensely and irrevocably evil — as far from God, truth, and righteousness as it is possible to go. When you have a son, a prison, or a culture that is in a state of rebellion, riot, or civil war, wildly and hopelessly out of control, you must first, before anything else, restore order! You have to get their attention! Then, when order is restored, you can proceed to show favor and restore or rehabilitate them. That is what God did with Israel through the law! He brought forth in the earth a people whom He saved from the utter corruption of the civilization of that day, and wisely He did so with a strong hand! They weren't ready for the next step yet — Jesus. In the “fullness of time” God sent forth His Son! The Old Testament world stood before the thought of God as we sometimes stand before a summer thunder-storm — black, flashing with lightning, crashing with thunder, terrible and awesome — and with fear they bowed in the dust. They conceived that God was exacting and full of wrath. God punished people and destroyed all His enemies. But that God loved them? God would accept their sacrifices, certainly. God would even put up with them, and they would propitiate Him and appease Him (or so they thought!), but they did not in most cases truly love God!

But have we really made that much progress? The same beloved John who wrote so extensively of God's marvelous love left us this solemn warning, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols (that is, false gods, or false ideas and representations of the true God)” (I Jn. 5:21). Do we have false ideas about God? I fear we do! Most Christians say that God is all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful, and then turn around and deny it. They say that God “so loved the world” and that Jesus is “the Saviour of all men” and “the Saviour of the world” and then turn around and say that only a few will be saved while God sends the vast majority to suffer the excruciating pains of fire and brimstone for all eternity without His feeling any concern for their suffering — totally impotent to win them to Himself, and eternally without mercy! They affirm that God is all-powerful, and then turn around and say that God has “provided” salvation for all men, that God is “trying” to save the world, that God is “pleading” with men to repent, but that dirty old devil who blinds and possesses men's souls is so much more powerful than God that he will carry away captive into eternal hell countless billions of men for whom Christ died! More preachers major on hell and damnation than emphasize His all-encompassing love, His ever-enduring mercy, and His great and glorious purpose of the ages. Not only does such a message not reach men's hearts with the goodness of God that leads men to repentance, but multitudes of Christians live under a sense of sin-consciousness, condemnation, and fear of God, ministered to them by the preachers!

“Little children, keep yourselves from false ideas of God.” False ideas about God! How the world and the church are filled with them! Many who read these lines have gone through several rounds of smashing idols, false images of the Almighty, and will probably continue to drop false ideas until Christ is fully formed in them. Many people view God as a schoolboy did: “...the sort of person who is always snooping around to see if anyone is enjoying himself and then trying to stop it.” Then others make God out to be a tyrant, or a vengeful, wrath-filled FIEND. But the Bible knows no such God! No more terrible insult was given to the God of all grace who came in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,

not imputing their trespasses unto them. The story is told about a little girl. After she had heard her father preach a sermon on the awful wrath of God, and that the unsaved would go to a red-hot, sizzling, burning hell the moment they died, and that they would twist in agony and torment forever, without mercy, this little girl said, "I wish Jesus were as good and kind as my father." God does bring judgment upon sinners — swift, strong, effective, corrective judgment — but never meaningless, sadistic torture. All such crude notions are just **SMOKE OUT OF THE PIT WHICH DARKENS THE SUN AND THE AIR!**

More than two and a half centuries ago there echoed through the halls of America's churches the voice of a dynamic and prolific evangelist. His name was Jonathan Edwards. The sermon for which he was most famous drew hundreds down the aisles, weeping and trembling in fear, caused by his vivid descriptions of their alleged fate. His famous sermon was called "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." It happened on the evening of July the eighth, 1741, in a rural church house in Enfield, Connecticut. Tradition has it that Jonathan Edwards was substitute speaker that evening. Since communication was rather slow in those days, it was always a good idea for a visiting preacher to keep a just-in-case sermon ready at all times, even if he wasn't scheduled to speak. The spare sermon in Edwards' saddlebag proved useful when the scheduled speaker for the evening failed to show.

When Edwards strode into the pulpit that night to deliver his sermon, the congregation had no idea what they were about to witness. Neither did they know that the words they were about to hear would drive them to their knees in gut-rending fear! There is no doubt that that message caused many a nightmare and sleepless night. The sinner, Edwards explained, is clutched in God's outstretched hand, hanging by a frayed thread over the flames of hell raging beneath him, with God standing ready to snip the thread at the slightest provocation, sending the sinner plummeting into the excruciating agony of the endless flames. The audience was assured that one day God most assuredly will release His grip, and the sinner, screaming and kicking, will plummet helplessly into the torturous depths of eternal hell fire.

So vivid was Edwards' description of the horrible fate awaiting any who had sin in their lives, the parishioners could almost feel the heat, see the smoke, and smell the sulfurous stench of hell's vengeful flames. Stephen Williams, who witnessed the occasion, wrote that before the sermon was finished "...there was a great moaning and crying out through the whole house." One cried, "What must I do to be saved?" Another lamented, "Oh, I am going to hell!" And yet another wailed, "Oh, what shall I do for Christ?" Williams said the "shrieks and cries were piercing and amazing." The people were absolutely shot through with **STARK, NAKED FEAR!** I do not hesitate to tell you that these are false ideas about God! **THIS IS SMOKE OUT OF THE PIT OF THE DECEPTIVE HEART OF CARNAL-MINDED MAN, DARKENING THE SUN OF GOD'S GLORY AND THE AIR OF SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING!**

David Wilkerson once wrote, "I've known families in which the children cowered in the presence of a hard, mean, abusive father. They played happily until their dad came home. But when they saw him come through the door, they ran straight to their mother and clutched her apron. I never saw them go near their father, except when he demanded something of them. They never crawled into his lap or asked to be hugged. They dreaded being in his presence. I believe this is one powerful reason why so many Christians don't want to get close to their heavenly Father. They dread drawing near to Him because they sense they've failed Him somehow. They have a nagging feeling they haven't measured up to His standard, they've done things wrong. All they can conceive of Him is that He's full

of consuming fire, ready to judge and condemn them. That's not His nature! We can't judge our heavenly Father by the measure of our human fathers. That's not who He is! The question for all of us today is, how can we not want to be near a Father who writes love letters to us...who tells us He yearns to be with us...who's always ready to embrace us...who says He has nothing but good thoughts about us...who assures us, 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!'"

The sons of God have been called to proclaim a full salvation, a salvation that includes every man that has ever lived, and every man that ever shall live! God is raising up in us, His firstfruits, His full salvation — salvation in spirit, soul, and body! That is the fullness of the full salvation! Full salvation — you don't hear that preached in the churches today. They have what they call "Full Gospel" but in reality it is only about one-tenth gospel. It's not "full" — it's full of something, but not gospel! "Gospel" means GOOD NEWS. What you get in most so-called gospels today is a little bit of good news, and the rest is "You better watch out, you better not cry, you better not pout, I'm telling you why — Jesus Christ is coming and is He mad!" So you get one-tenth good news and nine-tenths bad news, and they call that FULL GOSPEL. No it's not!

It is time to come aside from the crude beliefs that teach myths to children in Sunday School, showing them pictures of the devil with horns and his demons around him shoveling coals into a fire, with people screaming and the fire never going out. They picture God up in the sky, with a long white beard and angels with wings and halos, floating on clouds and playing harps. This picture of God and heaven is as primitive as the mother in Africa who sacrifices her new born baby to appease an angry god! Oh, yes! MORE SMOKE OUT OF THE PIT!

Those of us who grew up in a legalistic religious system, know that many times sin was preached about on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. Sin was preached good and long and hard and loud, and we came away with a "sin-consciousness." But a careful study of the New Testament makes plain that the power of Jesus Christ and His blood removes even the consciousness of sin! "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience (consciousness) of sins. But this man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Heb. 10:1-18).

God has given us a new mind, even the mind of Christ! Christ has made an end of sin, He has taken away sin, He has borne all our iniquities, because of His sacrifice for sins He no longer remembers our sins and is not holding them over our head. The mind of Christ in us will also take away our sin-consciousness! The Holy Spirit is giving us a change of vision — and anytime the scriptures speak of vision they are talking about our understanding. One of the greatest hindrances in the lives of the Lord's people is double-mindedness. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8). To be double minded signifies a double vision. It's two visions at once. It means a vacillating back and forth between the flesh and the spirit, between what God says is true and what we feel in our emotions.

Double minded people hear the word of God, experience the moving of the Spirit, get all built up in the inner man, and then somebody gets up and preaches about the devil, preaches about the weakness of the flesh, and begins to lay the law on them, "Don't do this, don't do that," and creates a whole system of legalism, beating them to death with man-made rules and traditions, and their victory is all swept away. In one of his books, Philip Yancey tells the story of a prostitute with a drug habit who had reached the end of her rope. She knew she needed help desperately. Someone suggested that she go to church and get help. This was her answer: "Church? Why would I ever go there? I'm already feeling terrible about myself. They'd just make me feel worse!" Oh, yes! She may have been a prostitute, but she knew more than most Christians about religious sin-consciousness!

I read the testimony of a man who said, "Religion drove the fear of God into my heart. When I heard the term God I'd never break out into a smile or begin dancing. When someone mentioned God to me, I recoiled in dread and my inner child would shrink. This was not surprising to me. God had always been an enemy. Not just an enemy, but THE enemy! I could run from my human enemies, but I had nowhere to hide from my Divine enemy. 'He sees everything' I was told as a child. 'He will find you wherever you may be!' I still remember the morning, twenty-one years ago, when my best friend was frantically chased by his religious school teacher who set out to discipline him. The frightened boy locked himself in the bathroom while his teacher yelled, 'God will get you in the bathroom too!' That day, as a six-year old child, I learned that God hangs out even in the bathroom so that He can zap us at any given moment."

I can sympathize with that poor man! I remember coming up as a little child under the legalistic teachings of the Pentecostal church. I came from a Mennonite family, but my parents had received the baptism in the Spirit and had left the Mennonite denomination. My father became a Pentecostal preacher and was the pastor of our church. As a young person there was very little we could do, because just about everything was considered to be of the "world." We weren't permitted to go to movies, dances, ball games, or even the county fair. Every Friday they showed a movie at school. Admission was fifteen cents. I skipped lunch one Friday and used my lunch money to go to the movie. It was a dog story, something like Lassie Come Home or Rin-Tin-Tin. A girl told my dad that she had seen me at the movie. I had to get up in church on Sunday morning and publicly apologize to the congregation for my "sin" and ask their forgiveness. We were told that we had to live right and measure up to all the self-righteous standards of legalism, or we could not enter the presence of the Lord. Oh! How I longed to live in the presence of God! I had a heart after God from my earliest memory. My soul cried out for reality, for life, for glory. But the air was dark to me, the smoke from the pit obscured the heavens and choked the life out of me! The sun and the air were darkened because of my weaknesses and failures and the emphasis on sin-consciousness and the law of condemnation made the heavens as brass and God seemed a million miles away. In my imagination, in my vain, religious imagination, I thought that somehow my Father couldn't love me because of what I knew was in me, or He was judging me, I wasn't good enough for Him, I wasn't worthy to stand in the glory of His presence or even worthy of His blessings. The sun of Christ's glory and the air of my spiritual understanding were darkened because there was this man-made standard I had to live up to, and, of course, I always failed!

Just a few weeks ago I received a letter from a dear brother who shared his heart with me. He wrote, "I grieve for those who have gone all their lives trying to serve God, but never coming to the reality of His life in them. Setting their sights on dying to go to 'heaven.' My mother and father met in Bible School where they attended four years each. Then they were missionaries for a while. They were 'Holiness.' They taught me all about God to the best of their own knowledge. But it made me run from God! There was no way anyone could live up to that outward standard. Those in their church simply faked it, or else went insane trying to live the 'Christian' life in an outward manner. Now I realize this was all God's doing to show us the error of that way! I was never running from God, I was only running from an erroneous concept of Him."

There are hundreds of thousands, probably millions, around the world today who have experienced physical abuse. This abuse comes most often from parents or spouses. There are nearly the same amount who have experienced sexual abuse. And millions more who have suffered verbal and emotional abuse. There are parents who are angry, who don't know how to love and nurture their children. They heap verbal abuse upon them with constant threats, often yelling or screaming at them for little reason. They constantly demoralize the young ones with denigrating statements like, "You can't do that," "You're no good," "You'll never amount to anything!" But do you know that there are also thousands, maybe hundreds of millions, who have experienced spiritual abuse? Spiritual abuse is rampant throughout religious circles today!

Spiritual abuse is that which others do to us, or we do to ourselves, when we no longer sense and feel and totally understand God's unconditional love for us, that God is not a vindictive tyrant out to punish us, but He is our heavenly Father who deeply loves, cares for, and nurtures us so that we can grow spiritually and become all that He has planned and purposed for us. When people represent God as a God to fear, who is watching our every move to reprimand us, judge us, to cast us into eternal doom and damnation in a fiery hell if we do not keep all His laws and commandments — that is spiritual abuse!! People who have been spiritually abused can't believe in the unconditional love and acceptance of God because they have, in their memory system, confusion and distortions about God. False ideas about God! Smoke out of the pit! Can you not see the mystery? When preachers preach a message of sin-consciousness, how God hates sin, because of His infinite holiness He cannot tolerate any sin, and His hand is against the sinner — that is a vicious, blasphemous lie and it is spiritual abuse! When our consciences are conditioned (brainwashed) to feel terrible guilt, condemnation, and separation from the favor and blessing of God over the smallest failure to measure up to God's standard of holiness — that is spiritual abuse!

We have a whole religious culture today that lives and thrives off of the negative realm of legalism. There are literally millions of Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Holiness people who love the kind of preaching that constantly steps on your toes. I call it perversion, myself. Out in the world without the spirit of Christ there are people who can't receive any kind of gratification sexually or otherwise unless they are beat upon or beating someone else. They are aroused by either receiving or inflicting pain. Norman Elliott describes it so well in one of his books. "When we find a person who is in love with sickness and delights in pain, we say he is mentally ill. There are people of that sort. When they delight to have pain inflicted upon themselves we call them masochists; and when they delight in inflicting pain upon others we call them sadists. We say they are perverted, their energies and goals have become turned about, upside-down, inside-out, and directed toward ends for which they were never intended. They are sick.

“Such perversions can be refined; they are not always as obvious as physical whipping. Once I attended a meeting high in the mountains in a little tar-papered shack. The preacher held the listeners in terror for over an hour as she whipped them with words of an impending hell, the fall of brimstone that would burn but never consume, the inherent sinfulness of their nature that could only result in such a holocaust. Yes, there was the call to repent, and to repent, and to repent — meaning to beg forgiveness. From what I could learn, all those who were present were members of the little mountain sect and the service was normal for them. It was not long before people were literally screaming to God for mercy, and the time came when some were writhing on the floor in apparent agony as they continued to cry for mercy. The picture of God that must have been etched on the sensitive minds of the little children who were present can only be imagined.

“After the meeting we met the preacher and some of her flock and told them that we were at a nearby church-campgrounds for a week-long series of meetings, and we invited them to attend if they desired. A few days later I was speaking when I noticed three or four of them enter the room. They sat far in the back and listened. That day I was talking on the theme that the love of God is broader than the reaches of men’s minds. A remarkable thing happened. The people became positively angry! It was reflected in their faces and the way they shook heads at each other. That was not the gospel to them! They had become so accustomed to verbal beratement, mental beatings, fear and terror that they had come to enjoy it! It was not too long before they left the meeting. One wonders how they could enjoy heaven when they had habituated all their attitudes and feelings toward hell!” — end quote.

It gives me no joy to find it necessary to say these things, but the simple truth is that such people are spiritual deviants. It is spiritual perversion. Their teaching and preaching is naught but billowing smoke out of the pit of hearts full of deceit which puts a devilish twist upon the word of God, turns the truth of God into a lie, and grotesquely distorts, deforms, and disfigures the image and character of God. In the spirit realm, people come into the assembly of God’s people and expect the preacher to just beat them up with the word of God, and they call that good preaching! The preacher gets great satisfaction out of how “hot” he can preach it, and the people get all excited the harder he lays it on them! If you did not grow up in that kind of a system you may be unaware of that kind of abuse, but it is abuse! That kind of activity stems from a spirit of anger, it comes out of a spirit of hate, and it originates from a perverted notion of who and what God is. It comes from worshipping Yahwey the lawgiver from mount Sinai, the angry God throwing lightning bolts from His fingertips, just waiting to zap you on the head at the slightest infraction.

Now, there is a side of God where He finds stern discipline necessary, and He is fully capable of correcting and chastening His sons as well as the whole creation. But I tell you today that GOD IS NOT AN ABUSER! A normal, balanced, wise, and loving parent does not go around with a scowl on his face breathing out threatenings, berating, slapping, and beating His children all the time. If he does he is an abusive parent with a vicious personality and a violent temperament. Jesus picked up little children and His disciples said, “Wait a minute!” They thought He was too important and busy to be concerned about little children who probably weren’t capable of understanding the deep teaching of the kingdom of God anyway! Jesus replied, “You wait a minute — suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven!”

Jesus put a face on God, the firstborn Son of God was the image of the invisible God! He only castigated the wicked rulers of the people, the misguided, self-righteous and

hypocritical religious leaders. But He ate with sinners! He went into Simon's house and here came this woman — a prostitute. If you were a preacher, put yourself in that position. She gets down and begins to anoint His feet (which could be construed as caressing!) and drying them with her hair, and He did not get that agitated look on His face, squirming uncomfortably, wishing she would hurry up and leave, nor did He turn her away. He talked to the immoral woman at the well. She was "shacked up" with a man who wasn't her husband! He never said a word of correction or rebuke to her about her lifestyle. He didn't remind her that she had to acknowledge that she was a sinner, and leave this bum, before she could ask for God's mercy. Oh, no! He just told her He had some living water and would like to give her a drink! He told her that when she drank of this water that it would become an artesian well within her, springing up unto eternal life! He imparted no sin-consciousness to her — He just offered her the unconditional gift of transforming life! Isn't it wonderful!

Jesus gave not one word of condemnation to the adulteress the Pharisees wanted to stone. "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more!" Instead of joining the condemners, reminding her that she really was guilty and deserved to die, He simply spoke a word of release from sin into her life. Oh, the beauty of it! He showed infinite mercy to the sinner and the ungodly, and He took the little children up in His loving arms and blessed them! He didn't beat them over the head with a stick or with the word of God. Children need love, nurture, counsel, and example. Jesus loved people! He came not to call the righteous, but sinners. And He didn't win them by beating them about their sins and dangling them over the fires of hell. Jesus was no Jonathan Edwards! He won them with unconditional love, mercy, and goodness.

It is a mystery too deep to fathom, but God in His great mercy honors His word on whatever level it is preached, and in spite of the intent and character of those who preach it. Paul proclaimed this great truth when he wrote to the Philippians, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:15-18).

It is a fact that multitudes of men have been turned to seek and find God even by words that are pitiful mixtures of truth and error and preached even by men and systems of reprobate minds. Their children are born of mixed natures as was Ishmael, truly born of God by the Spirit, yet born of Hagar, the Egyptian bondwoman, through the fleshly word, the word of God mingled with the ideas of men. The many and varied erroneous ideas about God and His kingdom, contorted representations of truth and reality, each bring forth spiritual expressions of their religious lineage. Some of these unfortunate children are born completely paralyzed spiritually and others are still-born, conceived by a totally dead word. Those who preach the word of God as a dead letter of literalism, legalism, and carnality, void of spiritual understanding or the breath of life, fill the earth with children of God having inherited an Egyptian heart, weaknesses, deformities, and pathetic imperfections.

I do not doubt for one moment that many who read these lines were first conceived in their spiritual life by a defective word! Only as each of us is miraculously and supernaturally healed can we hope to come into the image and likeness of God as His sons! How precious the knowledge that regardless of the poor and wretched condition of our early conception, GOD IS A GREAT HEALER! He can heal the embryo in the womb, or He can

heal the child of tragic birth. As this great healing work takes place in our lives, through the gracious dealings and faithful processings of the Lord, we are dramatically and gloriously transformed in our spiritual lives. Gone are those “religious” spirits, bondages, customs, speech, mannerisms, methods, practices, fleshly efforts, false doctrines, static creeds, empty rituals, ceremonies, and ordinances, lifeless programs, dead works, and denominational hype which once characterized all our understanding, attitudes, and activities. All the marks of Babylon were upon us — not impressed merely from without, but genetically reproduced within us by the very Word that conceived us!

Today, my beloved, I point you to CHRIST THE HEALER! Think not for one moment that Jesus Christ is the healer only of diseases of the body! He has come to cleanse His church, to sanctify and purify His called and chosen elect, to purge and refine and make every whit whole those apprehended to be His sons. I declare to you today that HE IS THE HEALER AND RESTORER OF HIS FAMILY! He purges out of His kingdom all things that defile and offend. Listen! The great and wonderful mercy of the Christ receives those who have blemishes, and His power heals all who humbly come unto Him. Think of how He put up with the unspeakable carnality of His very closest disciples for three and a half years! But in due time they were changed, healed. Have you received the call to sonship? The Holy Ghost is closely examining candidates for this ministry. The qualifying time is NOW. The “in-part” ministries of the church age may get by with blemishes, defects, and deformities, but the King-Priest ministry destined to deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption must itself first be freed from every vestige of carnality, weakness, limitation, sin, and death, transformed into the image of God. “Faithful is He that calleth you, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT!” Aren’t you glad!

With this exhortation fresh upon our minds let us consider some events from the Old Testament that are reminiscent of the vision John beholds here in chapter nine of the Revelation. John saw the abyss, and the smoke pouring out of the abyss. Then he saw swarming locusts coming out of the smoke, to torment men upon the earth. I would remind you that when Moses was sent to deliver God’s people out of the bondage of Egypt there was a plague of locusts sent into the land of Egypt! The plague of locusts was directed at one of the gods of Egypt, Serapis, protector from locusts, who was shown to be powerless as the plague of locusts covered the land, devouring everything that grew. There was also a great darkness that came upon the land of Egypt, a darkness so dense that it could be felt.

It is time to stop, look, and listen! The imagery of what transpires when Christ opens the abyss corresponds with the imagery of those plagues in Egypt! All the plagues God sent by the hand of Moses upon Egypt were designed to get God’s people out of Egypt! These symbolisms reveal the great truth that something similar to what happened in Egypt is happening here in the book of Revelation! There is indeed a great similarity, but there is also a vast difference. You see, my beloved, the plagues of Egypt were sent to get God’s people out of Egypt, whereas in the revelation of Jesus Christ it is not merely getting us out of the bondage of our spiritual Egypt, but getting Egypt out of us! That is the mystery. From the Old Covenant to the New Covenant everything is opposite. In Moses’ day the Lord’s called and chosen people were in Egypt and He moved to bring them forth out of the house of bondage.

Today, through the blood of Jesus, we are free! We have been called out from under the taskmasters of this present world! We have been separated unto God and His high purpose! Yet — we find that there have been some gods in the hearts of God’s elect!

There have been idols, false images, false ideas about God and truth, natural reasoning, carnal understanding, human ways of looking at things, literal interpretations of spiritual realities, residues of old-order religious concepts, doctrines, methods, anointings, orders, and fleshly ways from which our hearts have not been completely purged. As we follow on to know the Lord it becomes more and more clear to us that many of the things we have cherished even to this day, did not come from God! We have all been taught by man. To one degree or another we are still walking about in the smoke of the pit, in a darkened atmosphere. We are still in the process of our faithful Father's dealings to purge, purify, cleanse, refine, and purify our hearts!

We can only fully know God as we see Him as He is! We can only see Him as He is when all the smoke of the pit has cleared away! We have been like the little girl that was diligently drawing a picture of some mysterious creature, who, when asked by her father what she was drawing, said, "I am drawing a picture of God." "Well," said her father, "you cannot draw a picture of God because no one knows what God looks like." "Well," replied the child, "when I am finished with this picture, they will know." We smile at this and well we might, but is her answer more simple than the vanity of men who, not having seen God in the spirit and by the spirit, describe His characteristics and, not having known Him by the spirit of truth, take pride in their explanations?

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

But the popular churches are still lost in dreams. They have not yet awakened. They know not of the dawn! But we who are of the day, and who are not lovers of the drunkenness of false doctrine nor sleepers of the night, have a higher heritage. "We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others" (I Thes. 5:5-6). We who have received the love of the truth are heirs to a higher calling. We have privileges, and we have duties to perform. We must be about our Father's business! There has been a parting of the ways. God has called upon us to forsake the shame and error of the harlot systems of man, to look up, to arise and shine. Our light has come. The glory of the Lord is rising upon us. The day is at hand! The night is far spent. We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow!

Chapter 113

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And there *came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth*: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power” (Rev. 9:3).

Indeed, John did see locusts coming out of the smoke, however, they are being used as a picture, yes, a very fitting picture! And now it is important that we understand this picture properly. John sees the locusts come forth out of the smoke that escaped from the abyss. They did not themselves actually come out of the abyss; they originate with, or are produced by, the smoke! Nothing is said to come out of the abyss but the smoke which darkens the sun and the air; and out of the *smoke* the locusts come. It may be natural to think that, after all, they cannot be bred of the smoke, and that they must come with the smoke out of the pit; but naturalistic interpretations may easily deceive us, where the spiritual sense is the whole matter, and for the spiritual meaning there is deep significance. The smoke is not, as in other places, the smoke of tormenting fire, but fumes of maligned spiritual influences which obscure the enlightenment of the Spirit and our own spiritual understanding. Out of this spiritual darkness, caused by the deceitfulness of the human heart, we can easily understand the locusts to be bred!

The locusts therefore are intimately associated with the smoke. Smoke is more of an ethereal, airy, vaporous, gaseous substance, whereas the locusts have a tangible form. The locusts represent the outward form of the spiritual concept. Arising from the abyss of the deceitfulness of the heart is the smoke of ego, thoughts, imaginations, desires, ambitions, perceptions, attitudes, interpretations, ideas, concepts, opinions, propositions, and divinations. None of these things are tangible, visible, physical things! Yet out of these come other things! The visible, tangible, physical things (locusts) which come out of the smoke represent the men, ministries, movements, organizations, governments, and activities that are spawned by the thoughts, perceptions, ideas, interpretations, and opinions that come from the heart! All the unfettered instincts of the soul have their root and source in the depths of the abyss. And all the outward embodiments and manifestations of these inward soulful instincts have their root and source in the smoke!

The locusts, then, are the *energy-charged* authority, words, and actions of men and systems which carry a very real power capable of wrecking much havoc in the lives of God's people. That these locusts become the personification of the deceitful intents of the heart is confirmed by the words of the prophet where, in reference to the might and power of Nineveh, he states that “Thy *crowned ones* are as the *locusts*” (Nahum 3:17). That which is crowned, of course, is a KING — a ruling one — that which sits on the throne and has authority and power over men! A friend has pointed out that this is, also, the thought which is carried by the Greek word *daimon* translated “devil” in the scriptures but from which we derive our English word “demon.” This word *daimon* means, literally, a DEIFIED SPIRIT! It is, then, a GOD that rules over man — a god-like spirit made so because it sits

as a king or a “crowned one” in a man’s life. This is naught but the **religious spirit** that rules over the Lord’s people through the instrumentality of the movements, organizations, and church systems of man! Oh! What authority and power they exercise over men’s lives! The priests and ministers of religion, and the systems they represent, are as *God* to the masses of Christians who blindly accept their words as the very words of God! Can you not see the mystery?

Out from the smoke of the deceitfulness of the heart comes every form of man-made church system, personality cult, kingdom building, organization, creeds and laws, manipulation and control. That which comes out of the smoke of the serpent’s deceit only bites, stings, and torments! “And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power...and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man” (Rev. 9:3-5). The diabolical heresies of man’s religion appeal to man’s intelligence and are subtle; but when they have clouded the sun of truth and life they are seen to be cruel and relentless, enslaving and exploiting, resulting in anguish and torment. The smoke includes the laws, rules, creeds and commandments of religion and the traditions of men. The locusts represent the actions and practices that the controlling, dominating, and legalistic spirit inflicts upon our lives. These are not pure, satisfying, comforting, assuring, edifying, revealing the heart of God and the mind of Christ; rather, they sting us with guilt, fear, condemnation, exploitation and bondage. They bite and eat away at us even as we endeavor to serve the Lord!

These come out of the darkened mind and ignorance of man, out of the false ideas about God and His word, *locusts* upon the earth! The “earth” signifies the carnal religious realm, and that which is soulical. “Upon the earth” carries the meaning of “to light on top of” as a bug that flies and lands on top of a stalk of corn or wheat. Spiritually, the locust indicates that which forms out of the imagination of carnal minds and lights or lands upon those who are growing in the field or vineyard of the Lord. These are the Lord’s people who are meant to grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. When a farmer sees locusts he knows he has a problem. Locusts devour and destroy! They ravage the harvest! These locusts are given the same authority as the scorpions of earth. One thing the called and chosen elect of the Lord have learned in this great kingdom day is that God has given us *power to tread on serpents and scorpions!* Aren’t you glad!

Because of the desolations poured out upon God’s people the Lord gave a word of assurance with promises of deliverance through the prophet Joel. He prophesied, “Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye *children of Zion*, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the *former rain*, and the *latter rain* in the first month. And the floors shall be full of *wheat*, and the fats shall overflow with *wine* and *oil*. And I will **restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm**, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, and none else: and *my people shall never be ashamed*” (Joel 2:21-26).

The plague that had come upon Israel was without parallel in their history. It consisted of successive devastations by locusts, of which naturalists say there were as many as ninety varieties in the Middle East. In the passage above four different words are used. They are *arbeh*, *gazam*, *yeleq*, and *hasil*, translated respectively as *locust*, *palmerworm*,

cankerworm, and *caterpillar*. The reality is that these are not four different insects, they are four stages of the same insect! The Amplified Bible reads, “And I will restore or replace for you the years that the **locust** hath eaten — the **hopping locust**, the **stripping locust**, and the **crawling locust...**” All these words are different names of the locust, referring to different stages of its development. And the same swarm of locusts, according to the advancing stages of its growth, had done its desolating work in every stage! Four is the number of universality — the ruinous activity of the locusts was full and complete. Nothing had escaped! The whole land had been laid waste.

While this prophecy appears very literal to Israel of old, yet we know that in the New Testament the promised *former rain* and *latter rain* are revealed to be the outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon God’s spiritual elect. Thus, the prophecy pertains to SPIRITUAL REALITIES! The “land” is not the old land of Palestine over in the Middle East! The covenant of the old land of Canaan is *our example* to prepare us to enter the new and greater “land” of the kingdom of God on earth. The substance of that land is Christ! These words of Paul Mueller are so very significant for us all at this present time. “The Psalmist said, ‘The righteous shall **inherit the land**, and dwell therein forever’ (Ps. 37:29). Not only shall the saints inherit the earth, but they shall inherit the land. This land is a special place reserved for the elect. It is the place that corresponds in type to Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, the place of David’s throne. It is the glorious realm of spiritual Zion, the ‘land’ that corresponds to the Holiest of all in the tabernacle or house of the Lord. That place, or land, is a land of the incorruptible and immortal glory of the presence of the Lord. From that ‘land’ the saints shall rule and reign with Christ in incorruptible bodies, with incorruptible minds, the mind of Christ.

“O that the wonderful spirit of revelation would enlighten us to the grandeur of these promises of God! The wisdom and understanding of the Spirit is being given to us. We are growing up to know the hope of our calling, and to see the glories that are reserved for us in the realm of the Spirit. Only as we are enlightened by the spirit of revelation can we possibly comprehend the marvelous truth of **our inheritance in Christ**. When we fully understand that Christ is our inheritance, the things of earth will indeed grow dim. The world and all things of it will lose its attraction, and we will run with patience the race that is set before us. Our glorious, risen Christ has already set down the footprints, the steps, into the glory that is reserved for us. He has pre-destined our walk unto His fullness. He has set aside an inheritance for us that makes the things of this world look like the paltry dust and ashes that they are. Compared to the splendor of the incorruptible and immortal Christ of glory, all else is corruption. He has reserved Himself for us! He has set aside the Holiest of all, the place of His greater presence, for the holy remnant who are now growing up into Him. What an inheritance! The steps to that glory are there. Walk in the Spirit and the way will be made clear” — end quote.

Many saints have no desire to attain experientially to the fullness of Christ Himself. They have no vision of *sonship*! They are more interested in a mansion over the hilltop, or a cabin in the corner of glory-land, or some such foolishness. They want to live next door to Jesus, but they have no yearning to be like Him, to overcome as He overcame, to be filled with the glory of the Father as Jesus was, and to reign with Him on His throne. Their vision has nothing to do with restoring all creation into the glory of God, they will be satisfied with a harp and a robe! But the land of our inheritance is peace, joy, righteousness, incorruptible life, divine wisdom, infinite knowledge, omnipotent power, universal dominion, and eternal glory! All this is ours as sons of God, but only as we *grow up into Christ* and *put on Christ* do we become mature and arrive in the position to assume this responsibility

of possessing our possessions. We are talking about the *full stature* of Christ within ourselves, not gold bath tubs in heaven. By a mature understanding and a divine faith we see the way to enter the land and take possession of all the riches and glory of full sonship to God!

The army in Joel chapter two is an army of locusts that devastates the land of God. It represents the adversaries to true spirit life that come into the vineyard or garden of the Lord and lay it waste. They strip the leaves from the vines and cause the fruit to rot. There is a progression in the growth and destructiveness of the locusts that are in the vineyard of God. The most destructive of all is the full-grown consuming locust, more destructive than licking or gnawing. These locusts have gone from crawling to hopping to swarming to consuming! As we look at all the different levels of experience, doctrine, ministry, church life, and control in the church world it is obvious that not every realm is equally destructive to spiritual life! A few nurture that life to a high degree. Yet all the carnal, man-made systems, creeds, organizations, programs, and promotions express *locust mentalities* and *locust ministrations* that rob God's people of their true destiny, vision, purpose, understanding, faith, wisdom, and power. These movements of man, like the locusts, usually begin small and unpretentious, but soon gather strength and become hopping locusts, and before you know it they are airborne and are everywhere in their full-blown destructiveness. The church today is literally filled and totally covered with these devouring locusts!

Ah, how often the voice of the locust speaks the very same things within us! The locust voice says, "Don't talk about being *perfect* — no one can be perfect in this world! Don't talk about the *nature of God* — that is too high for you! Don't talk about *conquering death* — everybody dies, and all who have preached that have likewise died! You will go by way of the grave at last! Don't talk about becoming *exactly like Christ* — nobody can measure up to Him, and you are taking too much upon you, taking away from His glory! Don't talk about being *manifest sons of God* — it is enough to join a good church, support the preacher, give to missions, be a faithful Christian, and make heaven your home! Besides, you are weak, you are now old and feeble; you can't preach or teach the Word; you are beset by physical ailments and disease, silly of you to think of overcoming sin and death; you have already failed so many times to please your heavenly Father; God never answers your prayers anyhow; you have no church or fellowship, no one to encourage and strengthen you, no covering over you; you have too many problems and hang-ups, and you aspire to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption! You are young and inexperienced, others have walked in this truth for years; your own home is out of order, you are bedeviled by an opposing spouse and rebellious children; and you're wanting to be a *manifest son of God!* It is far beyond your ability, you can never make it! Don't talk about putting on the *mind of Christ* — you'll never get rid of your old carnal mind until you die! Don't talk about *ruling and reigning* with Christ — it might go to your head! Who do you think you are, anyway! Don't talk about being *kings and priests* after the Order of Melchizedek — that's just for Jesus! It is absolutely impossible for you to attain and possess such high and holy things! It's just an ego trip!" Oh, yes! The locusts have so devastated the fields and vineyards of the Lord until there is little mature fruit of Christ anywhere!

All through the body of Christ today I see the destroying army of negative attitudes, static creeds, false images of God, exploitation of the people, childish interpretation of scripture, human control and manipulation, unbelief, spiritual stagnation, stunted growth, Babylonian bondage, entertaining the saints rather than perfecting the saints, carnal programs and

promotions, which one and all rob the Lord's people of the glorious and eternal reality of the fullness of Christ, bringing them to powerlessness and reproach in the midst of the earth. Can any doubt that the church is full of locusts! As Lynn Hiles once said, every time I see these man-made programs, carnal concepts, and fleshly methods pawned off as "ministry" I want to get in that vineyard and **kill some bugs!** I tell you today, God is cleansing our land of these locusts! The word of the Lord is coming to God's called and chosen elect in this day as it came in that long ago to the spirit of the prophet Joel, proclaiming, **"I will RESTORE unto you the years that the LOCUST hath eaten!"** To all who walk in the spirit of truth in this hour, under the mighty hand of God, the Lord is RESTORING WITHIN US all that the locusts have devoured! Praise His wonderful name!

HURT NOT THE TREES...

"And it was commanded them that they should not *hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads*" (Rev. 9:4).

"Power," that is, authority, or the ability to act effectively, was "given" to the locusts, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They could carry out their mission only with God's approval! We must understand that in spite of all the carnality of religion, God is still moving in people's lives and ministries in those realms! So the Lord established their perimeters. The locusts have a limitation on what they can do, a limitation set by God. "Hurt not the grass, the green things, nor any tree." In other words, you are given a sphere of influence among the people, but don't hurt the living things, the little life they have in manifestation, the good things they do in a sincere effort to serve God. The grass speaks of those who are young in the Lord, but live close to the earth, out of the carnal mind. They have not ascended within themselves into the heavens of God's Spirit. Grass is also a covering, an aesthetic, which covers the earth, conceals what lies beneath, veiling the true nature of the flesh. They grow very close to the earth, yet do express some life on that level of immaturity in Christ. The "green thing" is something a little higher, something that would give life like a green vegetable or herb, but still has its roots in the earth, in a carnal realm. These are the works of those who have an anointing of life and the bread of truth from God, they are truly life-givers, but in spite of their anointing and ministry of life they are still bound in the carnal systems of man and think with a Babylonish mind. The world is full of these! Christian television is full of these! Trees are strong things that grow out of an earthly realm, yet have life and express life. These grow higher yet, but still their roots go deep into the earth-realm rather than into the waters of the river of God, where grows the tree of life!

The locusts are commanded not to "hurt" these three levels of experience, life, and works. "Only those *men...*" It is not the realms of experience, life, and works that God is out to destroy, nor is it even the truth of God as expressed on these various levels that God is after, but the *men* themselves. God is dealing with something beyond the measure of life men possess and the level on which they express that life — His concern is with the *mind* — their understanding, perception, and way of thinking! How can we know it is their mind God is dealing with? Simply because the locusts hurt only those **men** who **have not the seal of God in their FOREHEADS!** They can touch only those who have not the "Seal of God." Therefore, for those who have the seal of God the locusts cannot bring pain in the "region of their thought...their forehead." It is only the seal of God in our thinking that can stop them! They cannot go against the "mind of Christ." And when we come to the grass, the green things, and the trees, it is not their immaturity, not their imperfect works that are

affected — it is the fountainhead, the mainspring of their condition — a *mind* unconquered and unreplaced by the *mind of Christ!* These have not been lifted up into the mind of Christ, nor do they know by the Spirit their true identity as sons of God. And lest we should think that these are just those carnal Christians out there in the religious systems of the world, let me tell you something. The locusts will sting any area in God's elect where we are not walking in the mind of Christ! Any man who lacks anything of the mind of Christ is subject to the sting of the locust! In the words of the old song, "It's not my brother, nor my sister, but it's ME, Oh Lord!"

TORMENTED FIVE MONTHS

And to them it was given that they should *not kill them*, but that they should be *tormented five months*: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man" (Rev. 9:5).

Have you yet seen by revelation of the Spirit of God that you will have torment in your soul — in your mind, in your emotions — until the seal of the living God is placed in your forehead, until you begin to think out of the mind of Christ and live out of the spirit-man which you truly are. The locusts out of the smoke of the pit will torment you *until* you identify with Christ who *is your life* and your *only reality*. If by the grace of God this holy vision can burst upon you, you will stand upon the heights of the mount of God in triumph and victory! Nothing can destroy your true identity or the eternal life you have in Christ! Some who read these lines have passed through some very hard places, trials, temptations, and testings which pressed you beyond measure, and you despaired of life itself. Be of good cheer, for the locusts are under commandment from God — they cannot *kill you!*

We have all experienced those seasons of weakness, failure, discouragement, doubts, oppression, and hopelessness. But in it all the gift of God in our vessel was left untouched, unscathed, and unharmed! The deposit of God was left alone. The life of God in you, the real you, is born of an *incorruptible seed*. It is both incorruptible and indestructible! That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*, and always acts like flesh. That which is born of the Spirit *is spirit*, and always acts like spirit. That is the mystery! Your heavenly Father has so constructed your spiritual life that it is always protected in your earthen vessel and even the locusts in the likeness of horses prepared for battle, with crowns on their heads, their faces as the faces of men, their teeth like the teeth of lions, their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle, and with tails with stings like unto scorpions — even these cannot touch the new creation of God which you truly are! Even God will not and cannot destroy that which is of Him within you, nor will He, nor can He torment it! You are His beloved son, precious in His eyes. He has set His eternal, unconditional love upon you! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" When we fail to identify with who we really are we can be *tormented*, and we all have been there! It seems to me that there is no greater torment than the *spirit of condemnation!* Yet, thank God, even that torment has a time limit!

In the Greek, the words used here for "torment" and "tormented" are *basanizo* and *basanismo* which are both derived from the word *basanos*. *Basanos* is what is commonly known in English as the "touchstone." Its proper usage in olden times was to try the genuineness of gold. The pure gold rubbed on the stone would leave a peculiar mark, different to that of other metals or alloys. Therefore it acquired a symbolic significance: a *test or criterion for determining the quality or the genuineness of a thing; to test for purity or*

truth. Therefore, you see, when we are “tormented” by the locusts, we are having our genuineness and quality tested — for if we are being tormented by the locusts it should clearly reveal to us that we are NOT WALKING IN THE TRUTH, NOR IN THE MIND OF CHRIST, NOR IN OUR TRUE IDENTITY AS SONS OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER! That is the test, and the truth of what mind, word, and identity we are walking in is made manifest by the “sting” of the locusts! They cannot sting one who has the seal of God in his forehead!

Their province is to torment those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads, or who are not consciously abiding in the mind of Christ and the truth as it is in Jesus. Is it not true that the false doctrines of the church systems of man are a torment to those over whom they have obtained the mastery? The sting of the locusts often involves the emotions of fear, dread, and terror. Terror is the emotion people feel when facing the unknown or when threatened. It is the emotion we come face to face with when we hear the doctor announce, “You have cancer,” or the stock market falls a couple thousand points just when we are ready to retire. There is also *spiritual terror* inflicted by what one brother calls *terrorist preachers*. When I was a boy, the churches in which I was raised painted such a picture of God as One who is so exacting, demanding, judgmental, and vindictive, that if you went to bed at night with one little unconfessed sin in your life, not under the blood of Jesus, and should the “rapture” take place during the night, you would be left behind! The preachers filled a lot of altars with weeping, wailing, hysterical people with that kind of *terrorism!*

I tell you that in those days I could not truly love God for *being afraid of Him!* The coming of the Lord sent no thrill of glory through my soul; the very thought of His coming struck terror in my heart! God was so high and holy, so awesome and exacting, so stern and demanding that I was sure I could never be quite ready to stand before His fearsome presence. That sting of the scorpion-tailed locust revealed that I was not SEALED WITH THE SEAL OF GOD IN MY FOREHEAD! I did not yet know what it meant to WALK IN THE MIND OF CHRIST! How my ransomed soul exults with joy unspeakable and full of glory that God has driven that false religious locust-spirit out of my land so that I may now KNOW HIM AS HE REALLY IS! Thank God, the allotted *five months of torment* came to an end and I no longer feel the sting of the scorpion tail! Do you think we should be afraid of someone as gracious and merciful as our *heavenly Father*? Should we cringe before Him like a dog that expects a kick? What has God done to us that we should be afraid of Him? God *so loved* the world that He gave His Son for us! And, behold, what *manner of love* the Father hath bestowed upon *us*, that we should be called the *sons of God!* Same love, for God *is Love!*

It is a fact that most fear has its root in the *unknown*. People fear what they cannot see, or what they do not understand, or what they imagine to be. It’s no wonder, then, that since religion deals with an unseen world — with spirit beings, the hereafter, eternity, future punishments and rewards, heaven and hell — that people’s *fears* play a very important role in most of the world’s *religions*. You must admit that fears of pain, suffering, or death; fears of coming judgment, tribulation, or wrath; fears of spiritual punishment and unknown, unnamed torments in hell; all of these fears virtually *dominate* most of the religions on earth — those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads!

Those who are God’s called and chosen elect in this great day of the Lord are now being delivered from all fear and terror, for they understand by the deep inner revelation of the spirit, and the teaching of the mind of Christ, that all things are in our Father’s hands and

all that happens in our lives is part of His wise purpose for our growth and development in Him. *He is in control*, no matter how dark or hopeless things *seem*, and He will bring us forth triumphantly as we commit our way to the Lord and trust also in Him. Now together we can raise our voices in blessed chorus with the Psalmist and joyfully sing, “I will bless the Lord at *all times*: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and **delivered me from all my fears!**” (Ps. 34:1,4). The writer to the Hebrews adds, “He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and ***I will not fear what man shall do unto me***” (Heb. 13:5-6).

Even in the “valley of the shadow of death” He has promised to be with us, and even there we shall “fear no evil” (Ps. 23:4). Those in whom the spirit of sonship is revealed fear no evil! We do not fear the wrath of men! We do not fear sickness or tragedy! We do not fear death! We do not fear judgment! We do not fear hell! We do not fear the antichrist! We do not fear world government! We do not fear great tribulation! We do not fear the beast! We have no fear of the “end times”! We have no fear of economic collapse! We have no fear of terrorists! We have no fear of conspiracies! We have no fear of earthquakes! We have no fear of tsunamis! We have sought the Lord, He has heard us, and has **DELIVERED US FROM A-L-L OUR FEARS** by the revelation of His mighty power working in us! He has delivered us from all the “stings” of all the scorpion-tailed locusts! By this you can know that you are sealed with the seal of God, that you are a *son indeed!*

No one has written more eloquently of the sting of the locusts than Bob Torango when he penned the following exhortation. “Why, you may ask, doesn’t the world follow after the message of the church? The answer is that the message is one of a God who is a dictator instead of a God that is a Father. The message of the church is tainted with words of judgment promising harsh punishment for sins, delivered without a voice of love. This nullifies the true reason for God’s judgment, which is to bring to us correction and joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the same scenario that is played out every day in an abusive home where the parents lash out at their children in a fit of rage, striking them with physical blows meant to bring them into submission, but accomplishing the direct opposite. There can be no substitute for love! A hug will accomplish more correction than a blow to a child’s body.

“I am not suggesting that a child should never be reprimanded, for I realize that any child will continue to mis-behave if given a free rein, but I do believe that the parent is responsible for punishment that exceeds the transgression. This happens more times than we want to think about. The parent has a bad day at work, the car breaks down, the air conditioner goes out, and the frustration over these matters is unleashed upon the children which, by the way, can’t do anything right in the eyes of the enraged judge of the house. The result is a beating that is more therapeutic for the parent in venting their frustrations than it is for correction of the child’s behavior. Judgment of any kind should never be administered in a spirit of rage or loss of sensibility. The result is much worse than if there were no punishment at all.

“The church, enraged over the continued rejection of their version of the gospel story, becomes more and more abusive toward anyone that does not see things their way. Instead of being the magnet of God’s love to creation, the church has become a judge of God’s wrath that cannot be approached by anyone except those who have lost all hope of love in their life and commit to the stranglehold of religion just to belong to a group that will give them a sense of security. This, dear ones, is the standard profile of a child that is abused! Some of us that have never been found in an abusive relationship have doubts

whether or not the relationship is truly abusive. Why don't the abused children tell someone about their beatings if they are truly abused? Why don't they run away from home? The saddest truth of all in an abusive situation is that the abused individual, especially a child, is convinced that they deserve this treatment! Added to this is the reinforcement that is given to this submissive behavior by our societal mores that continuously drill into our children that their parents are the judges of their life and have the moral and legal authority to administer punishments whenever they see fit. The child is reinforced to never question the judgment of the parents by teachers, which are surrogate judges at school, and by their playmates who are in ordinary relationships with their parents. The abused child is cut off, quite literally, from any hope of escape or explaining the situation to others. The result is a child that grows up to be either withdrawn or extremely low in confidence and self-esteem, or else one that acts out upon society the same acts of senseless violence that were acted out upon them.

“The world mirrors this same stereotypical relationship with the church! They are either scared to death of the church or they are violently opposed to it. What a tragedy to see the church in this shape! Whereas the church has been ordained to be the mother of the world's lost children, opening her arms with grace and love to all that are in need, she has instead been portrayed as an abusive judge in the earth, spitting out statements of eternal damnation and unthinkable horrors on all that do not follow her commands. *No wonder the Lord is preparing another church!* The church that is known as ‘mainstream’ is a fake, dear ones! She is a wicked stepmother that has no bond of love with the world at all. This wicked church loves the world in word only, and that only because the Bible says she must! The lost children of the world are only her lawful responsibility and, by God, if they don't shape up she is threatening to throw them all into eternal hell fire. Raise up your Jerusalem, O Lord! Raise up the true Mother of us all, bring her to us and let her lay her cool, soft hand upon the wounds that have been given by the abusive, counterfeit church of religious dictators. Let her sweet kisses fall upon our head and let them take away the fear and anguish that has been inflicted upon the world's lost children. Oh, dear friends, can't you just envision the power, the dunamis and exousia, that will be unleashed when the true, nurturing nature of the New Jerusalem, the beautiful Bride of Christ, the loving, compassionate, Mother of us all wraps her arms around us and holds us until the crying stops, and cleans the dirt from us as she takes the filthy rags off of us that religion put upon us, and she covers us in clean, silky linen made up of the righteousness of our Father.

“Even now, as we speak out against the tyranny of an out of control religious mother of Babylon, we see the damage that has been done and the scars that remain in the hearts of the people of God. Some still flinch and pull away when the hand of Christ is stretched out to them. For some, the message of a loving God who asks nothing of us but to believe in His love and come to live with Him in peace and grace, is too good to be true. For them, the abused offspring of a wicked guardian, beaten without reason, locked up in cult-like communities of religious bondage, forbidden to question the teachings and rules of their overseers, psychologically brainwashed into testifying to the goodness of their tormentors in order to stay in good graces and not be publicly humiliated, for them the message of unconditional love is foreign and suspicious. In their world of abuse, everyone has an angle, an ulterior motive, a con. Nothing is truly free in their relationship with the wicked mother! Yes, they have programs for the adults, a big gymnasium for the children, a beautiful building to gather in, but only if they continue to give their money to the wicked mother. In fact, they have come to the awful truth that mother only loves them if they support her with their money. Take the money away and mother becomes a tyrant

accusing them of neglect and warning them of the consequences that come to them that dare to leave off from supporting the prison house. The wicked mother especially enjoys telling her forced child laborers about the tales of what will happen if they think they could ever leave her domain. She goes into great sickening detail in describing the terror that awaits them outside the walls of her prison.

“Instead of the true gospel story of our heavenly Father and His grace and love, and His eternal commitment to our redemption, we are told of God’s eternal wrath against us for something we don’t even remember doing against Him. The fake church, the abusive mother, tells her young children that they are hopelessly evil and that all of their lives they will have to serve her in order to earn their way to heaven. The abused are told that God can’t even look on them, that He never heard their prayers before they came to live with the wicked mother, that God turned away from them in their sorrow. These are the bed time stories that the mainstream church puts her children to rest by. Whereas, the opposite is true! God always hears groaning creation and not one word intended for His ears goes by the wayside. Indeed, God has moved for us even when we were sinners and countless times saved us from destruction, with or without our asking Him. He has moved heaven and earth to keep us in this world and is constantly working on our behalf” — end quote.

The underlying foundation and core of religious Babylon’s theology is designed to activate fear — fear of hell, fear of an angry God, fear of God’s wrath, fear of the great and terrible tribulation God will pour out upon mankind, fear of judgment, fear of God’s curse if they rob Him by not paying their tithe, fear of blessings withheld if somehow they fail to please God sufficiently, fear of separation from God if they don’t obey the church, or observe the proper rituals, ceremonies, and ordinances, fear of any little sin that may keep God from hearing their prayers, fear that God will abandon them if they are not faithful to the church system, fear of pain and loss. You name it, fear works in every realm that touches our daily life! Who can deny that these are the very underpinnings of the popular churches’ theology? But, thank God, “*Perfect love casteth out all fear*” (1 Jn. 4:18). What a word that is! When the pure and perfect and all-encompassing *love of God* is revealed in our hearts every fear mentioned above will take wings and fly away! All “fear” of God is incompatible with Infinite Love! The more He is REVEALED TO US IN TRUTH, the more we understand that all of His actions are motivated by love, and in our best interests. His corrections are done in love, to instruct us in righteousness. Thus, while the testings, overcoming processes, might be hard on the flesh, yet we need not fear them, but commit ourselves into the loving hands of our Father, and trust Him for the ultimate victory. Oh, yes! When this mind is in us that was in Christ Jesus, there is no more “sting” of the scorpion-tailed locust of religion!

Let us further pursue this thought of the “fear” of the Lord. The Bible speaks often of the *fear of the Lord* and we are admonished throughout the scriptures to *fear God*. One of the seven spirits of God enumerated in Isaiah 11:1-2 is the *Spirit of the Fear of the Lord*. This is one of the seven spirits that rested upon Jesus, the firstborn Son of God! And it is one of the seven spirits of God that rests upon the elect of the Lord throughout the book of Revelation! This spirit is sent forth into our hearts from the very heart of HIM, the LAMB in the midst of the throne! As with all the seven spirits of God, the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall be a most remarkable thing in the ministry of the manifest sons of God as they arise to bring the kingdom of God to pass in all the earth in that glorious age of the ages!

The very first principle we must understand in this connection is that the fear of the Lord has absolutely and positively nothing to do with being afraid. Jesus does not have the spirit

of FRIGHT! Jesus was not, and is not, TERRIFIED of His Father, neither does He impart to men the spirit of terror. No sinner was ever apprehensive, fearful, or terrified in the presence of Jesus! "God hath not given unto us the *spirit of fear* (dread, fright, terror, horror, panic, alarm, apprehension, disquietude); but of *power*, and of *love*, and of a *sound mind*" (II Tim. 1:7). In the scriptures our English word "fear" is translated from the Hebrew word *yirah* and the Greek word *phobos*. These words have two principle meanings: first, that apprehension of evil or danger which normally cause one to flee or fight — an expectation of harm or pain which evokes a feeling of alarm or dread; and second, that awe and reverence which a man of sense feels in the presence of that which is high and eminent, such as a king or authority. A child feels the first of these kinds of fear in the presence of a mad dog or a cruel and abusive parent; and the second before a parent who is good and loving, but who must also be just, or before a teacher or trainer of renown who puts him through rigorous exercises which in the end produce wonderful and incredible results.

In the New Testament the Greek word *phobos* is used in both the above senses. On one occasion we read that the disciples of Jesus "cried out for fear" being frightened and terrified because they *thought* they saw a ghost! (Matt. 14:26). But later we read, "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking *in the fear of the Lord*, and in the *comfort of the Holy Ghost*, were multiplied" (Acts 9:31). Here, the second meaning of fear is clearly indicated, the awesome *reverence* of God!

I once read a story that so clearly illustrates the nature of the fear of the Lord that has been birthed in all who truly know Him and walk with Him. The brother that related this story said, "Several years ago I married a young couple who were, and still are, very much in love with one another. They had met when they were thirteen and fourteen, had never looked at anyone else, and wouldn't today after all these years. They went away on their honeymoon and after a few weeks came home again. I saw them in the meeting the next Sunday and greeted them with a little pleasantry. I asked the groom if his bride had burned the roast for their first dinner. They laughed, and she said, 'Oh, I was afraid that I was going to. I had read so much about the bride being unable to cook that I decided that John was going to have the very best meal a bride could prepare for her husband. So I began about three o'clock. I got everything out and started to work. When I finally put things on to cook, I wanted everything to turn out well, and I was afraid they wouldn't, and, of course, he had to be a little late, and I was afraid things would be spoiled.' I interrupted her and said, 'You have said *three times* that you were *afraid*. Did you think that John was going to beat you?' She pouted and said, 'Of course not.' She looked at him with all the love of her heart in her eyes. 'But,' I persisted, 'You said that you were afraid!' She broke in, 'You know what I mean.' And of course I knew what she meant! Her fear was not fright; her fear was A GREAT AND INTENSE DESIRE TO SERVE AND TO PLEASE the one to whom she had given herself entirely, the one whom she respected and esteemed above all others."

Perhaps this simple story will help us understand what is meant by the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is a godly thing, a wonderful thing, a lovely thing! How many precious believers, influenced by the false doctrines of the church systems, have absolutely no conception of the difference between the pure and holy fear of the Lord and *fright* of the Lord! God is love, and He loved us before the foundation of the world and chose us and picked us out in Christ! He predestinated us and sent Jesus to redeem us! While we were yet sinners in the flesh God commended His love toward us! God said, "O that there were

such an heart in them, that they would **fear me**, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!” (Deut. 5:29). Here the Lord plainly says that He wants His people to have “fear” of Him. But He wants the *same kind* of fear that an obedient son would have toward a loving father! The kind of fear our heavenly Father desires to be a continual emotion within every member of His elect is like an **awesome awareness**; like a full, consuming knowledge of His great **power**, His great **ability**, His great **holiness**, His great **wisdom**, His loving **foreordination**, His wonderful **plan** and **purpose** in our lives, and in the whole creation! The fear of the Lord is **reverence** for the Lord. It is profound respect, mingled with awe, affection, and veneration. It is reverential trust, hope, and expectation!

Another dimension of truth concerning the sting of the locusts has to do with the pain inflicted on the Lord’s people through the *human conscience*. Many people have been led to believe that the human conscience is one of the safest of guides. Some even contend that the masses of people who never truly heard of Jesus deserve to go to everlasting damnation because God spoke to them and revealed sin to them *in their conscience*, therefore they are without excuse. That is a horrible lie! Even if they did know right from wrong through their conscience, that did not reveal Jesus to them, and Jesus is the Saviour, not doing good things because our conscience would bother us if we did evil. That would be salvation by *works*!

The problem with the human conscience is that, first, it is a product of the fall — the knowledge of good and evil! Second, it is a conscience with power to condemn you for wrong-doing, but with no power to compel you to do right. Third, it is totally undependable so far as the life of sonship and the kingdom of God is concerned, being *conditioned* by the external influences of *this world*. To understand the truth of which I now speak you have only to observe the life of a child. In their first bloom of innocence children readily develop a sense of what is right. But as they grow older, deprived of original simplicity, imbibing of the voices, concepts, and influences of the world around them — parents, friends, teachers, television, books, movies, news, etc. — they become affected by the values they learn from these sources and their conscience becomes **CONDITIONED TO JUDGE RIGHT AND WRONG BY THE STANDARD OF WHAT THEY ARE TAUGHT**. Your conscience is like a computer into which data has been fed from childhood on. Your “computer” gives out the information that has been fed into it!

The conscience takes the shape of the things it is fed. The conscience of a Hindu has been conditioned to believe that a cow is an especially sacred animal, to be revered. His conscience would smite him were he to kill and eat a cow! What mental anguish he would suffer if he were required to dine with you at the local Outback Steakhouse! But if one is raised in a Catholic home he knows quite well that a cow is not sacred, and his conscience is not pained by eating beef, yet, if he bends his knee before the idol-image of a saint, his conscience will approve that, because that is how his conscience has been conditioned! Should a good Baptist be required to kneel before the image of a saint and pray to the saint, his conscience conditioned by Baptist values, would torment him and not let him sleep!

This brings us to a most marvelous verse of scripture. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart full of assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience**”(Heb. 10:22). When quickened by the spirit of revelation this passage staggers the imagination with its wonders. Such things are too wonderful for me! In our carnal state while yet our

eyes are dim through the ravages of sin and death and the weak and insipid rule of the conscience, we can but see through a glass darkly. But now comes the word: “Having our hearts sprinkled (purified) from an *evil conscience*” — having the “evil conscience” or the “defiled conscience” REMOVED FROM OUR HEARTS by the cleansing blood of the Christ!

I have shared the following experience before, but would share it again in this connection. I was raised in a Pentecostal home. So, upon arriving at young manhood I had acquired a PENTECOSTAL CONSCIENCE! It was shaped by the doctrines, practices, and traditions of the Pentecostal movement in the area of south Alabama where I lived as a boy. In those churches there were many rules and traditions, some of which have changed through the years. For example, the women were not allowed to wear facial makeup of any kind, and lipstick, especially, was the sin of Jezebel! Short or curled hair was sinful. Women could not wear slacks and their dresses must be long, with long sleeves and high necks. Bright, splashy colors were a sign of worldliness. And then no jewelry of any kind was permitted — not even a wedding band!

I remember when, as a boy preacher, I wanted a tie pin to hold my tie in place. I thought about the tie pin for a long time before getting up enough courage to buy one. I purchased a rather plain, gold colored one. I shall never forget the day I put it on, stood before the mirror, looked at myself, and said proudly, “Preston, you’ve really done it!” Then at once my Pentecostal conscience smote me and I took the thing off. I had to go back to the safety pin! You see, my conscience had been formed in the Pentecostal tradition and I thought that was *God’s standard of righteousness!* Shortly thereafter a fresh and marvelous move of the Holy Spirit swept over my life, quickening, bringing glory and the liberating spirit of revelation from God; there came a new and wonderful *unveiling of Christ* to my heart, and for the first time in my life I clearly saw the bondage of tradition, the commandments of men taught as the doctrine of Christ, for the pitiful thing it is. The blessed Spirit of God turned the searchlight within and I saw that just as the sinner needs his heart cleansed from adultery, lying, drunkenness, cursing, and all the ungodly works of the flesh, so did my heart need to be cleansed from the traditions of religion — PURGED FROM AN EVIL, DEFILED, CONDITIONED, WARPED, DISTORTED, PERVERTED, **RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUS!** How desperately the Lord’s people need this purging; for many the conscience still labors under the hangover of multiplied man-made standards, duty-bound rituals and ceremonies, and dead letter-of-the-word ordinances and observances.

Hear, oh man, oh woman of God, and give earnest heed ye sons of God! “For if...the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the *purifying of the flesh: how much more* shall the blood of Christ...PURGE YOUR **CONSCIENCE FROM DEAD WORKS** to serve the living God” (Heb. 9:13-14). He who writes these lines testifies to those who read them that no one can serve “the *living God*” with “*dead works.*” Dead works are the fruit of spiritual deadness, that have no spiritual life in them, no life of the Spirit of the Living God! Some think “dead” means “sinful” works. Yet here “dead works” are not crimes and immoral conduct, but rather all the formal, empty, false religious observances and self-invented acts of righteousness, and works of the law whereby men would seek to please and serve God. These things are imposed upon the Lord’s people by ministers who are unable to discern spirit from flesh or truth from error!

When I was a young man many of my peers had a heart after God and truly wanted to serve God. Every time we had a “revival” they would run to the altar weeping, repenting,

seeking after God. But the church told them they couldn't go to the movies, couldn't wear a short-sleeved dress, couldn't go to ball games, couldn't wear makeup or jewelry, and laid a hundred other laws and commandments on them which they didn't have the will power to keep. Therefore, within two weeks after the revival they "backslid," went back into the world — not because they didn't desire to walk with God, but the price seemed too high. In their backslidden condition they lived in perpetual fear of hell and damnation, tormented in mind and conscience, ashamed, mortified, and distressed beyond belief. Oh, my brother, my sister, what "stings" of the scorpion-tailed locusts! The preachers talk long and loud about these weird, vicious creatures that are going to crawl up out of the pit of hell one day and torment all the poor souls who missed the rapture — and know not that **THEY THEMSELVES, AMONG OTHERS, ARE THE VERY LOCUSTS JOHN BEHELD COMING OUT OF THE SMOKE FROM THE ABYSS!**

As the living God, He is all, and does all and fills all — the ever-present and ever-working God. Cleansed from our contact with the death of religion **WE KNOW THIS GOD** and have fellowship with Him and serve Him. It has nothing to do with the "touch not, taste not, handle not" commandments of men, such things have nothing to do with life in the spirit. **TO SERVE THE LIVING GOD!** What a word! The glory of the New Creature is to reveal God, to be a vessel into which He can pour His fullness, a channel through which He can show forth His glory, an instrument for working out His purposes. This is what man was created for — in the image of God. The image of God has nothing to do with whether you wear ear rings or sip a glass of wine. Those are carnal, foolish notions of self-righteous legalistic minds! The whole object of redemption is to bring us back to a life in the living reality of God. It is for this that the Holiest of all has been opened and we are bidden to boldly enter in. It is for this that our conscience is cleansed by the blood, purged from dead works. A life in the Holiest of all is a life in which everything is done under the sense of God's glory and presence, by His indwelling in our spirit, by the outworking of His power, and to His glory; a life that has no object but to live by the life of God within and do His will. That is what the New Creation Man is being formed for today! Praise God, a people is being formed to walk as God in the earth, the change is on and we *are being changed!*

Chapter 114

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a *smoke* out of the pit...and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there *came out of the smoke locusts* upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should...hurt...only those men which *have not the seal of God in their forehead*. And to them it was given that they should *not kill them*, but that they should be *tormented five months*: and their torment was as the torment of a *scorpion, when he striketh a man*” (Rev. 9:2-5).

In this graphic symbolic picture of spiritual realities John sees locusts coming forth out of the smoke that billows forth from the abyss. The locusts did not actually come out of the abyss; rather, they originate with, and come out of, the *smoke!* The locusts therefore have an intimate connection with the smoke. Smoke is more of an ethereal, gaseous substance, whereas the locusts have a tangible form. The locusts represent the outward expression and manifestation of a soulical condition. Arising from the pit of the deceitfulness of the heart is the smoke of ego, thoughts, imaginations, desires, ambitions, perceptions, attitudes, interpretations, ideas, concepts, opinions, and beliefs. None of these things are tangible, visible, physical things! Yet out of these come other things! The visible, tangible locusts which come out of the smoke represent the men, ministries, movements, organizations, rulerships, and activities that are spawned by the thoughts, perceptions, ideas, interpretations, and opinions that arise from the human heart!

These “locusts” have as it were the sting of a scorpion and are given authority to *torment* those men who *have not the seal of God in their foreheads*. You will understand a great truth when you understand that you will have torment in your soul — in your mind, in your emotions — until the seal of the living God is placed in your forehead, until you begin to think out of the mind of Christ and live out of the spirit-man which you truly are. The locusts out of the smoke of the pit will torment you *until* you identify with Christ who *is your life* and your *only reality*. If by the grace of God this holy vision can burst upon you, you will stand upon the heights of the mount of God in triumph and victory! Nothing can destroy your true identity or the eternal life you have in Christ! Some who read these lines have passed through some very hard places, pressures, manipulations of men, haunting fear from past wrong teachings, betrayals, temptations, and testings which pressed you beyond measure, and you despaired of life itself. Be of good cheer, my brother, my sister, for the locusts are under commandment from God — they cannot *kill you!*

Their province is to torment those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads, or who are not consciously abiding in the mind of Christ and in the truth as it is in Jesus. Is it not true that the false doctrines and requirements of the church systems of man are a torment to those over whom they exercise control? The “sting” of the scorpion-tailed locusts often involves the emotions of fear, dread, and terror. The underlying essence of religious

Babylon's theology is designed to activate fear — fear of hell, fear of an angry God, fear of God's displeasure and wrath, fear of being left behind when Jesus returns, fear of coming tribulation, fear of judgment, fear of God's "curse" if you rob Him by not paying your tithe into the church, fear of blessings withheld because of faults and failures, fear of separation from God if you fail to keep the traditions and ordinances of the church, fear that God will abandon you if you are not faithful to all your taskmasters demand of you. Oh, yes! Who can deny that these, and many others, are very real fears that torment the minds and emotions of many of the Lord's people in the church systems!

It is my conviction that three of the most painful stings of the locusts come from the infliction of *fear, sin-consciousness, and condemnation* upon God's people. Those of us who grew up in legalistic religious systems, know that many times sin was preached about on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. Sin and judgment were preached long and loud, and we came away with a "sin-consciousness." Thank God, those of us who have received the call to sonship have been dealt with by the Lord and He has given us a new mind, even the mind of Christ! Within our consciousness Christ has made an end of sin, He has forgiven all our sins, He has taken away sin, He has borne all our iniquities, He judged sin once and for all and forever at Calvary, He no longer remembers our sins and is not holding them over our head as a bargaining chip in order to either accept or bless us. The mind of Christ in us has taken away and nullified our *sin-consciousness!*

Some years ago Tony Salmon shared the following illustration which, in my opinion, is a powerful elucidation of this precious truth. He wrote, "Is it possible for a cat to be a part of the remnant seed company? If your answer to this question is 'no' I would have to agree, or at least I *would* have agreed, before I learned a valuable lesson from my cat. From this remarkable, furry feline I learned one of the greatest secrets of the kingdom and received a key that unlocks the new life within and causes us to live out of the life of the new creation man. The new man within already is a perfect representation of the Father's love, life, nature, and kingdom but for the new man to be expressed we must first be released from the bars and chains of the prison house of the mind. The new man has been kept under lock and key in solitary confinement and guarded by 'bulls' with names such as doubt, fear, unbelief, guilt, shame, and condemnation. These 'bulls' sprang to life from a seed called a *commandment* and they are the direct result of the Mosaic Covenant which Paul declared to be 'the law of sin and death.' I trust that my cat will be able to help find a missing key for anyone locked inside the reward/punishment paradigm of earned, works-based salvation that comes from trying to walk out the Old Covenant law of Moses.

'You learned all this from your...*cat?*' some are asking. I do realize at this point that some of my readers may think that I have 'flipped my lid' while others are looking at their calendars so they can schedule my cat as a special speaker for their meetings. Well, put your calendars away and just know that Father's heart is expressed through all of His creation. The very moment that God said, 'Let there be light,' the stars came together and formed pictures to tell the wonderful story of Jesus and to reveal the highest expression of love that could ever be shown which was the Father's offering to man — a slain Lamb, a sacrificed Son for the redemption and healing of all mankind. Our perspective of the cross has been that of a sacrifice to satisfy an angry God. This is not love; this is pagan ritual! The sacrifice of Calvary is a **REVERSAL** of the dark, pagan mind. You see, it was not GOD who was angry with man, it was MAN who was angry with God! The sacrifice of Jesus is the 'second mile' that Father is willing to go to win over the love of His lost creation. While Jesus was offering Himself to the Father the Father was offering Him to us.

Father was in essence appeasing OUR anger. The offering of the Son is Father showing us His willingness to give His ALL to win us back. The cross is not Jesus standing in the way of an angry God. That is why the Word tells us that God was IN Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM! The plan of redemption was perfect union and harmony between Father and Son. So with all this in mind, please make yourself comfortable while I share with you a message brought to me by my cat.

“After delivering a litter of four kittens, our cat, Misty, became ill and was unable to produce milk. Misty abandoned not only her kittens but her human family as well. Misty left our home and her whereabouts were unknown to us for almost a week. My wife and daughter went into action immediately to save the lives of the newborn kittens. They worked closely with a local pet store and purchased a bottle with a small nipple and a supply of special kitten formula. They literally worked around the clock nursing the kittens and taking care of their other needs. Despite all of their efforts, however, the kittens died one at a time.

“While the last kitten was barely holding on to life, Misty came home. Realizing what a negligent mother she had been, Misty walked to the middle of the living room, dropped her head, and exclaimed, ‘I’m so ashamed! I am responsible for the deaths of my children.’ Was that *really* her reaction? Of course not! In fact, she never missed a beat! She ran into the living room, jumped into my lap to greet me, and held her head high. What she *did* was not affecting who she *is* and she was living in the present reality of who she is rather than in some past mistake or failure.

“How is it that Misty is able to live her life without feeling any guilt, shame, or condemnation over a tragedy that she really had no control over anyway? It is because she has never eaten from the tree of *the knowledge of good and evil* — that tree that God commanded us not to eat from, or even touch, lest we die. Let’s imagine for a moment what would have happened if Misty had been a human in the same predicament. Law would have been applied. There would have been police officers, judges, attorneys, social workers, psychologists, and medical doctors all working to determine whether Misty had committed a crime for which she should be held accountable, or if the tragedy had been the result of circumstances beyond her control. Either way Misty, as a human, would suffer the *pain and torment* of a *sin-consciousness* and the humiliation of a stigma branded upon her reputation by many of her peers.

“Misty will live out the rest of her days without feeling an ounce of guilt over what happened to her kittens. She is completely free! The most obvious benefit of this freedom is that she is able to fulfill her destiny without the hindrance of shame and inferiority that naturally accompany sin-consciousness. ‘Cats are just animals,’ you might say, ‘they don’t have destinies.’ Misty’s destiny, however, seems to be to show me a picture of the life that can be lived when we live in the new creation rather than in past mistakes and failures. The scope of Misty’s influence reaches well beyond me as I am able to use her story as a teaching tool for the body of Christ.

“Am I saying there is no need for repentance for the things we have done wrong? Absolutely not! What I will say is that we have ‘missed the mark’ in understanding what true repentance is! When I feel that I have broken the heart of my Father I am quick to tell Him that I am sorry and to ask His forgiveness (which has already been given). I tell Him this not out of a fear of punishment but because I love Him and I do not want to misrepresent Him. I LIVE for the relationship with my Father and for His manifest

Presence. However, the godly sorrow that *leads* to repentance is NOT repentance! Repentance is a change of mind or a paradigm shift from the old creation that lives in the *dust of the outer realm* to the new man who lives in *heaven* or the spiritual realm within every believer. In other words, my sin is nothing more than an indication that I am living in the wrong realm and thinking with my natural mind rather than with the mind of Christ. Repentance involves a beheading of the natural mind so that the New Jerusalem, the heavenly paradigm or mindset, can descend out of the heavenly realm that exists within every person that has identified with the finished work of Christ. We need to ‘repent’ and begin living AS the new creation man!

“What about you, dear friend. Do you feel hindered from fulfilling your destiny because of some past mistake or failure? Let me tell you that the mistakes you made do not define who you are! You are a regenerated spirit having a human experience. You are the righteousness of God in Christ! That is the truth. The new man within your breast IS the real you! Have you suffered abuse or emotional pain? Do you feel paralyzed and unable to walk in your calling because of the pain? Take courage and know that the abuse was inflicted on an old creation man that no longer exists and your new man is unaffected by anything that has happened to you. Your new man is strong; he is whole. Your new man is already in heaven (the other realm) walking upon a street of gold (walking out a divine nature). Won’t you join him? Will you allow the sword of His truth to remove the old mindset so that you can start thinking with the mind of Christ? ‘Wilt thou be made whole?’” — End quote. May I add to this little story this one remark. When we identify with the new man, the mind of Christ, thinking and living out of that mind, our sins, faults, failures, weaknesses, and the fears, bondages, abuses, and pains inflicted by the “stings” of the locusts of religious minds which heap upon us fears, condemnation, and sin-consciousness, ARE ALL HEALED AND THE LOCUSTS ARE UNABLE TO STING US ANY MORE! They are given power only to torment the natural mind, those men who have not the seal of the living God in their foreheads! Oh, the wonder of it!

TORMENTED FIVE MONTHS

“And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be *tormented five months*” (Rev. 9:5).

The usual time for locusts in the Bible lands was from May through September, that is five months. Furthermore, there are precisely five months from the last day of the feast of Passover to the first day of the feast of Tabernacles, which begins with the blowing of the trumpets. The time is significant! As long as we are living spiritually in the feast of Passover or the feast of Pentecost we are able to be stung by the scorpion-tailed locusts. Until we get a vision of the fullness of God within our spirit, that is, the fullness of God in the Most Holy Place and the fullness of God in the feast of Tabernacles, we do not know or understand the way to victory! We are tormented until we consciously enter in to the feast of Tabernacles, until we enter in to our full inheritance in the spiritual land of Canaan, until we identify with the place of rest and security in the fullness of Christ. We recognize the flesh for what it is, old Adam who lives on a lower level, we cease from our own works, from all self-effort to reform the natural man, doing it our way, to simply **rest** in the goodness and faithfulness and power of the Christ within!

Another beautiful aspect of this truth lies in the fact that Noah’s ark floated upon the floods for five months. Five in scripture is the number of GRACE! Noah’s ark floating for five months reveals to us the great truth of God’s grace given to cover us until we find the

answer, the solution of our problem, and all the stings of the locusts, by putting on the mind of Christ. In his book *Number in Scripture*, E. W. Bullinger wrote, “Grace means favor. But what kind of favor? for favor is of many kinds. Favor shown to the *miserable* we call mercy; favor shown to the *poor* we call pity; favor shown to the *suffering* we call compassion; favor shown to the *obstinate* we call patience; but favor shown to the *unworthy* we call GRACE! This is favor indeed!” Though we have lived far beneath our privileges as mature sons of our Father, subject to the excruciating pain of the locusts’ stings, our Father has covered us with His abundant grace until we could grow up enough in Christ to enter experientially into a higher place. We have been in pain and torment! And we stay in torment until the trumpet sounds and we are awakened to the realm of God’s fullness. The trumpets announce the feast of the seventh month — the feast of the fullness of God! It is there on the day of Atonement that sin-consciousness is finally and forever removed from our minds. The day of atonement brings us out from under the law into the power of His life within, releasing us once and for all from our torment! But until the work is complete — we are marvelously covered by His grace!

SEEKING DEATH AND NOT FINDING IT

“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them” (Rev. 9:6).

I tell you, I have read between two and three hundred books on the Revelation given to John on Patmos and the vast majority of them don’t have a clue as to what the above passage means. Some say, “This is a strange thing” and they can’t figure out how it could be that people can’t die. They don’t understand it, but they look at it literally and conclude that for some strange reason God will temporarily make men unable to die. Even should you run over them with a Mack truck, shoot them through with an Uzi, poison them, or slit their throats — they can’t die! But the book of Revelation is a spiritual book! It speaks of spiritual realities! This desire for death is the result of the horrible “stings” of the scorpion-tailed locusts! The effect of the torment is that the subjects of it become weary of their lives, desire to die, but death flees from them. Death is the only relief from the agony, but nothing they are doing can produce it in them. These people aren’t seeking physical death, they want to die spiritually! They seek to die to self! They want their old man to be put to death! They want their carnal mind to be removed! They want their flesh nature to be slain within themselves! They want old Adam to be beheaded, decapitated! For the symbolic period of five months they seek death and cannot find it. They want to die, they’re seeking death, they’re trying to die, they’re even trying by will-power and self-effort to commit suicide, to kill themselves, they believe that this death is what will release the life in them. **But they can’t die!**

I wonder how many who read these lines at one time sat under Fundamentalist, Pentecostal or Holiness legalism and got beat up every Sunday, saved every week — you felt so weak and helpless and condemned, you felt you could never make it till next week, so you just wished in a moment of victory that God would just kill you so you could go out into eternity with your sins under the blood. I tell you, my beloved, I know exactly what I’m talking about because I’ve been there and I’ve done that! However it was not really physical death that we most longed for, but the death of all within us that was contrary to God and the pain inflicted upon us by religion through their ministry of condemnation and their misguided efforts to make us “righteous” by outward works!

George Wylie shared some beautiful insights into this dilemma in one of his messages. He wrote, "Just who or what is this 'old man' that we have to get rid of? We hear a lot about our carnal nature, and if we live according to the carnal nature it will produce death in us. For years I tried to get rid of this old sinful nature, with negative results (in other words, he was seeking death and could not find it!). We are told in Romans six that our old man is crucified with Christ, and that we are to reckon that he is. I somehow pictured in my mind that this old nature was something I was saddled with, something I would be able to put off and get rid of. Something like a filthy old overcoat that I could take off and discard, leaving me intact. It was something that wasn't really a part of my personality, but something that had been forced upon me, that made me act the way I did; sort of an evil thing that influenced me to do the wrong things. So I wanted to get rid of this thing so I could live a life pleasing to God. I tried to get this filthy old overcoat off and nail it to the cross, crucify it. For years I tried to picture in my mind this old nature nailed to the cross and crucified, but somehow he never seemed to stay there. I still found him hanging around me!

"I was something like the sister in one of the old churches. We had the habit of bringing everything we wanted to get rid of to the church altar and try to leave it there. I have seen men bring their cigarettes and tobacco, and alcohol too, to the front of the church and leave them on the altar, and go away without them. Sometimes this worked and sometimes it didn't. This dear sister came to the pastor one day, and said, 'Pastor, I have a problem. I seem to be able to lay everything on the altar but my tongue. I just can't seem to leave my tongue on the altar.' She had a very sharp, bitter tongue, with which she did a lot of damage. The pastor just looked at her and said, 'Well, sister, what's the problem? Isn't the altar long enough?'

"I was having a similar problem with my old carnal nature. Perhaps I wasn't using the right kind of nails. The thumbtacks I was using just didn't seem to hold, and he kept coming off the cross. It bothered me that I wasn't having better results. Someone said that our old man was already crucified, so there was no need to crucify him. It was a little hard for me to identify myself with something that happened two thousand years ago when I wasn't even around. It just seemed a little difficult to identify myself with the crucifixion of Jesus that happened so long ago. I tried, the Lord knows I tried, but somehow this old self seemed to stay very much alive. He just didn't want to stay on the cross and die! I tried to reckon him to be so, but he still seemed to stay around, very much alive and well.

"I think we all make this big mistake when we invite the Lord Jesus to come into our hearts and live, and He comes to dwell in us, we treat Him as a guest. In effect we say to Him, 'Lord, I'm so glad that you came. I am thankful that you are here to live with me. Just sit down and make yourself comfortable, and I will try to fix up this old house and clean it so it will be more to your liking.' So if we have been smoking, and we know He doesn't like that, we give it up. If we have been drinking, we quit. We go all over the old house, cleaning up this and getting rid of those things we feel He doesn't like. We do our best to get rid of bad habits and things we know are not Christ-like, so we will have a fit place for our guest to live in. But the trouble with that is that when we think we have a place cleaned up, we come back and find it just as filthy as ever. The habits that we have tried to break and get rid of, we find ourselves doing over and over again. We find that sin still has power over us, the world still has a great attraction for us, and the things in it. Temptations come and we still find ourselves yielding to them. We are still in bondage to sin, sickness, and death, and all our efforts to free ourselves have produced little or no results. We try over and over again to live a life pleasing to God, and He will let us do it, until we finally come to the

place where we realize it is all in vain; that we cannot do it, and that only He whom the Son sets free is free indeed!

“I tried on my own for years; failing over, and over, and over again, until I came to the place where I had to say, What’s the use? Many people when they come to this place, realizing they are not getting anywhere, just give up and let sin and the world have full control over them. This is sad, for it does not have to be! There is victory, but this victory is not in ourselves but in the Lord Jesus. It is the Christ within who is the victory! We come to the realization that He hasn’t come as a guest, but as the rightful owner...we are His possession, every part of us, He bought us, and ‘ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s’ (I Cor. 6:19-20). Christ in us is not a guest, but the owner of the tabernacle; He is rising up to take over the control of all our being, for all is His. He is rising up to be Lord over all our lives and actions, and only when He is, do we know the liberty and deliverance wherewith only He can set us free.

“When I came to the full realization of this mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations, which is *Christ in us, the hope of glory*; then I began to see things in an altogether different light, and found out how to do things differently. When I realized that He was within me to take over, and wanted to have complete control of my being, I started turning everything over to HIM! No more worry, fretting, regrets, struggle, self-effort, sweat, or tears. We are told to cast all our burdens on Him, for He careth for us. But you see, I had been thinking of the Christ on the cross, or the glorified Son of God in heaven sitting at the right hand of God. So like many others, I was having no end of trouble trying to put these things off and unto Him. It seemed hard to do, because He was someone at a distance, two thousand years back from me, or trillions of miles up in the sky! He was someone at a distance, outside of myself, other than me. But I find no trouble in dealing with the Christ who is within me, right here, dwelling in this house, this earthly house of my body, who *is my life*. So little by little I am learning to turn all over to Him, because all belongs to Him, and He is the Lord and reality of my house!

“I had difficulty relating to the death of Jesus on the cross, which happened so long ago, before ever I walked on earth. But I find it easy to identify with this death which He is dying in me now! This I can easily associate with, because now He *really is my substitute*, not in theory, not as an historical fact, but in actuality. I can easily cast my burdens, my troubles, my cares, my sins and my shortcomings, my carnal desires and thoughts, my sicknesses and diseases, my afflictions and infirmities, not on someone who lived two thousand years ago, and who is now in heaven, but on the one who is alive and lives in me, who, as I trust Him and yield to Him, is arising within me as my very own life to do just this. What a blessed and wonderful thing it is to know Him in this way!

“There is no way you or I can live a godly life. Self cannot do this; only the indwelling Christ as Lord of our beings living out through us from within can produce a life that is God-like. Thank God, He is not a Lord who is afar off, but one who is near to complete the work of our redemption within us. Paul talks about the righteousness of God, and how the Jews were trying to establish a righteousness acceptable to God by self-effort, and said this, ‘Christ is the *end of the law for righteousness* to every one that believeth.’ Moses had said that he that keepeth the law would live by it; but of course no one could keep the perfect law of God, though in their zeal they tried, therefore no one had life! But Christ is the end of that; no more trying to be good, just yielding to Him. Christ is the end of self-effort. Righteousness can only come through Him. But where is He? How is this righteousness

attained? Paul goes on to say, ‘But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above). Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead).’ (Rom. 10:6-7). So where is He, this Christ who produces righteousness in us? Bless God, He is near, not afar off. How near? ‘Even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; this is the word of faith, which we preach’ (Rom. 10:8). That’s how near He is! Right within us, to work out His righteousness in us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

“As we yield everything to the Lord within, self is put down and out of the picture; self is dethroned, and when our whole being has been delivered unto the Christ within, self has been abolished. He no longer has any place, he is truly dead, and has no power or authority any longer” — end quote.

It should be clear to all who read these lines that brother Wylie suffered the ***torments of the locust’s stings for his allotted symbolic five months*** until he discovered the mind of Christ and the fullness of God within and identified with it. Thank God for the allotted five months, for it will indeed come to an end as we continue to grow and progress into Christ. That is the secret! Never despair, my friend, rest in His love, accept His covering grace, expose yourself to His presence, and follow on to *know* the Lord. The months will pass, the trumpet will sound, the feast of Tabernacles will commence, the glory will overflow, the torment will end, and you will stand triumphant in the victory of Christ within! It is indeed wonderful!

THE APPEARANCE OF THE LOCUSTS

“And the *shapes* of the locusts were like unto *horses prepared unto battle*; and on their heads were *crowns like gold*, and their faces were as the *faces of men*. And they had hair as the *hair of women*, and their teeth were as the *teeth of lions*. And they had breastplates, as it were the *breastplates of iron*; and the sound of their *wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle*. And they had tails *like unto scorpions*, and there were *stings* in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months” (Rev. 9:7-10).

John is being shown all these things in visions, like a great moving picture before his eyes, all these symbolic scenes pass before his face. When he sees these locusts, the shape of which is like horses prepared unto battle, it is evident that he is not seeing either literal locusts or literal horses prepared for battle. No literal locusts could wear on their heads crowns like gold or have the faces of men, or have the hair of women, or have teeth like lions, or wear breastplates of iron, or have tails like scorpions. Nor could literal horses have these either!

The words “like” or “as” occur nine times. In verses seven and eight the locusts’ forepart is described; in verse nine their middle part; in verse ten their hind part. The prophet Joel has a description of similar beings in the second chapter of his prophecy. These locusts have hair “as” the hair of women, but it is not women’s hair. They have teeth “as” the teeth of lions, but they are not the teeth of lions. Their breastplates are “as” breastplates of iron, but they are *not* iron breastplates. They made a noise that “sounded like” horses and chariots running to battle, but they were *neither horses nor* chariots. If all this were literal can you imagine the abject horror a man would experience some morning when he looks out the window of his house and sees a creature with a man’s face, woman’s hair, and looking like a horse with lion’s teeth and wearing a breastplate walking around in the yard, making its

way to the house where he is. There will be no way to keep it out or kill it. But what *purpose* would such a creature serve?

We have noted previously that these locusts represent *religious delusions* propagated by men and movements! They embody the spirit, movement, and activities of religious Babylon. These delusions come with a power as irresistible as a charge of cavalry, as “horses prepared unto battle.” Like horses prepared for battle also signifies that out of man’s own strength he tries to fight the spiritual battle with the carnal weapons of the *letter of the Word*. It is carnal strength, the self-assertiveness of the human will saying, “ I can please God, I can serve God, I can do God’s work, I can build the kingdom, I...I...I...I...can!” The ability and wisdom of the flesh seems strong, powerful, awesome, formidable, irresistible, all-conquering!

When we come to the “crowns of gold” we approach a mystery that the Holy Spirit would make real to every son of God. Of God’s priesthood company John said, “And round about the throne were...four and twenty elders sitting...and they had on their heads ***crowns of gold.***” These crowns are not the coronets worn by the sovereigns of this present world. The feeble kings and rulers of this dark world system represent in their weakness the transient glory of earth’s passing kingdoms, but the golden crowns on the heads of God’s Royal Priesthood are not like one of these. The most common term rendered “crown” in the New Testament is the Greek word *stephanos*. This crown was usually a laurel wreath woven of fragrant branches, or the like. It was granted to the winners of the Pan Hellenic games and also for a token of public honor for distinguished service — especially of military leaders who had been victorious over their enemies on the battlefield. This crown denotes a VICTOR’S CROWN — the crown of an OVERCOMER!

Golden Stephanos! Golden Victor’s Crowns! Gold is a symbol for the divine nature. And how true that we are only able to overcome by being made partakers of *His divine nature!* To be “crowned” means to be given kingly authority. As the kingly authority and dominion of God’s divine nature now ascends the throne of our lives to rule within us — we are CROWNED, RULED OVER by our Father, but more than this, *made rulers*, not after the strength of the flesh, but in the love, justice, and glory of God’s own character flowing out from our lives! Of course the crowns of fragrant branches won by the Greeks in their athletic contests were short lived, for they soon wilted and became dead and brittle. In contrast to this, *our stephanos* are incorruptible crowns which will never fade away — for the Royal Priesthood is of the Melchizedekian Order — after the power of an endless life! God is even now bringing forth an *incorruptible* people, overcomers, who are overcoming all things. God is teaching us to reign in our lives and in every situation! He is making us a Royal Priesthood! Priests reigning in the Father’s own nature, love, and power! Reconciling the world and subduing all things!

Those *golden stephanos* worn by the twenty-four elders of the Royal Priesthood are the *genuine golden crowns* in the book of Revelation. But when we come to the locusts in chapter nine, they only *appear* to be of divine excellency, wearing, *as it were*, “crowns of gold.” The appearance *as of* crowns of gold indicates that they are not truly crowns of gold — these are fake, imitation, counterfeit crowns! There is that about them which tends to inspire their captives with a superstitious sense of their having received a divine commission from God, and that they exercise the very authority and power of God. When they speak they intend to be heard! They are like kings to those who serve them and their religious systems. The slightest disagreement with either the system or the doctrines brings the fury of a scorpion when it strikes! They have the power of life and death over

men. One word from them and you are in danger of eternal judgment...at least that's what they want the people to believe. What they bind on earth is bound in heaven. You can only receive the mercy of God through them. Yet, though they seem to be crowned, though they appear to have an authority and dominion out of the very nature of God, it is all phony! It is not real! It is assumed, usurped! In fact, they have no authority or power from God at all! You need fear them no longer, my precious brother, my dear sister, their torment over you must end, and they cannot harm you once the **truth** has been gloriously revealed in your spirit! CHRIST IN YOU has *all power and authority in heaven and in earth!* Nothing that originates from the abyss of man's human heart of deceit and darkness has any right of authority or power over your spiritual life at all. It is a front, an illusion, and a lie.

Sadly, I have seen "kingdom preachers" also wearing these "crowns *as of gold*," setting *them-selves up* as apostles and bishops, and only *they* have the full and true revelation of God, superior to all the other brethren; *they* are the special ones who have been raised up by God to lead the Lord's elect into the promised land, to bring the saints to maturity and perfection, and if you want to enter the kingdom and put on immortality you must grab on to *their* coattail! Wearing their crowns *as of gold* they gain a following, raise up a movement, build a kingdom, become more and more sectarian, and are at last just another of the many divisions of Babylon.

The locusts' faces were "as the faces of men," having the appearance of reason, intellectual credibility, and human intelligence, combined with "hair as of women," the attractiveness of grace and beauty, signifying that these ministers of religion have an artificial sweetness, catching the innocent in their net. Religious ceremonies, rituals, pageantry, vestments, cathedrals, choirs, stained glass windows, teachings, etc. appear as beautiful, to be desired, and people are drawn irresistibly as one seduced by a woman. Hair also speaks of anointing, which they appear to have, but they speak and devour as lions! It further identifies them as soulical creatures, rather than spiritual beings. In the religious systems of man that which is soulical is always pawned off as being spiritual! Those who thrive on either intellectualism or emotionalism are unable to discern the difference.

Having teeth "as the teeth of lions" these take firm hold on the mind and are ultimately destructive to spiritual life. Truly they seek to devour you, they will hinder you from your growth in the life of the spirit, and rob you of your attainment unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Having breastplates "as it were of iron" they cover themselves with pretexts which make them appear unconquerable, it seems to everyone that these people are equipped with zeal to defend the cause of God, proclaiming loudly their success to which they point as proof of their being the true army of the Lord; their arguments appear to be unanswerable, carried by "wings" having "the sound" of chariots and horses running to battle, that is, the sound of irresistible power — a torrent of words carrying all before it, flying everywhere, winning for them many people, but warring against the Christ within. The wings also denote action, motivation, self-effort to ascend and move into a heavenly realm.

The locusts have tails "like unto scorpions" and there are stings in their tails. The tail is a very important component in the symbolism of this vision. The "sting" of the scorpion-tail is a picture of the spirit of error, misrepresentations of truth, erroneous concepts of God; it is the ministry of the accuser, the ministry of condemnation, sin-consciousness, and spiritual abuse with its threatenings of wrath and judgment. Out of carnal understanding men

proclaim as truth that which is mere superstition, legend, and folklore of a carnal interpretation of the word of God. It comes from the smoke out of the deceitfulness of the human heart. Men preach fairy tales as divine truth! It is the language of the pit, the abyss. When we walk in the kingdom of God we speak the heavenly language! When I go to Mexico I speak Spanish, for that is the language of the nation. The language of the kingdom is the language of life, light, love, encouragement, strength, redemption, transformation, revelation and blessing! The elect of God speak an altogether different language than the religious systems of man! Should an ordinary Christian wander into the midst of a people speaking the mysteries of the kingdom of God, the glories of sonship, and the truth of the great restoration of creation they would understand little, if anything, of what they hear! It would be as a foreign tongue to them, for only those blessed ones taught by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God have understanding in the language of the heavenlies!

In one of the great passages of Isaiah the Lord announces that He “will cut off from Israel *head and tail...*” and then explains that “the *ancient and honorable*, he is the *head*; and the *prophet that teacheth lies*, he is the *tail*” (Isa. 9:14-15). Here is an interesting comparison! The ancient and honorable, or as it is in one version, the elders and the magistrates, are the *leaders*. They will be cut off because they have caused the people to err. In addition, the false prophet teaching lies is called the *tail*. False doctrine is like the sting of the scorpion. First it poisons, but it leads ultimately to madness. Power is given to the scorpions to “*hurt men five months.*” The very thought evokes fear! Their sting won’t kill you, but it can make you wish you were dead! I have known people who were in deep depression because they thought they had blasphemed the Holy Ghost — the so-called *unpardonable* sin. That is one of the terrible by-products of the ministry of fear and condemnation that spews forth from many pulpits. I know of some poor souls who are locked up in mental institutions because they believe they have committed the unpardonable sin. That is *torment!* And their torment comes from the sting of the locusts which swarm out of the smoke of religious deception! The effect of the false doctrines and religious delusions is the “sting.” What is said of strong drink (Prov. 23:32) may also be said of this *strong delusion*: “At the last it *biteth like a serpent*, and *stingeth like an adder.*”

Chapter 115

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And they had a *king* over them, which is the *angel* of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek tongue hath his name *Apollyon*” (Rev. 9:11).

In this cryptic passage of scripture we are told that the locusts, who come out of the smoke that comes out of the pit, have a king that is superior in authority to them. Natural locusts have no leader. But the locusts in John’s vision have this one who rules over them. The unique thing about this king is that he is *not one of them*, but he is called “the *angel of the bottomless pit*.” This particular expression does not occur anywhere else in scripture. Some hold that it refers to Satan, an angel whose home, they suppose, is in the bottomless pit where he is head and chief. The Bible nowhere indicates, however, that there is somewhere in the heart of the earth, or out in space, a literal “pit” where the devil lives, ruling over his imps, stoking fires, and doing all the other things religious people attribute to him.

The “king” in this text is not the devil — the king in this passage is the One who rules over all realms, the King of kings who was dead and is alive and has the *keys* of death and of hell! Christ, when He died, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He entered the darkest night of death, submitted to him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and was ushered through the somber gates and behind the fearful bars of Hades, the unseen, imperceptible realm of the dead. And then He arose the conquering Christ! He took control of the situation as with one exultant shout He grasped the keys of death and of hell from him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, stripped away the power of corruption, sin, and death, burst asunder the bars of hell, stalked boldly out in eternal triumph over all the dread powers of that dark realm, entered back into His body in the garden tomb, passed through the rock wall, showed Himself alive after many infallible proofs, and ascended up far above all heavens! Jesus has the keys; He proved that He has the keys of both death and hell, for He unlocked both and arose Victor. He holds the key to *everything*, for He has been given *all power and authority* in heaven and in earth! He alone is the one who opens and no man can shut, who shuts and no man can open. No one can open or shut any realm apart from our Lord Jesus Christ!

We often entertain such shallow thoughts about such profound realities! Satan does not hold the key to any realm! “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death He might **destroy him** that had the power of death, that is, **the devil...**”(Heb. 2:14). This should bring us release because we have been seeking death and cannot find it. We have been dying to self, dying out, dying out, a slow, painful, agonizing, tormenting death — and still we haven’t given up the ghost! Only life can swallow up death! We don’t die in order to live, we live in order to die! This whole book of Revelation is about how God is getting rid of **us!** The

whole book is about a *new heaven* and a *new earth*, for the first heaven and the first earth are *passed away*. Isn't it wonderful! This book is not about all hell breaking loose on earth — it's about the revelation of Jesus Christ — the Christ of God breaking loose in that earth which *we are* and swallowing up all the torment, death, and hell in our old Adamic mind, human consciousness, and natural life! There's a trumpet sounding, beloved, declaring that you don't have to suffer any longer, you don't have to try to die anymore, you can find blessed and eternal relief as you identify with *your new life* which is hid with Christ in God. That's ***who you really are!*** Forget old Adam — Christ has put him to death! Forget the devil — Christ has destroyed him! Forget about sin — Christ has made an end of sin and has given us *His righteousness!* Stop worrying about death — Christ has *abolished death* and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel! Until you *can* forget, God covers you with His grace! *So forget all of that!* Identify only with Christ. Embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. Then your up and down, in and out, victory and failure experience will cease, your torment will end, your scorpions will scamper, your horses will vanish, your smoke will clear, your pit will be filled in, and there will be a great calm. Hallelujah!

Let us remember that Satan is not the “angel” of the pit, nor does he hold the “key” to the pit, nor is he the “king” over the pit. All of this has been transferred to our Lord Jesus Christ who is Lord of all! Satan is a nobody and has no power at all. Someone says, “But, brother Eby, it says that the name of this angel of the bottomless pit, or this king over the locusts, is *Abaddon* and *Apollyon* — which mean DESTROYER! Surely that can't be *Christ!*” I will confess that my view of Abaddon and Apollyon is very different from most. I make no effort to connect these names with the devil, the antichrist, nor any other dark personage or power. Apollyon is the “angel” of the abyss or the one who has power and control over the abyss. Here he has the “key” to the abyss and authority to open it.

Now let us UNDERSTAND! “And I saw an *angel* come down *from heaven*, having the *key* to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is called the *Devil* and *Satan*, and bound him a thousand years. And he *cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him*, that he should *deceive the nations no more...*” (Rev. 20:1-3). Now let us consider some pertinent questions. In this symbolic scene, who is it that has the key to the abyss? An *angel!* Where is the angel from? From *heaven!* Therefore, where did the key to the abyss come from? From *heaven!* What did the angel do? He *bound the devil, shut him up in the pit, and locked it with the key!* How, then, could Satan be the one who has the key? *Impossible!* Who is it that has bound, and does bind, the power of Satan? Our *Lord Jesus Christ!* Who is the symbolic “angel from heaven” all through the book of Revelation? *Christ is!* Ah, can we not see by this that the “destroyer,” that is, Abaddon and Apollyon, is the Christ of God! This is not some negative entity out of a realm of darkness — this is CHRIST!

The great truth and the deep mystery that the Holy Spirit would make known within our hearts in this great day of the Lord is that Christ is indeed the DESTROYER! Look at what He destroys! “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that *man of sin be revealed...who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God...so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God...WHOM THE LORD SHALL CONSUME WITH THE SPIRIT OF HIS MOUTH, AND SHALL DESTROY WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING*” (II Thes. 2:3-8). This “man of sin,” who is the carnal mind, the natural man, and the old Adamic nature within each of us, doesn't suddenly one day “set himself up” in the temple and declare himself there to be God. Oh, no! Paul tells us that he “*sitteth*” in the

temple of God *“showing himself”* that he IS GOD — a present and continuous activity. All who have spiritual understanding know that the “temple of God” is not a rebuilt “Jewish” temple over in the city of Jerusalem! I won’t belabor the point by quoting a battery of scriptures which confirm that *“ye are the temple of the living God,” “...which temple ye are,”* etc.

God was known in the Old Testament times in the tabernacle and in the temple. That was His dwelling place! That was where God was revealed, where His glory was seen, where His voice was heard. This human heavenly temple of the New Covenant is the one not made with hands! The true temple is the body of Christ. The temple of the Lord is that vast family of God’s sons who are coming to maturity in the image of Christ. It distresses me to hear preachers constantly proclaiming as fact the old wives’ fables that the temple of God made with hands must be rebuilt in Jerusalem. I fearlessly proclaim the truth that God’s temple is the body of Christ and no temple of God, made from stones or ornamented with silver and gold, will ever be rebuilt in Jerusalem. The notion of a rebuilt temple is a lie that would be humorous, were it not so blasphemous. The temple that God builds is the temple of which Jesus spoke to the poor, sinful woman at the well of Sychar. She was quibbling about where the true dwelling place of God was, and Jesus said, *“Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father...the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit (in their own spirit) and in truth”* (Jn. 4:21-24).

The man of sin sits in the temple of God, the temple not made with hands, even that temple which *we are*, usurping the throne, asserting that HE is the one in control! And it is not a future event, not something reserved for the end of the age, or during the great tribulation. It is a present reality! Your temptations, my brother, my sister, your weaknesses, stresses, emotions, lusts, problems, inner turmoil, fears, struggles, and battles are very real! In all these things that man of sin, that human reasoning, carnal thoughts and desires, the voice of the flesh sits in your temple and says, “I am God, I have authority in this house, you shall not break through into victory over sin, sorrow, limitation, and death — I am God here!” Ah, yes, the man of sin shows himself to be God in the temple of our being. He is not God anywhere else! All reality must be known and experienced *within the temple of God!* Just as the temple of our bodies is the habitation of God through the spirit, so the man of sin sits in the same temple to convince us that *he* is God!

The flaming words of the prophet Malachi are even now being fulfilled: “THE LORD WHOM YE SEEK SHALL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE...but who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a *refiner’s fire*, and like fuller’s soap: and He shall *purify the sons of Levi*, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” In the cleansing of the temple of old, our Lord Jesus made it perfectly plain that He was cleansing the temple to show them that He, who in the temple of His own body had come to redeem them, was so mighty that He would cleanse the whole temple of His corporate body. He told the religious priests and Levites that they had made His Father’s house a den of *thieves!* Is that not what the “man of sin” within us does to the temple of the body of Christ? He is a *thief!* He robs us of righteousness, He robs us of joy, He steals our peace, our progress, our faith, our hope! We are the temple of God! And in this day the mighty, cleansing, purging Christ is arising in His temple to do away with all sin, to do away with every vestige of the carnal mind, and every claim of the fleshly nature, to bring an end to all self-seeking, self-indulgence, and self-promotion, and all the foolishness of religion! Oh, yes! He has

come to His temple in this new day of the Lord as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, to CONSUME this "man of sin" with the spirit of His mouth, and to DESTROY this "man of sin" with the brightness of His presence! Thank God, our glorious Christ is the DESTROYER!

Let us consider some more passages which speak of Christ the Destroyer. "That through death He might **destroy him** that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "...the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy** the works of the devil!" (I Jn. 3:8). "And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest **destroy** them that destroy the earth" (Rev. 11:18). "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will **destroy** the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent" (I Cor. 1:18-19). "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. And the last enemy that shall be **destroyed** is death" (I Cor. 15:25-26). How my ransomed soul exults and shouts ten thousand hallelujahs that our mighty Christ within IS THE DESTROYER! Were it not so, then sin, corruption, death, this present evil world, the man of sin within, the works of the devil, Mystery Babylon, the locusts, the pit, and the devil himself would never BE DESTROYED! Oh, what a wonder! Christ is indeed Abaddon and Apollyon! He is the Destroyer within us, bringing an end to the old mind, the old man, the old creation. Truly this is **the revelation of Jesus Christ!**

THE ANTIDOTE FOR THE LOCUSTS' STING.

In nature we have antidotes, a medicine or substance to remedy, neutralize, or counteract the effects of poison, or of anything noxious taken into the body. For every natural law there is a corresponding law of the spiritual kingdom. Therefore, my beloved, even if you have been tormented by the painful sting of the locusts' tail, I tell you today that there is an antidote for the sting! There are self-help books on the market today that tell people who have a lack of confidence how they can seek and develop more self-confidence. Do you think that you need more self-confidence? I want to tell you that you do not! You need less! That may startle you, but I want to say that self-confidence is a curse! "Cursed is the man that *trusteth in man*, that maketh *flesh* his arm." What we need is more *Christ-confidence!* I am not saying that we should not have confidence, but I am saying that we should have confidence in something which is worthy of our confidence, and not trust in a bruised reed which will easily break and pierce our hand. Confidence comes from the Latin words, *con* and *fides*, which means "with faith." My question, dear one, is this: Faith in whom? Self confidence with faith in self? Oh, no!

Hear the blessed words of the inspired apostle as he testifies to this certainty: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me!*" (Phil. 4:13). This is the divine cure for an inferiority complex. I used to have an inferiority complex in my younger years. It was very, very painful. I suffered with that complex for years until *Christ was raised up in my life!* I then found out who I really am! I discovered that I am a son of God, the offspring of my heavenly Father! I have been made for eternity! I will outlive the stars! I was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world! I was before the stars! I was predestinated to placement as a son by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will! My life has a significance transcendent beyond anything in this world! And so does yours, dear reader of these words! Ah, there is a remedy for an inferiority complex! It is

discovering the reality of Christ within ourselves, the mighty Christ, the all-conquering Christ, the omnipotent Christ, the all-knowing, all-wise, all-sufficient Christ of glory! Christ is the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in His rays, therefore, He is the *antidote* for the sting of the locusts! Christ is truth, therefore, He is error's *cure*! Christ is life, therefore, He is the *antidote* for death! Christ is love personified, therefore, He is the *cure* for everything of the negative realm in our lives!

Jesus told His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). The word **deny** actually bears the meaning of **disowning**. We can deny ourselves of many things, sleep, food, a new car, clothes, or companionship simply by never obtaining them. But to "disown" means to repudiate something that we perceive to be ours. If you are going to disown YOURSELF, you are disowning your very ego, your sense of life and being, your very identity. That is what it takes to follow Christ! To follow Christ does not mean merely to go along with Him, or follow along behind Him, but it signifies union with Him, a stepping into HIS SENSE OF LIFE, HIS SENSE OF BEING, AND HIS IDENTITY! Christ is becoming our realization. We can't destroy life, because life is God. There is only one God and only one life — His life! "**In Him** we live and move and **have our being!**" What a mystery this is! You see, the old human sense of life, the old human sense of being, the old human identity is based on a lie. That is very obvious when we look at what happened in that long ago beginning in Eden. The death that came to Adam was the loss of the awareness of the life of God in his spirit. He was left with only a consciousness of the physical, corruptible, earthly, and mortal. There is no reality there! "The world passeth away and the lusts thereof; but he (the inner man) that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Adam died to spiritual life and awoke to mortal existence. Now the Lord has called upon us to *disown* this thing we call life and think is life, and take up our cross and follow Him!

In the natural we think our life is dependent upon our body, and so we try to save our natural sense of life. There are brethren who think that they will not have the "eternal life" Jesus promised until they put on physical immortality, as though eternal life is physical. But we had life *before* we had an earth-body, before the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy! Yet men are so afraid that old age or death will take their consciousness and sense of being away from them. People do everything in their power to preserve their physical life. And there's nothing wrong with that! But since our human identity is our sense of being, we don't want to lose it. We want God to take it to heaven or to make it well; to make all things well so we can retain our humanness. Jesus knew better than this! Therefore He said that if you do not *disown yourself* and *reject who you think you are*, and *what you think life is*, you cannot keep it! The lesser must be swallowed up of the greater!

God is raising up a people in this day who know that they are *sons of God*, and that though they have a body on earth that is not the realm they were birthed from or came from, and that is not their reality. The Lord has made us willing to start as a child in the new kingdom, as a new creation, and let these new creation thoughts awaken within us a new image of God and of self, so that we can think, understand, see, live, and act out of our true identity as sons of God. Jesus came to awaken within us the consciousness and realization of our true, spiritual identity, to give us a new sense of being — His sense of being. Many people encourage others to "give their life to God." So they pray and say, "Lord, I want to give my life to you." I think God says within himself, "I don't need your life, I have my own. In fact, I have given *you* my life! Why would I want your life when you already have my life? I don't need your life, but I will awaken within you my life, which *is your life*, for Christ who *is our*

life is now appearing. You can now disown your life!” This is Christ-consciousness and Christ-confidence! Oh, yes! I can do all things through this mighty Christ within!

We have the full power of overcoming life right within our spirit! Paul put it this way: “And if Christ be *in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell *in you*, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies *by His Spirit that dwelleth in you*” (Rom. 8:10-11). Your spirit is much deeper than your mind, your emotion, or your will. Deep down on the inside of you, where your true life dwells, you are a spiritual being, a divine being, a truly God-being. That is where you are alive! “The *spirit is life.*” That is where you are pure and righteous! That is where you *do not* sin, neither *can* you sin! (I Jn. 3:9). That is where Christ *in you* is your hope of glory! Your body (outer man) is dead because of sin, but your spirit is alive because of Christ’s righteousness within it. Once you know where life really is, you have discovered the exceeding riches of Christ! LIFE IS IN YOUR SPIRIT! What is true in your spirit is who and what “you” truly are!

An experience of Jesus’ offers a remarkable and telling demonstration of the difference between living out of the Christ identity or the human identity. The account is in the Gospel of John. A woman had been caught committing adultery. The traditional law mandated that adulterers be publicly stoned to death. Before carrying out this sentence, the scribes and Pharisees had brought her to Jesus, related what the law said, and challenged Him, “But what sayest Thou?” This they said tempting Him, that they might have occasion to accuse Him. Many malicious, destructive thoughts were poised and armed, the potential force behind multiple missile-stones. Jesus didn’t launch a defensive barrage of bargaining, rationalizing, or pleading. Nor did He react with a counteroffensive of personal wisdom or withering criticism. At first He was silent. He did one strange thing, something which seems almost not relative to the occasion. He stooped down and *wrote with His finger on the ground*, as though He heard them not.

When He finally spoke, He spoke with a divine wisdom and authority that disarmed the ugly, apparently no-win situation. “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” One by one, the hostile group slipped away, leaving the woman to Jesus’ custody. “Hath no man condemned thee?” He asked. Then, He who was without sin and therefore eligible to cast a stone, reached out and uplifted her life with the healing impact of divine Life, Light, and Love. He freed her, saying, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” At that moment He raised her up from her sinful, sensual, physical, natural, earthly sense of being into His very own sense of being! “Go and sin no more.” What a word that is! It was a prophecy, an impartation, an awakening within her of a higher realm of life which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. She arose empowered to walk in a new mind, a new reality, a new life! Oh, the wonder of it!

The question follows — Why did Jesus write with His finger in the dust of the ground when the answer He gave appears to be sufficient to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees? The fact that He did it, and that the apostle John was inspired to record it, surely imparts some special meaning or significance to it. It has to be relevant or the Holy Spirit would not have preserved it for us. Imagine this woman’s feelings, her shame, fears and desperation knowing that according to the law she would shortly be stoned to death. The scribes and Pharisees were filled with fiendish delight supposing that at last they had set a trap from which this Jesus stood little chance of escaping. The tension is immense, a crowd looking on, some curious spectators, some bewildered, some angry, others excited by the

challenge. Then, with a perfect calmness Jesus stoops and begins to write on the ground with His finger!

An unusual reaction, for sure, but very deliberate. Though strange it may seem, it was not the first time the finger of God had written something on earth! The first thing we need to remember in order to understand this great mystery is an event that transpired some fifteen hundred years before Jesus wrote with His finger in the dust. It is an event to which our Lord is pointing with this action. That event was the giving of the law of Moses from God to the nation of Israel at mount Sinai. The record states, "And He gave Moses, when He had made an end of speaking with him upon mount Sinai, the two tables of testimony, tables of stone, *written with the **finger of God***" (Ex. 31:18). The next mystery that we need to understand in order to grasp the action of Jesus is the fact that just as Yahweh introduced a covenant to Israel *with His finger*, so now Jesus gives to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear a new covenant, written not, this time, in hard, implacable stone, but in the soft, pliable dust of the earth!

This is, of course, a beautiful parable! The prophet Ezekiel referred to it when he wrote, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the **heart of stone** and give you a **heart of flesh**. And I will put **my spirit within you** and cause you to walk in my statutes and do my judgments" (Eze. 36:26-27). Deliverance out of the old into the new can only come by the realization of the utter weakness and hopelessness of the natural man. He must be fully exposed for what he is, that we may no longer delude ourselves into thinking we can change him, control him, reform him, and somehow make him righteous. The woman in our story discovered the depths of the corruption of the flesh man, and she was soon to reap the corruption that comes from sowing to the flesh. Now faced with death she discovers her salvation, faced with the wrath of the Old Covenant she receives a revelation of both the mercy and the power of the New, for rather than hurling stones at her Jesus stoops and with His finger begins to write in the earth!

There is a significant order in this wonderful revelation! Christ must first lower Himself before He can write in the earth or dust. This "stooping" witnesses with a testimony found concerning Him in Paul's epistle to the Philippians. "Who although being...in the form of God, did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained, but *stripped* Himself, so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born *a human being*. And after He had appeared in human form, He *abased* and *humbled* Himself still further and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore because He **STOOPED SO LOW** God has highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2:6-9), Amplified). Because He **stooped!** Can you not see the mystery? Jesus stooped or lowered Himself to become one of us, clothed in flesh, a man of the earth, a human being! He became as Adam of whom it is written that the Lord God made him from the *dust of the ground*. We cannot comprehend the full magnificence of this, but in so doing the **divine nature was written into dust or flesh**, revealing the life of sonship and opening the way for many sons to be brought to glory!

Jesus demonstrated the life of the spirit, the divine nature of God in the spirit of every man. In Jesus the true identity of His inner son was awakened, disclosed, revealed. Jesus knew that His outer flesh was not the REAL JESUS; He also knew that His flesh was no better or stronger than any other man's flesh! The Christ, the Son within Him, was His true being. In the outer man He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin! He accomplished this out of the revelation of the life of His Father that dwelt in Him. He knew

that all the mind, wisdom, understanding, peace, joy, righteousness, glory, and power of God was closer to Him than the air He breathed, closer even than the blood that coursed through His veins. In that life there is no limitation at all! Though Jesus could not change what His flesh was, even as we are unable to change what our flesh is, He **superimposed upon it** the character of God in His spirit! He stooped and wrote in the dust of His body and soul THE LAW OF GOD. Not the law of Moses written and engraven in stone, but a heart of flesh, the character of God written, superimposed upon flesh. His flesh was still flesh, but when men looked upon Him they read the law or character of God written upon it! That is the mystery!

Therefore the great truth that Jesus was seeking to reveal to the sinful woman, and to us today, is that He became the way into the New Covenant. We are the earth; we are the dust of the ground, and having become one of us, and having superimposed the character of God upon the fleshy tables of His heart, He is now able to write His laws and statutes upon our hearts. We are the dust into which He is writing, and He is writing with His *finger* which is the *Spirit of the living God*. Jesus said on one occasion that He cast out devils by the *finger* of God; but another gospel writer records the same statement as the *Spirit* of God. Therefore, Jesus is telling us that the finger is the spirit! Only the power of the *spirit* can write or superimpose the character of God on our flesh! Jesus gave to the adulterous woman an object lesson of just what He was about to do for her! It is our own regenerated, awakened, redeemed, born-again spirit that is the source of our new life; for it is our regenerated spirit that is the Son of God within us. There are not two spirits living within your body, my beloved, for “he that is joined to the Lord *is one spirit*.” The Spirit of Christ within you is your own spirit joined to His Spirit, and by this spirit Christ in you is stooping to write in the dust of your outer man the New Covenant of God!

To you who have failed and feel you cannot make the grade, be comforted by these words of your Lord, “*Let the sinless one of you first cast a stone*.” Christ only is sinless, and if He who has the authority by virtue of His sinless life will not cast a single stone at you then no one can; not even your own conscience. So please, don’t *stone yourself*! Forgive yourself, even as the spirit of Christ in you says today, “Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more!” In other words, God is not going to judge you for failing, yet at the same time He is raising up in your dust the power to ignore the flesh and live the life of God in the flesh. Isn’t it wonderful! This, dear child of God, is THE ANTIDOTE FOR THE STING OF THE LOCUSTS! Oh, yes!

There is an old fable called *The Story of the Magic Eyes*. According to this fable, in the village of Faken in innermost Friesland, there lived a long thin baker named Fouke, a righteous man, with a long thin chin and a long thin nose. Fouke was so upright that he seemed to spray righteousness from his thin lips over everyone who came near him; so the people of Faken preferred to stay away. Fouke’s wife, Hilda, was short and round, her arms were round, her bosom was round, her rump was round. Hilda did not keep people at bay with righteousness; her soft roundness seemed to invite them instead to come close to her in order to share the warm cheer of her open heart. Hilda respected her righteous husband, and loved him too, as much as he allowed her; but her heart ached for something more from him than his worthy righteousness. And there, in the bed of her need, lay the seed of sadness.

One morning, having worked since dawn to knead his dough for the ovens, Fouke came home and found a stranger in his bedroom lying on Hilda’s round bosom. Hilda’s adultery soon became the talk of the tavern and the scandal of the Faken congregation. Everyone

assumed that Fouke would cast Hilda out of his house, so righteous was he. But he surprised everyone by keeping Hilda as his wife, saying he forgave her as the Good Book said he should. In his heart of hearts, however, Fouke could not forgive Hilda for bringing shame to his name. Whenever he thought about her, his feelings toward her were angry and hard; he despised her as if she were a common whore. When it came right down to it, he hated her for betraying him after he had been so good and so faithful a husband to her. He only pretended to forgive Hilda so that he could punish her with his righteous mercy. But Fouke's fakery did not sit well in heaven.

So each time that Fouke would feel his secret hate toward Hilda, an angel came to him and dropped a small pebble, hardly the size of a shirt button, into Fouke's heart. Each time a pebble dropped, Fouke would feel a stab of pain like the pain he felt the moment he came on Hilda feeding her hungry heart from a stranger's larder. Then he hated her more; his hate brought him pain and his pain made him hate. The pebbles multiplied. And Fouke's heart grew very heavy with the weight of them, so heavy that the top half of his body bent forward so far that he had to strain his neck upward in order to see straight. Weary with hurt, Fouke began to wish he were dead.

The angel who dropped the pebbles into his heart came to Fouke one night and told him how he could be healed of his hurt. There was one remedy, he said, only one, for the hurt of a wounded heart. Fouke would need the miracle of the magic eyes. He would need eyes that could look back to the beginning of his hurt and see his Hilda, not as a wife who betrayed him, but as a weak woman who needed him. Only a new way of looking at things through the magic eyes could heal the hurt flowing from the wounds of yesterday. Fouke protested. "Nothing can change the past," he said. "Hilda is guilty, a fact that not even an angel can change." "Yes, poor hurting man, you are right," the angel said. "You cannot change the past, you can only heal the hurt that comes to you from the past. And you can heal it only with the vision of the magic eyes." "And how can I get your magic eyes," pouted Fouke. "Only ask, desiring as you ask, and they will be given you. And each time you see Hilda through your new eyes, one pebble will be lifted from your aching heart."

Fouke could not ask at once, for he had grown to love his hatred. But the pain of his heart finally drove him to want and to ask for the magic eyes that the angel had promised. So he asked. And the angel gave. Soon Hilda began to change in front of Fouke's eyes, wonderfully and mysteriously. He began to see her as a needy woman who loved him instead of a wicked woman who betrayed him. The angel kept his promise; he lifted the pebbles from Fouke's heart, one by one, though it took a long time to take them all away. Fouke gradually felt his heart grow lighter; he began to walk straight again, and somehow his nose and his chin seemed less thin and sharp than before. He invited Hilda to come into his heart again, and she came, and together they began again a journey into their second season of humble joy. (From *Forgive and Forget*, by Lewis B. Smedes).

The realization that Jesus came not into the world to *condemn* the world, but that the world through Him might be *saved*, is another way to express the same beautiful truth. Jesus does not *condemn* any man for his sin, but neither does He *condone* it! He knows what is in man, and He came not to condemn; but He did come to *deliver* and *give victory!* That is the message. Some people think that because we don't preach against sin and condemn sinners that we are somehow "soft on sin." Condemning people doesn't help at all! I wouldn't even kick a *dog* when he is down! Our mission is to encourage people, love people, help people, and draw out the Christ life within them.

Look how Jesus treated sinners. Did He call them sinners? No! Were they sinners? Yes! Did He know they were sinners? Absolutely! Did He insult them by calling them sinners? No! What did He do? He showed mercy. He loved unconditionally. He told stories like the story of the prodigal son! This gift called mercy is not understood by the world. Society does not forgive. Prosecutors do not forgive. Courts do not forgive. Governments do not forgive. Nature does not forgive. If I do a dumb thing and cut my hand off, nature doesn't forgive and grow another hand. Human beings, by nature, do not forget. They bury the hatchet, but they leave the handle above the ground. Everybody respects good people. But Jesus respected bad people! Time and again He befriended the "dregs" of society — Zaccheus, Simon, Mary Magdalene. He dined with rough, crude fishermen. He defended the harlots. He associated with corrupt people in power positions — again and again. And never once did He preach to them a thundering denouncement of sin! Why? To illustrate the power of mercy and redemption. As one has written, "*God becomes believable when you meet a person who is lovable.* And love becomes authentic when a person respects you even when you know you don't deserve the respect. That, in a nutshell, is the message of the gospel!" It is also the ANTIDOTE FOR THE STING OF THE SCORPION-TAILED LOCUSTS!

We make His love too narrow
With false limits of our own,
And we magnify His strictness,
With a zeal He will not own.
For the love of God is wider
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal,
Is most wonderfully kind!

There are not many people to whom I can listen when they talk about sin, but I can always listen to Christ. For in Him two qualities are conjoined: on the one hand the highest expression of purity and righteousness, down to the very depths of the soul; and on the other hand the most marvelous outflow of His heart of understanding, mercy, and love ever seen by man. On the one hand He embodies the very highest standard of purity, holiness, and obedience to the Father, and on the other He displays the utmost tenderness, compassion, and grace in His treatment of sinners. For every son of God there is no more sacred or blessed way to learn the spirit of sonship than to be taught by Jesus' nature and by His life. And how we benefit by listening to Him speak about sin! "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more!" "Thy sins be forgiven thee!" That is His life and His nature. This marvelous expression of God's goodness is — *the Christ!* In Jesus we have the countenance of God turned toward us whence His unfathomable mercy and love radiate.

"That I may *know Him!*" the apostle Paul cried. And again, "For the excellency of the *knowledge of Christ Jesus* my Lord!" Ah, there lies the difference between the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. The tree of knowledge of good and evil can only impart to man the *knowledge of good and evil*. Nothing more. The sad fruit of that tree, then, is condemnation and death! The tree of life, however, imparts to men the *knowledge of Christ who is Life!* Let us exchange the knowledge of good and evil for the more excellent *knowledge of Christ*. As long as we try to enforce rules and lay upon men regulations, laws, doctrines, dress codes, "dos and don'ts" etc. we are merely feeding them from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Over the past many years, in the fellowships we have been associated with, a number of people have been led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Some of these dear ones were cigarette smokers; others had other habits, problems, hang-ups, and weaknesses in their lives. Knowing that such habits are a hindrance in the lives of those who would truly be **overcomers** in the kingdom of God, we could have told these people, “You must stop smoking. You can’t flow or function in this fellowship as long as you are in that kind of bondage. Smoking is a sin and will destroy your spiritual life. You need to seek deliverance!” We could have counseled these dear ones thus, but we would have only been offering them some fruit off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! So instead, we offered them fruit from off the tree of LIFE! Rather than condemning them for their smoking, we **encouraged them in the Lord**. We received them with open arms. We loved them. Got them into the Word. Ministered the spirit of Truth to them. Shared sonship and the high calling of God with them. Unveiled the mysteries of the kingdom to them. And guess what happened! To my knowledge, nearly all of them were delivered from their tobacco within a very short time. Their deliverance was a **product of Life**, a working of the growth of divine life within them. Death became “swallowed up” of Life! The Son of God came that men might have life. He did not come to condemn. These two are opposites, incompatible, irreconcilable! You cannot condemn and minister life at the same time. The sons of God are arising for the very same purpose, in the very same ministry — LIFE. The world is condemned already. The whole creation is groaning and travailing, not for the law, but for the **manifestation of the sons of God** that they might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. It is indeed wonderful!

Ah, God will not condemn any soul! I believe that with all my heart. God has a great and unconditional and unfathomable love for every man! His only desire is to help, to bless, to deliver, to transform and make beautiful every life! And He is not judging you for your failures, but will stay with you until His victory is raised up in you, His law written in your flesh! He seeks to save *everyone*! Threats of eternal damnation are incompatible with the heart of God. He sees every person through those eyes of love and intense yearning and desire for them. He plans better and greater things for every man, woman, and child in this world. Does that mean nobody is punished? Not at all! Every man still reaps what he sows — if a man smokes for fifty years and dies of lung cancer, that is the reaping of what he has sown — it is not the condemnation and vindictive wrath of God which not only kills him, but then sends him to the flames of hell! God does not condemn. He does not condemn us who are His children. He corrects us, purges us, and purifies us in love and everlasting faithfulness. But He does not *condemn*! That is the “gospel” because it is GOOD NEWS!

David Wilkerson once wrote: “You see, even after I repent, I feel I have to make it all up to the Lord. But like the Prodigal Son, I can have the Father hugging my neck, kissing my cheek, putting rings on my fingers and a robe on my back, telling me to forget the past and come into His house and enjoy the feast He has prepared for me. Yet inside I’m saying, ‘I can’t go in — I’m not worthy! I’ve sinned against You. Let me pay You back. Let me grieve and carry the guilt a little longer.’ It’s easy for me to believe God forgave Israel, Nineveh, the heathen, the dying thief. But I find it hard to understand how, the very moment I turn to Him, He so quickly and lovingly accepts me *as if I had not sinned!*”

Now, someone may think that this gospel of grace is going to give you the liberty to sin, for your flesh to go wild. Let me tell you something. People say that God cannot overlook or excuse sin. Well, maybe He can’t, but I’ll tell you what He has already done. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, **not imputing their trespasses unto them.**”

God has forgiven us all our trespasses! But He has also *quicken*ed us and made us *alive in Christ*. I will not come to perfection, maturity, the image of Christ, and sonship by trying to make my Adamic life live more godly. Adam can't do it! The adulterous woman found that out! But there is a Life, even Christ, flowing from the very essence of my being that has absolutely nothing to do with my natural character, the Adamic life. It is a power greater than all! It is Christ who must be raised up in me, to be my life, my righteousness, my reality. Christ isn't formed in us in one day, one month, or one year. But Christ is growing up in all the elect who have received the call to sonship! Our Father does not condemn us while we are going from victory to victory, but still fall short of His holiness. All our sins are covered until we have FULLY OVERCOME! No license to sin here, just *grace, mercy, and great faithfulness* UNTIL WE REACH PERFECTION. Once this deep mystery is unveiled within our hearts there will be NO MORE STING OF THE LOCUSTS! Aren't you glad!

Everything grows without trying, and, on the other hand, nothing can grow by trying! No man by taking thought has ever added a cubit to his stature, nor has any son or daughter of God ever approached nearer to the stature of the Lord Jesus by working at it! Jesus did not become the Son of God by working — He became the Son of God by **growing!** Any who thinks to reach this blessed height by anxious effort is really departing from it. Christ's life unfolded itself **from a divine seed**, planted centrally in His nature, which grew as naturally as a flower from a bud. Only *life* can do that! For a seed to germinate, sprout, grow, change, develop into a plant of beauty and grace requires the power of an **indwelling life**. Therefore the man who has within himself this great power — the life of Christ — contains within himself all that is needful to become a son of God! The man in whom this life has not been activated *cannot* be transformed, but the man in whom the life has been activated *must be*. The life must develop according to its type; and being a seed of the Christ life, it must unfold into A CHRIST. The end of the growth process is perfection, the mind of Christ, the character of Christ, the power of Christ!

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. For the LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the LAW OF SIN AND DEATH” (Rom. 8:1-2). The next thing we need to understand in order to understand this mystery is that sin and death operate by a precise LAW. That is what Paul tells us in the passage above. It is “the *law* of sin and death.” The next thing we must understand is that what makes me free from that *law*, that *power*, that *influence*, and that *principle* of sin and death is ANOTHER LAW! It is “the *law* of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus!” Do we not understand that life swallows up death just as light dispels darkness? HIS SPIRIT flowing through our lives accomplishes this! But haven't we always had it turned around in our thinking? How often have we told ourselves, “If I can get rid of my old nature, if only I can conquer this habit, this temper, this unruly tongue, this lust, this...this...this...then I will have the *life* of Christ manifested in me!” We have tried to get rid of the death in us so we would have life. We have worked at eradicating the darkness from our lives so we could walk in the light. Dearly beloved friends, we have had the cart before the horse! It's like saying, “I will stand in this dark room and rebuke the darkness, and when the darkness has departed I will have light.” Oh, no, it doesn't work that way! You can rebuke the darkness until someone carries your corpse to the mortuary, but the darkness will never leave UNTIL YOU TURN ON THE LIGHT! It is light that dispels darkness, and getting rid of darkness does not create light.

God works by divine law and He has given us not only the spirit of life in Christ Jesus but the LAW of that life. And just as the law of gravity is a natural law that does not fail, so the

law of life in Christ Jesus is a definite law that will produce in us a result without our struggling to attain it. This law of life is a HIGHER LAW than the law of sin and death! This law is powerful enough to lift us up above sin and above all external pressures, above all situations, circumstances, and happenings, and above all the negative influences of the world. A great space craft is held on the launching pad by the force of gravity. But once the mighty rockets fire it is lifted up and propelled into space, defying the law of gravity. This is accomplished by a HIGHER LAW coming into operation — the law of rocket propulsion. Can we not see by this that the law of life in Christ Jesus is a HIGHER LAW than the law of sin and death! Stop struggling, precious friend of mine, with your weakness, your hang-ups, your problems — your *sins*. Instead, *seek Christ, seek Life!* Expose yourself to Him, to His presence, to His word. “Just as I am...oh Lamb of God, I come” is not just a word for the man outside of Christ; it is *the word* for any man who follows on the path of transformation into the image of the Son! Enter into His glorious presence until the ***LAW of His life consciously and experientially makes you free from the LAW of sin and death!***

Chapter 116

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God” (Rev. 9:13).

In this part of the vision, there are several very significant symbols to notice: the voice from the horns of the golden altar, the order given to the restraining messengers, the great river Euphrates, the army of horsemen, and the unrepentance of man. When the sixth angel sounded the very first thing John heard and saw was “a voice from the four horns of the golden altar” which is before, or in the presence of, God. The golden altar was seen earlier in the visions, in chapter eight. It was on this altar that the prayers of the saints, mixed with much incense, was placed, and from which they were offered unto God by the messenger (High Priest) whose place it was to minister at the golden altar. The golden altar was in the Holy Place, close to the second veil, just in front of the ark of the covenant over which the Shekinah Glory shone. We are told in Exodus 30:10 that the golden altar was “most holy unto the Lord.”

The golden altar had the blood of the sin-offering applied to the four horns, or projecting points of it, once a year for the purpose of making a ceremonial or symbolic impartation of the power of redemption into the ministry fulfilled there. The placing of the blood on the four horns indicated the world-wide efficaciousness of the power of redemption! The blood was the basis of all the service presented at that altar. Without the application of the blood, all service rendered there was unavailing. Only after the blood was applied, could the prayers of the saints be offered with the incense and ascend as a sweet-smelling fragrance to God. The altar was a prophecy, a pre-figuration of Christ our High Priest by whom, and through whom, the sacrifices of our praise, worship, and prayers are offered unto the Father in heaven (Heb. 13:15).

The blood is the life of God’s Christ, for “the life is in the blood,” we are told in the book of Leviticus. Apart from the indwelling life of Christ there can be no ministry that is acceptable to God or profitable for man. John hears the voice coming not only from the altar in the presence of God, nor even from the ministry of the altar, but from the four horns of it, those parts to which the blood has been applied. The voice he heard was the voice of the Blood! It was the voice or the word out of the very Redemptive Life of Christ! Therefore, the symbolic plagues and death which come as a result of this voice cannot be, as many teach, the vindictive judgment and unrelenting wrath of God against sinful humanity. How absurd! As though the voice of the Son of God who gave His life for the world at Calvary is now commanding that mankind pay horribly for their sins! And that this voice of condemnation and wrath would come from the very altar of prayer, worship, and praise! Oh, no! This is a redemptive, life-giving, delivering, transforming voice; in keeping with the symbol it can be nothing else!

The golden altar upon which incense offerings were made signifies the ministry of prayer, worship, and praise. By the four horns of that altar the power of that spiritual ministry is signified! Horns in the scripture are always significant of power, authority, and kingship. In Habakkuk 3:4 we are told that God is seen as having "horns coming out of His hand: and there was the hiding of His power." The horns on the animals are their source and instrument of strength, power, defense, and victory (Gen. 22:13). Four is the number of that which is world-wide, universal, and all-inclusive. The fact that we have four horns here points to the truth that all power is now given to God's Christ in the heavens and in the earth. The power of the Christ within is the power of the horns of the altar within our hearts! In this case the power lies in that which is spoken out of that realm, for John heard a voice from the four horns of the altar saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." It is the altar itself which speaks through the four horns. The voice emanates from the spiritual ministry of prayer, worship, and praise of the altar. Furthermore, the voice out of the horns of the golden altar must be speaking just at the right time, in advance of the loosing of the "four angels." It must now be noted that this voice is a prophetic voice proclaiming the loosing of the "four angels." Such a voice from the four altar horns symbolizes a great cry out of the Spirit, and from God's anointed remnant, full of strength and power, the power pictured by the "four horns." They now pray and travail mightily in spirit, not for four literal angels in the invisible spirit realm to be released, but for a release within themselves of something which has been bound, keeping them there on the border of Babylon.

Can we not see by this that it is by the power and authority in spiritual prayer, praise, and worship that the four angels in the river Euphrates are loosed. Truly this is a spiritual work and a spiritual loosing! This truth is made so very clear in the vision John saw just prior to the sounding of the first trumpet. John was beholding spiritual realities in the form of pictures. He saw the golden altar from the tabernacle of Moses, but now it is the spiritual golden altar in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! The golden altar of incense in the tabernacle of old 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 top of it rested a pan-shaped vessel, called the golden censer, on which coals taken from the brazen altar in the Outer Court, were burning. There was no chimney for the smoke to escape by, so the room was full of it; the fragrance was sweeter than anything ever smelt before! But it was not the wood which gave forth such a sweet odor when under the action of fire; it was the incense which the High Priest put on those burning coals that smelled so pleasant, and which felt so refreshing to the spirits of those who ministered there. This incense was made of four sweet spices, which gave forth their fragrance by burning. Their sweetness was not known till they were submitted to the action of fire, when the odor was sent forth in the smoke.

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 is God Himself! The golden censer represents each member of God's elect, for the holy fire of God resides in the life of every man and woman who has been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. What ignites real, spiritual praise, worship, and prayer is the fire of God upon the altar of God in our hearts! There is an unspeakable glory manifest in the spirit of worship and divine intercession that ascends from the fire upon the altar of the hearts of those who truly worship the Father in spirit and in truth. There is a living stream of the song of the Lord and the prophetic voice of the Lord that flows from our innermost being as we stand at the

golden altar of incense and worship the Father in the Spirit and by the Spirit. This is not the religious prayers and soulful worship of the popular churches, but the ministry of a people separated unto God as a priesthood unto Him. What glory rests upon those called to be God's royal priesthood! What power flashes from the golden altar of incense within! When the fire of God energizes and empowers the worship of His elect, even in our solitude, it comes from the altar of God out of the holy fire of His presence, and there is a divine fragrance that ascends with it! And out from the horns of the altar the voice of the Lord speaks of great and mighty things!

The prayers offered upon the altar are the effectual prayers of those saints who minister as priests in 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! Not every prayer rises by the quickening power of the fire of God upon the altar! People often pray very casually for whatever it is they want God to do for them or for someone else. But true, spiritual, priestly prayer is as incense. It only rises by the work of the fire of God! 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) 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. Oh yes, 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! There is such power in the true spiritual praise, worship, and prayer of God's elect, that there comes forth from it in this significant hour a prophetic word of authority commanding the loosing of the "four angels" bound in the great river Euphrates, at the border of Babylon, who are four messengers, or a four-fold word that is bound or restrained at the boundary between religious Babylon and our spiritual land of inheritance in Christ.

THE EUPHRATES RIVER

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates" (Rev. 9:13-14).

The Euphrates is mentioned twice in the Revelation — here, and in chapter sixteen, verse twelve. The epithet "great" is used in both instances: "The great river Euphrates." The literal Euphrates river begins in the Armenian Mountains and is about 1780 miles in length, by far the longest and most important river of western Asia. It is famous in Bible history and prophecy. This region was the site of the inception of human sin; here the first lie was told, the first effort of man's own "religious works" was performed, the first murder committed, the first grave was dug, and the first confederacy for the purpose of war was assembled. It was here the vast system of Babylonian idolatry originated. Israel's great progenitor, Abram, came from its other side into the land of Canaan. The rivers Nile and Euphrates are prophetically designated as the southern and northern boundaries of the

promised land (Gen. 15:18). The region of Euphrates was the scene of the long years in which the children of Israel dragged out the wearisome days of their Babylonian captivity.

The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah all speak to a time in history when a remnant of the people of Israel came out from their captivity beyond the Euphrates to return to the promised land of Israel and build again the city of Jerusalem and the temple of the Lord. The remnant of Israel came out from Babylon. The physical captivity Israel experienced in Babylon symbolizes the spiritual captivity of the Lord's spiritual people to the carnal church systems of man with their false doctrines and confusion. Confusion is a word that describes the mingling together of so many ideas and methods that nothing is clear. Just as Israel came out of Babylon, and therefore across the Euphrates, we too have been called of God to come out of the ignorance and bondage of man's carnal religious systems, control, rituals, ceremonies, programs, doctrines, and confusion.

The four angels bound in the river Euphrates signify a word and a ministry that is bound at the borders of our inheritance in Christ. This word, this ministry is no longer in the full captivity of religious Babylon, but neither has it been released to enter into the full inheritance of the land of promise. Though these can no longer function within the man-made systems of religious Babylon or the old order church systems, neither have they attained to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That this is the truth signified by these symbols no man can suspect or understand unless it has been given him to know what is meant by the great river Euphrates, and by the four "angels" bound there.

The Euphrates river bordered Babylon and was that which had to be crossed either to enter Babylon or to leave Babylon in the direction of Canaan. Sometimes it stood for Babylon itself, sometimes for the land of Canaan, but most often as a border or separation between the two. The prophet Jeremiah revealed how the Euphrates represents Babylon when he said, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labor in vain...and they shall be weary. The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah...when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into (captivity in) Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words which are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; thou shalt say, O Lord, Thou has spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her" (Jer. 51:58-64).

The Euphrates river stands for a separation between the kingdom of Babylon and the promised land of Canaan just as the Red Sea was the border and boundary of Egypt and must be crossed before the children of Israel could begin their journey to the promised land, and just as the Jordan river flowed at Canaan's border and had to be crossed in order for the Israelites to possess the land. Religious Babylon appears prominently in John's visions in later chapters of the Revelation, but here we are given a view of a word and a ministry that has arisen and departed from Babylon, beginning the journey to their spiritual land and inheritance in Canaan, which is the fullness of Christ; but they have not fully entered into their inheritance, being bound or restrained at the very borders of Babylon.

That the river of Egypt, the Nile, and the river of Babylon, the Euphrates, were the divinely determined boundaries of the land of Canaan is stated plainly by the Lord when He gave Abraham the promise, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt (the Nile) unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18). Again in Deuteronomy 1:7 we read that the children of Israel received the command: "Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto...the great river, the river Euphrates." The same we read in Deuteronomy 11:24 and Joshua 1:4. We find that the promise was realized in a literal way in the time of Solomon, for of him we read that he ruled over all the kingdoms from the river (that is, Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines (I Kings 4:21). A number of other passages allude to this river as the boundary of the land of promise, and therefore I find that in its spiritual sense the river Euphrates represents the ideal and real boundary line between the spiritual and heavenly kingdom of God and the carnal and earthly kingdom of religious Babylon. That is the mystery!

We will understand this great truth when we see by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that the symbolic "four angels" bound in the river Euphrates are the Lord's elect, His firstfruits company! Not that all of us are still bound there, though some may indeed be, yet none of us can testify that we have now entered into the fullness of our inheritance in Christ! Not one of us can claim absolute perfection and maturity, nor have any of us put on bodily immortality and been manifest as sons of God, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption. We have truly received the call to sonship, we are now on our way into the full stature of the firstborn Son of God; each of us has attained to our present standing in Christ, and I do not doubt for a moment that some of us are yet bound in the great river Euphrates!

This has been a part of our experience since we first heard the cry of the Spirit to "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). This was pre-figured by Israel. They had been carried away captives into Babylon because of their departure from the ways of the Lord. When the call of God came to those in Babylon's captivity, it was this same call, "Come out of her so that you may escape her punishment!" Oh, yes! God was about to judge Babylon, and it was time for the Lord's people to come out from her, not only to escape the judgment, but also to enter into all the glory of their own land of inheritance. The Jews who were captives in Babylon had become so situated in this foreign land, that they became insensitive to the Spirit's call. They had their priests and their laws, and carried on their religion as best they could right there in Babylon. Very few were tuned into God's purpose, they cared not that God had chosen Jerusalem, that the temple was the center of His presence, nor that Zion was without a ruling king. They had mingled the word of the Lord with the superstitions and ways of Babylon, had become a reproach among the nations, and lost their purpose in God to be His chosen ones as a peculiar nation.

Only a few, a remnant, returned to the land in answer to God's call. What happened to the remainder? They became partakers of the promises of God against Babylon! When Babylon was defeated and spoiled, those who remained with her were again put to the sword and carried further into captivity by the beast nations. There is absolutely no place of compromise! If you do not have the desire to be in the presence of God (Spirit), or in His house (temple — ye are the temple), or in His government (New Jerusalem), or as a reigning king (Zion, sonship), you will remain a captive in the spiritual Babylon. And if you have come out of Babylon, but are now bound on the borders of your true and glorious

inheritance in the nature, glory, and power of God's Christ, then hear today the voice from the four horns of the golden altar, sounding as a trumpet in the land, proclaiming, "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates!"

Ah, this word comes prophetically from the midst of a people who are the priests of the Lord at the golden altar! There is such power in their praise, in their spiritual worship, and in their spirit-energized prayers, that it brings forth that word of authority commanding the loosing of a word and a ministry from the border of Babylon! It speaks release to the Lord's called and chosen elect to arise and enter on in to the fullness of their inheritance as sons of the living God! In earlier days of God's dealings we all arose to "come out," yet there was a season when we had obeyed the Spirit's call to come out to the best of our understanding and ability, but though we separated from our previous entanglements in the worldly church systems, and separated from many of the more glaring errors taught by them, and were in that measure separated from Babylon, yet we had not at that time received the full revelation of the high calling of God in Christ and the deep purgings, processings, and dealings necessary to bring us into our full inheritance as manifest sons of our Father. Thus, we were not yet separated unto His great sonship and kingdom purposes! We had come out as far as we could, but still had not pressed on to possess our inheritance in our new promised land! Oh, yes! It was there that we were "bound" in our word, in our vision, in our experience, in our ministry, in that great river Euphrates, at the boundary between religious Babylon and the spiritual and heavenly mount Zion! To those who stand at the boundary of their inheritance I today speak release unto a new, fresh, full word of revelation, experience, glory, and transforming power! Arise, my beloved, and possess your land promised in Christ before the foundation of the world! It is indeed wonderful!

There are some today who have come out to the border of the land and feel that we have gone far enough. Talk about the inheritance beyond the River in the hills and mountains of Canaan, in the courts of the temple of God, and the kingly splendor of mount Zion, and it is thought to be "far-out" teaching. What we have is good. Why be concerned about anything more beyond the River? Let us just camp right here at the fertile valley of the Euphrates, and seek an enlargement of what we have already received. We speak in tongues, we have gifts of the Spirit, we prophesy, we dance in the Spirit, we have beautiful singing and worship, and some healings and miracles. Why get excited about things "far-out" beyond the Euphrates? Why seek after perfection, the mind of Christ, incorruption and immortality, the glory of manifest sonship, or reigning with Christ in the kingdom and delivering creation from the bondage of corruption?

The Euphrates is also symbolic of the spiritual borderland between the world of darkness and the glories of Eden; between flesh and spirit; between half-heartedness and abandonment to God; between childishness and maturity; between carnality and spirituality; between the carnal mind and the mind of Christ; between the realm of death and the fullness of His incorruptible life. It is not enough to have revelation of the high calling of God in Christ. It is not enough to have visions of the life of sonship to God. It is not enough to see by the spirit a realm of perfection and glory where the carnal mind is exchanged for the mind of Christ and death is swallowed up of His life. Revelations and visions are not possession; and though they may be from God, they are only given to encourage us to hasten our footsteps that we may enter in! It is not enough for us to leave the world and religious Babylon and begin the journey; we must hasten on to the end, follow all the way, and finish our course even to the last step.

How many who start on the journey, settle down at the great river Euphrates! How many settle for something better than what God has called them out of, but less than what they have been called to! Ah, yes, this borderland is an alluring place, a subtle experience, a crafty and cunning temptation. It is the territory between Babylon and mount Zion where are felt the powers of both, but in the mixture neither are fully experienced. Those who abide here settle down comfortably in some “New Testament Church” order, with shepherds, worship teams, and gifts of the Spirit — and fail to GO ON! These concern themselves with the “first principles” of the doctrine of Christ, of repentance from dead works, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, a future resurrection and eternal judgment (Heb. 6:1-2), and lay these foundations again and again, refusing to leave them in order to go on to perfection!

The borderlands are a dangerous place for all who settle there. If they are not drowned in that swift and terrible river, they eventually retrace their steps and are found in the world from whence they came, for it is so very close, and so very comfortable, and there is no treacherous journey and no battle to possess it. Ah, we praise God for these borderlands, for it is needful that we pass through them, but pass we must! The vision of a distant land of beauty and fruitfulness and glory does not feed nor satisfy the one who sees it. It must be experienced! It has to be entered into, possessed! Moses did not go over into Canaan, though for forty years he bore the children of Israel as a nursing mother bears a child upon her bosom, and stood between God and His people as the mouthpiece of God. God took Moses up on the top of mount Pisgah and let him view the land, but He told Moses that he could not go over to possess it. The sight was, no doubt, beautiful to this servant of God; and yet how was he profited by the milk and honey, which flowed in the land that he beheld?

Though the vineyards were ever so green and fruitful in the promised land of Canaan, what joy could they bring to him who would never enjoy their fruits nor drink of their vintage? Though the pomegranates were large and luscious, though the olive trees were green and loaded with fruit, he would never eat of this perfect fruit nor be anointed with the pure, abundant oil. Though the sun shone brighter than he had ever seen it in Egypt, or during those forty years in the desert, where he was taught in God’s school of solitude, how did it profit him? He would never be warmed by its gracious rays! And what shall it profit us, my beloved, if we settle down in the borderland, if we allow ourselves to be bound in the great river Euphrates, in the “in part” realm of spiritual experience, in the glory of that which falls short of the promised fullness, in an old “church order” rather than the glory and the power of the new day of the kingdom of God; in the satisfaction of “blessings” and gaining an occasional victory rather than overcoming all things, even unto the last enemy, which is death; in contentment with the “indwelling” of His Spirit instead of a total TRANSFORMATION INTO HIS IMAGE!

He who writes these lines is fully aware that neither in writing them, nor yet in reading them, can I, or you, lay hold upon the fullness of Christ. It must be walked out experientially in each of our lives as we are released by the word of the Lord from that place where we have been bound in the borderland, in the great river Euphrates. We must arise then, and make the journey all the way to the heights of Zion! The apostle James put it so succinctly: “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22).

There were some among the disciples, who were privileged to behold the glory of manifest sonship, and the glorious One who is the firstborn of this Order. Shortly before Jesus

accomplished His decease, He took Peter, James, and John up into a mountain apart from the others. “And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became glistening, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them.” Peter, in speaking afterwards of this ineffable experience wrote, “We were eye witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father glory and honor, when there came to Him such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount” (II Pet. 1:16-17).

Though Peter, James, and John beheld the glory of Christ’s sonship and heard the voice of the Father witnessing to Him, they could not enter into that glory at that time. Before they could themselves enter into the glory of sonship to God they had a course to run, they had a ministry to fulfill, they had battles to fight, victories to win, they had a faith to keep even unto death. Only when they had done these things, could they enter into this glory, which they beheld upon the mount of transfiguration. So it is with us. How beautiful is that land of far distances! Our souls are ravished by the revelations of our high calling, which we see in spirit while upon this high elevation, caught up in the Spirit. But we must come down and hasten over the path that leads to the possession of all that we have seen, and all that God has offered us. There is no working of the adversary so treacherous as the working of deception that would make us mistake for possession the great revelations God gives of sonship and the kingdom of God and our high calling in Him!

Well did Ray Prinzing write, “The Holy Spirit imparts a revelation on how much the institutional religious system is a part of the present day Babylon, and then He whispers in your heart, ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ So, painful as the process has been for some, we come out — to walk day by day as the Holy Spirit would lead. Yet we find that that word is not finished with its work in us — for then it must purge out all the traits of Babylon that are in us. It is one thing to be called out of Babylon, it is quite another to have all of Babylon purged out of you. BUT THE WORD WENT FORTH, He spoke it in your being, and when THE WORD HAS FINISHED ITS INWORKING, you will be free of Babylon, inside and out, because His word will not return unto Him void, it will have prospered in all that He sent it to do!

“Pre-requisite to His receiving us on any deeper level, is be ye separate! We must come out from all the unholy realms of Babylon, and no more touch that unclean thing! Coming out is a process, wrought by degrees, as He strips away the old, and prepares us for the new. Many think they have come out — perhaps they have physically, but often their mind is still in the clutches of the old traditions. So wrapped in the cocoons of creed and doctrine, there is a long process of coming out, just as there is also a long process of entering in to the new. There is a long process to where we truly worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, untainted by any of these other things. Holiness is a separation, not only from, but also unto — presenting ourselves unto the Lord, placing ourselves before Him for His sovereign disposal.

“How thankful we are that He can lead us far beyond the confines of our human comprehension, and open up to our inner man the vision of divine reality. In His own unique way He brings our thoughts and imaginations into conformity to His will and purpose. How we pray for a break-through, beyond all the barriers which have held us in limbo, in dimensions of emptiness, waiting for His time and season for full manifestation. Verily, ‘He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in...’ (Deut. 6:23). Called out of the world, called out of religious Babylon, called out of self with its own will and way, to

be brought into the FELLOWSHIP OF THE SON — to partake of Him, be brought in — to be found in Him — the unlimited expanses of His love, where we might walk that path which the vulture's eye hath not seen, bringing us into His glory. May He lift us up from the low way of religion, into the high way of His Spirit!" — end quote.

Call to remembrance here that the reason for the loosing of the four angels which are bound in the river Euphrates is that they may enter on in to their full inheritance. The inheritance was the land that stretched all the way from the world of Babylon, beyond the Euphrates river, on to the borders of the land of Egypt. While there are many beautiful spiritual types in Israel's entrance into and possession of the promised land, the fact remains that throughout the Old Testament one reads the history of a physical people receiving natural blessings in an earthly land. In the Old Testament the Lord always referred to an earthly land. You can recall how many times from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the end of Malachi the Lord stressed the land again and again. The land...the land...the land I promised to thy fathers; the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the land I promised you; I will bring you into the land; I will give you the land; I will bless you in the land. It was the land, the land, always the LAND! Yet, the whole expanse of that which God promised Abraham and his seed could not be found in that natural plane of things that he explored, for it spoke of greater things — that which is spiritual!

If we know the scriptures and have light from God, we will realize what is meant by "the land." In the hidden language of the Spirit, the symbol of "land" has the meaning of "inheritance." Many scriptures speak of the fact that all the inheritance of Israel was in the land! But the New Testament teaches us something deeper. Land is not the destination. Being in a sacred space does not guarantee that one will act more nobly. History is also replete with examples — the rebellious Israelites at mount Sinai, right at the very holy mount of God; the marauding, plundering, ravaging armies of the Crusades, and the suicide bombers of today — all show that you can be physically in a so-called "holy place" and still not be holy! One would think that after possessing their land the children of Israel would be ready to fulfill their destiny in God. Moments of triumph do fill the record— the lightning conquest of the land, the new capital in Jerusalem, the magnificent holy temple, and under Solomon a brief blazing empire across the Fertile Crescent. But the overall feeling of the Old Testament books is disillusionment — the judges fail, the kings fail, the priests fail, the people fail, even the temple fails. Because of these failures God flushes the people from the land He promised them. He exiles them. Then Jesus came! He came and revealed the great mystery that the "land" was merely a symbol of everything the people of Israel were longing for. He introduced the people to something higher: an understanding of the nonphysical dimensions of God, our Father who is in heaven, God who is spirit and can be worshiped only in spirit and in truth. Then with the coming of the Holy Spirit the essence of the land was transferred to a higher, spiritual plane. The question might be asked, Then why does God promise land to Abraham at the very beginning? Because God relates to man on two levels — the plane of the physical and the plane of the spiritual. As a nation, the people needed land. But in their spiritual life, they did not need land. The firstborn Son of God came into the world to reveal the great truth that physical land, political power, even a temple made with hands, are not the ends for God's people. FELLOWSHIP AND UNION WITH GOD IS THE END! You do not need land, laws, priesthoods, rituals, or temples in order to experience and know God. In fact, those things detract from knowing union with Him! Therefore, the land is but a figure of CHRIST AS OUR ALL IN ALL!

In the Old Testament the descendants of Abraham were brought into the land, first from Egypt and the wilderness, and again from Babylon. In the New Covenant those born of the Spirit are brought into Christ. Have you truly realized that Christ is now the territory of your life? Christ is the land! The inheritance is in the land, and Christ is the land! "...that He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: IN WHOM WE HAVE OBTAINED AN INHERITANCE, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him..." (Eph. 1:10-11). So many glorious realities are ours in Christ! Time would fail me to quote the many scriptures that explore the expansiveness of our inheritance in Christ. You may feel today that you are living on this earth, compassed about, hedged in, and shut up by the myriad problems, pressures, frustrations, and limitations of this world. But you must realize that this earth, nor any part of it, including the land of Israel, Great Britain, America, or any other place, is not your real land; nothing of this world is your sphere of living! "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light...and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:12-13). The old land is but a type of Christ as everything to us! By virtue of the new birth we now have the ground to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ! God gave us this ground. It is greater than any ground in Israel, Great Britain, America, or anywhere else! We have obtained an inheritance, not in Israel, not in America, not in the earth, not even in the heavens alone; but rather IN HIM. This ground is our land and we may enter in and fully possess all its glories by faith! Isn't it wonderful!

I deeply feel that most of the Lord's people are still living in the old land—the "shadow"—and have discovered but little of the true land, the substance of which is Christ. What a vast difference there is between the shadow of an object and the object itself! Shadows can be beautiful, as when, for instance, a day draws toward late afternoon and the mountains cast long shadows, creating wonderful illusions, but with no substance to them. It is my conviction after sixty years of ministry that multitudes of Christians are today contenting themselves with the shadow instead of the substance.

I think we can look upon the shadow and the substance as picturing two sorts of lives lived by God's people. There is a life, if we can indeed call it such, which is just a shadow of the real thing; things spiritual are not real to the one living in it; the whole thing reeks of the scent of the "earthiness" of the old natural land. These folk, though religious, church-going people, may even sing choruses, clap their hands, speak in tongues and prophesy, but in most aspects of their daily lives MIND EARTHLY THINGS. They preach a lot of frothy discourses concerning the abundant life, but the abundant life of which they speak is not the abundant life of Christ Himself, but mere external blessings of answered prayers, healing, health, jobs, bank accounts, automobiles, houses, clothes, and a thousand other earthly things which they imagine represent the "abundant life." It is not the abundant life of "those who dwell in heaven" but of "those who dwell upon the earth." All through the book of Revelation we are told what befalls those who "dwell upon the earth!" The abundant life is experienced in CHRIST THE SUBSTANCE, not in the shadow. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth, saith the Lord. If God has favored you with temporal things, then you may accept them with thanksgiving, but do not deceive yourself by supposing that these temporal things are a sign of God's favor or your great faith or spirituality, for such is not the case. The fleshly Israel of old enjoyed all these earthly things for which men seek, but they did not have the abundant life Jesus came to bring!

Only the Holy Spirit can make this real to us, but one of the most significant utterances ever made by the apostle Paul is found in his epistle to the Ephesians. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST" (Eph. 1:3). The source of all blessing is God who is Spirit. "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). However, the blessings and benefits which make up our "inheritance in Christ" are not primarily temporal, physical, or natural blessings for the outer-earth-man. They are not mere creature comforts. Oh, no! They are spiritual blessings bestowed upon the inner-new-creation-man. These spiritual blessings are received and experienced only "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." They are in Him and are communicated from the high and holy realm in which He dwells. These are the blessings of the life of sonship, and when you have appropriated all the blessings of this new and heavenly land which is Christ, you will be a manifest son of God. That is the richness of this land!

This glorious land is the realm of incorruption which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow, or death. It is filled with blessings which God has covenanted with all who dwell in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, blessings of wisdom and knowledge, of joy and peace, of love and faith, of grace and glory, of righteousness and power, of the mind of Christ and the image of God. The mark of a son is when he asks most often for spiritual blessings instead of temporal blessings. One will know that he is no longer numbered among the lusty throng who "dwell upon the earth" when, in all his seeking, he seeks only and always those things which are "above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God."

The words of the inspired apostle Paul come ringing like a trumpet through the centuries, the truth falling like dew upon the spiritual ear of each called and chosen member of God's Christ. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16-17). Again, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4:6-7). An heirship always implies an inheritance. But there is a truth deeper and more wonderful than this! As the ocean includes the seas, the bays, the straits, which, though known by separate names, are parts of its majestic and all-embracing fullness, so is there a dimension of HIS INHERITANCE that encompasses ALL that is ours in Christ.

In the law of the Old Testament priesthood, "The Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them. I AM THY PART, and THINE INHERITANCE, among the children of Israel" (Num. 18:20). It was a very satisfactory arrangement for the pious priest. He could not own any land in Israel. But he could well dispense with the olive yards and vineyards, the cornfields and homesteads of Canaan, if he might have GOD HIMSELF as the strength of his heart, the source of his supply, and his portion forever. And the Psalmist eagerly caught at the thought, gladly surrendering all portion in this life, if only he might be "satisfied" with God (Ps. 17:15). "The LORD is the portion of MINE INHERITANCE and my cup (supply): Thou maintainest my lot. Yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Ps. 17:5-6).

Ah, as God's kings and priests our inheritance is God Himself! That is the true inheritance of every son of God! Not golden harps. Not golden streets. Not walls of jasper or pearly gates. Not a cabin in the corner or a mansion over the hilltop. Not wings and a white

nightgown with which to flit about over the Elysium hills of glory. There is something deeper, more inward and rapturous — the possession of God. HEIRS OF G-O-D! Not merely heirs of the things of God, but heirs of God Himself. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! Heirs of all the communicable glories of the divine nature and power. To know Him, to explore His being, to live on His fullness, to discover new tracts and continents in the “terra incognita” of Godhead, to see and share His glory, to be transformed into His image, to receive His authority and power, to be filled with His wisdom and knowledge — this is “the heritage of the sons of God.” Blessed be His wonderful name!

Beloved, you and I have been given an inheritance in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has left us a title deed to His very own wisdom, righteousness, nature, glory, and power! Of course, Jesus lived in absolute poverty while on this earth; He owned no land, no vast estate, no great herds of cattle, no store of gold or precious stones, no account in the bank. But He willed to us riches greater than the diamond mines of South Africa, greater than the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, greater than the gross national product of the United States of America. Jesus has provided us an inheritance that makes us far richer than a Rockefeller, Bill Gates, or any Middle Eastern oil Sheik. It is the inheritance of all the riches of His very own life and glory! Once you understand the value of this inheritance you will count everything else in your life and in this world as mere rubbish. You will seek after it with all your mind, strength, and heart, and be a glad and willing heir to His legacy.

Indeed, people, yea, the Lord’s people, seem exceedingly slow to recognize the value of our inheritance in Christ. Just like when the Mount Morgan Gold Mine in Australia was first opened up, more than a century ago, a poor farmer sold the land, which he had dexterously tilled for years, to the Morgan Brothers for \$3,200, and went insane, sometime after, when he found that the same land was sold for forty million dollars! All about him was a treasure beyond his feeble comprehension, and rightly his, if only he had discovered and mined it, but he entered not into the possession of its value. Just as naturally, just as easily, and just as tragically — only with longer and more serious consequences — most believers today are busy “cultivating” for God and miss altogether the unsearchable riches of God, by failing to mine the “gold.”

The most important thing we can seek God for in this life is the value of our inheritance in Christ — and it’s waiting to be claimed! As this vision is birthed in your heart, you will begin to hear the voice from the four horns of the golden altar saying to the sixth angel which has the trumpet, “LOOSE THE FOUR ANGELS WHICH ARE BOUND IN THE GREAT RIVER EUPHRATES!” Ah, yes, there will be a loosing, a release within you to arise from that place where you now are, to press forward into the land of your inheritance. Truly this is the sound of the sixth trumpet! It speaks of God’s mighty work in His elect to bring us into the fullness of Christ as sons of the living God! Here we are nearing the end of our journey, for “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God (Christ in you) should be FINISHED, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets” (Rev. 10:7). Aren’t you glad!

Kelly Varner shared these challenging and penetrating words: “Since the great outpouring of the Spirit in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s, God’s people have been hearing these glorious truths of sonship and inheritance. But what good is it to know these things if we continue to hesitate to walk in them? We are not the first people to come to the threshold of the Kingdom. One generation has already died in the wilderness of fear and unbelief. If you and I do not arise and walk in what our Saviour died for, then we, too, shall go by way of the grave and wait for our children or our children’s children to get us out! The creation

is groaning for real deliverance, not merely some deeper teaching or some higher concept. We must bring the invisible into the visible. This Gospel of the Kingdom must be translated into a lifestyle that all men can read and understand. Someone must come forth and demonstrate, 'If you have seen me, you have seen the Father!'"

Our friend, Jackie Caporaso, once expressed this truth thus: "We are at the border of the land. We are hearing the rallying trumpet — the sharp word which is calling us to press on! This is what Jesus has prepared us for. This is why He led us to overcome daily our personal battles, small or great. Will we find it in our hearts to follow Him all the way and overcome the intimidations, doubts, weariness, pain, discouragements, and all the things which would keep us from the goal? Indeed, Canaan represents that place in God where the sons of God who have valiantly fought their own battles, and now led by Jesus, are putting all enemies under their feet...sin, sickness, corruption, and death itself being the last enemy to overcome." May God release within all who read these words that word, that life, and that ministry, which have been bound at the border of our full inheritance in Christ, even in the great river Euphrates!

Chapter 117

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates” (Rev. 9:13-14).

The Euphrates river bordered Babylon and was that which had to be crossed either to enter Babylon or to leave Babylon in the direction of the land of Canaan. In the visions of the book of Revelation the Euphrates river stands symbolically for the separation between the kingdom of religious Babylon and our promised land of inheritance in Christ. That the river of Egypt, the Nile, and the river of Babylon, the Euphrates, were the divinely determined boundaries of the land of Canaan is stated plainly by the Lord when He gave Abraham the promise, “Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt (the Nile) unto the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18).

In the Old Testament we have the history of Israel’s long captivity in Babylon, where they had been carried away after being conquered by king Nebuchadnezzar. After seventy years a remnant of the people of Israel came out from their captivity beyond the Euphrates to return to the promised land of Israel and build again the city of Jerusalem and the temple of the Lord. The physical captivity Israel experienced in Babylon symbolizes the spiritual captivity of the Lord’s spiritual people in the Mystery Babylon of the book of Revelation, the carnal church systems of man with their false doctrines, fleshly ways, and confusion. Just as Israel came out of Babylon, and therefore across the Euphrates, we too have been called of God to come out of the ignorance and bondage of man’s carnal religious systems, control, rituals, ceremonies, programs, doctrines, and confusion.

The four angels bound in the great river Euphrates signify a word and a ministry that is bound at the borders of our inheritance in Christ. This word, this ministry, and this people are no longer in the full captivity of religious Babylon, but neither have they been released to enter into the full inheritance of the land of promise! Though this speaks of a people who in their experience of Christ have left the organized land of Babylon and no longer function within the man-made systems of religious Babylon, neither have they pressed on into their full inheritance in the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ. That this is the great truth signified by these symbols no man can suspect or understand unless it has been given him to know what is meant by the great river Euphrates, and by the four angels bound there. We truly understand this deep mystery once we see by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God that the symbolic “four angels” bound or restrained in the river Euphrates are the Lord’s elect, His firstfruits company! Not that all of us are still bound there at the extremity of the borderland, though some may indeed be, yet none of us can testify that we have pressed on into our spiritual promised land and possessed our full inheritance!

We are all looking for our promised land, for our full inheritance in Christ as manifest sons of God! The land is unsearchably great, unlimitedly rich. The dimensions of the land are the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth of the fullness of Christ. The land is all the riches and glory of Christ Himself! The land is peace, joy, righteousness, the mind of Christ, wisdom, knowledge, incorruptible and immortal life, omnipotent power, dominion, and glory. All this is ours as children of God, but only as we grow up into Christ and truly put on Christ do we become mature and arrive in the position to assume this responsibility of possessing our possessions. We are talking about the full stature of Christ within ourselves, not gold bath tubs in heaven. There is a remnant of the Lord's people today who have not only heard and obeyed the call to "come out of Babylon," but they have also heard the voice from the horns of the golden altar commanding the sixth angel holding the sixth trumpet to "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates!" By a mature understanding and a divine faith we now see the way to arise and leave the borderlands, and press on in to our promised inheritance and take possession of all the riches and glory of full sonship to God!

Long held in the captivity of religious Babylon we could say with the people of Israel, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Ps. 137:1-4). Even in Babylon there was a faint remembrance of our homeland and our sonship to God in the realm of the spirit before the foundation of the world, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy! This remembrance is what gave us the keen discerning sense that there was more in God than we were experiencing there in Babylon. Oh, how our hearts cried out for the pure reality of our Father's presence, glory, power, and purpose! This whole world, even the best of it, is a "strange land" to those in whose breasts beats the vision of the full glory of God. Our hope and our vision is set on the "better things" of the fullness of Christ, and this hope makes us strangers to this world and the things in it, as well as the religious orders of man.

Our union with God and His eternal purposes is established within all who are possessing their land of inheritance in Christ. Our home is no longer in Babylon! But our homeland, our inheritance, is in that spiritual city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the celestial mount Zion in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation stone of this city as well as its spirit and substance. The Psalmist said of the Lord, "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God" (Ps. 87:1-3).

Commenting on this passage, Paul Mueller wrote, "The foundation of the city of God is in the holy mountain of Zion. And the Lord loves Zion, and her gates, more than all the literal, natural dwelling places of Jacob. That heavenly, spiritual Zion is the city of God! And we all should know that this city of God is the realm of the Spirit where Christ and His saints dwell. It is not a literal city, with literal streets of gold, but it is the realm of the Spirit. The Lord loves that spiritual city of Zion more than all our literal dwelling places, and so should we! Because the Lord has set His love upon this city, glorious things are spoken of her.

"Our homeland, our promised land, our Beulah land, our citizenship, or our inheritance, is the combined realm of the Spirit united with the earth, to bring restoration to it all. Our promised land or our inheritance is the new heavens and the new earth, which is now being recreated by the power of Him who is the Word of God. And it is from that heavenly,

spiritual realm that Christ shall appear to transform and fashion anew these bodies of our humiliation, and to recreate them to be like the body of the glory and majesty of Christ. He shall accomplish this by exerting the power and the energy that enables Him to subject everything everywhere to Himself. Christ has appeared many times in the past, revealing Himself as Savior, as our Baptizer and Healer, and as the Rain of His Spirit. This time Christ shall appear, again revealing Himself as our Savior, to fully save us in body as well as in mind and spirit. We are now learning to be comfortable in the realm of the Spirit, for that realm is our true home. Our true citizenship is in that realm of the Spirit, not anywhere in this present world (Heb. 10:34)” — end quote.

What or where is our promised land, our homeland, the land of our inheritance? It is this earth married or joined to God in Christ! Christ is the Word made flesh and man redeemed to his sonship in the family of God. That state of full and eternal union in God is our spiritual and heavenly promised land of Canaan! The scripture tells us that Christ is the very image of God. The word in the Greek for image is the word from which we get our English word character. The image of God is the character of God! The character is in you, it is in the Christ, in your spirit. When you behold this Christ within, the glory of Christ begins to shine and the veil is done away; the character of God is seen by all about. The one thing that terrifies the forces of darkness is the fear that someday those who believe in Christ will wake up to the dynamic potential of the life of the spirit within them and begin to live fully out of that realm. When this happens, the great problems that plague mankind will disappear! Ignorance will go; sin will go; disease will go; limitation will go; Satan will go; death will go; bondage of every sort will fade away and the kingdom of God will be demonstrated in men. What a hope! What a day! The wonder of it all is that this Day is even now breaking in the hearts and lives of God’s elect!

I proclaim to you that the crisis hour in the history of the world has come, and God’s people must now arise and shine and courageously take hold of life and bring deliverance to the whole world. Oh yes, we have heard the voice from the four horns of the golden altar saying to the sixth angel who holds the sixth trumpet, “Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates! Release every one of my called and chosen elect to arise from the borderlands of their inheritance that they may enter on in to the fullness of life and glory and power in the realm of the Spirit!” Truly we have come to the kingdom for such a time as this!

THE HOUR, THE DAY, THE MONTH, AND THE YEAR

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men” (Rev. 9:15).

This verse contains an unusual way of designating time, pinpointing this mighty work of God to the exact hour. While the King James Bible says these four angels are prepared for an hour, a day, a month, and a year, that is not how the Greek text reads. It should be the hour, the day, the month, and the year. The scripture in the Greek does not mean that they will spend an hour, a day, a month, and a year in preparation for their work, nor does it mean that they will fight (for they are revealed to become an army) for an hour, a day, a month, and a year. It is a way of saying that once they were loosed from their bondage in the river Euphrates they were then specially prepared for a precise moment, in the exact hour of the exact day of the exact month of the exact year in which they will perform their mission — and our heavenly Father in His omniscience knows exactly when that moment will be! “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:18).

God has set a date to finish His work in each member of His elect! How do we know that He has set such a date? First, we know it by revelation, but it is also right here in the grammar of our passage. The definite Greek article *teen*, which is the English *the*, placed once only before all the time periods, indicates in the Greek that the hour in the day, and the day in the month, and the month in the year, had been definitely fixed by the Lord. The article would have been omitted if the sum of the periods had been meant. This reveals the great truth that there is a “time appointed of the Father” for everything in the unfolding of God’s purposes, in our lives both individually and collectively. Was it not when the “fullness of time” was come that God sent forth His firstborn Son into the world? (Gal. 4:4). Was it not when the day of Pentecost was “fully come” that there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and the disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:1-4). It is also in the dispensation of the “fullness of times” that God shall gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even into Him (Eph. 1:10).

As we continue this journey into the fullness of God, each of God’s called and chosen elect is led unreservedly by the Holy Spirit to experience this wonderful sovereignty — causing each to do everything at the right time, to be in the right place at the right time, to take each step in accordance with our heavenly Father’s will and His divine intervention in our lives. All must be done by God, at His appointed time; we must then act each day within His divine provision and leading, and then patiently wait for the hour of the day of the month of the year that HE has chosen!

By revelation of the Holy Spirit we are all assured that the day of our manifestation approaches! There is a kingly and priestly people, a remnant in whom the Spirit of God is working a transformation. In due time God shall manifest this king-priest company and their NEW STATE OF BEING shall utterly silence all the false claims of carnal men. No philosophy, no science, no religion on earth shall be able to gainsay the wisdom and truth proclaimed by the sons of God! No man, no professor, no doctor, no politician, no military general, no organization, and no government on earth shall be able to withstand the glory, authority, and power emanating from God’s sons! Conformed to His image, filled with His Spirit, the embodiment and personification of His wisdom, nature, grace, incorruptible life and power — no man will be able to counterfeit the reality of this new state of being, and these shall redound to the glory of God. Obviously, “no man taketh this honor unto Himself, but he that is called of God.” It is a transformation that is God-wrought, for God starts it, God works it out, and God brings it to its conclusion, it is all of Him and that is why the flesh cannot duplicate such glorious, divine handiwork!

The vision of sonship is not fulfilled through self-effort. Many people try to place themselves in certain positions, claiming to be this son, that angel, or the other prophet, etc., claiming that they personally and individually fulfill some personage the scriptures have prophesied should come on the scene. In the past century or so “Elijah” has appeared at least three or four times, I have personally seen two of these Elijahs, and have a photograph of the third, complete with his ceremonial robes. The “two witnesses” have manifested on more than one occasion, I met them, a man and his wife, in Las Cruces, New Mexico, in 1972 and I met another in St. Petersburg, Florida in the spring of 1974. That set of witnesses later split up, the first witness excommunicated the second witness from his church, and the dismissed witness came to Texas and founded his own organization. Incidentally, neither were clothed with sackcloth, they both wore the finest clothes, ate the finest food, and flew around the country in their own jet airplanes!

In 1962 I visited a home where John the Revelator had taken up residence upon his return to earth, and with him was king David and a few other of the sons of God who had already “by-passed the grave,” they had their glorified bodies and were shortly to take over the world. In 1966 I passed through their area again and it occurred to me to stop and see how the “kingdom” was progressing. I discovered that the “immortal” king David had died, the sons had dispersed, and king David’s wife whispered furtively in my ear that the lady in the next room was “a devil.” One sister I know, who previously had a beautiful ministry, and with whom we had precious fellowship, tried to take the honor to herself, declared herself a High Priestess, clothed herself in robes and expensive furs and diamonds, fell into even grosser delusions and became in the end just another cheap religious racketeer. What a contrast to the Christ, the firstborn Son of God, who glorified not Himself — but “made Himself of no reputation...He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore GOD hath highly exalted Him!” (Phil. 2:7-9). Ah, yes, it was by the direct oath of God Himself that our Lord Jesus was exalted and lifted up to this high place — for, “He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee, the same said also unto Him, Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedek.”

As one has written: “In many of its aspects haste is the mark of immaturity. To those who are now becoming spiritually mature, there is an undergirding of knowledge that ‘to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose...’ (Eccl. 3:1), and they desire to only move in GOD’S TIMING, not to rush ahead in a final outburst of self-promotion to claim to be this, or that. When the vision seems to tarry, we can well afford to ‘wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry’ (Hab. 2:3). At the Father’s appointed time He will fully manifest His own — placing them in the position for which He has been preparing them. Yes, in the making of kings and priests through whom God shall administer the affairs of His kingdom, HE has carefully selected His vessels, and is now processing them by means that stagger the imagination with their intensity and scope. But God shall not be satisfied with an inferior product, hence the transformation must penetrate into every fiber of our being until the whole becomes A NEW CREATION in Christ Jesus” — end quote.

I do not hesitate to add that only those who receive the call, who come to realize that they are, beyond any shadow of doubt, apprehended to sonship to God, will be FULLY PROCESSED AND POSITIONED AND BIRTHED INTO THE NEW ORDER FOR THE NEW AGE. These are they who have come out of Babylon, and now hear the voice from the horns of the golden altar saying to the sixth angel with the sixth trumpet, ‘Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates!’ Each son must come to this realization and hear this voice through a personal encounter with the Lord! Each son must receive the call and each must hear His voice for themselves. In order to be a king-priest after the Order of Melchizedek our existence must spring from the Father’s mighty work in us, and not from any self-desire or self-effort. Those in whom God is working unto this end are now being prepared for the exact hour of the exact day of the exact month of the exact year — THE PRECISE AND APPOINTED TIME OF THE FATHER FOR OUR MANIFESTATION! Aren’t you glad!

200,000,000

“And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them” (Rev. 9:16).

If you believe in the traditional literalist interpretation of the book of Revelation, there are some serious issues you are going to have to face. Hundreds of these literalist teachers

are proclaiming across the land that in the days of the Great Tribulation, here at the end of the age, a nuclear war takes place; one third of the world's vegetation is destroyed, all the world's oceans are turned into blood, as the blood of a dead man, and every living thing in the seas dies; all the rivers and springs of water in the whole world are turned into blood, there is no fresh water to drink anywhere on the planet, and there is a great run on Coca Cola, but even the stores of bottled drinks give out; there is a world-wide epidemic of ulcers and skin cancers under a global heat wave, horrible locusts (maybe helicopters) plague the world's unbelievers for a solid five months, and then, while there is no water, and no food, and no health, and no ability to work or earn a living, with a global heat wave and billions of dead bodies strewn everywhere, with famine and disease and war and trouble and torment on every hand, an army of 200,000,000 soldiers (possibly Chinese communists), march on Israel, and on their way they kill two billion more people. Now the scene gets even more bizarre! With billions dead or dying, with confusion and chaos everywhere, if you take the mark of the beast you are given the liberty to buy and sell! Buy and sell what? I ask. And while these 200,000,000 soldiers are attacking Israel, there are 200 pound hailstones falling on them!

I'm not trying to be cynical, friends, but it seems to me that anyone with one eye and half sense could see that the logistics of this scheme transcend absurdity — they are impossible! There is no geographical space for 200,000,000 soldiers with tanks, airplanes, supplies, and all the rest in the valley of Megiddo — not counting the armies of Russia, the United States, and their allies who are all supposed to gather there. Hear me, my brother, my sister — it ain't going to happen! These armies can't fight — there is no geographical space in all of Israel for so many people to even stand properly. So we have a problem! When you calculate the effect of all these events, if they are literal, and all happen at the same time during a three and a half year period, you really have a contradictory, unreasonable, illogical, ridiculous, impossible absurdity. May the blessed spirit of truth help all who read these lines to think soberly, and righteously, and above all, spiritually about what is portrayed here!

The question follows — What do all these things mean? Ah, it's all GOOD NEWS! Our heavenly Father is not some kind of angry, vindictive, psychotic, sadistic monster who is grinning and kind and merciful for two thousand years and then suddenly throws a temper tantrum, becomes vicious and vengeful, turning on that portion of the human race that just happens to be living at that time, pouring out wrath and spewing out judgment that makes Adolph Hitler look like Santa Clause, and the Second World War appear as a Sunday School picnic. IS THAT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST? IS IT? Is that the revelation of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world? Is that the revelation of the God who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them? Is that the revelation of the Christ who taught us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us, 'that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven!' The preachers who peddle the foolishness I have been talking about are simply spiritual terrorists! They have no true spiritual understanding whatsoever and love to scare people to death with a "revelation" that is supposed to be the unveiling of Jesus Christ! If that is the unveiling of Jesus Christ, then please keep the lid on Him!

These truths are presented with soberness and prayerfulness, and the fervent desire that the verities unfolded here may grip the spirit of God's elect with such forcefulness that we may yield ourselves mightily unto God to accomplish in us and through us His marvelous work, which work is the unveiling of Jesus Christ. It is clear that the four angels which are

loosed from the river Euphrates are also the great army of the horsemen which numbers 200,000,000. A careful reading of verses fourteen through sixteen establish this beyond doubt. It is to be observed here that the strength of this army seems to be the cavalry. Every man in this army is riding a horse and the number of them is two hundred million, as we read it in the King James Bible. This would be a larger army than has ever been assembled in the history of mankind, and to take it literally would be as absurd and impossible as to suppose that stars are going to literally fall upon the earth. That it would be a very large host — so large that it could not readily be numbered — is clear. The expression in the original (Greek text), while it conveys the idea of an immense number, seems also to refer to some peculiarity in the manner of reckoning them. The language is, “two myriads of myriads.”

The idea is this. John saw in vision an immense host of cavalry. They were so numerous that he did not pretend to be able to estimate the number Himself, for it was beyond his power of computation. But in spirit he heard it stated in these round numbers, that there were “two myriads of myriads” of them. It could also be translated as “a double-myriad of myriads.” Now, a myriad is ten thousand. But according to The New Webster’s Dictionary “myriad” carries a significance beyond a mere ten thousand. It means “innumerable; an indefinite, immense number; a multitude of things or people; innumerable, multitudinous, but indefinite.” Thus, while John was unable to estimate the number of the army, the Spirit spoke within him that it was “countless thousands.”

There is a deep mystery in the way this number is stated. Attempts to reduce this expression to arithmetic, or to a precise amount, miss the point. The Spirit is simply revealing the immensity and awesome power of the army of the Lord! It is the infinite power of God raised up within each member of God’s elect! God Himself is all that is needed! John heard the number, but he didn’t hear with the natural ear the math of it, but with the spiritual ear he “heard” the almightiness, the infinity, the omnipotence of God in us! We don’t have to be a company of thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions to change this world.

The truth is, numbers have no bearing whatever upon how we are to go about being the transformers of this age. What will change the church and the world is not thousands or millions of manifest sons of God, for it will take only a few who walk in the light of this new kingdom Day to bring a transforming presence and power to this earth! It is not numbers of people we need in our midst, but to be one with our Lord, speaking with the voice of the resurrection, anointed with the fullness of His wisdom, holiness, and authority, and endued with power from on high! It took only one Son of God to take away the sins of the world and reconcile mankind to God, to conquer all the false gods of Greece and Rome and Babylon, to change the course of history and birth the church throughout all the nations of the world. One Son! And now many sons are being brought to His glory! But it need not be a literal 200,000,000! The Lord Jesus Christ Himself within us is stronger than an army of two hundred million, for He has been given all authority and all power in heaven and in earth! Oh, the wonder of it!

Since the elect of God are signified in the Revelation as the hosts or armies of heaven, the Lord is therefore called YAHWEY TSEVAOTH, that is, Yahweh of armies or hosts. “And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean (righteousness of Christ). And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword (the word of God), that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron...” (Rev. 19:14-15). The first half of chapter nine of the Revelation is devoted to the

invasion of the “locusts” out of the abyss; the second half of the chapter reveals GOD’S MIGHTY ARMY raised up to defeat the locust army and bring forth the victory of Christ in those being prepared to establish His glorious kingdom in the earth! God is working within us to bring Adam to an end and raise up Christ as the only reality of our lives. Notice what John says about the locusts: “And the shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared unto battle” (Rev. 9:7). And now of the second army he says, “And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand” (Rev. 9:16).

The locust army and the angel army are two armies that face each other! It takes two armies to have a battle! Both are said to be prepared for battle! And how wonderful the knowledge that everything about the army of the Lord is greater and more powerful than the locust army of Babylon! It is interesting to note that under the fifth trumpet, repeatedly stung by the locusts, men were tormented by the false doctrines and condemnation and threats of judgment as proclaimed by the church systems of man, yet they could not die. But here there is a difference! “And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for the hour of the day of the month of the year (God’s appointed time) FOR TO SLAY THE THIRD PART OF MEN.” Here, thank God, they do die! The word (angel) of the Lord, once released from its captivity at the borderland of Babylon, refined and made pure and strong in the Spirit of God, is able to finish the work in us, to bring the old Adamic man, the carnal mind, the natural life, the old human consciousness and identity to its end within us! The word out of Babylon cannot accomplish this, but the living word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, and in the power of an incorruptible seed, is fully able to bring forth the triumph of the Christ within us! Isn’t it wonderful!

As we have stated numerous times in the course of this Study, the book of Revelation is first and foremost a spiritual book. It is a book of spiritual realities communicated by means of signs and symbols. You will not read the fulfillment of its prophecies on the pages of Newsweek magazine, but you will see them manifest in the lives of men and women who walk with God and in the great accomplishments of the kingdom of God on earth. The word of the Lord in its spiritual meaning does not describe for us the carnal warfare between nations. For what have wars between nations to do with the kingdom of God? God does not conquer by carnal weapons, therefore the warfare between nations has nothing whatever to do with the kingdom purposes of God! This is where people go astray in their thinking. They suppose that God acts politically or militarily. Oh, no! The battles beheld in spirit by the eagle-eyed seer of Patmos signify spiritual combats, combats between light and darkness, between spirit and flesh, between Adam and Christ, between the carnal mind and the precious mind of Christ, between truth and error, between righteousness and evil, between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Babylon, between life and death. A man must experience this combat within himself to become a spiritual conqueror and possess the promised land. Our Lord, when in the world, carried on such spiritual warfare in an infinitely greater way than others, overcoming the compounded powers of the world, the flesh, and the devil, opening up the way to victory and triumph for all who are willing to follow Him into the lifestyle of the kingdom of God.

This great army of saints in this new kingdom day who, in the fullness of time, shall take the kingdom and destroy the rule of the flesh, of Babylon, and of sin, sorrow, and death, is even now, at the time of this writing, being prepared to march forth and bring to pass this glorious victory. That all who are to be in this army may be awakened to the urgency of the hour the prophet Joel calls upon those who see and hear this word of the Lord to sound an alarm, saying, “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day

of darkness and gloominess (for the natural man), a day of clouds and of thick darkness (for the carnal mind), as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not ever been the like, neither shall there be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land (of the flesh) is as a garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. AND THE LORD SHALL UTTER HIS VOICE 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 (for the systems of man); and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:1-3,11).

God is preparing such an army! We now want to present this army. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain...and the Lord shall utter His voice before His army: for His camp is very great..." The trumpet blows in Zion — mount Zion. The army of the Lord is in Zion! So much of the book of Revelation is rooted in the prophecies of the Old Testament. The people who hear this trumpet and are called to battle by it are seen by John, "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1). This company of 144,000 stands upon mount Zion in all the nature, glory, and majesty of their Redeemer. Mount Zion, the highest hill in Jerusalem, represents the very highest position attainable in God's kingdom. Such are the ruling class in the capital city of the kingdom of our Lord, the New Jerusalem, prefigured by king David of old who dwelt on the natural mount Zion in the earthly Jerusalem. It was upon mount Zion that David built His citadel and royal residence. From there he reigned. This company, standing on the heavenly and spiritual mount Zion, followers of the Lamb, can represent nothing other than those who have followed Jesus all the way from mount Calvary to mount Zion, who suffered with Him even unto death (to self), and shall now reign with Him upon His throne forevermore! They are overcomers. Before coming to the throne, like king David, they have engaged in warfare, fought many battles, gained the victory, and possessed the kingdom. They are "the armies which are in heaven" which follow Him who sits upon the white horse, and they too ride "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen clean and white." A horse in prophecy is a symbol of speed and strength in war. White stands for righteousness. So Christ and His armies of overcoming sons riding white horses denotes that they come in swift, strong, and righteous judgment!

Can you see, child of God, what a tremendous heritage is ours — the right to rule and reign and bring life and blessing and deliverance to the whole creation! But before we can deliver the groaning creation from the bondage of corruption — sin, sorrow, limitation, and death — these deliverers must first, within themselves, conquer every enemy in their land and possess their inheritance in the fullness of Christ. Can you see how that all through the ages the flesh and the devil have usurped the authority of the sons of God? You have only to look around you at the people in general, both believer and unbeliever; you have only to look back at church history, to see that the Lord's people have suffered defeat from the powers of darkness century upon century and millennium after millennium. Deceived on every hand; afflicted with all manner of sickness and disease; demon oppressed; filled with carnality, sin, bitterness, bewilderment, sorrow, fear, lack, doubts, and torment. Many have been taken captive by the god of this world, and instead of a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, instead of Zion invested with strength, instead of a people that look "forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," with power over all the power of the enemy, we see, instead, a defeated band of slaves, divided into a thousand sects, cast into Satan's mold of bondage, deception, ignorance, weakness, fear, and torment.

Yet — thank God! To a people that has been called out of the walls of the great Babylon of religious captivity has come the word of the Lord, saying, “Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared...and the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand.” This is the cry of the Spirit for you to arise, O sons of God, from the bondage of defeat and desolation! Put on your beautiful garments and the whole armor of God! The trumpet call, the anointed word of the Lord, goes forth in this great and glorious day, calling for a Gideon’s band of overcomers, who appear as only four little angels bound in the river, but who shall be “more than conquerors” through Christ, and shall stand tall and strong in the might of the Lord, so that in the very next glance they appear as an invincible army that cannot be numbered or measured! And this band, “him that overcometh,” is being prepared, for which we praise God; an army that shall arise not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord! The call is even now going out to muster the army of the Lord, a people great and strong in God above any people that ever has been, or ever shall be, unto the years of many generations! That is the mystery.

In our effort to unfold this mystery even further I would take you back to the formation of the nation of Israel and their ultimate possession of the land promised by God to their father Abraham. Throughout the books of Genesis, Exodus, and on through the book of Joshua everything is presented in a progressive way. God called Abraham to leave his homeland and journey to a land He would show him, which afterward He promised to give to him and his seed as their possession. The children of Israel multiplied in the land of Canaan, but then were taken by the Lord into Egypt where they continued to grow into a great company of people over a period of four hundred years. Then Moses was raised up to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and take them finally to their promised land. Under the anointed hand of Moses this vast throng of the children of Israel were formed into a nation at mount Sinai and given their constitution known as the Torah. God gave them a tabernacle, an ark, His glorious presence, a priesthood, a sacrificial system, and national holidays or feast days. All of these things related prophetically, as types and shadows, to the experiencing of Christ in the Spirit and by the Spirit as our all in all. Starting with our experience of Him as the Passover lamb on to the enjoyment of Him as the ark, bespeaking of His word, life, and authority. Our experience of Him enlarged through the tabernacle, including the offerings and the priesthood.

Throughout the books of Exodus and Leviticus we come to the seven feasts given to Israel, where Christ is seen in measure after measure of His fullness until in the final feast of Tabernacles we are filled with all the fullness of God. Through these feasts, experienced now in a spiritual way, God’s people are enabled to experience Christ in a much fuller way than before, being brought to maturity and full spiritual stature. After Leviticus, we come to Numbers. Most Bible expositors tell us that Numbers is a book wholly occupied with the numbering and wandering of the tribes of Israel. It is true that much of the book deals with these issues, but there is a great truth beyond that! Numbers is a book of glorious records. It is the book which records the formation of the army of Israel which is the army of the Lord. Only at this point, following all the offerings, priesthood, tabernacle, and feasts, was it possible for the people of God to be formed into an army capable of conquering every enemy and possessing the promised land. Not all the people were in the army, but it is indeed glorious that a group of the Lord’s people could be formed into an army for the Lord on this earth. And it is further glorious that these very people are those who will take possession of the land! Those who are able to fight the battle as directed and empowered by the Lord are those who will conquer, divide, and take

possession of the land! And those who fight the battle do not take possession of the land for themselves alone, but for all the people of God! Oh, the wonder of it!

In the book of Numbers, the children of Israel were numbered twice. The purpose of the first numbering was to choose those who would be formed into an army to fight the battle. They were numbered the second time, not only as an army for warfare, but also according to their tribes to divide and inherit the good land. In these types and shadows, therefore, we may realize the great and glorious truth that God is forming a portion of His people into a spiritual army which, on behalf of all the people of God, is designated to conquer, divide, and inherit the good spiritual land of the fullness of Christ! We have heard much of becoming kings and priests to reign with Christ, and we have heard of becoming judges to bring righteous judgment to the earth; but today the Spirit of the Lord is drawing our attention to another matter, that God's elect is in this hour of preparation being formed into an army. We as a company of the Lord's people must be formed into an army to fight the battle for Him on this earth. Oh, this is tremendous! If this strikes fear in you, you may turn back. Only by the army of the manifest sons of God can the spirits and systems and powers of this present world order be conquered and destroyed!

The cry of the hour is that we become that for which we have been apprehended. We are giving notice to heaven and earth that this is not just another teaching or beautiful revelation given to thrill our hearts, but this message is given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as a witness to God's elect that we are a "chosen generation," a "royal priesthood," "kings to reign," and we are also called to form the "army of the Lord" in the earth. We are not just passing through this world, but are sent by God at a specific time, at the very hour of the very day of the very month of the very year when the army of God is destined to arise in the earth to fight the final battles for the possession of our inheritance in the kingdom of God! We shall bring to this world the unveiled glory of the Son, in an open display of a manifestation in the sons of God. For this we cry, that we would be the forth shining of the Son, His express image, the demonstration and power of His sonship glory and dominion, upon which the nations will gaze and be changed by the glory of His countenance. Oh, yes, the army of the Lord shall "shine forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!"

By this army shall creation be set free from the prison of corruption, to see a new heaven and a new earth, to see sin and unrighteousness banished from the hearts of men, to see death destroyed from off God's creation, to see the end of all sickness, sorrow, and pain, to see safety, peace, and happiness come to every man, woman, and child, to see Jerusalem established as a praise in all the earth, to see kings reigning gloriously from mount Zion, to see every man and every nation walking in the Light of the Lord. The army of God marches to see every prisoner set free, to see every man awaken in His likeness, to see the good news published throughout Zion, to see the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed from the mountain of God, to see the valley of dry bones erupt with life, to see the lion's mouth shut so that none shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy kingdom!

THE HORSES OF THE ARMY

"And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of

their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt” (Rev. 9:17-19).

The spiritual characteristics of these battle horses reveal their superiority over the army of the locusts which also were “like horses prepared unto battle.” The horses in the Lord’s army are able to crush, consume, and destroy all the characteristics and powers of the locust army! The Lord’s army has breastplates of fire which can melt the locust’s breastplates of iron. The heads of the horses in the Lord’s army are as the heads of lions which can crush the skull of the locusts’ heads which are like men. The horses’ tails in the Lord’s army have heads fully able to devour the stings on the scorpion-like locusts’ tail. The locusts were described as “like unto horses” whereas the horses in the Lord’s army are described as the real thing.

John saw the horses and they that sat on them. This meant victory! The old Roman conquerors, when celebrating a brilliant conquest, rode down the avenues of the Imperial City upon a snow-white steed, and received the plaudits of the people. The Lord is described in the Revelation as the Word of God emblematically riding on a white horse; it is the image of aggressive action, of a prosperous conquest over His foes. And those who follow Him are the armies of heaven, all of them riding upon white horses! The horse in scripture represents strength, and fearlessness to accomplish its task. Long millenniums ago the war-horse was described thus by the patriarch Job: “He paweth the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrightened; neither turneth he back from the sword. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage...he saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting” (Job 39:21-25).

The locusts had on their heads an illusory appearance of authority, bearing “as it were crowns of gold,” while the horses in the Lord’s army have heads as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone...for their power is in their mouth.” It should be clear that power in the mouth is superior to the authority signified by a crown which only appears to look like gold! Furthermore, the fire can burn up that which only appears as gold! Some literalistic commentators claim that the fire, smoke, and brimstone which issue out of the horses’ mouths mean gunpowder, discharged from modern weapons of destruction! But, strange to say, when they come to chapter eleven, where it is recorded of the two prophesying witnesses, that “if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies,” these interpreters at once abandon the idea of gunpowder, and interpret the fire as prophetic denunciations and prayers! If it is gunpowder in the one place, it seems that it should be gunpowder in the other. But it is neither gunpowder nor prayers in either case, but simply what the prophet sees in type — A BURNING WORD OF AUTHORITY AND POWER FROM GOD! Oh, yes, the authority and power of God’s Christ, by the word of the Lord in their mouth, is higher and greater than all the presumed authority and power of the flesh and the world! The pure, living word of God shall consume all the empty, vain, death-dealing words and works of Babylon!

The fire, smoke, and brimstone that issue out of their mouths correspond in type to the sword that goes out of His mouth with which He smites the nations. In both cases the Lord and His armies are riding upon horses with something issuing out of their mouths! That which goes forth from the mouths of God’s army is the sharp two-edged sword of the Word of God! His name is called THE WORD OF GOD! He is the LOGOS. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made” (Ps. 33:6). This is He who was in the beginning. “In the

beginning was the Word" (Jn. 1:1). This is the Word that was God. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. This is He of whom it is written, "He sent His word and healed them." Christ does not come with, in, and through His armies to avenge blood or slay in battle as other conquerors have done. His all-powerful words smite all who hear them! As someone has said, It will smite them with conviction and bless them with conversion. The spirit which animates God's many-membered Christ is the warrior spirit! His object is the conquest of the world, by conquering the hearts of men! He has formed the resolution, which burns in the hearts of all God's sons today, never to cease from His campaign until the whole world, a conquered realm, bows devotedly before Him as its rightful Lord and Master, and only true King.

"Their power is in their mouth." When I speak, or write, I manifest spiritual influences; and the force of these influences is proportionate to the inner power, and their effect is proportionate to the state of reception of my hearers. Words are thus seen to be the vehicles of spiritual forces. Understanding that mystery enables one to also understand how it is that God created all things by His Word. There is power in words! Life and death are in the power of the tongue, the wise man wrote. The action of spirit on spirit is inappreciable by the senses; but could we look behind the veil of nature when a crowd or a congregation is swayed hither and thither by the speech of one man, we should see that the influence exerted was as real and actual as muscular force. From this we learn that words are not mere sounds, but are the sheaths or cases of either soulical or spiritual life, and on this ground we at once see the force of the Lord's declaration, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 6:63).

The Spirit of God is today forming and fashioning a people, His great army, a glorious company, from whose lips flash forth that CLEAR WORD OF THE LORD which shall cause the traditions and unrighteousness of man to utterly come to naught. It was said of our Lord and elder brother, "Never man spake like this man" (Jn. 7:46). "What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? FOR WITH AUTHORITY commandeth HE even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him" (Mk. 1:27). "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" (Mat. 8:27). The Lord's speech is the manifestation and influence of His inner life poured forth upon those to whom He speaks. An incident in the life of Jesus, recorded in the Gospel of Luke, provides a picture in which may be discerned the POWER OF THE WORDS OF GOD. As He approached the gate of Nain there met Him a funeral procession, a widow's only son carried out to burial. Moved with compassion for the sorrowing woman He bade her dry her tears. The astounded crowd heard Him address the figure upon the bier: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" The power of the speech of the Prince of Life pierced the realm of the dead! The lad sat up and began to speak. The tender Christ delivered him to his mother, and made effective His command, "Weep not!" Her son was not only brought back from the gates of the tomb, but was restored to her as a gift from the Lord BY THE POWER OF HIS WORD!

That which was manifest in Jesus Christ shall also be seen in His many-membered-brethren-company. There are preview glimpses of this even in God's servants in the Old Testament. With what boldness did Elijah the prophet pronounce unto king Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, BUT ACCORDING TO MY WORD" (I Kings 17:1). The pure and powerful word of God shall cause His servants to ride victoriously! Naught shall be able to stand before the fire, smoke, and brimstone of HIS WORD! The locust-army shall be vanquished — how glorious shall be the advance of this mighty company!

The power in the mouth of God's army is expressed and manifest as fire, smoke, and brimstone. What struck the seer as remarkable on looking at the symbol was, that this immense warfare seemed to proceed out of their mouths! It was not that they trampled down their enemies; nor that they destroyed them with the sword, the bow, or the spear: it was a unique and remarkable power in warfare — in which the weapons proceed from the mouth in the form of fire, smoke, and brimstone! The word "brimstone" or sulphur denotes the character of the fire. As Charles Pridgeon has pointed out, "The word theion translated 'brimstone' is exactly the same word theion which means 'divine.' Sulphur was held as sacred to the gods among the ancient Greeks; and was used to fumigate, purify, to cleanse and to consecrate to the deity; for this purpose they burned it in their incense. In Homer's Iliad (16:228), one is spoken of as purifying a goblet with fire and brimstone. The verb derived from theion is theioo, which means to hallow, to make divine, or to dedicate to a god. (See Liddell and Scott Greek-English Lexicon, 1897 Edition)."

To any ancient Greek person, or any trained in the ancient Greek language, fire and brimstone would indicate "divine purging, cleansing, and purification" or "dedication and consecration to God." Divine purification and divine consecration are the plain meaning in ancient Greek. In the ordinary explanation of Bible commentators this fundamental meaning is missed altogether, because of the false doctrines of Babylon, and nothing but destruction and torment are associated with fire and brimstone. How beautiful this is! The Lord is not out to destroy His people, or the sinners of this world! The great purpose of His army is to destroy the locusts and their stings — the false doctrines, systems, and movements that indeed do torment (Rev. 9:5) God's people, so that creation may be set free!

Fear not. Have hope. Believe in hope! It is God's good pleasure to yet restore all His precious people to the knowledge of the truth and to union in the purity of His life. He shall yet renew the face of the whole earth! All the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness. The mountain of God's house shall be established in the top of the mountains. Babylon shall be utterly burned with fire, and all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy place. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall they know war anymore. They shall all be without spot or blemish, loving one another, even as Jesus has loved us. You are called to be a part of the firstfruits, even if the total harvest has not yet come. You are to love your neighbor as yourself. You are to love your enemies and bless them that curse you and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them. You are to ride forth in the strength of the Lord, with the purifying, cleansing, purging, delivering, consecrating, redeeming, transforming WORD OF GOD ISSUING FROM YOUR MOUTH! You are to ride forth in majesty as the expression of God's kingdom on earth. You are to utter His burning word of authority, smiting the earth with the rod of His mouth!

Chapter 118

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared...for to *slay the third part of men*. And thus I saw the horses in the vision...and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was *the third part of men killed*, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths” (Rev. 9:15-18).

These truths are presented with soberness and prayerfulness, and the fervent desire that the verities unfolded here may grip the spirit of God’s elect with such forcefulness that we may yield ourselves unreservedly unto God to accomplish in us and through us His marvelous work, which work is the full unveiling of Jesus Christ. It is clear that the four angels which are loosed from the river Euphrates are also the great army of horsemen which numbers 200,000,000. A careful perusal of verses fourteen through seventeen leaves no other alternative. It is to be observed here that the strength of this army seems to be the cavalry. Every man in this army is riding a horse. And what a mighty army it is!

The locust army and the angel army are **two armies** that face each other! It takes **two** armies to have a battle! Both are said to be **prepared for battle!** And how wonderful the knowledge that everything about the army of the Lord is **greater and more powerful** than the locust army of Babylon! It is significant to note that under the fifth trumpet, repeatedly stung by the locusts, men were tormented by the false doctrines and condemnation and threats of judgment as proclaimed by the church systems of man, yet *they could not die*. But here there is a difference! The army of the Lord is prepared, John says, to *slay the third part of men*. Here, thank God, they **do die!** The word of the Lord, once released from its captivity at the borderland of Babylon, refined and made pure and strong in the anointing of the Spirit of God, is able to finish the work in us, to bring the old Adamic man, the carnal mind, the natural life, the flesh, the old human consciousness and identity **to its end within us!** This does not denote a literal, physical killing of vast numbers of humanity, but the bringing to death of the old Adamic life within God’s elect. These are **spiritual realities!** The word out of Babylon cannot accomplish this, but the living, energetic word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit is fully able to bring forth the triumph of the Christ life within us! By the living and burning word (fire, smoke, and brimstone) of God in the mouths of this great army of saints the rule of the flesh, the spirit of Babylon, and the bondage of sin, sorrow, limitation, and death within us shall be eradicated and destroyed. Aren’t you glad!

It is in the sounding of the trumpets that we are introduced to the term, “*a third part*” and the expression is used almost exclusively in relation to the work of the trumpets. In the symbolism of John’s vision of the sounding of the trumpets the first trumpet metaphorically brings God’s work of judgment and dealing upon the earth, the land mass. The second falls on the seas and oceans. The third falls on the rivers and their sources. The fourth affects the

light-bearers — the sun, moon, and stars. In each case, a *third* of their power is destroyed. The expression “a third part” occurs as many as twelve times in this passage, surely indicating that the Lord would have us pay special attention to this particular feature. A third part of the trees are burned up; a third part of the oceans becomes blood, so that life cannot exist in them; a third part of all ships on the seas are destroyed; a third part of fresh, flowing water becomes so bitter that men cannot drink it; and a third part of the light of the heavens is darkened. Surely, there is reason for the question: What is indicated by this “third part” occurring so often in the text? *One third!*

I have mentioned previously that John saw three series of dramas, each with seven parts. There is the drama of the seals, that of the trumpets, and finally the vials. As we meditate upon these great truths, surely we can see that the opening of the seals is *the revelation of Jesus Christ!* A revelation is an *unveiling*, and it is Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, who is unveiled unto us and within us as the seals are loosed. Thus, Jesus is the *first* of this trinity of dramas. The further truth is that all our glorious Father wrought out in the life of Jesus in order to reveal the fullness of God in Him — in sonship — must now be wrought out also in God’s firstfruit company of “many sons” brought to His glory. God’s elect, grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, is the *second company* to be brought to full and complete redemption, restoration to the life, glory, wisdom, and power of God! The *third company* brought into perfection and the fullness of God is the rest of the Lord’s people who are presently enslaved in the bondage of religious Babylon.

The point I wish to make is just this: As the loosing of the seals brings the revelation of *Jesus Christ*, the first Son, so the blowing of the trumpets accomplishes the very same work of God in His called and chosen elect, the *many-membered body of Christ*, or the *manifest sons of God*. And just as the trumpets show the work of our Father in His chosen firstfruits company, so the pouring out of the seven vials depicts the deep and awesome dealings of God with *therest of God’s redeemed people — the church!* Thus the seals represent the work of God in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the trumpets show the work of God in His many-membered son company, and the vials reveal the work of God in the rest of the Lord’s saved people, the church. Three series of dramas, each with seven parts! Three is the number of completeness, seven the number of perfection. These three dramas with their seven parts reveal the great truth of God’s ***complete redemption and restoration of His people, bringing perfection, life, and glory!*** There are *three stages* in the redemptive program (in relation to the church), and a full and complete redemption wrought in each stage. Jesus has already been perfected, resurrected, glorified, and enthroned! Multitudes who read these lines are even now in the process of full perfection, redemption, and glorification as sons of God! And our Father has a wonderful plan and purpose to restore all His precious people back into the perfection and glory of God! He will, in fact, restore the whole creation, but the three series of dramas now under consideration speak of His dealings with His church prior to the restoration of the world and all things and all realms.

It is my deep conviction that the “third part” mentioned so often in connection with the *second drama*, the sounding of the trumpets, bespeaks of the work of God in His *firstfruits son company* in contrast to all the rest of the Lord’s people who are dealt with later at the pouring out of the vials. When this *third part*, or the *manifest sons of God*, has been thoroughly processed by the Lord, when the work of perfection and maturity has been fully accomplished in them, there remain yet multitudes of the Lord’s people who are still babes in Christ and slaves to the man-made religious systems of Babylon. But their day will come, too!

The next thing we need to understand, in order to understand this great mystery, is the fact that here in our text John says that this great army of the Lord, which is also the four angels that have been bound in the great river Euphrates, is raised up with the burning word of the Lord in their mouths for the express purpose of slaying or killing *“the third part”* of men. What a mystery that is! In all the preceding visions the reference was to *“a third part,”* whereas here it is *“the third part.”* It can only mean that *“the”* third part identifies this third as the *very same* third referred to in all the previous scenes! This third part is God’s called and chosen elect, the manifest sons of God!

Most Bible teachers interpret this passage to mean that one third of all the men living on the face of the earth will be physically killed, wiped out, by the horrendous wrath and judgment of God. They completely miss the fact that this action originates from the four horns of the golden altar which bespeaks of the ministry of prayer, intercession, praise, and worship! God has commanded us to pray for all men that they may be saved, and to make intercession for all the saints according to the will of God, but nowhere has He commanded us to pray for His vengeance and destruction to be poured out upon mankind. Oh, no! The word of the Lord in the mouth of God’s elect in this hour is not given to bring physical death to men, but death to the man of sin within us, death to the old Adamic consciousness with its carnal mind and fleshly ways. It is fire, smoke, and brimstone which issue out of the mouths of the Lord’s great army, by which *“the third”* of men are slain. Paul speaks of this same dealing of God when he writes, *“And then shall that Wicked (man of sin) be revealed (uncovered, exposed), whom the Lord shall consume (kill, burn up) with the spirit of His mouth (words, authority), and shall destroy with the brightness (truth/light) of His coming”* (II Thes. 2:8). That this man of sin is not outside of us, some demonized individual reigning over in Jerusalem in the land of Israel, is evident from the words which follow those just quoted wherein Paul says, *“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan...with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish...”*(II Thes. 2:9-10). Oh, yes! The man of sin is *within!* This man of sin in us is what has troubled us, he is the working of Satan in our lives through deception and unrighteousness, and now God is going to deal with him and slay him finally and forever in His *“one third”* company. Oh, the wonder of it!

The burning word and the fiery presence of the Lord are so strong in the Lord’s remnant in these days until the man of sin will be choked to death and silenced forever by the Holy Ghost fire of God! There is no sin, no carnality, no evil imaginations, no demon spirit that can stand before the manifest presence of God! That this is precisely what the *“smoke”* that issues out of their mouths signifies is confirmed by the description given by John, *“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth (hot bluish color), and brimstone (purging, purifying sulphur): and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, WHICH ISSUED OUT OF THEIR MOUTHS”* (Rev. 9:17-18). How is this *“third part”* of men killed? By the burning, authoritative word of God proceeding from the mouths of God’s elect! By His Holy Ghost fire and the power of His flaming word He consumes all that is not of His nature and the man of sin in us which keeps us from the perfection of His mind and life. The smoke is the glory cloud of the fiery presence of the Lord which appeared in Solomon’s temple on the day of its dedication, when the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God so that the priests could not minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord (I Kings 8:11). That the glory of God in His temple of living stones is indeed the *“smoke”* that slays the man of sin in God’s elect will be confirmed in Revelation 15:8: *“And the temple*

was **filled with smoke** from the **glory of God**, and from **His power**; and no (natural) man was able to enter into the temple...”

ADAM CAN'T REPENT!

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet *repented not* of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: *neither repented they* of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (Rev. 9:20-21).

The message is clear — every son of God must repent! I have heard it said that sons do not need to repent, only those in the old-order church systems, or the sinners out in the world, must repent. But “he that overcometh,” he who is part of God’s great army in this day of the Lord certainly will repent or he will never *be* an overcomer nor a soldier in the army of the Lord! By repentance the Lord is leading us to change our spiritual directions, and causing us to walk in the new paths of His will for those called to be conformed to the image of Christ, to reign with Him in His kingdom. Every son is even now repenting and preparing himself for the changes that must take place as we put on the fullness of Christ. We repent every time the Father brings changes in our lives, as we qualify to be His instrument to bring the new order of the kingdom of God to the nations of earth. We repent of clinging to anything other than HIS HIGHEST for us!

Because we have repented we are no longer concerned about being nominal Christians, or demanding gifts, or grasping after ministries, or the positions of apostles, prophets, or bishops, or getting to heaven when we die. Because we have repented, we have taken *another mind* (for that is what repentance means in the Greek), and we now desire only GOD’S HIGHEST AND BEST! Because we have repented we are putting on the mind of Christ and seek only those things which are above at the right hand of God, where Christ sits (Col. 3:1). We are being changed into the image and likeness of the firstborn Son, and we shall be priests of God after the order of Melchizedek, for that is what Christ is doing at the right hand of God in the heavens of the Spirit! We shall be kings with Him, for He is a king and a priest after the order of Melchizedek! As a king and a priest of God in the glory of His kingdom we shall minister that same Life, which we received from Him, to the masses of humanity, delivering them from the curse of sin and death. This ministry is reserved for the *overcomer*. And the overcomer is the one who truly *repents* of every lower realm and seeks only and always the fullness of Christ!

When Jesus came proclaiming the kingdom He didn’t say, “Repent because you have been sinning.” No! He said, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” Sin is not the issue in the kingdom. The issue is **allegiance**. Repentance means to repudiate something you have believed in and clung to in order to believe in and cling to something else. Repentance is the call to change our minds about the rule of our lives. Repentance is the call for us to change kingdoms! The kingdom of God is spiritual, it doesn’t work in the carnal mind. So whether a man is sinning or being religious he must repent, because the kingdom only works in the spiritual mind. Kingdoms clash. Every kingdom wants to rule, for that is what kingdoms do! When one kingdom is in power and another kingdom comes to take the dominion there is warfare. The message of the Christ is repentance unto another kingdom! Another rule comes into our lives which will cast out the demons of religion, the idols of our false concepts of God, our fornication with the spirit of the world, and establish the mind of Christ and the rule of Christ.

God has called upon us to repent of the rule of the flesh, the rule of the carnal mind, the rule of the world, the rule of man's religion, the rule of external laws and ordinances, and all that pertains to the old church order. Repent of *sin*? Yes! But much more. Those who only know repentance from sin have only gotten to first base in God. It is a whole economy, a whole mentality, a whole way of life, an entire system of things that we must repent of in order to enter into the kingdom rule of God! When we talk about entering the kingdom we are changing many things; there must be a change in our whole world of existence, where we think we came from, who we think we are, what we think we are, what our purpose is in this world, how we live in this world, and what we think our destiny is in God. All our concepts and realities change! In our natural birth we came from the earth. In our spiritual birth we came from heaven. We are shedding that Adam identity, that Adamic delusion, the Adamic mind, the Adamic life-style, the Adamic wisdom, knowledge, and ability.

It's not news to any who read these lines that we are in the midst of a war between two kingdoms. Neither is it news that WE are the battleground! More particularly, the major focal point of the battle is ***our mind***. There the battle rages at its greatest intensity, because the war is a struggle for our hearts and loyalties — the very souls and lives and beings of men. Adam is dust, the natural, sensual, sense-oriented realm. In that long ago Eden, when God gave dust to be the serpent's meat, the earthy man became the rightful food for the serpent. This means that the serpent now finds his base of operation and fulfillment of his nature, desires, and purposes in and through the natural, earthy life of *mankind*. By the very nature of things, when the serpent eats, he seeks to satisfy his appetite and gratify his desires. The curse of "eating dust" means that the serpent nature is only gratified in and through carnal-minded men. Today the sphere of Satan's activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of dust. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking *whom he may devour*" (1 Pet. 5:8). Can you not see the mystery? He devours you by overwhelming you with sensual lusts and carnal-minded pursuits, including the carnal religious realm where men serve God in a fleshly way, until your whole being becomes consumed with things and activities that are not of the Spirit nor of Life.

You will find men and women who claim to hate the devil and all he stands for, but no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. In so doing he gives place to the devil! It is the *flesh* that wars against the *spirit*! The *flesh* unceasingly wars against the King and His kingdom that is within you. Just as the religious leaders of the Jews cried, "We will not have this man to rule over us," so the flesh, your flesh, and my flesh, desperately striving to perpetuate the corrupt nature of Adam within, would push Christ from the throne of the heart and reign in His stead. The energy force and motivating power of the flesh IS the *ancient serpent of Eden*! He now crawls upon his belly, restricted to the realm of man's earthiness, the dust realm. He is the spirit and nature of the carnal mind! Multitudes do not understand this mystery, and few will proclaim this truth. The sacred mysteries of God are revealed only by the Holy Spirit of Truth.

Adam is dust. If you want to keep the kingdom of Satan, the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of the earth realm alive in you, then just feed the serpent that crawls there! If you don't feed him, he'll starve! When you proclaim the kingdom of God, and the message is rejected, shake off the dust of that realm, don't let anything people say or do against the kingdom cling to you, let them keep their earthiness, let them continue on in their carnal religious and worldly foolishness, and you be a testimony against that realm by continuing

on progressing into the life and reality and power of the Christ within your spirit! SHAKE OFF THE DUST, sons of God!

Our text says that men “repented not.” Now what does this mean? Does it mean that God is going to pour out the fury of His wrath upon the world of sinful mankind, and instead of realizing that God is punishing them for their wickedness, and repenting, they continue on in their sins? Does it mean that all the humanists, communists, thieves, murderers, and prostitutes will stand up in defiance of God and curse Him to His face for tormenting them? This term appears only five times in the book of Revelation. Once it is used in relation to the symbolic woman Jezebel in the church in Thyatira, of whom the Lord said, “And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she *repented not*” (Rev. 2:21). Twice the term is used under the sixth trumpet, and twice when the vials are poured out in chapter sixteen. All of this is very significant! You see, we are prone to apply this to that wicked old world out there, outside of us, but the book of Revelation is addressed to *the church* — it is not addressed to Russia, China, Africa, Hindus, Buddhists, witches, serial killers, prostitutes, drug lords, or terrorists! Jezebel was a condition and a people in the church, she was told to repent, and repented not.

Many deep spiritual truths of scripture remain locked up to man and cannot be understood with the natural mind. It is significant to note that no statement is made regarding men “repenting not” under the opening of the seven seals. The reason for this is abundantly clear! The seals represent the *unveiling of Jesus Christ*, the firstborn Son of God. There is no repentance required in the unveiling of Jesus Christ! The glorified Jesus needs no repentance. Therefore, the only repentance in the book of Revelation is on the part of the *church* in chapters one through three, and on the part of God’s firstfruits company who are brought to perfection and the full stature of Christ under the sounding of the seven trumpets, and on the part of the rest of the Lord’s people who are purged, purified, and perfected through the pouring out of the seven vials.

While it is true that every son of God must repent, it is also true that there is a part of each of us that *cannot repent* and *will not repent!* Truth has been revealed, and the truth is that “human beings” never become spiritual. The spiritual progress we make is to “die” to our human identity, our ego, our natural life, and Adamic consciousness, and be *made alive* to the new creation life of the Christ within. No human being has ever been spiritual or ever will become spiritual, because the Adamic man is flesh and blood, and flesh and blood *cannot inherit* the kingdom of God. We are not trying to save our humanhood, nor can we put it under the laws of God and make it righteous, for the word of the apostle Paul is incontrovertible: “*The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*” (Rom. 8:7). This old earthly, human, natural, Adamic mind and nature must be *put off*, for it cannot repent nor can it be redeemed. Adam can only go to the cross!

Our repentance means that we no longer identify with the first man, the earthy, but we consciously identify with the second man, the spiritual, which is the Lord from heaven! We are putting off the old man, and are putting on the new man. The old man that we are putting off *cannot repent, will not repent*, therefore we die to that man and are raised up in the new man, Christ. That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*, and that which is born of the spirit *is spirit*. To try to change, or improve, or save the old earthy man is an effort in futility. It cannot be done! And that is the great truth and the deep mystery the Lord is revealing to us when He tells us that “*the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues* (that is, that part of us which has not yet been fully brought to death) *yet repented not of the*

works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols...neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." It simply means that ADAM CANNOT REPENT! One fact only dominates the life of man upon this earth, and Paul articulates it when he says, "...in Adam **all die.**" By the word "Adam" Paul means everything "human," everything natural, everything earthy; he means himself, his history, his language, his institutions, his works, his hopes and dreams, his abilities, his world, his ethnic identity; and over "Adam" hangs the inevitable sentence of death. Adam comes to an end, he passes out of existence, he dies, he ceases to be.

We have borne the image of our earthly father, Adam, and still carry that image about in our natural life, in spite of the efforts of many to say that it was all put to death at Calvary and doesn't even exist anymore. The simple fact is, if you have a soul and a physical body capable of lusting, cursing, hating, lying, revenge, bitterness, or even being "religious," then Adam is still walking in you regardless of all your protestations to the contrary. Let's get *real!* The nature we were born with in our natural life was not heavenly, divine nature, but the carnal, corrupted, degenerated nature of the first Adam, and what a detestable thing it is! When we see the old nature in its true light how we hate it and long and travail to be completely delivered from it. Some think this is impossible and cannot be accomplished, "No one can be perfect in this life," they say, but I want to tell you that it has been accomplished in our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is now being accomplished in a people who are *putting off the old man with his deceitful lusts, and are putting on the new man which is created in the image of God and in righteousness and true holiness.* Oh, yes! This work has to be fully accomplished within us, for it is part of God's great purpose in His sons, and nothing can prevent it from being accomplished.

God is in the process of raising up in us the *new creature*, not a revamped, remodeled, renovated old creature, but an entirely *new creation*. It is not really a new creation, for it has existed all the while within our spirit, but it is new *to us*, and new to mankind, because we have all walked only in the consciousness of the outward Adamic mind and life. The old has to go until there is nothing left of it at all, and has been replaced with that which to us is entirely new. The new creation is not a remodeled version of the old one, for the new is *spirit and life* whereas the old is *flesh and corruption*. "Behold, I *make all things new,*" saith the Lord! When God is finished everything in the heavens and in the earth will be absolutely new, there will be no place for the old. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev. 21:1). "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; the former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind" (Isa. 65:17). God has no notion of salvaging the old nature, it is necessary to have a new nature that comes from God! He has no program by which it can be remodeled for use by Him. He has no program for it at all! It is condemned, my friend, destined to *pass away, not even to be remembered anymore!* It does not please God when the flesh lifts itself up and boasts in itself. God says that no flesh is to glory in His presence at all. It is an atrocious thing!

Gary Sigler once put it so well when he wrote, "You see, those who are ruling from the earth are still trying to take this earthly image of themselves, and make it more acceptable to God. I tried this for years. I prayed every day. I read ten chapters in the Bible every day. I prayed in the spirit for at least an hour a day. I did all of those things that I supposed I should do to take this image of myself that was so alienated from God, and make it acceptable, make it more godly, make it presentable to God. That is the spirit of antichrist! It is a hard concept to accept, but if you are taking a human image of yourself and trying to make it into God, that is the abomination of desolation! That image of yourself will never

become God. Oh, you can make it better. You can dress it up. You can quit smoking and chasing women. You can go to church, sing and dance, clap, be all you want to be. You can improve it a little. But you'll still be the abomination of desolation because it is a human image of yourself sitting in the temple of God trying to *be like God*. Well, when you realize that all of the old creation Jesus took to the cross and raised us all up as the new creation, then there is nothing you need but the unveiling of who God is in you. The new creation is not a human being; you are a spiritual being. *You are God manifesting in the flesh*. Now if you say that out of your ego or your carnal mind, that is the abomination of desolation the scriptures talk about. But if the ego or the carnal mind is removed, what else can you be but a manifestation of God?"

In our understanding of redemption, it is important that we recognize that there is no redemption for the Adam man, that is, the earthly nature and life. God has not asked the Adam man (the natural man) to consecrate himself to God, because that is the worse thing that could happen! The Adam man tried to make his nature pleasing to God when he sewed fig leaves together to cover his nakedness in the ancient mists of Eden. But that does not please God, because that Adam man was sentenced to death, and die he must! That is why God sent the "second man" and the "last Adam" — to *replace* the "first man" and the "first Adam." Therefore, if any man be *in Christ* he is an entirely NEW CREATION; old things are passed away, and behold, *all things are become new!* Can you not see the mystery? God did not save the old Adam, He *replaced him*. We are redeemed and saved by having the old Adam brought to death, and being raised up into the new Adam. So when Christ sends His Spirit, he does not come to the natural man, for the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit! He comes to the new creation man! "*He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.*" It is *His Spirit* joined with *our spirit* that makes the new creation man! Therefore, he is a spiritual man! And yet, most of Christianity deals with the natural man, because they want him to live before God. In order to get him restored they lay the laws on him, try to get him to conform, force him to go through the motions, train him and give him a call from God. But the problem with dressing up and training old Adam is illustrated by the story I read once in a tract.

A young boy, on a certain occasion, was walking with his father through the streets of Manchester, England. His attention was suddenly drawn to a man standing before the door of a building, announcing loudly, "**Come in, ladies and gentlemen, and see the great American pig!**" Having his curiosity aroused, he paid his entrance fee and entered the building. There, sure enough, was an amazing pig performing feats and giving evidence of an intelligence no pig had ever before exhibited. At the command of his trainer, he would pick out, from the alphabet lying on the floor, the letters "G-O-O-D P-I-G." He would also walk about on his hind legs and shake hands with those who stepped up to greet him. This pig had been washed and scrubbed until he was perfectly clean and he was dressed in a beautiful garment. Of course, he commanded the highest admiration and no one could deny that he was well-educated and well-behaved in every respect. But in spite of his remarkable culture and his attractive appearance, HE WAS STILL A PIG — better off, perhaps, than most other pigs — but yet, after all, only a pig and a pig to remain, however advanced his learning!

Ray Prinzing expressed this same precious truth when he wrote, "A NEW CREATION SPECIES IS NOW IN FORMATION! The new life is HIS, for He is the Source of all the new! *'It is, remember, by grace and not by achievement that you are saved — He has lifted us right out of the old life to take our place with Him in Christ Jesus in the heavens'* (Eph. 2:5-6, Phillips). This is not a recycling, or a redesigning of the old. In the

natural world there is a strong emphasis being placed upon recycling — it's the environmental thing to do. And it does seem that a lot of people in their religious activities have taken up with the concept of trying to recycle mankind — keeping the same form, the same expression, but giving it a religious flavor. But God is not revealed in the Word as One who just 'patches up' something gone bad. Nor is He just trying to dress up the world with a 'Jesus garment cover' to give a better appearance. Before He is finished with His creation He will have totally transformed it — to bring forth *'new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness'* (II Pet. 3:13). Thus we are challenged to yield to His handiwork as He dissolves, strips away the old, burns up the chaff with unquenchable fire, that He might make all things new. *'Draw me, we will run after Thee'* (Song of Solomon 1:4), is a far better response, than having to be pressured into relinquishing the old realm.

“Jesus told it well, in His parable illustrations. *'No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old wineskins: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new wineskins'* (Mk. 2:21-22). A piece of new cloth — the word 'piece' is the Greek **epiblema**, from the word **epiballo** meaning: to throw upon, thus, a patch, imposed upon a cloth to mend it. But the piece that is applied is new, **agnaphos**, literally, unfinished, unshrunk, just raw material. So if it be securely fastened to the garment, as it gets washed and then shrinks while drying, it will pull away from the cloth whereon it was sewn, and the rent is made worse. The *old* does not blend with the new! A worn out garment with a new piece sewn on, makes for quite a contrast, and is a recipe for disaster. Likewise, Jesus says, you cannot put new wine which is still in its fermenting stage, into an old wineskin (bottle) that has become stiff and unbending — the build up of the inner pressure will burst the wineskin, resulting in the wine being lost, and the bottle ruined. The specific point Jesus was making, emphasized by double application, is that you cannot mingle the old with the new, it renders them both useless” — end quote.

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet *repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols...*”

Upon hearing about men worshipping devils and idols our thoughts immediately travel to other lands, and other times; either to the idolaters of ancient civilizations and empires, or to religions very alien to our own. We envision tribes performing strange rites and sacrificing animals, or even human lives, to grotesque images of hideous gods whom they seek to appease. Many times these images resembled men, or beasts, or some exotic combination of features of both. The spirit behind these were the spirits of devils, as the apostle Paul tells us: *“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God”* (I Cor. 10:20). In this case, however, these literalistic notions keep us from remembering that the book of Revelation is a *spiritual book*, addressed to *aspiritual people*, and concerning *spiritual realities* — THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! We may feel that we do not behave so foolishly as the pagans who served devils and idols made with hands, but we are wrong. Idol worship is just as widespread as ever, but now appears in subtler forms. I am not talking about such possessions as homes, bank accounts, pleasures, etc., which many people call idols, but about something much more cunning.

Much that goes on in Christianity and within the walls of church buildings and in the name of God is little more than a refined form of idolatry. An idol is anything that usurps the place of the living God, of His living reality in our lives. In their crudest form, idols are fashioned

by men according to their own imaginations out of whatever material they are pleased to use. Christianity's "refinement" for this practice is still to worship a god manufactured by their own imaginations, emotions, traditions, and will, merely abolishing the manufacture of an artifact. In short, those who present a god who is different than the God revealed in and through the firstborn Son of God are guilty of idolatry. No matter how religious the depiction, how appealing the description, how supposedly "orthodox" the assumptions, any church, minister, or movement that presents a god other than the One revealed in Jesus is guilty of making an idol.

No man lives without a God. The real question is, who or what is his God, or gods. The pronouncement in the fifties and sixties that "God is dead" did nothing to God. Instead it simply attempted to assert that a certain God or kind of God was dead. It was a false image of God that men were endeavoring to cast away. All of us have had false images or concepts of God that we have had to cast aside! If you listen to people speak, and hear what they say, it is easy to see their image of God. The fact remains, our Lord Jesus Christ is the *true image* of God! Any characterization of God that deviates from the revelation of the wisdom, nature, power, compassion, mercy, love, truth, and grace revealed in Jesus is a demon God and idol image! God has caused us as His called and chosen elect to repent and empty our minds of the remnants of false beliefs and inadequate concepts of God which most of us had accumulated in our early childhood, or perhaps carried over from an elementary stage of spiritual understanding and experience of God.

The only true revelation of God is in His *sons*. It is *sonship* that reveals the Father! The only valid "image" of God is the living reproduction of His character and attributes in and by the Spirit. Every man reflects within himself the kind of god he serves. Let him think of a god who delights in blood, and he will be a brutal, vicious man. Let him worship a god who is lacking in holiness, and he will either live wantonly in immorality or settle for imperfection as the norm. Let him think of a god who is pleased with rituals and ceremonies, and his practice of religion will center in external pomp and pageantry. Let him think of a god who can be paid by service, and he will become a hypocrite. Let him conceive of god as a hard master, reaping where he has not sown, and he will be a legalist and a spiritual tyrant, lording it over other men's lives, laying heavy burdens upon them, enforcing upon them the bondage of external laws, commandments of men, and traditions of the elders. But let him know God as his Father in Christ, and he will become a king with a priestly heart of unconditional love, mercy, reconciliation, goodness, blessing, and redemption for all mankind! It is my conviction that the highest mark of sonship is found in the view one has of God. *Sons know the Father!* Sons, above any other calling or relationship with God, *know what God is really like!*

The God created by the morbid imaginations of the carnal minds of religionists, and preached in most of the churches of the world, is a God who is less than the best human we know, and in most cases even less than the *worst*. Adolph Hitler is demonized by the whole world because he killed several millions of innocent people, but the God of Christianity is presented as one who will torture *billions* who somehow failed to hear of Him, or believe in Him, or who committed the slightest of offence against Him, in the unending flames of eternal hell-fire, without any mercy whatsoever! In this view God becomes a monstrous tyrant, a subtle and celestial sadist, a vindictive and vicious power poised in retribution over man. The idol images of the pagans were exceedingly grotesque and frightening, yet I do not hesitate to tell you that the "image" of God revered by the church systems of this world is even *more* grotesque and frightening!

We here perceive how it is that the Holy Spirit faithfully instructs us that Adam cannot repent of worshipping devils, or of paying homage to idolatrous images of God. You see, my beloved, all the false ideas about God are creations of the carnal mind — the mind and imagination of the **natural man!** That part of any man, that part of *you*, that part of *me*, that is earthly, human, carnal, sensual, and therefore *devilish* (James 3:15), will create a false idol-image of God. There is a tremendous distortion of deity made in the producing of graven images, because they come forth in the likeness of men and beasts, the earthly, bestial nature. Man always makes images of his god in the form of himself — human nature — or other creatures. The carnal mind cannot help doing this, therefore until it is put to death within us we cannot repent of this error! “*And the rest of the men which were **not killed by these plagues (dealings of God) yet repented not of the (religious) works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols...***” That is the mystery! How vitally imperative that God strip away from us all the religious imaginations of the flesh wherein we boasted. Yet the “religious beast” fights hard to retain its own place in the temple of God — to create a false image of God. The natural mind, the Adamic mind *never repents of this!*

“Neither repented they of their *murders...*” The subject is not homicide, not the bloody murder that will land you in prison. Let us keep our minds *in the Spirit!* Again I remind every reader of these lines that the Revelation is a *spiritual book*, and its realities are *spiritual realities!* The very same John who on Patmos penned these portentous words is also the one who wrote, “*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever **hateth** his brother **is a murderer:** and ye know that no **murderer** hath eternal life abiding in him*” (1 Jn. 3:15). No one knew better than the beloved John what, in its spiritual meaning, “murder” signifies! The message is clear — If old Adam is still alive in us we cannot help hating our brother, we are in our heart a murderer; to boost our own ego, or enhance our standing with others, we will whisper behind people’s backs, repeat a negative report, carry a tale about someone, engage in idle gossip; we will assassinate the *character* of any brother who appears as a threat to us, or whose place we wish to usurp — that’s the way the carnal nature works, and the Adamic nature *cannot and will not repent of the murder!*

“Neither repented they of their *sorceries...*” We know what sorceries are in the occult world — divination through the assistance of evil spirits, black magic, enchantment, witchcraft. The word for sorcery in the Greek language is *pharmakeia*, the same word from which is derived our English word *pharmacy*. Its true meaning is “*the mixture of drugs which stifles the senses and puts the mind in a hallucinatory state.*” Spiritually it signifies the doctrines of religious Babylon which dull the spiritual senses of the Lord’s people, giving them a false hope, and causing them to live by religious superstitions, myths, traditions, legends, and folklore. Doctrines about the power of the devil, financial prosperity, the rapture, a mansion over the hilltop, along with the supposed virtue of rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, and a hundred more delusions **drug God’s people into a spiritually hallucinogenic state.** They live in a false, starry-eyed fairy-world of soulical imaginations which they suppose to be spiritual realities! When this great religious Babylon falls and is burned with fire, the apostle John declares of her, “*And the light of a candle (the little light you had) shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom (Christ and His body of sons) shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants (ministers) were the great ones of the earth (carnal realm); and by thy sorceries (enchancing doctrines of men) were all nations deceived*” (Rev. 18:23). What a word!

“Neither repented they of their *fornication*.” The fornication here is a *symbol*, not the fornication of the flesh, but something spiritual, a joining to that which is not Christ. Women in the Revelation are likewise symbolic, either positively of the bride of Christ, or negatively of the soul, or of religious organizations and activities which are *soulish* rather than *spiritual*. These are those ministries, and multiplied millions of believers, who daily sow their seed, deposit their spiritual life of Christ, into man-made religious systems, mingling the reality of Christ with the commandments of men, joining themselves to carnal programs, promotions, methods, and worldly religious activities, as well as with the political systems and governments of the world, satisfying their own soulish appetites and lusts in the name of the Lord. It is *spiritual fornication*!

The church is imitating the world! Christians regulate their devotion by the clock. The church schedule is packed with flesh-appeal programs and activities that run day and night. They feel that unless every night of the week is taken up with some sort of activity, the ministry is an ineffective thing. They have the strange idea that nothing is being done unless someone is talking! So they fairly swarm to conferences, seminars, workshops, committee meetings, platform discussions, concerts, plays, and programs of many kinds.

It is distasteful to have to admit it, but the plain truth is that the vast majority of Christians live their lives in *soulish lusts*. The further truth is that God’s purposes are not accomplished by intellect and soulical activity! The church systems go forward today like a little Samson shorn of its locks of power. It parades up and down, boasting of its accomplishments, and like Samson, it knows not that the Spirit of God has departed from it. But even as Saul and his armies tremble in fear before the mighty Goliath, the Lord is raising up a little David with a slingshot of the spirit of sonship to meet the enemy with all of his stratagems and come off with a mighty victory! The David company is still in preparation, far out in the solitude of the green pastures of a living word, and beside the still waters of the quickening spirit, learning by faith and obedience to slay their bear and kill their lion. But we are gaining new victories every day and learning within ourselves the power of God and the ways of His kingdom! Saul’s armor will not do! The sons of God are being prepared to step forth in the majesty of the name of the Lord God of Israel! The preparation does not take place with the seven brothers who appear so tall, handsome, articulate, charismatic, and accomplished, nor in the hustle and bustle of the streets of Bethlehem, but *alone with God* in the pastures of HIS choosing, outside the camp, in the secret place of the Most High!

Amid all the religious ruckus of the hour, and all the fuss of those who run after many lovers, fornicating with the flesh, the world, and the carnal mind, there is a *little flock* that has climbed the mount with Jesus. They care not for the flamboyant humbug of the gaudy harlot’s house, but, having beheld the glories of the kingdom afar off, they are pressing through surging waves of flesh-oriented believers to *come apart* to receive instruction from the King of the kingdom. At His feet they hear the call to the heavenly mark and find a door opened for them to enter in and lay hold upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth! They lean hard upon Christ! They keep themselves unto Him, and to Him alone! As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pant their souls after God! The spirit of sonship to God dwells within them! They are partakers of His mind! They have been given the knowledge of His will! They comprehend His great plan and purpose in the earth, in His sons, and in the unbounded universe! They have laid aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset them!

They are running the race with patience! They esteem the hope that is set before them higher than all the pleasures of Egypt and greater far than the prestige of Babylon! They are patient in tribulation, knowing that through much tribulation we shall inherit the kingdom! They continue instant in prayer to God, and He comforts them and upholds them with the right hand of His righteousness! To them the voice of the Father speaks in words of everlasting hope and assurance, "Fear not, *little flock*; it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Aren't you glad!

"Neither repented they of their *thefts*." Consider now the remarkable statement of Jesus found in John 10:7-10. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are **thieves and robbers**: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*" The firstborn Son of God stood one day in the center of the religious world and made the astonishing statement, "**ALL that ever came before me are thieves and robbers!**" Did He not take into consideration Abel, who "by faith brought God a better and more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, because of which it was testified of him that he was righteous — and God bore witness by accepting and acknowledging his gifts. And though he died, yet he is still speaking" (Heb. 11:4). Did He not take into consideration Noah, that preacher of righteousness, that man perfect in his generation, who "being forewarned of God concerning events of which as yet there was no visible sign, took heed and diligently and reverently constructed and prepared an ark for the deliverance of his own family. By this he passed judgment and sentence on the world's unbelief and became an heir and possessor of righteousness" (Heb. 11:7). Did He not take into consideration that great man of faith, Abraham, who "when he was called, obeyed and went forth to a place which he was destined to receive as an inheritance" (Heb. 11:8). Did He not take into consideration that mighty man, Moses, who "when he had grown to maturity and become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, because he preferred rather to share the oppression and bear the shame of the people of God than to have the fleeting enjoyment of sin. He considered the contempt and abuse and shame borne for Christ to be greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward and away to the reward. By faith he left Egypt behind him...urged on by faith the people crossed the Red Sea as though on dry land" (Heb. 11:24-29).

When Jesus uttered these extraordinary, audacious words, "**ALL who ever came before me are thieves and robbers,**" did He not know of all the patriarchs and prophets, and men of faith and exploits? Yes, He did! Furthermore, when Jesus was on earth there was already here Hinduism, Buddhism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, and many other religions, and the founders of them all, men renowned as the great teachers of mankind. All of those were *before Him!* Can we believe that Jesus was calling all these good men THIEVES and ROBBERS?

The Jews were greatly offended when Jesus said that HE was the door to *life* and ALL who came before Him were *thieves and robbers*, and the thief comes only to *steal*, and to *kill*, and to *destroy*. They understood not the words that He spake unto them! Oh, how good it would be if God's dear people would only seek to understand the vital message contained in the words which fell that day from the anointed lips of Jesus the Christ! To those who can receive it, our Lord was saying that ANY MAN OR ANY MESSAGE THAT BRINGS TO MANKIND ANYTHING BUT **L-I-F-E** IS A THIEF AND A ROBBER! All who came before Jesus were thieves and robbers because the revelation and message they bore **led to death**. They gave mankind great teachings, inspiring philosophies, wonderful laws, noble moral and ethical precepts, but not one of them possessed **eternal**,

incorruptible, immortal life, and not one of them could minister and impart that life to those to whom they were sent. Therefore, though they were valuable teachings on one level, yet, in the final analysis they **robbed men** of what they needed most — LIFE! Many centuries ago the apostle Paul penned an inspired assertion when writing to the saints at Corinth, saying, “for HE must reign, until HE hath put all enemies under HIS feet. The last enemy that shall be *destroyed* is DEATH” (I Cor. 15:25-26).

Good men, holy men, great men like Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, men who heard the voice of God and by faith did exploits in their generation, DIED AND PASSED INTO CORRUPTION. The Holy Spirit witnesses with absolute certainty that “These **all died** in faith, not having received the promises” (Heb. 11:13). Jesus looked at all these men with their message and ministry and works and saw that not one possessed *life* or the ability to impart life into mankind. They all, in very fact, **deprived** mankind of the most precious gift of all — LIFE! The law that came by Moses was a ministry of condemnation and death, and the message of every other holy man, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, and all the rest, **fell short** of life, incorruption, and immortality. Jesus came bearing a truth, a reality, a power never before possessed by any man who came before Him! He came with LIFE, eternal life, incorruptible life, abundant life! Life enough for Himself and all mankind! Confucius is dead; Buddha is dead; Moses is dead. I have stood by the tomb of king David on mount Zion in Jerusalem, and by the tombs of other great men, and I testify that they are both dead and buried and their sepulchers are with us to this day. But Jesus Christ is alive, and all who believe on Him are transformed by His Spirit! We have been quickened in our spirit, we have risen with Christ, we have been *made alive* unto God, we have been raised up and made to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places! There is coming forth from the tomb of our death, of our separation from the life of the spirit, a new kind of life, a new nature, a new mind, a new heart, a new consciousness, a new identity, and a new kind of experience which we have not known before. Unto quickened men today Jesus is speaking these magnificent words: “*I am the resurrection and the life: He that believeth into me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth into me shall NEVER DIE. Believest thou this?*” (Jn. 11:25-26).

The natural man, the carnal mind, the Adamic life, the human consciousness, and all that streams from the realm of the soul is impotent to impart spiritual life and reality to any man. All the noble philosophies, science, education, vocation, entertainment, social work, business, economy, government, and every other esteemed pursuit and profession of this world are honorable and have their place, but one and all are in the end found to be *thieves* and *robbers*, for they all *fall short* of true *life* and rob those men who center their lives in them of that which is of **eternal value** — **divine and incorruptible LIFE!** The natural man continues on, however, pursuing and promoting the fleeting things of this world, including the carnal religious realm, all of which pass away, with the lusts thereof, and he “*repenteth not* of his **thefts!**” Oh, yes! The Adamic mind and way of life will rob you of the mind of Christ and the divine life of the spirit! That is why every son of God who has been called by the Father in this great hour has now *repented*, has taken a new mind, adopted a new lifestyle, and lives in the new reality and power of the kingdom of God on earth! It is indeed wonderful!

Chapter 119

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And I saw *another mighty angel* come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth” (Rev. 10:1-2).

We know that in the symbolism of the book of Revelation this “mighty angel” is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ, because of the marks that are given. Some would make this the many-membered corporate Christ, but by the identifying characteristics it is clear that this is the glorious Head of the body, the *indwelling spirit of Christ*, the One who indeed fills the whole Christ body, yet remains the Head of all. He is clothed with a cloud and the rainbow is upon His head, just where it was when we saw Him before in this book. The only two places where we see it is here and in chapter four. He is clothed with a singular cloud, denoting the firstborn Son of God; for when Christ comes *in all His saints* it is stated that “He cometh *with clouds*” — plural — the many clouds of glory! Now, in the tenth chapter His face is like the sun, just as it was in the holy mount of Hermon, in the transfiguration. His feet are as pillars of fire, just as John saw them in chapter one. The fire is under His feet now, for His work of purifying judgment in the elect members of His body is complete, and the hour has arrived for the fullness of life, glory, and power to be imparted to the many sons brought to glory. He has a scroll in His hand, opened. Who opened it? He did, the Lamb did, over there in chapter five!

Elsewhere in the Revelation Christ is spoken of as a lion, a lamb, a root, an offspring, a witness, a star, and now He is presented as an angel or a messenger. There are seven angels of the seven churches, four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, the angel ascending from the east, that is, the Sun of Righteousness arising, and the seven angels which blow the seven trumpets. In chapter eight we saw “another angel” which came and stood at the golden 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. It should be clear to every spiritual mind that this is Christ our High Priest ministering in the sanctuary in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! There He appears in His *priestly dignity*. Now this angel, in chapter ten, is spoken of as “*another mighty angel*,” and here we behold Him in His *royal* dignity!

I would point out that in Greek grammar, when the word “*another*” is used with a noun before it, it is very significant. It signifies literally, “another who is the same,” and throughout the book of Revelation we find this word descriptive of our Lord. Remember, Jesus told His disciples that when He went away He would send them “*another Comforter*.” There we have the same grammatical structure in the Greek, indicating “another who is the same.” The Lord made it clear that this “*another Comforter*” was truly *Himself* in another form! “*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another*

Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth **with you** (as Jesus Christ in the flesh), and shall be **in you** (as Jesus Christ in the Spirit).” And then He adds with unmistakable clarity, **“I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU”** (Jn. 14:16-18). Can we not see by this that the Comforter, or the Spirit of truth, was not another or different person, but another manifestation or form of the very same Christ who said, **“I am the Truth,”** standing there before His disciples! He was **“another Comforter,”** oh yes, ANOTHER WHO IS THE SAME!

This was not just another literal angel that came down from heaven, for here He is referred to as a “mighty” or “strong” messenger. The angel is “mighty,” not because other angels are weak, but because of his superiority beyond the ordinary rank of angels. This “angel” is the bearer of a commission which no ordinary angel is qualified to convey. He “comes down from heaven” in the sight of John, and this denotes the character of his mission — in an aspect of authority and power which can in no way be disputed or opposed. This descent of the “angel” to the realm of the earthy indicates that here is One whose word and work must surely prevail! Let there be no doubt in the mind of any reader of these lines that this glorious One is none other than our Lord Jesus, the Christ! Our Lord Jesus is truly mighty because fullness of authority and power resides in Him, because He is valiant, because He has been in battle and has won, He has prevailed and won the conquest, He has overcome sin, death, hell, and the grave, and because He overcame in both death and resurrection He was therefore qualified to open the seven-sealed book and bring forth the revelation of His victory and glory in a many-membered body of sons of God.

An angel is a messenger, and the messenger stands for the message. The angels in the book of Revelation are wonderful *symbols* representing the *living word of God* communicated by the spirit of revelation! The spirit of Jesus Christ is the living word of God! In the beginning of the book an “angel” came and began to show these things unto John — that is, a powerful word of the Lord came to John out of the heavenly realm of the Spirit, speaking mysteries to his heart and passing before his spiritual eyes visions of wonders to come. The proof of this is found in John’s own statement as to how the revelation was received. *“He (Jesus) sent and signified it unto His servant John: who bare record of the **word of God**, and of the **testimony of Jesus Christ**, and of all that he saw”* (Rev. 1:1-2). Thus, this mighty angel or messenger is a great and powerful WORD OF THE LORD with awesome authority over both our body and soul realms (sea and earth). Truly, IT IS THE LORD!

The **“spirit of might”** is one of the seven spirits of God resting upon the sons of God. Isaiah revealed this deep mystery when he penned these blessed words: *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and **might**, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord”* (Isa. 11:1-2). The seven spirits of God rested first upon the Head of the many-membered body of Christ, and it is *from Him* that all the sons of God receive this anointing (I John 2:27). The Spirit of Might which belongs to the sons of God is the Spirit of Jesus, for He upon whom the sevenfold Spirit first rested is called THE **MIGHTY GOD** (Isa. 9:6). It is only “in Him” that one can become mighty! There is a glorious company of people, who along with Jesus the Mighty God, is termed “the Mighty.” Asaph, the song and praise leader of Israel, prophesied of this company, saying, *“God standeth in the CONGREGATION OF THE MIGHTY; He judgeth among the gods. I have said, YE ARE GODS; and all of you are THE CHILDREN OF THE MOST HIGH”* (Ps. 82:1,6). This company of “the Mighty” in whose

midst God stands is none else but those who are “in Christ” who is “the Mighty God” and are thus “strong *in* the Lord” and “*in* the power of HIS MIGHT.” And the word of the Lord through Asaph declared plainly that “the Mighty” are, every one of them, the sons of the most High, truly, the manifest sons of God. Aren’t you glad!

One commentator objected to the idea that the “mighty angel” is the Lord Jesus, pointing out that this angel “...*lifted up his hand to heaven, and swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer*” (Rev. 10:5-6). This commentator contended that it was an impossibility for the mighty angel to be Christ, because he would then swear by Himself — for Christ Himself *is* the Creator of all things! He would never be guilty, says he, of swearing by the One who made the heavens and the earth and the sea when that One was Himself! That indeed sounds like a plausible argument; however, we must bear in mind that the Lord Jesus Christ has two sides to His nature — He is both the “mighty God, the everlasting Father” and the “Son of man.”

When the apostles preached about Jesus they proclaimed that He was a man. “*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles*” (Acts 2:22). When Jesus was speaking of Himself He declared that He was a man. To the Jews who had murder in their hearts Jesus said, “*But now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the truth*” (Jn. 8:40). Few will dispute the testimony of both Jesus and the apostles that Jesus Christ came into this world as a man. Even those who refuse to believe that He was God’s Son will admit that there was a man named Jesus who lived on earth two thousand years ago. There can be no doubt at all about the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Bible teaches it too plainly.

The great truth that the Holy Spirit would now make real in our hearts is the fact that it was not only while Jesus was here on earth in a physical form that He was declared to be a man, but after His resurrection, ascension, and enthronement in the heavenly realm He still retains His identity as a Man! Hear the testimony of scripture. “*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*” (I Tim. 2:5). “*And they truly were many priests (under the law), because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but **this Man** (Jesus), because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is also able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them*”(Heb. 7:23-25). “*For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that **this Man** have somewhat also to offer. For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law...but now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry...He is the mediator of a better covenant*” (Heb. 8:3-4,6). “*The **first man** is of the earth, earthy: the **second Man** is the Lord from heaven*” (I Cor. 15:47). Oh, yes! There is a Man in the heavens! And we who have been called and chosen are now being raised up as **one new Man** to sit with Him upon His throne!

A dear brother has explained it this way: The apostle Paul wrote about the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and employs this language, “Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (I Cor. 2:8). Paul, whom did you say they crucified? “...*the Lord of glory.*” That is different from Pontius Pilate. Pilate said, “...*behold the man!*” (Jn. 19:5). Now, as far as Pilate was concerned he was committing to be crucified, a man. A good man, yes, the best man he had ever met,

but a man for all that. So, there can be no doubt about the humanity of the One delivered into the hands of Pilate to die. But, Paul still maintains that this Man was the Lord of glory! Now just who is the Lord of glory? The Psalmist said, “Who is the King of glory? The Lord (Yahweh) strong and mighty, the Lord (Yahweh) mighty in battle” (Ps. 24:8). Here is an incredible and profound thought, friend. The Man who was put to death in weakness was Yahweh strong and mighty! “GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS — **GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH...BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY**” (I Tim. 3:16). You must not ask me to explain how that Person hanging on a central cross, writhing in death agonies, happened to be the Lord of glory and the Lord of life. I cannot explain it, friends — but I want to tell you that I believe it with all my heart. It is a mystery, a blessed mystery, a thrilling mystery — God manifest in the flesh!

A dear Trinitarian brother came to me one day and said, “Brother Magee, I think that is a great embarrassment to you Oneness people — that Jesus prayed.” I said, “You are wrong. But I want to tell you something: it is a great embarrassment to you.” He asked, “How would it be an embarrassment to *me*? I have never viewed it as such.” I replied, “What happened that night in the garden when Jesus prayed?” “Oh,” he answered, “it is simple. If you believe in the Trinity, it is easy.” I asked him to make it easy for me. “Well,” he said, “here is the Second Person praying to the First Person. It is as simple as that.” I said, “Just a moment, please! Was the Second Person God?” “Yes, certainly, the Second Person was God,” he assured me. “And was the First Person God?” Again he assured me that the answer was in the affirmative. Then I asked, “God prays to God?” “Yes,” was the firm reply.

I said, “Sir, if you pardon me for saying it, that exposition of yours, to my mind, is confusion twice confounded. Would you explain to me, please, how a Divine Person could pray IN HIS DIVINITY without undeifying Himself? If you ever hear someone praying, you know they need help, and God most assuredly does not need help! A Divine Person does not need help; only *men* need help. The Trinitarian explanation of John 17 — that we find one Divine Person praying to another Divine Person — is an absurdity. What we see in John 17 is *humanity praying to Divinity!*” The brother asked, “Then did not He pray to Himself?” “No! He did not pray to Himself!” “What did He do?” I replied, “In His human nature He prayed to His Divine nature.” “Well,” he said, “that is praying to Himself!” “Jesus was God *and* man! If Jesus had a dual nature why should we think it incredible that He should perform a dual role? Why should we think it strange for His human nature to call out to His Divine nature? You know that there is a wrong way of saying the right thing. I would say that Jesus was God, but I would not say that God died, you could not bring me to say that God died; for obvious reasons, God cannot die. But, friend, I do not hesitate to say that He who died was God. I simply do not hesitate to say it. It is simply the right way of saying the right thing. (End quote).

It is time to consider with prayer and meditation the things we have just read, for, if the humanity of Jesus can pray to the divinity of the Father dwelling in Him, then with all certainty the “*man Christ Jesus*” may, in the symbolism of the book of Revelation, lift up His hand to heaven (the realm of the Spirit) and swear by Him (the eternal Spirit) who liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the earth, and the sea! Can you not see the mystery?

CLOTHED WITH A CLOUD

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, *clothed with a cloud*” (Rev. 10:1).

From the dawn of history the way in which God has displayed His glory has been in the form of a cloud. The *glory cloud* of God’s presence has taken different shapes and different sizes on various occasions. When it was time for the children of Israel to begin their exodus out of Egypt, the glory of God took the form of a pillar of fire enshrouded within a cloud. “*And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people*” (Ex. 13:21-22).

What did the glory of God signify every time it appeared? The glory cloud of God signified the unique presence of God! It always told the people of Israel, when it appeared, that Yahweh was uniquely present in this place, at this time, for a special purpose. When the glory of God as a cloud led the children of Israel out of Egypt, it signified to the people that God was with them in a very real and sovereign way. “*And the Lord went before them in a pillar of a cloud.*” God was **in** the cloud! The almighty God Himself dwelt in that cloud by day and in the fiery pillar by night. That strange pillar of cloud and fire was the visible manifestation of His glory and presence! While Israel walked in the light of His fiery presence, no calamity could harm them, no enemy could attack them, no evil could befall them, nor plague come nigh their dwelling. God was with them in sovereign power in all their marches! “*And the Lord said unto Moses, I come unto thee in a **thick cloud**, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe for ever*” (Ex. 19:9). And again, “*And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: **for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat***” (Lev. 16:2).

When the cloud came down out of heaven and rested on the top of mount Sinai, it signified that God in a unique sense had come out of the realm of invisible spirit to meet with the children of Israel in His manifestation on the earth plane. When they saw the cloud move into the most holy place in the tabernacle and later in the temple, it signified again that God in a special sense was taking up residence within that worship structure within the nation of Israel. The light that shone in the holiest of all behind the temple curtain of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, laced with threads of gold and figures of cherubim, was not the beams of the sevenfold candlestick of the holy place, nor even the radiance of the sun in the outer court. It was the glory light of God’s own divine majesty! Through time the Israelites called that glory cloud of God the *shekinah*. The word shekinah means “to dwell.” And since the glory cloud always signified that God was present at the place where the cloud appeared, to dwell in a special sense, they called it the shekinah or *dwelling glory* of God!

The truth that I would now draw to your attention is the fact that it was this same shekinah, this very same glory cloud, which the eleven disciples beheld in spell-bound astonishment on the crest of the mount of Olives that blessed day when the Lord Jesus ascended into mid-air and suddenly a bright cloud, like a chariot of God, bore Him speedily away, concealing Him from mortal gaze. “*When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and **a cloud** received Him out of their sight,*” the record states. An accident? An illusion? A natural phenomenon? A marvelous coincidence? Not on your life! This is the equivalent of saying that the cloud which hovered over Israel in the wilderness; the cloud which rested upon the glorious tabernacle of old; the cloud which dwelt between

the gleaming cherubim in the most holy place; the cloud which filled Solomon's temple until the ministers could not minister by reason of the blazing glory; the cloud which overshadowed the virgin girl Mary when she came to be with child; the cloud which enveloped the Son of God and revealed the glory of His sonship on the mount of Transfiguration; that cloud **is the very same cloud** that received the Lord Jesus into its midst and out of the sight of mortal eyes! The cloud that received the firstborn Son of God out of the sight of those startled disciples certainly was no ordinary rain cloud which happened to be blown across a torturous sky. It was the blazing shekinah cloud which had always veiled the divine majesty of God from time immemorial!

Now, lest we should miss the deep mystery this unveils, I would point out that the one cloud points unerringly to the singular glory of the Head of the body of sons, even our Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that this mighty angel comes down from heaven, *clothed with a cloud*, reveals the truth that this cannot represent the corporate Christ, or the many-membered Son; furthermore, the work of God in the sounding of the seven trumpets is to bring the many-membered body of Christ to perfection, maturity, and the full stature of Christ; only when the seventh trumpet sounds is the mystery of God *finished*, the mystery of God formed, revealed, and manifest in many sons brought to glory; therefore this mighty angel cannot be the many-membered Son, but is without any doubt the Christ, the Captain of our salvation, the Forerunner who for us has entered in beyond the veil — it is HE who is bringing us to His glory! We are not there yet, my beloved, when the sixth trumpet sounds, but the indwelling Christ is performing His mighty work of bringing us on into the fullness of God!

Here I wish to point out a most significant fact of scripture which has entirely been overlooked by most Bible students and nearly all preachers and teachers. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel, to the ascension of Jesus from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always just ONE SINGLE CLOUD! The Lord Jesus ascended in **one single cloud** of God's glory — the very **same** cloud in which He had manifested His presence to His people throughout the long ages of time!

It is when we come to the book of Revelation that we see a distinct difference! For suddenly in addition to the one cloud we are introduced to a great **plurality of clouds!** Let us see! Christ departed this earth in *one cloud*. He comes again in *many clouds!* It was the blessed seer of Patmos who announced: "*Behold, He cometh with clouds: and every eye shall see Him*" (Rev. 1:7). Daniel in vision beheld Him thus: "*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like a Son of man came with the clouds of heaven...and there was given unto Him dominion*" (Dan. 7:13-14). Jesus Himself said, "*And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" (Mat. 24:30). And again, "*Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*" (Mat. 26:64). Finally, the apostle Paul relates this dramatic experience: "*Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds...and so shall we ever be with the Lord*" (I Thes. 4:17). In the CLOUDS! More than one cloud. Many clouds. A great company of clouds!

Why are there many clouds attending Christ's coming, and what are these clouds? Let us not forget for one moment that we are dealing with *the cloud of God's glory, presence, and power* — the shekinah! When the firstborn Son of God was in the world John said of Him, "*We beheld His glory*" (Jn. 1:14). Peter reveals to us what is really meant by their beholding the glory of the Son. "*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when*

we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and **glory**, when there came such a voice to Him **from the excellent glory (the glory cloud)**, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, **when we were with Him in the holy mount***" (II Pet. 1:16-18). Ah, it is clear — it was the glory of HIS manifest sonship!

How very significant that at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry He said, *"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also shall be one in us...and **the glory which Thou gavest me (manifest sonship) I have given them...I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...that they may be with me where I am (His relationship of sonship to the Father); that they may behold my glory which Thou hast given me**"* (Jn. 17:20-24). And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation's light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, God manifested to His creation in a *singular* way His own glory. He, the eternal God, exhibited His presence in the form of one glory cloud! But as Jesus approached the cross, and the glorious events to unfold thereafter, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to **SHARE HIS GLORY WITH A VAST COMPANY OF SONS...that glorious body which is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all!**

*"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the **glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God**"* (Rom. 8:18-19). *"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). *"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in **glory**"* (Col. 3:4). *"That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath **called you unto His kingdom and glory**"* (I Thes. 2:12). *"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing **many sons unto glory**, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings"* (Heb. 2:10). *"I...also am a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the **glory that shall be revealed**"* (I Pet. 5:1). *"But the God of all grace, who hath **called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus...make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you**"* (I Pet. 5:10). Oh, the wonder of it!

What, then, are those clouds with which, and in which, the Christ comes? Why, bless your heart, WE ARE! He comes with and in many clouds! There is only one other group or plurality of objects of which it is stated that Christ comes "with" them or "in" them, and that is — the SAINTS! The Holy Spirit of inspiration is very careful to tell us that He comes "with" clouds. And He also tells us that He comes "with" His saints! *"To the end He may establish your hearts...at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **W-I-T-H ALL HIS SAINTS**"* (I Thes. 3:13). Jude says, *"And Enoch also...prophesied...saying, Behold, the Lord cometh **W-I-T-H TEN THOUSANDS OF SAINTS**"* (Jude 14). The Amplified Bible is helpful, when it reads, *"Behold, the Lord comes **W-I-T-H MYRIADS OF HOLY ONES.**"* But the interlinear reading from the Emphatic Diaglott gives the clearest of all renderings from the Greek text, *"Lo, comes Lord **I-N HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF!**"* "Myriads of HIMSELF!" All of them begotten out of His life, all of them partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, filled with His mind, matured in His life. **Myriads of Himself**, of His own kind, born of His seed, a many brethren company of sons of God. The apostle Paul once expressed the truth in this way, *"When He shall come to be glorified **IN HIS SAINTS**, and to be admired **IN ALL THEM that believe in that day**"* (II Thes. 1:10). John the beloved sees this same

scene in wonder-filled vision and speaking in prophetic language writes, “Behold, He cometh **WITH CLOUDS**; and every eye shall see Him.” Oh, the mystery of it!

Oh, if only I could make men see that our Lord Jesus Christ is *the cloud* and each son of God is *putting on the cloud* which He is. The beautiful type for this was given when Israel began their journey to their land of promise. The apostle Paul spoke of it in these words, “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all **baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea**”(I Cor. 10:1-2). They were baptized in the cloud! Have you thought about that before? The cloud was the spiritual cloud of God’s presence. When that cloud came down into the most holy place the Lord said to Moses, “Come and draw near, and I will speak unto you out of the cloud.” The cloud was a **speaking cloud!** The cloud was the very presence of God as a living word that brought a condition in which they were able to fulfill the plan and purpose that God had ordained for them. As the moving cloud by day and by night, it was a leading word. It was a guiding word. It was a covering word. As a pillar of fire by night it was an illuminating word. It was a quickening word. It was a transforming word. It was everything they needed to bring them into their land. And they were baptized *into that cloud!* They were made one in that living word of God! The cloud is a speaking cloud! It’s a cloud of His word! And now, beloved, God’s elect is being **baptized into the cloud!** The one cloud is becoming many clouds of the presence, glory, and power of God in the earth!

THE RAINBOW UPON HIS HEAD

“And a *rainbow* was upon his head” (Rev. 10:1).

The definite article employed in the Greek text of the passage above takes us back, not to the rainbow in the book of Genesis, or to the rainbow which from time to time appears in the sky, but to that in chapter four of the Revelation where we have been told, in the description of the throne of God in the heavens of the Spirit, that “*there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon.*” The Greek text of Revelation 10:1 reads, “And **the rainbow** was upon His head.” “**The rainbow**” can only be the rainbow already mentioned by John as circling the throne of the Lord!

There is something entrancingly wonderful about a rainbow! When by the spirit of revelation we look beyond the earthly symbol with its excellent beauty, we find God and see a truth and a glory that awakens the heart to worship at His feet. Thus did Ezekiel worship, when, caught up in the ecstasies of the Spirit, he beheld a *vision of God* so sublime that the heart of man has never yet been able to fathom its depths nor the tongue of man to expound its meaning. “*Above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw...the appearance of fire round about...and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. AND WHEN I SAW IT I FELL UPON MY FACE...*” (Eze. 1:27-28). In this vision the cloud is stated to be a specific representation of the glory of the Lord!

In John’s vision the rainbow is upon the “head” of Christ, just as the rainbow was first seen by John “around the throne” — for the head pictures the same reality as the throne. Christ is the “head” of His body, but He is also “the head of *all principality and power*” (Col. 2:10). This signifies that the authority and dominion of the Christ has come down from God out of

heaven, or out of the realm of the Spirit, bringing the rulership of the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of sonship, to finish His work in His elect sons upon earth. The rainbow is a symbol of promise and covenant, as we read, *“I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a **token of a covenant between me and the earth**. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth”* (Gen. 9:13,16).

The rainbow signifies all the prophetic promises and covenant given to the firstfruits company that are as yet unfulfilled. By the spirit of revelation the Lord has made marvelous promises to His called and chosen elect in this great hour! By the prophetic word of the Lord in the midst of His people God has covenanted to manifest His sons in all the glory and power of the firstborn Christ! Ever since the mighty outpouring of the presence of Christ as “Latter Rain” in 1948 the spirit of the Lord has given exceeding great and precious promises to His chosen ones! All of these promises of deliverance, of perfection, of victory, of transformation, of incorruptible life and immortality, of wisdom, glory, power, and dominion as manifest sons of God — all of these promises are within the mind of Christ, and within His authority and power to perform within each of us, assuring the complete and total fulfillment of each and every promise we have received by the Spirit. Our loving, faithful elder brother *remembers His covenant and its promises which He has given us, He beholds them in the rainbow upon His head*, thus assuring us that it shall all be fulfilled!

HIS FEET UPON THE LAND AND THE SEA

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven...and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth” (Rev. 10:1-2).

What a tremendous panorama we see when this “other mighty angel” comes down from heaven and sets one foot upon the earth and the other upon the sea! This scene reveals the unlimited power of the Lord! This fact also reveals to us His ability to be ever present at any time and any place, and to deal with any situation, circumstance, or power in the works, motions, and lusts of the flesh, or in the self-will, self-assertiveness, or self-righteousness of the soul! For who is able to put his foot on the sea and on the dry land at the same time? By this He demonstrates that He is ruler of both! There is nothing in any of our lives or circumstances that He is not able to change and transform!

The ordinary act of placing the foot, becomes an extraordinary act under certain circumstances. When promising the land of Canaan to Abraham the Lord instructed him, *“Arise, **walk through the land** in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee”* (Gen. 13:17). Hundreds of years later God spoke to the people of Israel through Moses, saying, *“Every place whereon the **soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours...there shall no man be able to stand before you; for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon...for ye shall pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land...and dwell therein”*** (Deut. 11:24-31). Thus, when Joshua led the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, the conquest was accomplished by virtue of a previous right and claim granted by the Lord Himself. This right was acknowledged by Joshua’s obedience to the instructions of the Lord, *“Every place the sole of your foot **shall tread upon**, that have I given you”* (Josh. 1:3). The famous “discoverers” frequently appropriated new lands and even the great Pacific for their “crowns” in this manner. The permanence of their conquest, however, depended upon the strength of their military forces to maintain their claim.

This indicates, first of all, that Christ the King who dwells in our spirit subjects all things under Him. The placing of one's feet upon anything is symbolic of subjection and possession. In Joshua 10:24 we read that Joshua calls the chiefs of his army together and bids them place their feet upon the necks of the five kings who have tried to escape in the cave, but which cave became their prison. And then we read that Joshua pledges that Yahweh shall thus do unto all their enemies, against whom they are fighting to conquer the land. In other words, Yahweh shall subdue their enemies and put them in complete subjection!

In this sublime spectacle the right foot of Christ is set upon the sea and His left foot upon the earth. It is an all-inclusive assertion of **right to possession** of the symbolic land and sea! The mighty Christ within has **authority** to lay claim to sovereignty over all the "earth" of our soulical life and all the "sea" of our flesh and body realms! The "sea" in the book of Revelation represents man, or man in the flesh. The scripture says, "...*the wicked are like the troubled sea*" (Isa. 57:20). The "wicked" are not just the people out in the world living licentiously, drinking, fighting, committing adultery, lying, stealing, and murdering. The "wicked" is the old "man of sin" within each of us! And when the Bible speaks of "*the dragon that is in the sea*" (Isa. 27:1), it is a reference to the beastly, Adamic nature of our outer flesh man. When Christ sets His right foot upon the sea, He is symbolically setting the very fiery presence of the Lord upon the man of sin within us! The fiery dominion of the Christ life shall cleanse every member of God's elect to establish the righteousness of Christ fully within us all. Oh, what a wonderful work is done when Christ puts His right foot into the great "sea" of our lives!

Then, Christ puts His left foot on the "earth." Thus, in prophetic purpose, the Christ within us is placing the fiery presence of the Lord upon everything that pertains to the soul. When the Christ is raised up in our life, He who has overcome all things within Himself places His victorious feet on the territory of *our reality*, upon the sea of the wickedness of our flesh and upon the earth of our carnal, soulical self-hood and religiosity. When Christ is raised up within us with His right foot upon the sea and His left foot upon the earth, our whole being is brought under the rule of the spirit, into subjection to the mind, will, and nature of Christ, and the long warfare between the flesh and the spirit is finally ended. The conquest is secured! We no longer battle with the passions of the body or the emotions of the soul, for the Christ within stands astride the sea and the earth of our lives and all things become subject to the life of the spirit.

This is not some kind of behavior modification, reformation, self-effort, or performance activated by fear or commandment. Oh, no! This is not something we do at all, this is the experiential victory of Christ accomplished within us! God Himself so puts His laws in our minds and writes them in our hearts until when something "pushes our buttons" the only thing that proceeds out of us is the life of God. You cannot do this, my brother, my sister, no matter how hard you try or how long you work at it. Only HE can do it! And He only does it within those who follow on to know the Lord — at the sounding of the *sixth trumpet!* Oh, yes, we tried to lay hold upon this victory when the first trumpet blew, and again when the second trumpet blew, and on and on in our walk in God. But did we not fail each time? Don't work, my friend, don't strive or struggle or labor or sweat — rather expose yourself to His glorious presence and His living word, listen for the sounding of the trumpets, until in due time His life overwhelms you triumphantly. **His presence, His authority in you** will descend from the heavens of your spirit and stand upon the sea and upon the earth, and you will hear a voice like thunder from behind the veil, roaring as a lion, and His mighty victory will consume you and stand up in manifestation by the power of His word!

Christ does not descend from some far-off heaven to put His feet upon the sea and the earth. Even as the sea and the earth bespeak of realities right within us, so the Christ is also within us, in the higher realm of the heaven of the spirit. He that is joined to the Lord *is one spirit!* Christ is in our spirit, and it is from the heaven of the realm of the spirit that He descends into the lower dimensions of our life. Even now at this very moment the divine life is at work within us, changing, transforming, bringing soul and body into harmony with the nature and power of His life. The life of Christ is not something outside ourselves. I am wearied a little because so very often believers sing songs such as “*Oh Lord, Send the Power Just Now,*” or “*Jesus is Passing This Way,*” or “*Reach Out and Touch the Lord as He Passes By.*” I rejoice that there are indeed those special “times of refreshing” that come from the presence of the Lord, but I can assure you, my beloved, that you will never know the glorious reality of sonship to God so long as you live in that consciousness of “times of refreshing.”

The consuming desire within my heart in this new kingdom day is that every member of God’s elect might with me become aware of the ***abiding presence*** of God. The message of life and triumph that reverberates through the yielded soul of every saint separated unto God and His high purpose in this great day is just this: It is possible for saints here and now to live with the constant and full assurance that even as the almighty Father indwelt and continually permeated the life of Jesus of Nazareth, so does the spirit of Christ, who is the mighty God and the everlasting Father, live and abide within those who have received the call to sonship. As the years have passed since I first heard the call of the Spirit unto the blessed realm of sonship to God, there has come to me an ever-increasing assurance that I am dwelling and walking in His presence, for He is not momentarily passing my way but has been impregnated into my earthen vessel as the incorruptible seed of the word of God that ***liveth and abideth forever!***

God is not far away; He is not without; He is ***here within us.*** The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. That is the vague form in which many babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ’s teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth now and again when it is time for an embryo to be formed. Oh, no! The life is ***in*** every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, resident within its own tissue and substance, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained in the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism, and fully capable of reproducing itself out of its own generation. Life is not one of the homeless forces that promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the *spiritual life* is not a visit from a force, not something sent down from above, but a resident tenet of our own spirit.

“*The kingdom of heaven is like a...seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field.*” Our human life is the field, Christ is the seed, and our heavenly Father is the great sower! Therefore the life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He “passes this way,” nor from some great revival or “outpouring” of the Spirit, nor yet from the weekly reviving or refreshing that comes to weary souls by gathering together in church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship and encouragement of those of “like precious faith,” but I do not hesitate to tell you that the life of sonship can only be known by the inward activity of the INDWELLING CHRIST, for truly HE IS OUR LIFE and only He can reproduce Himself within us. Every son of God is becoming more and more sensitive to the

Christ within, conscious of His speaking, His teaching, His guiding, and His power continually transforming the mind and the body into the image of Him who created them. Out of the heavens of the spirit He has put His right foot upon the sea, and His left foot on the earth, possessing them for the kingdom of heaven! With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ's indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination! He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you! Nevertheless, I can confidently assure you that, the moment the grand and glorious **fact of His indwelling life** grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life! The knowledge of His abiding life will also begin to change your mind, quicken your emotions, transform your purpose, and renew your body as well!

As speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are the evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, so the redemption of our bodies from the power of decay and death is the initial evidence of the manifestation of the sons of God! Paul by revelation makes this fact unmistakably clear when he says, "*We ourselves too, who have and enjoy the first-fruits of the Spirit — a foretaste of the blissful things to come — groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, WHICH WILL REVEAL our adoption (placement as sons), our manifestation as God's sons*" (Rom. 8:23, Amplified).

This change in our bodies shall not come by the mighty working of Christ crashing down through the clouds over our heads, but by the divine inworking of His indwelling life! Paul by inspiration also has given us these wonderful words of consolation and understanding: "*If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive, immortally) your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you*" (Rom. 8:11). Aren't you glad!

The apostle Paul also explains that Christ "*shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body*" (Phil. 3:21). The Amplified Bible expresses it so clearly and beautifully, "*Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty.*" This phrase, "body of our humiliation," is a more correct rendering of the Greek. How expressive that is! I must confess that it is indeed humiliating to be found in a body like this! It is humiliating to find it necessary to chew on mints to keep the breath from offending those around us. It is humiliating to be so weary from traveling and ministering that at times it is difficult to sit up and fellowship with God's precious saints. It is humiliating to get digestive and intestinal disturbances and require special water and diet in order to carry on. It is humiliating to be bald at twenty-four years of age and gray at thirty! It is humiliating to suffer the weaknesses and appearances of old age, to see new wrinkles and flabbiness in the skin, spider veins, emaciated muscles, paunchy middle, bags under the eyes, and all the other reminders of the earthiness, corruptibility, and mortality of these fragile bodies!

I will never forget an incident in Canada some forty-five years ago. Due to car trouble along the way, I had traveled day and night for two days to get to a Conference where I was scheduled as one of the speakers. When I arrived my clothes were disheveled, my eyes were blood-shot, and I needed a bath. The Conference had already started, and not knowing where I was to stay, I slipped into the Conference Hall to find someone to direct me. I later learned that when I entered the building a number of saints, not knowing who I was, thought a *drunk* had staggered into the meeting! *Body of humiliation!* But, thank God, the *sign* of our manifest sonship lies straight before us as a sure promise and a bright-

shining hope, *“Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of HIS GLORY AND MAJESTY.”* What anticipation this stirs in the heart of every man and woman who has received the call to sonship!

Paul gives us even more information about how this change shall be effected. *“Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last (seventh) trump”* (I Cor. 15:51-52). The Greek word for “moment” is *atomos*. This passage is the only place in the Greek New Testament where this word is used. *Atomos* is the word from which comes our English word ATOM. The word carried the meaning in the Greek of that which is *uncuttable* or *indivisible* because the Greeks believed that the atom was the smallest particle of matter that existed, therefore it could not be divided, cut, split, or reduced in any way. The translators have taken this to mean that our bodies shall be changed in “an atom of time,” that is, in an instant of time so brief that you could not make it any quicker, or reduce the time in any measure. They call that a “moment.” But does not this word *atomos* rather indicate that we shall be changed in the ATOMS of our bodies, in the very **atomical structure** and substance of our physical being? There is no reason for reading the element of “time” into the expression. Surely the apostle was explaining by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that *“we shall be changed in atoms, in atomical structure, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump!”*

Truly we yearn for this change, yea, groan inwardly for the transformation to take place! I continually meet up with brethren who are persuaded that they have already put on incorruption and immortality, that they have by-passed the grave and cannot or will not die. If they have attained to that, then I am dreadfully disappointed. I must be very honest and frank with you, my beloved brothers and sisters. I have not one whit of a desire to live forever, or even for a thousand years, **in this body of humiliation!** There is no more repugnant thought, no more frightful possibility, than the idea that I might live forever, or even for a thousand years, in this body of humiliation! The thought of such limitation, the suggestion that I might have to daily bathe, brush my teeth, use the toilet facilities, put on deodorant, and rinse my mouth with Listerine; the very hint that I may retain this same form, that I might be **as I am** for another thousand years or throughout eternity, falls as far short of a *changed body, conformed to and like the body of HIS GLORY AND MAJESTY*, as does hell fall short of heaven! The body of the manifest sons of God is a **redeemed body, a changed body, a transformed body, a glorious body, an incorruptible body, an immortal body!** Anything less than that is NOT MANIFEST SONSHIP! We are not being made as He was, we are being made *as He is!* *“We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”* The body of the manifest sons of God shall no more resemble this vile body than does the mustard tree resemble the chemical elements that were raised up out of the earth and metamorphosed into the substance of the tree by the mighty working of the subtle and mysterious life-force sown in the earth as a seed. Isn't it wonderful!

Chapter 120

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven...and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not” (Rev. 10:3-4).

The intriguing passage above shows that the seven thunders did not merely make a reverberating noise, but gave forth an articulate message — an utterance which John understood and was about to write down. The implication is that there was a sort of personality ascribed to these thunders. It is enlightening how in the symbolisms of the Revelation everything is animated, and becomes instinct with life and intelligence. Everything is a revelation! Seven is the number of completion and perfection, and the “voices” of the “seven thunders” reveal that it is a word — yet, not merely a word, but the fullness of the revelation of the Lord! What else could we expect as we approach the seventh trumpet, which trumpet brings God’s called and chosen elect to the full stature of Jesus Christ! Revelation precedes experience, therefore we must expect that the Lord would give a full revelation of His purpose just prior to bringing us experientially into that purpose.

Throughout the book of Revelation John represents the overcomer. The voice of the seven thunders is the fullness of the revelation of Christ unto those called to be His firstfruits! The complete revelation of Christ is not given to all men at the same time, not even to all believers. It is given first to a firstfruit of God’s creation, and John represents that firstfruit company which receives the revelation! It’s a corporate word, but we hear it individually. It’s a corporate word we hear by the faith of God within ourselves. When you hear it, you sense that somewhere deep within you you have known this all the time — it was just not awakened within your conscious mind. But you recognize the sound when you hear it! That’s why, when one apprehended of God for sonship hears the message of God’s kingdom purposes, his immediate response is, “This is what I have been searching for, waiting for, all my life! I knew there was something more in God!” Oh, yes! The mystery of God is a secret knowledge concealed in the life of Christ within. Once we hear the voice of the Son of God as a lion roars, even the voice of the seven thunders, our spirit leaps as a babe within us bearing witness to the truth! It comes not as a new revelation, but as a remembering!

I am overwhelmed by the greatness of our Father’s calling and purpose! I tremble with each recollection, if I may say so, with each “flashback” of our former abode before the foundation of the world, when with our heavenly Father we received our commission to come into this earth realm to reveal His glory, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy! We are breaking through a barrier that until now has

been completely unknown to man, hidden, as it were, in the bosom of our Father...a barrier broken only by our Elder Brother as He received the fullness of the Seven Spirits of God, walked out the life and ministry of sonship, became obedient unto death, and then, early one morning, in a garden, as the stone (the old binding force) was rolled away, He arose triumphant in the power of resurrection! And that, my beloved, was the harbinger of the “coming forth” of the sons of God as they partake of the glory of His incorruptible life, when they shall put on the garments of a resurrected being. The Father in His wisdom has reserved this glory for us in this new kingdom day, that we might prepare the way for our brothers and for all creation who are to follow...that we might open the gates of the Paradise of our God, and be the first to eat of the tree of Life...thus leading the way for all mankind to be restored to Eden in the image and glory of the Father. It is indeed wonderful!

But there is a little problem here! Though the word John hears is the fullness of the revelation of the Christ, John wished to write that full revelation down. This reveals an inclination to disseminate this word on a lower, carnal level. By writing, in the natural sense, is signified to commit to paper, and thus for posterity, in a way that it can be read or received even by the unsanctified eyes and ears of any who wish to hear it. Anyone can pick up a book and read a “revelation” even if they have no ability to understand it or receive it by the spirit, and may therefore take the revelation and distort it, pervert it, corrupt it, defile it, applying it with the carnal mind, so that the word becomes an instrument of the flesh and the devil rather than a work of the Spirit and the power of God’s Christ. We must keep in mind, however, that these are symbols, and John “writing” the revelation is not talking about literally writing on paper! The “seven thunders” are a symbol denoting that John heard and received the revelation in the Spirit and by the Spirit, whereas John “writing” the revelation is a symbol indicating the preservation or communication of that revelation on a level other than “in the Spirit and by the Spirit!” People fulfill this when they endeavor to impart truth to others apart from the leading and energizing of the Spirit!

Therefore, it was said to John that he should “seal up” those things and not write them! This was not a revelation which John then was to record and make known. What the seven thunders uttered they spoke in unison; but just what their words were, we are not told. This signifies that each of us must receive the revelation for ourselves! We cannot appropriate God’s purposes on the grounds of a “borrowed revelation.” Like Mary of old, he was to “ponder these things in his heart,” rather than preaching or proclaiming them to all who could hear, putting them on public display, and thereby “casting his pearls before swine.” In modern-day terms John would be restrained from proclaiming this deep truth of God to those believers in the carnal church systems. He would be forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach these sacred secrets of God on the public radio stations and television channels, or to publish them in books for sale in the Christian Book Stores of Babylon. Oh, what a word this is!

The great soul-gripping truth is this — John both heard and understood the message of the seven thunders! He wasn’t forbidden to hear or receive the message, nor was he prevented from understanding or appropriating what he received. Oh, no! He was only commanded to be careful what he did with it, how he communicated it. Actually, he was to seal it up within himself! The word of the Lord to John was that he could not share, proclaim, reveal, or impart this message to anyone at that time. It was for his ears only, that is, only for those apprehended ones who have ears to hear! In making this statement we are brought face to face with two popular errors regarding the seven thunders. Sometimes I hear people say, “No one can know what the seven thunders uttered,

because it was all sealed up.” Not so! It is true the message was sealed — but John knew what the message was — it was not sealed to HIM! Can we not see by this that the revelation of the seven thunders is not sealed to those whom John represents!

On the other hand, I have heard a number of brethren declaring from the pulpit that throughout the church age no one has known the message of the seven thunders until now, in this new day of the Lord, and the message has now been unsealed within them and they are now proclaiming it! With all emphasis I must declare that if they are preaching the message of the seven thunders (as though they, and they alone know the secret of it) they are doing so illegally. To John it was given the hear, to know, to understand, to experience, to appropriate the seven thunders message, but as the elect of God he was commanded to seal it up within himself and not write (preach, reveal, proclaim, publish, or impart) it for others to read. That does not mean that as members of the elect we cannot speak or write of these things! If that were so I would put away my pen! What it means is, that if I think I have the revelation and I go out to share it with the world so that they can only get it from me, then I am illegally proclaiming it. The fact is, it can only be received from the Spirit, just as John received it! The things we share with one another are by way of edification, encouragement, and confirmation — not to try to “convert” more people to the message! When you hear someone declaring that “they” are revealing the message of the voices of the seven thunders — if they truly have that message they will not be revealing it! That explains precisely why Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, always taught in parables (Mat. 13:34). On one occasion His disciples came to Him and asked, “Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?” He answered and said unto them, “Therefore speak I unto them in parables: because they seeing see not: and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand” (Mat. 13:10-13). In other words, by His unexplained parables He was hiding the message from them! That is just the opposite from why most people think Jesus taught in parables! Only to His small inner circle of called and chosen disciples did He reveal the mysteries of the kingdom!

When a thing is sealed up, it becomes a mystery, a secret; it is not open. But a hope is given us, because the “angel” goes on to say, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery (which John had just created by sealing up what the seven thunders uttered) of God should be finished” (Rev. 10:7). It would no longer be a mystery, because in that day, when the voice of the seventh angel would be heard, the mystery would be revealed openly! After sealing up the words of the seven thunders, and not writing them, John was given a “little book” from the hand of Christ Himself. The little book was not sealed, like the book Christ received from the hand of the Father in chapter five. A sealed book is a book whose contents are not yet revealed; an open book is a book whose contents are revealed, that is, seen in the spirit and understood. The sealed book must be opened, and it was opened as the Lamb loosed each of its seven seals! This opening of the book is the revelation of sonship in the firstborn Son of God. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ!

So the book is now open, held in the very hand (power) of Christ, but it must be eaten by His “many brethren” and digested. We have already beheld the opening of the sealed book, and presently shall behold the eating of the open book. The book in chapter five was the revelation of Jesus Christ and the blessed realm of sonship opened unto us by the spirit of revelation. The book in chapter ten, however, is the revelation of Jesus Christ brought into life, reality, and substance within us! John, representing all the overcomers, was told to “eat it up,” signifying that He was to receive this revelation directly from the Lord Jesus Christ, take it into his own innermost being, allow that word to be digested and

made substance within him, and then, and only then, was he instructed, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. 10:11). Oh, yes! This "prophecy" to the nations is the very same word John wanted to write down, only now it will be ministered not as a "revelation" or a "word" or a "teaching" or a "doctrine," but as the expression of his own state of being, the very fullness of the word of the Lord and the revelation of Jesus Christ flowing as rivers of living water from out of his innermost being! The word is made flesh within him, the messenger has become the message, and now will be ministered as SPIRIT and LIFE!

TIME NO MORE

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer" (Rev. 10:5-6).

There is much debate among scholars over whether the expression "there should be time no longer" is the correct rendering of the Greek, or if it would be better translated, "there should be delay no longer." It is my conviction that the former is the natural meaning of the original. The original word *chronos* occurs over sixty times in the Greek Old Testament and over fifty times in the New Testament. This is its second last occurrence and nowhere else has it been translated delay. This alone is enough to reject the translation. Sound exegesis does not permit a change of meaning to a word that has been uniformly translated throughout the scriptures. As to the exact form and order of words there should be no difficulty, since five other passages occur in this same book (Revelation) precisely similar to this, except the subject of the sentence. In each there is the negative no, the verb to be, and the Greek word *eti* translated more. Let us note:

- The sea shall be no more (Rev. 21:1).
- The death shall be no more (Rev. 21:4).
- Pain shall be no more (Rev. 21:4).
- Curse shall be no more (Rev. 22:3).
- Night shall be no more (Rev. 22:5).

Accordingly, so in our present text: Time shall be no more! The proposed translation delay is given, of course, to get rid of a difficulty; namely, that time evidently continues after the angel swears that time shall be no more! There are yet many events with the mention of hours, days, years, with lunar and solar cycles, that follow the announcement of the end of time! Since the translators do not understand by the Spirit what the Lord is proclaiming in this statement, their only alternative is to conclude that there must be some mistake, therefore they go about to change the word of the Lord! The true revelation of what the Spirit is speaking unfolds for us one of the deep mysteries of God's great purpose of the ages and is awe-inspiring beyond words to articulate!

A concept we must immediately grasp in order to understand God's wonderful plan of the ages is that time is a created phenomenon consisting of past, present, and future just as man is a created phenomenon having youth, middle age, and old age. No, you cannot smell, touch, or feel time, but it is there, ever-present, always marching into our future. Time was created; it had a beginning, it shall have an end. It is only one thing among countless other things that are part of the entire created universe. It is as much a "species" of creation as, for example, rocks, elephants, trees, and water are species of creation.

Before the creation of the universe, there was no time; at the end of the ages when the present material universe is dissolved and replaced by a new, spiritual universe, time shall cease to be. It will be swallowed up into eternity just as death will be swallowed up into victory, and there shall be no more death. Time — composed of milliseconds, seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, decades, centuries, millenniums, ages — was created in the beginning, and will be dissolved at the end of the ages.

I am compelled to state that the Bible says very little by way of a definition of eternity because the Bible is essentially a book of time and for time. It was written for man who lives in a temporal state and who is not yet a totally eternal being. Only as we enter that state of being called eternity...only as HE who IS ETERNITY becomes all-in-all within us...only as we are spiritually metamorphosed into our eternal condition in spirit, soul, and body...only as eternity becomes an absolute reality to us...only then do formerly temporal beings as we have all our life-time been, truly comprehend and understand eternity and things of an eternal nature. This marvelous work has begun in our spirit as our spirit has been quickened by His Spirit, and we have awoken to our inward origin out of the eternal sphere. I stated that the Bible is relatively silent about what eternity is; that is not to say that human teachings and theology haven't taught us a great deal about eternity, but, alas! much of it over the past centuries has come from the carnal minds of Babylonish theologians and not from the mind of the Eternal One via the Eternal Spirit.

This phenomenon called time was created by God for man! Why? Time is the womb from which God is birthing a people like unto Himself. We get the germ, the beginning and foretaste of eternity in time, but this is only the seed of eternal life. The womb of time is provided to aid man in his development, to assist him in preparation for a new, totally spiritual consciousness and existence beyond time, beyond the material, beyond the ages, when the umbilical cord is cut, and we are released into that state of existence called eternity. Man, as he is dealt with by God, is passing from a gross, largely material consciousness, into a glorious spiritual existence! Time serves only as an instrument to help man, to give him a period during which by and through experience to develop into that new state of being. In time there is change — in eternity there is no change! All change, growth, and development must take place in time!

Thank God, we are being changed! But that means that the life of God within exists as a seed, that is, in a limited, underdeveloped state. While the seed of omniscient wisdom and omnipotent power lie within the seed of divine life in our spirit, the fact that it has not overwhelmed or overcome all the outward, limited, imperfect, and mortal aspects of soul and body, reveals that our life as to its condition is limited and immature. God has dispensed that life into us in time, that through a process of time and experience the seed of spiritual life may be released, developed, and matured, until eventually Christ is fully formed in us and we arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. When the work in time is finished, we are brought to the fullness of that which GOD HIMSELF IS. When the process is complete we are able to see Him as He is, and there will BE NO MORE CHANGE! We will then truly know what eternal life is! As long as the life within us is passing through the process of change, growth, and development, it is not viewed as eternal, unchangeable life, but as the LIFE OF THE AGES, life undergoing the dealings of the Father in time.

The so-called eternal security of the believer is known only by the overcomers who have fully and forever conquered every vestige of the flesh, the world, and the devil, being conformed into the image of the Son. Of these triumphant ones it is written, "To him that

overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life,” and again, “He that overcometh...I will not blot his name out of the book of life” (Rev. 2:7; 3:5). The inference is clear — until this “overcomer” state is attained, it is possible to have one’s name blotted out of the Book of Life! That does not mean that the name cannot be written there again, any more than it could be said that it was impossible for it to be written there in the first instance. But it does indicate that the life possessed by a believer who is not fully an overcomer is not by God’s definition eternal life, for were it absolutely eternal its manifestation and victory could not be lost! Have we not all known people who started out in a wonderful expression of divine life, they were powerful in God, and then something tripped them up, they were offended, or disappointed, or embittered, slipped into an attitude of defeat, even departing from their spiritual walk, sinking back into wantonness, drunkenness, and all kinds of filth of the flesh. Ah, their name is not at that time written in the book of life, life is unable to be read by any in that “book” which they are! (II Cor. 3:2-3). Can we not see by this how it is that the one who has truly and fully overcome all things — his name cannot be blotted out of the Book of Life, for the Life in him has fully matured and has triumphed over all — beyond interference or possibility of defeat! Oh, the wonder of it!

Every son of God is growing up into relationship with our heavenly Father in the nature revealed by His name — YAHWEY. The name YAHWEH is derived from the Hebrew verb havah meaning “to be” or “being.” This word is almost exactly like the Hebrew verb chavah meaning “to live” or “life.” One can readily see the connection between being and life. Thus Yahweh means THE SELF-EXISTENT ONE or THE ETERNAL. He is the One who in Himself embodies essential life, permanent existence, derived from no source outside himself, and absolutely dependent upon no other person, thing, circumstance, or action for its continuance. Any being whose existence is dependent in any degree upon another, or upon conditions such as food, water, light, air, instruction, growth, change, etc., or even upon some cosmic influence, is not self-existent! This quality inhered originally in Yahweh alone, as it is written, “The Father hath life in Himself” (Jn. 5:26). That means that His existence is not a derived one, nor a sustained one; not derived from anything nor dependent upon anything, but inherent and eternal within Himself. The verbs “to be” and “to live” from which the name Yahweh comes denote both ESSENTIAL LIFE and a STATE OF BEING. Hence, God is not only eternal Himself, but every aspect of His nature and all His characteristics are as eternal and unchanging as His life!

Anything that is absolutely eternal is not only unending, but is also unchangeable. Anything that changes in any way is not eternal, for in the change some characteristic is left behind and a new one acquired. In every change something ends and something else begins! That which dwells in an eternal state knows no change. Change is possible only in that which is limited, imperfect, or immature. Yahweh declares of Himself, “I am Yahweh (the Eternal), I change not” (Mal. 3:6), and the inspired apostle says of Him, “With whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). God is never surprised. God has not learned anything this week, nor last year, nor in the last several billion trillion years! If God learned one thing today, it would destroy Him. He would no longer be the omniscient One knowing the end from the beginning, for known unto Him are all His works from the foundation of the world. God does not experiment. God does not become stronger, mightier, or increase Himself in any way. God is the omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal One. He changes not! He has never been anything He is not now, nor shall He ever become anything He is not now. He eternally is all that He is without any degree of decrease or increase or fluctuation whatsoever. Ah, He is the ETERNAL GOD, YAHWEH — THE SELF-EXISTENT ONE!

It is a great and blessed fact that Yahweh is the eternal God! Transition, adjustment, change — these words seem to be constantly with us, until we vainly would grasp for something that seems to be stable, solid, enduring. Much of the inner drive for change is simple evidence that man is not satisfied, has not found his completeness in Christ, for “beloved, now are we the sons (children) of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him” (1 Jn. 3:2). Here is stability — immutability — the quality of His nature remains the same, HE IS THE ETERNAL! And this is the nature of which we would be partakers, the fullness of which we find in Christ, and through union with Him we shall be changed until we become changeless in the absoluteness of that which He is — fully like Him! He who is eternal cannot be influenced, affected, moved, changed, altered, damaged, destroyed, or improved in any way. He cannot grow tired or old. The character of God is eternal, changeless, unaffected. The love, joy, peace, righteousness, and power of God cannot fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. Matters not what happens or what men or devils say or do, the love of God, the nature of God, the purpose of God, and the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, undiminished, unaffected, without fluctuation. The eternal existence of God is certain for He is the source of all life. Death cannot touch Him for He is not dependent upon the sustaining power of another, He is Yahweh, the Self-Existent One!

With these lofty thoughts of God in our minds, our hearts respond with joyful accord when Christ in His wisdom shows that it is God’s intention that he who walks in the blessed realm of sonship should be as constant and unchanging as is God Himself. To His disciples Christ spoke these incredible words: “For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (Jn. 5:25-26). LIFE IN HIMSELF! This is self-existent Life, a Life not derived from any source, not dependent upon any sustenance, inherent Life! Thus Jesus could stand and declare, “I am the Life!” The exceeding great wonder of all is that not only did Jesus possess the self-existent Life of God, but God made Him to be “a life-giving Spirit.” How plain, if the Spirit of Christ dwells in us, He imparts THE SEED OF ETERNAL, SELF-EXISTENT LIFE WITHIN US NOW!

Yet, the spiritual life we now have is a progressing, growing, maturing, conquering life — the life of the ages. That is what the Greek word *aionios* means! It is usually translated as eternal, but that is not the meaning in Greek. The Greek noun *aion* means “an age,” a period of time. In its plural form it means “ages.” The adjective form of the word is *aionios*, meaning “that which pertains to the ages” or “age-lasting” or “ages-lasting.” The reader may consult Young’s Literal New Testament or the Emphatic Diaglott for the correct translation of these words. Thus, what the King James Bible calls “eternal life” is in fact “the life of the ages!” It is the life that has come by the quickening of our spirit by His Spirit, giving a new consciousness of life, a new beginning, and the potential to become, in due time, all He is. But I am sure my readers, with myself, must confess that there is a great deal of progress still to be made, considerable growth to be experienced, much transformation to be wrought, before we stand in Him in the fullness of that life that needs no change, no further development, no additional experience, no more growth unto maturity, no fuller stature, no added triumph, no increase of wisdom and knowledge — that state of being as unchangeable as He is unchangeable, truly as ETERNAL AS HE IS ETERNAL!

Only faintly now do our eyes behold the splendor of that eternal realm which lies before us, but if we approach softly with reverence and godly fear, not disrespectfully and thoughtlessly as nosey children prying into some sacred thing, then the Lord of glory will meet us and will be a Father unto us and we shall be the manifest sons of God in whom

the Father shall unfold the fullness of His life, mind, will, power, and glory. Thus shall we come into that same image and be sharers with the Christ in the glory He had with the Father BEFORE TIME WAS — ETERNAL GLORY! I think I know why some become so enraged when we tell them that we do not now possess the absolutely eternal life. Is it not because they would rather ignore this life of the ages, somehow projecting themselves into that life which is eternal, claiming “by faith” the finished product, while by-passing the tedious processing? Ah, dear ones, it doesn’t work that way! God has graciously given unto us life aionios — the life of the ages — and how I thank God that my current stage of spiritual growth and development, and my present state of being, are NOT ETERNAL! Oh, yes! There is MORE! I would follow on to know Him in all the fullness of His glorious and eternal reality! And it will take “the ages,” my beloved, to unfold it all! As long as there is need for growth, change, increase, and advancement, there is need for time. Redemption and transformation as a process has a unique relationship to time. Until our redemption and transformation into the image of God is complete its work will proceed in time, and the finished product stands at time’s end. Thank God! There is an end — then eternity, God all in all!

As God’s plan of the ages has progressed there has been a level of life, a spiritual vitality, for each age. Each age has been different. Men in antediluvian times knew God in a certain way and received life of a particular order. Israel, under the law, and the ministry of the prophets, entered into another degree of spiritual awareness and life. Under the new covenant the born again body of Christ has received yet a higher dispensation of the life of God. Perhaps I can give you a simple illustration in this way. There is a difference between embryo life, fetus life, infant life, and child life. There is a difference between adolescent life, young life, middle age life, and old age life. In the same way there is a growth and development of spiritual life within each of us! There are babes in Christ, young men in Christ, mature ones in Christ, and ultimately the manifest sons of God. There is spiritual growth of the seed of Christ in every man until HIS FULLNESS is attained. There shall be a continuing development of His life in the whole human family in the “ages to come” until God becomes all in all! Aren’t you glad!

An understanding of this important truth will show us why we have been given what the Greek text of the New Testament calls life aionios — the life of the ages, and why we also know that the life of the ages leads to ETERNAL LIFE! “Eternal” is one of the words which everyone thinks he understands, but there are few who realize what a deep and glorious meaning it has. It is supposed that “eternal” is something that always continues, something that has no end. This explanation is merely a negative one and tells us only what “eternal” is not, but it teaches us nothing about its nature and being, that is, what its qualities and characteristics are which make it unending. Everything that exists in time has a beginning and is subject to the law of increase and decrease, of becoming, growing, increasing, weakening, diminishing, and decaying. What is eternal knows no change, increase, or weakening, because it has in itself a LIFE THAT IS INDEPENDENT OF TIME AND SPACE. To say that one has “eternal” life means much more than to say that it will have no end. By that word we are taught that he who has a share in eternal life possesses something in which the power of an indestructible life is at work, something in which there can be no change, nor can it suffer any diminution, and which therefore we may always enjoy in its absolute fullness.

When our faith lays hold upon what is eternal, it will manifest itself in us as a power superior to all the changeableness of our mind, feelings, emotions, desires, and circumstances, with a vitality, freshness, and fullness that is not for one moment affected

by any internal or external influence or pressure. It is, therefore, more than merely an endless duration of life — it is the UNCHANGEABLE QUALITY OF DIVINE EXISTENCE! Not only does this life never end, but it never ends simply because it is, at all times, and under all circumstances, unchangeably WHAT HE IS! This life can never be altered, frustrated, diminished, or overcome. When we commence to live in this life we become a people who ARE. We ARE what His life IS! As this life develops and matures within we become constant in His nature, without fluctuation, unvarying, regardless of anything that happens to us or around us. Oh, son of God, is there not within your soul the insatiable thirsting to truly know the fullness of such a life, to be partaker not only of the unendingness of His life, but to abide ever in His unchanging nature! This is precisely the transcendent purpose of our heavenly Father in the fullness of our redemption and transformation!

God is cultivating within His sons an eternal nature. The thoughts of God's people are becoming boundless and eternal, no longer controlled and motivated purely by carnal memories of the past, by present events, or by dim hopes for an endless future in "mansions over the hilltop." The fledgling spirits of God's sons are fast growing up into the limitless expanses of our Father's own eternal, unchangeable, spiritual nature. Yes, the whole man is becoming a new, eternal creation, no longer limited by the space-time continuum.. God's maturing sons see the reality of a state of being called eternity, where our life is truly constant, unchangeable, unaffected, untemptable, and indestructible. Eternity is not merely endless time; it is that state of being where as He is, so are we in this world. How our hearts strain and leap upward toward that "place" in God!

Before returning to our text, and the angel's declaration that "there should be time no longer," bear with me as I share some further insights into the difference between time and eternity and how the sons of God move from time into eternity. Here I wish to quote a portion from Nathan R. Wood's informative book, *The Secret of the Universe*:

"How does time exist? What is its source? Here is where we must diverge from those who have heretofore discussed the nature of time. We cannot safely so diverge from all who have gone before unless the thing which we discuss can be shown to be self-evident. That is what we must show. How does time exist? What is its source? Not the past. Carelessly we think it so, as coming out of the past. Moralists, poets, and scientists speak of it so. We speak of the stream of time as flowing out of the past...describing that movement as proceeding out of the past through the present into the future.

"But time does not come out of the past! It comes out of the future. And it does not flow into the future! It flows into the past. This may bring a shock to one's habit of thinking. It has brought a shock to some who have discussed it as it is presented in these pages. We have never thought of it in that way. None the less it is the self-evident fact. We have but to take a definite date, a definite piece of time, and trace its course down the stream of time, to find at once whether that section of time moves from past through present into future, or from future through present into past. Consider, for instance, that section of time which we call 'today,' the day in which you read this page. For a long time this day was 'next year,' far in the future. Then it was 'next month,' still in the future. Then it was 'next week,' in the near future. Then it was 'tomorrow,' in the immediate future. Then it became 'today,' in the present. Soon it will be 'yesterday,' in the immediate past. Then it will be 'two days ago,' in the near past. Then it will be 'last week,' in the recent past. Then it will be 'last month,' in the receding past. Then it will be 'last year,' far in the past.

“Manifestly, that section of time which we call ‘today’ comes out of the distant future, first into the near future, then into the present, then goes into the recent past, then disappears into the distant past. That is the unbroken order of the motion of time. That is its invariable direction. Never does it flow the other way, from past to future. Never does yesterday turn back in its flight and become today, or today become tomorrow. Never does the past pass into the present, or the present into the future. No. It is the other way. Tomorrow becomes today. Today becomes yesterday. The future becomes the present. The present becomes the past. The future is therefore the source, it is the reservoir of time which will some day be present, and then past. The present is the narrow strait, it is the living instant, it is the flashing reality, through which the vast oncoming future flows into the endless receding past.

“Why then do we usually think of time as coming out of the past? What is the reason for this common fallacy? The answer is simple. We get the impression that time comes into the present out of the past, because the human race and human history come into the present out of the past. The human race passes from past through present into future. Therefore we have fallen into the habit of thinking that time follows the same order. But it is not so! Time goes the other way. The human race comes to us out of the past, and time comes to us out of the future. We do not go with time. We continually meet it, instant by instant. That is why the present is always instantaneous — because we do not go with it, we constantly meet it, moving from past to future while time proceeds from future to past. This is the procession of time. The future is the reservoir out of which the present comes. The future is the source.

“The future is the source. The future is unseen, unknown, except as it continually embodies itself and makes itself visible in the present. The present is what we see, and hear, and know. It is ceaselessly embodying the future, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment. It is perpetually revealing the future, hitherto invisible. The past in turn comes from the present. We cannot say that it embodies the present. On the contrary time in issuing from the present into the past becomes invisible again. The past does not embody the present. Rather it proceeds silently, endlessly, invisibly from it. But the present is not the source of the past which proceeds from it. The future is the source of both the present and the past! The present therefore comes out of the invisible future. The present perpetually and ever-newly embodies the future in visible, audible, livable form; and returns again into invisible time in the past” — end quote.

Seeing, now, that time indeed comes out of the future, the great truth also becomes self-evident that when one arrives at the beginning of time, not time past, but time future, right there at that beginning of time he steps beyond time into eternity! But how do we arrive at the beginning of time, the source from whence it flows to us from the future? Nathan Wood in his book points out that the future is the source of the present and the past, but what he fails to tell us is what is the source of the future, the source of time! The beginning and source of time is God — SPIRIT! “In the beginning GOD created...” And that, my beloved, is the beginning and source of time! Just as the present flows out from the future, so time itself (the future) flows out of God! God is Spirit, Spirit lies beyond matter, beyond time, beyond space. Can we not see by this that Spirit exists before and above and beyond time. “HE is before all things.” Thus, all that is necessary in order to transcend time is to LIVE AND WALK IN THE SPIRIT! That is where time ceases to exist! That is where “time is no longer!” Eternity is not where time ends linearly; it is where time ends dimensionally! Spirit exists in a dimension above and beyond time. Spirit is the source of time, but Spirit is not time. Spirit is unchangeable, therefore eternal, before time, after time, and in time. Let

there be no doubt in the mind of any man that when the Lord swears that “there should be time no longer,” He is not predicting that the world ends, the sun burns itself out, the stars fall from heaven, the universe collapses, and all time ceases to exist. Oh, no! That is the way the carnal mind conceives of it, but that is not the truth perceived by the spiritual mind! The spiritual mind understands the words that follow these, wherein the Spirit testifies, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared unto His servants the prophets” (Rev. 10:7). When the mystery of God is finished, time shall be no longer. Ah, when the mystery of God is finished in His elect, the sons of God will be manifested! When we have been fully transformed by the renewing of our minds, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, we shall arise to that new state of being in the eternal, unchangeable nature and glory of sonship — THAT IS WHERE TIME ENDS FOR THE SONS OF GOD AND ETERNITY BEGINS! Time is no more for any man who enters the heavenly, celestial consciousness and life of the Eternal Spirit!

There was a time when God was ALL. Because we are caught in the physical creation with its material realm and time, with its beginning and ending, we are trapped in the inability to comprehend eternity. Do you realize there is really no such thing as an hour, a minute, or a second? Such measurements were invented by man for his convenience, as fabricated units of time. But for you and me, there is only now. And now is so infinitely small that it is im-measurable — it just passed as you read these lines — and yet it didn’t pass, for it is still just NOW. Now is so incredibly short for me. Let’s try this on God. God also only has now — but God’s now is so much bigger than my now! His now reaches from eternity to eternity, for it has no consciousness of time. Since God is the eternal and omnipresent One, His now is everywhere and at all times! You put this infinitesimal thing called time into God’s now — and the distance between places — His now is in all of those. God’s now is just as much at the end of our time as His now is at the beginning of time. God’s now is the now of every man who has ever existed anywhere at any time. His now is all the nows of all the people who have ever experienced any now anywhere at any time. God was there in Adam’s now, in Noah’s now, in Moses’ now, in David’s now, at the very same “time” as He is here in my now. Eternity is God’s all-encompassing NOW. Oh, the mystery of it!

In the opening chapters of the book of Genesis we see how on each of the six days of God’s “labor” there was an “evening” and a “morning” marking the beginning and the conclusion of the work and purpose of God in each day. It is significant to note that on the seventh day we read of no evening or morning, for the seventh day bespeaks a completed creation, God resting in Himself, the never-ending day of the fullness of the glory of the Lord. In each of the creative days the “evening and morning” mark the duration of the day, the work accomplished, the purpose fulfilled; and each new evening and morning indicates a going on to another work, which work will ultimately end, to give way to yet another work. Each “day” begins and ends!

Typically, this reveals to us how each moving of God’s Spirit in the earth, and in our lives, accomplishes His purpose for that time and then becomes history...and God marches on. I am convinced that one of man’s great faults is that he always expects the future to be just a repetition of the past. If God moved in a certain way once, they were sure the next move would be in the same manner and form, so they called their all-night prayer meetings and implored, “Oh, God, do it again!” I do not hesitate to declare to you that such a prayer is utterly void of understanding and can never be answered, for God does not repeat the work of a first day, or a second — He marches on to finish His work! As one has so ably pointed out, God does move in His appointed cycles, but each season of refreshing has a

totally NEW element in it as well as some of the age-abiding truths which were revealed in former moves. Thus we have the paradox of how God's moves are both OLD and NEW, and no man can say that he already knows what is coming, because there is that new part which has never been uncovered before, being reserved for this special hour. Thus God moves onward in His progressive working, from age to age, from revelation to revelation, from dealing to dealing, from experience to experience, from one working of His Spirit to another, until finally His image (at the end of the sixth day) is brought forth and He can rest.

Let all who have received the call to sonship know that every "day" of the Lord's "labor" ends, the way God has moved in your life in former times will end, all the old orders are ending, the glory of former revivals and movings of God's Spirit are passing away, all the religious institutions organized into powerful kingdoms out of bygone times of refreshing are crumbling and are ready to collapse. Let something else be equally clear — God has a new order arising, an entirely new day is dawning, there is a growing consciousness that we are standing on the threshold of a glorious new moving of the Spirit in the earth, **TOTALLY UNLIKE ANYTHING WHICH HAS BEEN SEEN IN PAST AGES.** I do not say that a revival shall break out! Men talk about a great "end-time revival," but that shall not be! A revival means the reviving of that which was once alive, but has died and needs a resurrection. This new day is far more than the reviving of some old order, including the old order of the "New Testament Church." This is a new day, the birthing of a new order, the unveiling of a new glory, the standing up of a new man, for the sons of God shall be manifested, the kingdom of God shall come into the earth in power and great glory, and His incorruptible and immortal life shall reign in a firstfruits company — even those who step out of the "time" of all former "days" to minister out of the eternal realm and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption!

All the gifts and glory and power of former days of God's moving have failed to deliver creation and bring the glory of God's kingdom to pass in the earth until His will is done on earth as it is in heaven. All the mighty revivals of church history failed to deliver the groaning creation. None of the "six days of labor," nay, all of them together, have not brought the fullness of God in God's elect nor the blessedness of God's rest to creation. How unmistakably accurate is the prophecy spoken by our omniscient Father when speaking of man's rule over the earth He said, "six days shalt thou labor." All man's grandiose efforts, works, programs, schemes, and endeavors to convert the world and establish the kingdom of God in all the earth have not only been an incredible failure but, if for an instant we may descend to baseness of speech, have been a colossal flop, for sin and sinners and wretchedness and violence abound more today than at any time since the days of Noah.

We have passed through many "days" of God's dealings, revival after revival, move after move, revelation after revelation, and blessing upon blessing. Each has had its evening and morning. Each has come and gone. Thank God, the first rays of the light of a new day are even now painting the eastern sky! Thank God! a few of His chosen ones have arisen in the Spirit to behold the glories of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn! This is a day of days, as the six days of the old creation were but one day of creation (Gen. 2:4), so this seventh day has been preceded by "days" of unfoldment, yet it is but one day in which God brings His sons into rest with Him in His glory. This seventh day is not like any other day in one important feature. It has no evening and morning! This reveals the wonderful truth that this is an unlimited day of consummation — an eternal day without end in which time shall be no more! All the days of "labor" have this evening and

morning, for they need it, and good as are the days when God's work goes on within us from evening to morning, cycle after cycle, while we yet need them, FAR MORE BLESSED IS THE ETERNAL DAY OF REST IN HIS GLORY WHEN HIS WORK IS COMPLETED AND WE AWAKE IN HIS LIKENESS! It is indeed wonderful!

This blessed realm of His fullness, of perfection, of incorruption and immortality, is the day of which John prophesied in spirit, saying, "And there shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:25). No night! No darkness, for the shadows have all flown away. No darkness, no dusk, a day filled with the effulgent glory of the Lord! No night! An eternal day, a day with no end, and a day when no more changes come to those who are now like Him. On this day it has also been revealed, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there...and they shall see His face: and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there...for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 21:3-4; 22:3-5). Ah, beloved, such is the seventh day, a walk with God, a place in God, uniting earth to heaven in blessedness, God and man dwelling and resting together, joined in one spirit. If we know it not, let us wait for it: to those who wait with patience and faith, it will surely come, and will not tarry.

The seventh day is not merely a period of time; the seventh day is the REALM OF GOD'S REST, and finally, the seventh day becomes A PEOPLE. It is stated of the seventh day, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it" (Gen. 2:3). He did this because in it He rested. When God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, He set it apart unto Himself and lifted it up above all other days, specifically above all the days of "labor." But in Exodus 31:13 the Lord identifies the day with a people, showing how the one prefigures the other, and how the twain are one. "Verily, MY SABBATHS SHALL YE KEEP (Hebrew: ye shall rest in My Rest): for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth SANCTIFY YOU." Here the day and the people are both so sanctified to God that they become as one. As we enter into God's rest, beyond all the days of man's religious labor, so that His rest becomes personified within us, WE BECOME HIS REST, HIS HOLY DAY, HIS SABBATH, AND HIS MOUNT ZION!

So let the nations rage, let the people imagine a vain thing, let the storms of trouble blow, let sorrows spread as a cloud over the land, let the kingdoms of men tremble and fall, let the whole political, economic, and religious structure collapse and darkness cover the earth...GOD'S SABBATH PEOPLE ARE AT REST AND UNAFRAID, THE GLORY OF THE LORD HAS RISEN UPON THEM, BECAUSE THEY DWELL IN HIM. They are upheld by His mighty hand, and they shall become a beacon of light to those who stumble in darkness. When men's hearts fail them for fear in looking after the things that are coming upon the earth, these shall abide in the unchanging, unaffected, undisturbed, unshakeable, invincible, eternal nature of their Father. These are the Living Word beyond time's span; beyond the fluctuations of time these shall remain calm, cool, and collected, ready to speak peace to him that is afraid. While many are running to and fro throughout the land trying to find a place of safety in the storm of trouble, God is preparing His DAY PEOPLE who shall stand in the midst of the land and many shall come to the brightness of their rising. Isaiah looked forward to this day and described the dawning of God's glory, saying, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward" (Isa.

58:8). Hallelujah! What a day! To all who by the Spirit enter into this day, into this dimension of His rest and glory, into this living reality of His eternal nature and life...TIME SHALL BE NO MORE!

Chapter121

The Sounding Of The Trumpets

continued

“...in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished” (Rev. 10:7).

All trumpets consummate with the seventh and last trumpet. If the reader will earnestly consider the truth of the statement just made, it will become crystal clear that the notion taught by the church systems, that Christ returns and “raptures” the saints to heaven at the beginning of chapter four of the Revelation, is a colossal error. The mystery of God is finished, that is, the work of God in His called and chosen firstfruits is consummated at the seventh and last trump! This trump doesn’t sound until chapter seven of the Revelation — long after the church has been taken out of the world, according to the popular rapture teaching. The apostle Paul makes it plain in I Corinthians 15:52 that there is a last trump, and that at the sounding of the last trump we shall be changed. “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” There are only seven trumpets in the scriptures, making it abundantly clear that the seventh is the last. It should not be difficult for any thinking mind to grasp the great truth that the seventh trumpet is also the last trump!

The last trump blows right in the middle of the so-called “tribulation period” when they tell us the saints won’t even be on earth! Can any doubt that such a teaching is indeed the confusion of Babylon? Paul says, as I have mentioned, that it is at the sound of the last trump that we are changed. Not raptured away to some far-off heaven, mind you, but changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. This corruptible puts on incorruption! This mortal puts on immortality! And according to the vision of John we are changed in or during the days of the voice of the seventh angel, as he begins to sound. And yet — the seventh trump is more than a sound, more than a revelation, more than a message — it’s a PEOPLE! The seventh trump is the trump heralding maturity, perfection, and fullness in those who are the firstfruits of His redemption!

Let us now acquaint ourselves with the following wonderful truth, for when this truth is firmly established in our hearts, it becomes the trumpet sound that finishes within us the mystery of God. The trumpet will sound until the mystery of God is finished! From the depths of my quickened spirit there arises the divine conviction that the seventh trumpet is sounding even now. The certain hope of the mystery of God being finished is now within the grasp of those blessed ones apprehended to sonship. If you are hearing this sound, my beloved, it is changing you! If the sound you are hearing in the Spirit and by the Spirit is truly changing you, then it can be none other than the seventh trumpet! I am hearing a sound in the Spirit today that is changing me! “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn

among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29). The seventh trumpet is the voice of the Son of God. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (I Thes. 4:16). There is no greater trumpet, there is no greater voice! When the voice of the Son of God is heard out of the body of Christ, the mystery of God is finished. It doesn’t mean we understand everything, but it does mean that the mysteries have been opened up! They that hear the voice of the Son of God shall live (Jn. 5:25). We are being changed because we are hearing the living voice of the Son of God in the earth! Some have heard it for years, others are just now hearing it, but all who hear are being changed! The old carnal mind, the old human identity, the old Adamic life with its corruption and death is fleeing away from our land and God is causing us to live in His sight!

Our Lord said that the hour would come when those that are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God, and all that hear shall live. While it is wonderfully true that death shall be swallowed up in victory at the sounding of the last trump, yet there are graves other than the ones out in the cemetery, that men are buried in. There are many realms of death, multitudes of men are dead in trespasses and in sins, she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth, the wise man said. Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees whited sepulchers full of dead men’s bones. According to Jesus religion is the congregation of the dead, one vast cemetery full of bones! All death is not the same death, but whatever realm of death a man abides in he can come forth and live only when he hears the voice of the Son of God! Some of us have been in Baptist graves, Methodist graves, Pentecostal graves, New Age graves — anywhere that men have doctrine and external forms of religion, but not life! I sound the message today, I blow the trumpet out of Zion, declaring by the word of the Lord that those ordained to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, who are yet in their graves, whatever grave or realm of death it is, shall in the days before us hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Isn’t it wonderful!

Seven is an important number in the word of God. God’s creative work was completed in six days, and on the seventh day He rested, and man rested with Him, because His work was accomplished. We had a picture in our minds that Gabriel would appear in the sky and he would blow the “last trumpet,” declaring the end of the world. Not so! It is the seventh angel company that is sounding the last trump message. The last trump is the seventh trump, the last message that brings God’s redemptive work in His elect to completion and consummation!

If all one preaches is the message of the outer court, which is the message of the feast of Passover, he will get men forgiven and reconciled to God. If all one preaches is the message of the holy place, which is the message of the feast of Pentecost, he will get men baptized in the Holy Spirit and with His gifts. Throughout church history the various trumpets have sounded with their messages, and each has brought us onward and upward into the purpose of God. With each sounding of a trumpet of the Lord came another measure of light and life. But none of the trumpet sounds we have heard proclaimed what creation is groaning for! Nor were they what we ourselves, who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, are groaning for! Creation is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God, for a full, complete redemption and restoration, deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of corruption, in spirit, soul, and body! How long God’s people have waited to hear the sound of the seventh trumpet! It is this last great final message that has lain longest under the shroud of obscurity and spiritual ignorance.

If your eyes can see how it is now in the heavenlies, you see that the whole realm of the heavenlies is astir and alive with hope and expectation. The great cloud of witnesses is passionately urging us to press onward and upward into the kingdom of our Father. The seventh trumpet is announcing that this is the great day of our full salvation! A remnant company of saints is marching toward its destiny...and all the precious saints who went by way of the grave, the great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, are observing their progress! With each step forward and upward we take in God, those spirits of the redeemed in the heavens of the spirit are rejoicing and praising our beloved Redeemer for the work of deliverance, maturity, and restoration He is now accomplishing in the lives of His elect on earth in this great hour. They realize that their only hope of deliverance rests with the sons of God who are entering into their full inheritance in Christ in the power of resurrection. Until the time came for it to be sounded, the revelation of the seventh trumpet has remained unknown and unheralded by the church. But now, praise God, there's an "angel" sounding in this new day of the kingdom of God, a messenger with a message! It's a corporate message. It's a corporate messenger. It's a corporate trumpet sounding! It's the seventh trumpet announcing the life, glory, majesty, and power of the most holy place, which is the call to the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of fullness, the feast of the finished harvest, the full ingathering at the end of the year. In this feast the mystery of God shall be finished!

There are a number of "lasts" in the scriptures. Jesus spoke of the "last day." "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth into Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6:39-40). Paul spoke of the last trump. We have surely read these inspired words of instruction: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready (prepared) to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:3-5).

Let me draw your earnest attention to seven wonderful truths revealed in these words of the apostle. (1) We have been, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, begotten again unto a living hope. (2) This living hope is the hope of an inheritance. (3) This inheritance is incorruptible. (4) This incorruptible inheritance is reserved in heaven — the invisible realm of the Spirit — for us. (5) Until we fully receive our inheritance we are kept by the power of God unto the inheritance— preserved so that we can appropriate it when it is disclosed. (6) The inheritance is salvation beyond what we have experienced thus far — incorruption full and complete. (7) This salvation is ready for us — already prepared for us and appointed to us — and shall be revealed in the last time.

Make no mistake about it — the "last time" is not a date on the calendar! That is where so many "end-time" teachers go wrong. They think the last time is a date, so they are always trying to figure out the date, setting dates for the coming of the Lord, the beginning of the great tribulation, the dawn of the millennium, or the manifestation of the sons of God. I do not doubt for one moment that the old church age is rapidly drawing to a close, or that the new age has already dawned, but that is not the issue here. The kingdom of God is not an "age." The day of the Lord is not an "age." The "last time" is not a date on the calendar. The last time relates to the elect of the Lord entering into and possessing their inheritance!

The last time is the finish, the completion, the consummation of our experience in God! It is when God's work in us is ended, concluded, and accomplished! It is when we have grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! It is when we have fully put on the mind of Christ! It is when we have gone on to perfection! It is when we have attained unto a perfect man! It is when we have been filled with all the fullness of God! It is when Christ has been raised up within us in all the glory and majesty of Himself! It is when we have spiritually developed into a mature faith, understanding, wisdom, love, and power! It is the third day, the third feast, and the illumination, life, and authority of the most holy place! It is a time, not on the clock, nor on the calendar, but in the development of Christ within us! It is not the end of the age that brings the manifestation of the sons of God — it is the manifestation of the sons of God that brings the end of the age! Therefore, let us take heart as sons of God, for growth in Christ is far more accessible to each of us than the unknown dawning of a chronological age! Again, the "last day" and the "last time" and the "last trump" are not a time on the calendar, but a time within ourselves when the work of God in us is brought to its completion! Aren't you glad!

In interpreting scripture we are so inclined to interpret all things with our human understanding. When the Word speaks of the sounding of a trumpet, our carnal mind envisages a loud blast akin to the sound of reveille, but such is not the case. We have previously spoken of Paul's inspired exhortation instructing us that we shall be changed at the sounding of the last trump. The Bible speaks of many trumpets, each with its own signification, but I think all will agree that there cannot be any trumpet sounding after the last trump! There may be other trumpets of different orders, but the Last Trump is always the final trumpet to sound in any series. It is significant to note that in the book of Revelation, chapters eight through twelve, we have presented the sounding of seven trumpets. I am confident that this seventh trumpet is the last trumpet, for after the seventh trumpet there can be no other. Trumpet after trumpet the inworking of God's truth and life progresses in the spiritual lives of God's elect until at last the final trumpet, the last message, the ultimate revelation is ready to complete the process, producing a people in the fullness of the nature, glory, and power of the Lord!

We know that all will be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" when the last trump shall sound. But the call of the last trump cannot come to any man until he has already heard, heeded, and yielded to the call of every preceding trump, and been changed by each, line upon line, precept upon precept, from glory to glory, in the growth and development of spiritual life. When the last vestige of the old Adamic mind and nature has been put off, overcome, then the final trump will sound and this corruptible will have fully put on incorruption, and this mortal will have fully put on immortality. The last trump does not sound at the same instant for every man — it is always sounding — but is heard by each in his time when he has been prepared to hear it. Oh, the mystery of it!

May God grant us wisdom and understanding that we may apprehend the mystery of these things! The number seven gives me the understanding that contained within the seven trumpets is the totality of God's character and the complete revelation of His will and purpose. As the trumpets sound within the lives of the Lord's people they begin to experience the increase of all that God is within themselves. There has never been an expression of God at the level of divine fullness in the earth at any time except in the person of the first Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is the firstborn among many brethren! Now there is a people who have been sealed unto the day of redemption, and as the Spirit of God sounds the trumpet-messages it will bring forth a many-membered

expression of God at the same level of God's fullness. This is the Lord Himself descending in the trump of God!

I am reminded of a story out of history. Several centuries ago, the Emperor of Japan commissioned a Japanese artist to paint a bird to be put on display in the Emperor's gallery. Months passed, then years. Finally, the Emperor went to the artist's studio to ask for an explanation. The artist set a blank canvas on the easel and in fifteen minutes completed the painting of a bird that became a masterpiece. The Emperor asked why there had been such a long delay. The artist then went from cabinet to cabinet; he produced armloads of drawings of feathers, tendons, wings, feet, claws, eyes, and beaks of birds; these he placed one by one before the Emperor. The Emperor nodded and left the studio. He understood. The exquisite beauty of the painting completed in fifteen short minutes was merely the result of long years of research, preparation, and work!

Our Father shall have a glorious firstfruits company of sons in His own image which He shall put on display before the entire universe as the revelation of His own bountiful grace and matchless glory! The day of that unveiling shall surely come, and will not tarry. In the meantime, and to that end, the blessed Holy Spirit of God is patiently and unrelentingly operating in the lives of His apprehended ones so that we may be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. This conformation cannot take place in an instant, nor by a superficial experiencing of God. It does not happen in a single "experience" one night at an altar, nor can it be imparted by prophecy with the laying on of hands. The hour of our quickening unto God and His great plan was no more than the declaration of the divine purpose; it was just the beginning of the long work! The whole process is a detailed and painstaking progress "until Christ be formed in you." When the work is fully finished, the day shall then arrive when there will come to us a new and living and powerful moving of His omnipotent Spirit and the completed work will flash forth in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; the grand and glorious portrait of God's Christ, exquisitely wrought upon the canvas of our lives, that He might display in the ages to come His masterpiece...for we are God's own handiwork, created in Christ Jesus! (Eph. 2:7,10).

The new with its glory shall come to the fore,
Proclaiming the kingdom is nigh at the door.
Yet, strange the confusion as some try to stay
Entwined with the old, though it's passing away.
While some try to mix the old with the new,
To be torn by the strife, and the rending in two.
For saviours shall come and His fullness declare,
With beauty for ashes, and treasures most rare.
What ages have veiled as the old order reigned,
Shall burst into view at the time He ordained!

Ray Prinzing

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Rev. 10:7).

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel" — notice the plural — "days." The "day" of the Lord has "days" within it! Now notice — "In the days of the voice..." Each day has its

own voice, its own sound, its own truth, its own experience, attainment, and reality. As we came through the “day of Pentecost” in our spiritual experience, that day had a voice. It possessed a tongue, a message, a reality that never before had been heard. “In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he begins to sound.” Suddenly the “voice” becomes a “he”! Furthermore, “In the days of the voice of the seventh angel,” and the words, “begin to sound,” speak volumes to me because the complete sounding of that trumpet involves a process in time and shows us that our change which comes with the sounding of the seventh or last trumpet is not to find its total consummation in one specific moment of time. There is the obvious implication of a prolonged sounding extending through various seasons and dealings. Yet at the initial sounding, the “mystery” of God’s purpose for His elect shall no longer be hidden. Ah — methinks I have heard this trumpet, for the mystery of God has been revealed in the midst of the saints in these days! When the seventh trumpet sounds John beholds a wonder in heaven, in the realm of the Spirit, a woman clothed with the sun, and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brought forth a manchild, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne (Rev. 11:15-19; 12:1-5). This is the final drama of the seven trumpets, the closing act, the grand finale, the birth of God’s manchild company, the manifest sons of God given authority and power to rule all nations with a rod of iron and subdue all things unto the kingdom of our Father! It is indeed wonderful!

What does it mean to you, my brethren, when John says that “the mystery of God” should be finished? Our English word “mystery” means something which is either incomprehensible or unknown; but this is not the significance of the Greek word *musterion*. In its primary meaning in classical and Biblical Greek it is simply a secret; and a secret when it is disclosed may be understood by any one. A combination lock is a “mystery,” the combination is a secret. It is as easily opened as any other lock, provided we have been given the combination, but without the combination it cannot be opened at all. The “mysteries” of the New Testament are divine truths which till then had been “kept secret,” truths which had not yet been revealed, and until revealed, could not be known.

The inner secret of divine truth is not learned by word of mouth or studied in a book — it can be known only by the revelation of Jesus Christ, as Paul has instructed us, “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:12). Strong’s Concordance gives this definition of the Greek word *musterion*: “a secret or mystery through the idea of silence imposed by initiation into religious rites.” In the Bible days everyone knew about the “Greek mystery religions.” The people were acquainted with the mystery religions, although they did not know the mysteries of those religions unless they were initiated into the religion. In the Greek mind a mystery was a secret revealed only to the initiated! A strange silence surrounded them. Their religious rites, ceremonies, and teachings were known only to the initiated persons, and performed in strictest seclusion, and to be spoken of on pain of severe penalties, sometimes death itself. What happened at the secret rituals is not, even to this day, fully known. It was much like the practices of secret lodges in our day. The “mystery religions” were the highest form of religion in ancient Greece. There can be no doubt, I think, that the apostle Paul was using the common Greek understanding of the term “mystery” so often used in his epistles. He said that he spoke “the wisdom of God in a mystery” to them that are “perfect” — the very word used in the Greek mysteries for the “initiated” (*teleios*), those admitted to the secret wisdom of the Greek religion. The Lord Jesus Himself says that it was “given” to His inner circle of footstep followers to “know the mysteries” of the kingdom of heaven, but to those outside it was “not given” — inferring that the disciples were His

initiated! That was the common understanding of the term in the world Jesus and the early church lived in!

There are many “mysteries” spoken of in the word of God. They are not mysteries in the sense that they cannot be understood, although they cannot be understood by the natural, carnal mind; but they are mysteries because they are kept secret in the counsels of God until the time comes for them to be made known by revelation of the Spirit. For is it not written that, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever” (Deut. 29:29). The prophet David tells us that “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him” (Ps. 25:14). The Lord Jesus prayed these gracious words: “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Mat. 11:25). The prophet Amos revealed this great truth: “Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). And Daniel adds his testimony, saying, “There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets...of a truth it is, that God is a God of gods...and a revealer of secrets” (Dan. 2:28,29,47). And again, the firstborn Son of God declared, “I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world” (Mat. 13:35). In His infinite wisdom our Father knows that most men are ready to receive only small portions of truth at a time. Those who truly hunger and thirst after God and are ready to receive more, to them He gives understanding! This is why it was spoken by the Lord Jesus to His most intimate disciples, “Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but unto them which are without, all these things are done in parables” (Mk. 4:11).

We are told that we are “stewards of the mysteries of God” (I Cor. 4:1). Paul says that “great is the mystery of godliness” — of God manifest in human flesh (I Tim. 3:16). Again we find that our change from mortal to immortal bodies is a mystery (I Cor. 15:51). Then we read that God has graciously “made known unto us the mystery of His will” (Eph. 1:9). In the Revelation John reveals the mystery of Great Babylon — Babylon means “confusion” — and it’s a mystery how it works. There are furthermore the mysteries of the kingdom, the mystery of the faith, the mystery of the gospel, the mystery of the church as a bride, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the Father, the mystery of His fellowship, the mystery of Israel’s blindness, the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of the seven stars. All of these mysteries require an unfolding by the Holy Spirit of wisdom and revelation! Wherever a mystery appears in scripture it denotes that this knowledge must come from the Lord Himself, in the Spirit and by the Spirit! We cannot gain any insight into these things through human effort, intellectualism, academic study, or carnal research. These deep and eternal truths require the illumination of the Holy Spirit! We must be INITIATED INTO THE MYSTERIES OF HIS LIFE by personal experience. That is why every son of God must receive the “call” to sonship by the quickening of the Holy Ghost!

In the days when the voice of the seventh angel with his trumpet-message begins to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. The “mystery of God” is God manifest in the flesh! “Great is the mystery of godliness (God-likeness): God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. 3:16). This is also the mystery of Christ, that God was in Christ, and now God in Christ is in us! Paul elaborates upon this mystery in these words: “How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; which in other ages was not known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel” (Eph. 3:2-6). When you follow the word “mystery” through the writings of the apostles it is clear that the mystery is the body of Christ. The body of Christ

is composed of God's initiated ones! In Ephesians 5:31-32 it is the mystery of the union of Christ the Head with Christ the body in all the fullness that that means. It is time, my beloved, for the mystery of God to be finished! Finished means completed or consummated. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel THE BODY OF CHRIST SHALL BE FINISHED! Not merely quantitatively, but qualitatively! That trumpet signifies that the Lord's elect, the sons of God or the body of Christ, have all been transformed into His image and likeness and grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Christ the Head and Christ the body shall be joined in the blessed union of His fullness. The mystery of God manifest in the flesh will be finished! This remnant company is indeed a mystery. They are as a sacred secret that is being concealed until the hour of their manifestation. These royal sons are hidden away from the religious systems and from the world. While they are hidden, they are being initiated into the divine order of sonship which was established by Jesus Christ, the first Son.

The seventh trumpet signifies that the hour has arrived for the sons of God or the body of Christ to come forth in birth, into full and complete manifestation! This corporate Christ, Head and body, this manchild company, shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Caught up to God and His throne — into His authority! In the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet-message the mystery shall be finished, the body completed, the long and tedious preparation of God's sons shall at last be consummated. The trumpet has begun to sound! There is an acceleration of the Father's revelatory word, an intensified trumpet-message, a clear sound of the revelation of Jesus Christ! Listen, my friend, for the sounding of the trumpet-voice within your spirit!

If you can hear this trumpet sounding above all the hue and cry of rapture, antichrist, mark of the beast, great tribulation, demons and devils, denominationalism, sectarianism, mansions over the hilltop, cabins in the corner of gloryland, pie in the sky, religious programs, rituals, ceremonies, endless meetings, shepherds, coverings, bishops, cunningly devised fables, money raising schemes, false prophets, false healers, lying signs and wonders, carnal health and wealth prosperity doctrines; if you can mount up with wings as eagles and soar high above all this carnal, confused, hyped, frustrated clamor of noisy gongs and clanging cymbals, and hear the distinct, plain, unmistakable sound of this last trump, then it can be said to you: Blessed art thou, overcomer, manchild, hundred-fold, firstfruits; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven! Oh, the wonder of it!

The seventh trumpet is the final redemptive message and when it is finished sounding God will have made a man in His image! What tremendous truths are being blown on this redemptive trumpet! Let not any man rob you of the greatest sound that man has ever been privileged to hear! A sound with such a high and holy pitch, with tones so deep and profound, that only the Spirit can reveal its message to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, those who "have an ear to hear what the Spirit sayeth!" Do not miss what the Spirit is saying; gird up the loins of your mind with the truth that will fully redeem you, spirit, soul, and body!

When you begin to hear the voice of the seventh angel then the mystery of God in you begins to emerge into fullness. The mystery of God is fulfilled when your own identity and life is swallowed up and God is manifest in your flesh. 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 and incorruptible life shine forth before all nations! This is going to be done through those who are being transformed into the likeness of His Son. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall fill the earth. His power will shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before HIM. The harvest of this age shall be gathered.

There is coming a day when the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God! As a mystery is a sacred, concealed secret, so the mystery of God is working deep within us to bring us to the fullness of God in Christ. We cannot see Him working in us because this work of godliness (God-likeness) is a mystery that is to be kept secret until the unveiling of the sons of God. Neither the church nor the world is aware of what is happening in God's elect in this significant hour. As a thief shall it come upon them! The Christ within is increasing within us, bringing us to greater maturity. In due time the Father will witness from heaven, as He did with His first Son, "These are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased." Then shall the sons of God be manifest in the fullness of the Father's nature, glory, and power and the greater works (Jn. 14:12) of which Jesus spoke shall be performed by that vast family of sons!

THE LITTLE BOOK IN HIS HAND

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven...and he had in his hand a little book open" (Rev. 10:1-2).

This "book" is called just that, "a book," in chapter five of the Revelation, whereas in chapter ten it called a "little book." What is the difference? Here I am of the opinion that it is a matter of translation and availability of the oldest and most original manuscripts. Both of these books — whether "book" or "little book" — are actually small scrolls. In Greek they are described with the word biblion. That is the description for the smaller form of biblos. The book in the hand of the mighty angel in our text is called in some New Testaments bibliaridion. That again is a smaller form of the expression biblos. The fact is, however, the oldest available manuscripts used the same word in both chapters five and ten, namely, scroll. Thus, these apparently different books are, in actual fact, one and the same book!

It is abundantly clear that this entire scene is not meant in the literal sense of the word. If that were the case, we would have to assume that this was more than a vision, and there was actually a book in the hand of the angel, printed in heaven, and that John actually, physically, took that little book out of his hand, chewed it up and swallowed it. Of course, that is both an impossibility and an absurdity! Books are not meant to be eaten, but read. One does not derive any benefit from swallowing a book, but from appropriating its contents by taking its message into the mind and heart!

Let us prayerfully and reverently observe that it is the Lamb in the throne who is first given this "little book" to hold in His hand. So what is the book? Where did He get the book? The answer is not far to seek. "And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I wept much

because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain...and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne” (Rev. 5:1-7). It was the Lion-Lamb who took the book from the hand of the eternal Father seated upon the throne! That clearly, distinctly, and positively places the book in the hand of Christ, the firstborn Son of God! It is HE who breaks the seven seals, bringing forth to our hearts the reality and power of His sonship, and therefore our sonship! Now the book is open in His hand, just as it is when John sees it again in chapter ten!

It is the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ — not the literal book John wrote which is lying on the table before me at this moment — but the book in the vision which is the living revelation of Jesus Christ in and by the Spirit! You may recall that I have emphasized throughout these messages that the seals represent the revelation of Christ, which is the revelation of sonship to God, unto us, those apprehended to be His “many brethren.” At the breaking of the seals this was a revelation to us, showing us how the Father was revealed in Jesus, and subsequently the process by which Christ is raised up into revelation within us, but now as John is given the book from the hand of Christ, eats the book, digests the book, until it becomes life within, made substance within his own reality, Christ and sonship are no longer merely a revelation to us, imparting the knowledge of our high calling, but now we BECOME THE REVELATION! The revelation that was sealed (in the seven thunders) then revealed opened (in the little book), is now (after we have eaten and digested it) THE GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL REALITY OF OUR VERY LIVES! The totality of the Father in us is now being manifested in light!

EATING THE BOOK

“And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter” (Rev. 10:8-10).

John was not simply an observer of something that took place at a distance. He was not looking, as it were, at a motion picture projected on a flat screen. Nor was he seeing a stage play. This vision had such depth in dimension that John himself was caught up into it and made part of it — perhaps a little like the interactivity of a dream, or in the holodeck of a starship in the Star Trek series. John went to the angel and said, “Give me the little book.” This signifies that the reality of the revelation of Christ must be received from Him, by His word and by His Spirit! And this reality must in like manner be sought from Him! The humble disciple says, “Give me, I pray Thee, the little book!” The angel replied, “Take it, and eat it up,” that is, digest it, make it a part of yourself. This signifies the Christ saying to each of God’s seeking elect, “Take it.” Yes, “Take it and eat it up!” “Thy word was found,” said the prophet, “and I did eat it.” The angel also told John how the little scroll would taste (spiritually) and what the effects of eating it would be. “It shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.” He ends on the more appealing note, perhaps, to persuade John to follow his directions, which must have sounded strange, indeed! Spiritually it means that Christ wants to impart everything to us — both the glory

and the suffering! We are joint-heirs with Him, partakers in His suffering, and sharers of His glory, wisdom, majesty, and power — that is the meaning of this strange command that John receives. Many revel in the coming forth of truth, but how many are just as anxious for it to be worked out into reality in their lives? To “love your enemies, and pray for those that spitefully use you” is wonderful to talk about, but it is a bitter experience when it actually happens and we have to put it into practice. And so it is with all truth...it has to be lived, walked out!

The story is told of a little girl who stayed for dinner at the home of her first-grade friend. The vegetable was buttered broccoli and the mother asked if she liked it. The child replied very politely, “Oh yes, I love it.” But when the bowl of broccoli was passed she declined to take any. The hostess said, “I thought you said you loved broccoli.” The girl replied sweetly, “Oh, yes maam, I do, but not enough to eat it!” Is that not how it is sometimes with the revelation of the Lord?

Oh, yes! How sweet it is to our taste when the Spirit communicates some new truth to us! We rejoice in it as those who have discovered hidden treasure; but all truth is death to the natural man, and accordingly when it is established inwardly in the power of the Holy Ghost, we find it bitter in its working and effects. It is sweeter than honey to the taste of faith, so that we do not rebel, but eat it, swallow it, and hide it in our inmost heart. It is only after the truth has thus been made our own by inward assimilation, that the life and power of it can be manifested outwardly. Truth must be devoured; we must take it in to our inner man, until the inner man is built up in substance by it. Truth must become life before we can express it and manifest it as reality rather than doctrine. We must, like John, not only have heard the truth, or received the truth as revelation, we must have experienced it within ourselves...before others can behold its power in us! After we have assimilated the contents of the book, the living revelation of Christ and sonship, we must come under its power and influence, until we are transformed by it! Truth has something so sweet for the understanding, typified by the mouth, that is a delight to the mind. What joy and satisfaction to the man to whom truth is communicated! But in the belly it is bitterness, painful as it mortifies the flesh man, and more and more leaves but one desire, that Christ may be formed in us! And this is just the difference between understanding and experience, between revelation and manifestation!

This is also the difference between facts and truth! How many in the religious systems hold to their cold, dead doctrines of FACTS. But facts are expressive only of the dead letter of the Word — the letter that killeth! Facts can never make you free, but the TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE! Truth is reality. Truth is spirit. The spirit quickens, makes alive. “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” (II Cor. 3:6). We may feed into our mind any amount of information via the natural senses (hearing, seeing, etc.) but it will be only so many words — preaching, teaching, reading, study, research, facts, until the spirit, the living word within, brings it forth as an essence in our spirit. Jesus said that man must live by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God. Only the word of God can cause us to live! John calls it the “word of life” and the “incorruptible seed of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.” All the true life we have within has sprung from the living word within us. ALL the divine life we will ever have is the result of HEARING THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD!

No man can live physically apart from the assimilation of food, air, and water. Just as these natural elements sustain and quicken our physical man, so the assimilation of the

living word of God produces, sustains, and strengthens the life of God in us. If we do not eat food, meal by meal we become weaker. Paul gives us the key to faith when he calls it the “word of faith” (Rom. 10:8). One cannot separate between “faith” and the “word.” But it is never the “letter” of the word — mere facts — that produces faith! And it is right there that “all we like sheep have gone astray.” The healing evangelists have hammered and pounded into the Lord’s people that they are to take the promises in the Bible and then act upon them. “Do what you couldn’t do before!” they cry. “If you can’t raise that arm up,” they say, “then raise it up and show your faith by action!” It sounds good, so logical. But how many times did we venture out to do the impossible, or ignored our aches and pains, not because faith had brought us to that 100% place of believing God had done the work, but we were taking the action, endeavoring by the action to somehow lift ourselves up to the place where we could overcome our doubts and fears and persuade God to move in our behalf. In truth, we tried to produce faith by our actions upon a word. But in so doing we had the cart before the horse! Confessing or demonstrating the word of God as a “letter” or “fact” will never evoke life or faith — only death.

It is the living word within, the living voice of the Son of God out of the depths of spirit that produces life and faith! You see, my beloved, faith will produce works, but works never produce faith! If our actions are provoked by the faith that comes by hearing the word of God out of the living spirit, then there will always be results. But if our actions are a blind effort to conjure up faith, doing something with the hope that it might work, that perhaps God may honor it, yet the action did not spring out of the energizing, living word of God within, then frustration and defeat lie in our path. The quickening life of His Spirit within, the word of God as an essence, shall bring many sons to a place of exaltation, glory, and power in the kingdom of God! It is the living voice of the Son of God within us, the living testimony of sonship, that is pressing us forward into the fullness of God in this great day of the Lord. We are not trying to “manifest,” hoping the Father may honor our efforts and bring us into the glory of sonship. Oh, no! THIS IS THE LORD’S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES!

How true we find all this to be — the revelation God is giving in this day sounds so great, so sweet in our mouth — we shall grow up into the fullness of Christ, we shall be the manifest sons of God, we shall inherit the kingdom and reign over the nations, we shall restore all creation back into God again, and God shall be all in all! This is all contained, without a doubt, in the voice of the seven thunders, which is now the revelation of the open book in the hand of Christ. He shall make this glorious sonship ministry truly ours, how sweet to our taste! But then, the inworking process to make that a reality, how bitter in the belly, the experiential metamorphosis. It produces pains or cramps in our human nature that are not pleasant to experience. But if the revelation of God is bitter to the natural man, it is sweet to the spiritual man! Ah, this message will be bitter as we digest it, but it is only in the eating of the Word that God is bringing forth in this hour, that sons shall be brought to glory! God has separated a people unto Himself to eat the book, even that clear, sanctified, pure and holy Word that proceedeth directly from the throne of God. As one has commented, “The bitterness that we experience in the digesting of the Truth will take away and remove any vainglorious desire to display our knowledge in the eyes of men. The bitterness of the Word working within us will purge away all thoughts of grandeur and of greatness, and leave us ‘dumb’ like Ezekiel of old, until the hour when God shall open our mouths; and then we shall be enabled to speak that clear, infallible Word direct from God’s own heart.”

Then comes the word, “It was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings” Rev. 10:10-11).

The word again is significant, for it implies that John had already prophesied before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings, and that now there was to be another, different, greater prophecy to come forth. What he had prophesied before was not the prophecy which resulted from the eating of the book. It would now be the assimilated, digested, message of the open book that would be the substance of his prophecy! There is some debate over the word before, as to whether John was to prophesy “before” many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings, or whether the word should be translated “concerning” many peoples, etc. To my mind the argument is irrelative; the Greek word is *epi*, meaning “super-imposition, above, upon, over.” He could prophesy concerning, upon, over, or before the peoples, nations, tongues, and kings — it really would make little difference — THERE IS A MINISTRY INVOLVED!

The revelation came to John that he and his message must be one. He must assimilate it, making the message life and substance within himself. It must be delivered to the people, not as a word of teaching or instruction, not out of what he knew or understood, but out of what he is — out of his inner state of being. The message was to become so part of the man that it would be impossible to separate the prophet from his prophecy. His very life would BE the prophecy — a living word! He would prophesy out of a new and higher realm, not merely as a prophet, but as the very manifestation of God in the flesh! He himself was to be a “sample” of the message he proclaimed! The scene that is pictured to us shows how John must become prepared to be a prophet to the utmost: a prophet who not merely reveals things, who not merely informs the church and the world of some things with regard to the future, but who himself would be the living representation of the wonderful will and purpose of God for all mankind! Oh, the wonder of it! This command does not mean that John himself will appear in these modern years, as some assume, to “prophesy again.” John stands for and represents the entire company of the overcomers; this is not merely an experience of the apostle John two thousand years ago, but the prophetic word of the Lord to all His called and chosen firstfruits! To attempt to “prophesy” before we have “eaten” and “digested” will only be to discover our impotence in the presence of the enemy. The sons of God will not minister out of what they think they know, or out of what they do indeed know, or even out of the gifts and ministries they have been given, but rather out of WHO THEY ARE! Aren’t you glad!

I will now close this message by quoting from the inspired pen of brother George Warnock.

“This message will not bring forth that Living Word for the nations of the earth until we EAT THE BOOK. O, what a pure word will come forth in that day! A pure word to all nations! Here is a people who have eaten the Book, and knowing the bitterness of the cross in their lives they will have become merciful and faithful priests to men of every color, tribe, and nation. The bitter herbs of the Passover meal...the bitter hyssop of a broken and contrite spirit...will have completely removed all bitterness from their lives; and they will show forth the mercy and the compassion of Jesus from their very beings. They will not be entertainers. They will not be supported in their ministries by ‘mime’ and ‘puppets’ and ‘rock-musicians’ that go about today in the name of Christ making merchandise of holy things. These people have known and have eaten the bitter herbs, like Joseph in an Egyptian prison, like Moses in the Midian desert, like David in the wilderness of Judea, like

Jeremiah in the mire of the dungeon...and now they stand before the peoples of the earth as a clear, living Word from the mouth of God!

“God is saying to His people: I have been faithful in giving you the Water of Life and the Bread of Life. You have tasted of my Word and have found it to be sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. But now I say unto you, Go, take the little book and eat it, otherwise it will not profit you. Fear not to swallow it and digest it. For only then will it become a part of your being. And only then will you be able to bring forth that living Word of Life to the nations of the earth” — end quote.

About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit – and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him – in family or church associations – embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God's elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God's Word is always free to all. God's way is, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8).