

# *KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES*

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

## *FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE*

**Book Seven**

### **The Temple, Two Witnesses and The Manchild**

**By J. Preston Eby**

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**The Temple, Two Witnesses and the Manchild** by J. Preston Eby

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# Chapter 122

## *Measuring The Temple*

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

The eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation is one of the most important chapters in the entire book. Once we understand this chapter not only in its intrinsic spiritual revelation, but also in its relation to those things which follow in the subsequent chapters, we have less difficulty in grasping the significance of the rest of the book. As we enter into the scenes in this portion of the Revelation there need be no misunderstanding whatsoever! John is called in the vision to do something. A reed, a measuring rod, is placed in his hand; and the commission is given him that with this reed he must proceed to the holy city, Jerusalem, and measure the temple of God.

Before proceeding with this thought of measuring the temple I would point out that the scenes in chapter eleven are the result and outgrowth of the events in chapter ten. Chapter ten concludes with John “eating” a little 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 merely an observer of something that happened at a distance. He was not looking, as it were, at a motion picture projected on a 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, at 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 proclamation of truth, but how many are

just as anxious for it to be wrought out into reality in their lives? To “love your enemies, and pray for those that despitefully use you” is wonderful to talk about, but it is often 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!

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). This brought the revelation home 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 mere spoken word, not just as a teaching out of what he knew and understood, but out of what he is — out of his inner state of being. The message was to become so a 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, as he had never prophesied before; not merely as a prophet, but as the very MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE FLESH! He himself would be the “sample” of the message he proclaimed! Now he would prophesy again — in a new and living way!

Can we not see by this that eating the book, taking the word in, digesting and assimilating it, becoming the revelation, is what makes us the temple of God! That is how God gets on the inside, that is how Christ is formed in us, dwelling, living, walking, speaking, acting out of us! This precious truth is the simplicity of moving from chapter ten of the Revelation to chapter eleven. In chapter ten we become the habitation of God by eating the book, whereas in chapter eleven the command is given to measure (examine, inspect, appraise, survey, explore) the temple of God. It should be clear to every discerning heart that “eating the book” and “measuring the temple” are not separate visions about different things, but the latter is the divine result of the former! That is the mystery.

## **THE TEMPLE**

“The angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God” (Rev. 11:1).

The Lord dwells not in temples made with hands! They are but shadowy figures of the true. “What temple will ye build me?” saith the Lord. So wherever we see a reference to a temple of the present or the future, it must refer to “the true sanctuary, and the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). Furthermore, there is only one such tabernacle, or temple. The scripture nowhere tells of two, or three, or one hundred; one away off somewhere in space where Jesus is ministering, another in Jerusalem built by the Jews, and another spiritual one composed of living stones. Oh, no! There is but ONE temple, ONE great High Priest, and ONE royal priesthood. So when the priests of old served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly (spiritual) things,” those heavenly things were the same that Moses saw in the mount, and the same heavenly and spiritual things to which we, God’s spiritual and heavenly people, have now come, for, we “are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22). None of these are a future reality to be entered into after we die, or after Jesus returns. We ARE COME! Let us never forget that fact.

Would God that all the saints might see that God’s purpose from the foundation of the world has been the building of a spiritual house, a holy temple, an eternal abiding place in which He can be at home, and in which place He and His creation can meet. As Ray

Prinzing has pointed out, “The ultimate goal of God’s purpose being wrought out through the ages, is to have a people with whom, in whom to dwell, a place where He can PRESENCE HIMSELF without controversy, and say, ‘This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it’ (Ps. 132:14). So He is preparing man, both individually and corporately, to be partakers of His divine nature, to be IN HIS OWN IMAGE, so that He might have communion with them.

“God said to Moses, ‘Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them’ (Ex. 25:8). Sanctuary — literally, a place set apart. It was necessary for them to set apart a little area of earth with a tent on it, for His place of dwelling. But this was only an interim thing, for He yet planned to SET APART A PEOPLE for Himself. But for the time being, Israel had too much of Egypt’s god in them, along with all their own self-will and rebellion, so God said, ‘I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people: lest I consume thee in the way. So Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that everyone that sought the Lord went out unto the Tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp’ (Ex. 33:3,7).

“What a commentary on the state of the people, that even though God had brought them up out of Egypt, so ‘that I might dwell among them,’ yet there was so much controversy in them, they had to set apart a place outside the camp for Him, where they might go and find Him. Had He stayed in the camp He would have consumed them, for, ‘our God is a consuming fire,’ consuming all that is not one in His holiness. And so we read, ‘Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp...’ (Heb. 13:12-13). And so there has been a going without the camp — beyond the forms of religion, beyond symbol and ceremony, to be joined with Him in one spirit. We leave all else behind, that He might become First and Foremost in our life. And in this union with Him, we find that we are BECOMING HIS TEMPLE, ‘Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit’” (Eph. 2:20,22) — end quote.

More than three thousand years ago Solomon built a magnificent temple of stone and precious materials. He overlaid it with gold and adorned it with silver. Silently it seemed to grow out of the top of mount Moriah, as if drawn from the very mountain by some huge hand. There was no sound of hammer or chisel or saw, but only the soft blowing of the wind, for all of the stones and every part had been carefully made and cut far away, down in Solomon’s quarry. And now this magnificent temple with its mammoth stones was rising into the sky. The pillars reflected the light of the Judean hills; the great Corinthian brass door shone in the sunlight. Inside was the huge thick blue, crimson, and purple veil which separated the holy place from the Holy of holies. And within the Holy of holies was the gold covered mercy seat with the cherubim facing each other on either side. In the center over that mercy seat, when the temple was completed and prayer was offered, suddenly there appeared right there in the presence of men the visible evidence of God’s presence: the Shekinah Glory...and God dwelt among His people in His temple. The brilliant blinding light of His Shekinah Glory dwelt in the most holy place. So wonderful was it that the Queen of Sheba stood transfixed at the sight. But the temple built by Solomon was only a fleeting foreshadow of the living temple which Christ would build by the Spirit — a temple not made with hands!

When Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 587 B.C., the great temple of Solomon, along with the rest of the city, was destroyed and its valuable contents carried away to Babylon. Seventy years later a remnant of Israel returned from the Babylonian exile and soon thereafter the community began to rebuild the temple under the leadership of Zerubbabel. When the foundation was laid, the old men, who had seen the “first house” (Solomon’s temple), wept for sorrow (Hag. 2:3). Like most of the reconstruction in that era immediately following the exile, the temple of Zerubbabel must have been modest indeed. Five long centuries further down the spectrum of time king Herod the Great, who was a usurper, an Idumean prince who had usurped the throne in Jerusalem, announced to the people assembled at the Passover, just twenty years before the birth of Jesus, his intention of restoring the temple which was quite dilapidated by that time. Herod was an indefatigable builder. Many cities and heathen temples had been rebuilt by him and it was natural that he should wish to show his own grandeur by making the modest restoration temple larger, more complex, and much more beautiful. Other motives also moved him, especially his desire to ingratiate himself with the more religious Jews, who resented his Idumean origin and friendliness with the Romans. Herod’s temple in some respects exceeded both the temple of Solomon and the temple of Zerubbabel in beauty and glory. It is minutely described by the historian Josephus, and the New Testament has made us familiar with the pride of the Jews in its magnificence during the days of Jesus and His apostles.

The tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness and the temples of Solomon and Herod upon mount Moriah, were merely shadows of better things to come; merely the natural type of the spiritual reality which Moses saw by the Spirit in the mount. These never did constitute the TRUE TEMPLE of God! How absolutely clear are the inspired words of the apostle, “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the TRUE TABERNACLE, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Jesus is now a minister in the true tabernacle or temple! Concerning the old tabernacle and temple with its priestly ministry the writer to the Hebrews continues, “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the mount.” The tabernacle of old was made as a physical, material copy or representation of the true heavenly and spiritual tabernacle which Moses beheld in the spiritual realm of the heavens of God’s Spirit. What Moses saw in the mount was not physical, material, or earthly; it was heavenly and spiritual! And that which is heavenly and spiritual is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man!

We are now come to the true! The true temple is the body of Christ! The temple of the Lord is that vast company 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’ fable that the temple of God must be rebuilt by the Jews in Israel! May I say in the strongest terms possible that I do not hold any such view! My conviction is the exact opposite — that there never again will be a Jewish temple upon mount Moriah, and never again will men sacrifice the blood of animals either in an effort to cover their sins or as a commemoration. All of the sacrifices of animals in the Old Testament dispensation were to cover the sins of the penitent until such time as the true and eternal Lamb of God should come and once for all manifest God’s forgiveness for every sin of every man and once for all make an end of sin.

I fail to see how anybody could have even a rudimentary understanding of the epistle to the Hebrews and the high-priestly ministry of Jesus Christ, and still believe that animal sacrifice will again be enacted upon the face of the earth! I know that some teachers have

said that animal sacrifices will be reinstated in the land of Israel during the “millennium” as a commemoration of Calvary, but Calvary needs no old covenant commemoration, as the apostle makes plain: “For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image (reality) of the things, can never with those sacrifices 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 of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance (commemoration) again made of sins every year. Wherefore when HE cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body Thou hast prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Wherefore 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. 10:1-3, 5-6, 15, 17-18).

In the light of those plain statements, and many more throughout the book of Hebrews, how could anyone even imagine that God would re-establish animal sacrifices to “remember” or “commemorate” the sacrifice that ENDS ALL SACRIFICES! What a contradiction! Perish the thought! It is abomination of the worst sort! It is my conviction that it was the continuation of the animal sacrifices in the old temple, which continued on for many years after the one, true sacrifice had been made, that brought about the desolation of the temple by the Romans in A.D. 70 — as foretold by Daniel, and later by Jesus. The ninth chapter of Hebrews especially deals with the work of Jesus Christ as our great High Priest, and the eleventh verse says that “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands...neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Then the argument is developed that if the blood of sacrificial animals could sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, how much more should the blood of Christ purge our conscience from dead works — external works of the law, sacrifices, offerings, rituals, feast days, and ceremonies. The blood of Christ purges our conscience from these dead works; that is, we no longer sense that they are necessary to please God or to receive anything from Him — our conscience does not condemn us for never doing any of those things! God no longer desires it or requires it! Christ has established a New Covenant built upon better promises and the old is forever abolished! Aren’t you glad!

Listen to the words of Peter as he presses this golden truth home to the understanding hearts of the saints. “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he that believeth in Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. 2:3-6).

Our Lord Jesus Christ is remarkable as the cornerstone of this human heavenly temple because not only is Christ the sure foundation in the midst of a world where the pillars are trembling and the foundations are shaken, but He remains ever sure and ever stable and gives His stability to the entire structure. More than that, He is the living stone that communicates that stability to all the other stones that are joined to Him. Praise God that in the midst of all the pressures and testings there is that INNER STABILITY of the Christ! So, we see painted before our eyes a magnificent structure, the living cathedral of Christ rising into the sky, made of living stones. This is the true tabernacle which the Lord

pitched and not man! Not a temple of dead stones, but of living stones, each stone a spiritually living person indwelt by the glory of God, whose temple we are. Not covered by glittering gold, but overshadowed by divinity. Not adorned with silver, but displaying the beauty of redemption. Not fashioned with glittering, precious stones, but with the eternal jewels of His own nature, glory, and power!

God will never vacate this heavenly, spiritual temple to return to a temple made with hands! No temple of God, formed from stones and ornamented with cedar and 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 ridiculous and absurd. The very thought is a horrible blasphemy! God never goes backward in His purposes, nor does He reinstate the type once the reality has come! 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 the place to worship God, and He 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 spirits) and in truth (spiritual reality)" (Jn. 4:21-24). And our brother Paul adds this testimony, "Now therefore...ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an HABITATION OF GOD through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

Almost two thousand years ago the Lord Jesus spoke to the house of Judah, saying, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Mat. 23:38). This was a pronouncement of doom upon a city and a nation that had not received its King. He is saying that the presence and the glory and the purpose of God had departed from Judah. God took His presence from the Holy of holies in the temple, leaving their house desolate unto them. Finally, in A.D. 70, He came and destroyed that vacant shell of a building so that not one stone of it was left upon another. He scattered the people of Judah throughout all the earth, abolished their law and their priesthood, ended their sacrifices and offerings, which to this day have never been restored, nor can they be. It seems to me that when the firstborn Son of God was anointed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit the presence and glory of God left the dwelling place in the Holy of holies and came into the firstborn Son of God, taking up His abiding place in human flesh, the first stone of God's new and eternal temple. All of those years the priests had been offering sacrifices to God who was not in His accustomed dwelling place, though they did not know it. He had left His centuries-old habitation and had moved into a body of flesh, the body of His Son, the true temple of God! All of the world was ignorant of this for we read, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn. 1:10). And again, standing before Herod's temple, beholding the stones and the glory thereof, He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews were furious, demanding, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" But the record states, "They whist not that He spake of the temple of His body" (Jn. 2:19-21).

At the crucifying of Jesus, God drew a curtain of darkness over the earth and blotted out everything from sight. Beneath the cover of that dense darkness God tore the temple veil from top to bottom so that any carnal, earthly priest of Aaron's passing order could peer into the Holy of holies, the former abode of God, and plainly see and know that God was not there! This Holy of holies was empty! Ah, what must have been the thoughts of the priesthood as they returned to the temple! What must have been the feelings of the priests who had remained in the temple! When the darkness was lifted and the desolation seen and they discovered that they could come into the Holy of holies and not suffer death!

Then they must have known that something catastrophic had taken place. They would not dare breathe a hint of this to the people! They must hide the facts and continue on with the form of the sacrifices as though nothing had happened. And yet, in spite of this, only shortly thereafter we read, “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).

God was establishing something entirely new and different! Beneath the cover of darkness God ripped open that veil and let the whole world see that He had departed, leaving that room empty. It was desolate, and now this was the beginning of the end for Jerusalem, the temple, and its priesthood. And I want to say again, in spite of what many tell us, WE WILL NEVER SEE ANOTHER TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM! Are we so foolish even to entertain the impious thought that God would allow the still unbelieving Jews to construct in Jerusalem another desolate temple? To again institute a priesthood offering the blood of goats and calves after Christ has been offered once for all? The very idea is ludicrous!

Those who espouse such error, apart from contradicting the scriptures, have also not thought very clearly about the issues involved. Unless Islam was totally obliterated from off the earth, the very first result of any effort to rebuild a temple would be World War III! Randall Price has explained the Arab mindset in regard to Jerusalem and the temple mount. He writes, “Because the Islamic worldview recognizes the only relevant history of the region as that which began with Muhammad, any statement that a Jewish temple once occupied the Haram (“noble enclosure,” an Islamic term for the site) is considered “provocation” to the Islamic mind. The Palestinian Authority fabricated a revisionist history based on Islamic supercessionism that maintains that nothing other than Islam’s sacred structures have ever occupied the site. The present Palestinian mufti of Jerusalem illustrated this core belief when he declared, ‘There is not the smallest indication of the existence of a Jewish temple on this place in the past; in the whole city there is not even a single stone indicating Jewish history.’

“When I interviewed him Sabri told me a Jewish temple could never have been on the site, or Allah would never have permitted a mosque to be built there. He said the first mosque was built there by Adam and consecrated by Abraham and Ishmael, the progenitors of the Arab people and ‘worshippers of Allah.’ With this belief enshrined in sermons and inculcated throughout the Palestinian school system, it is not surprising a sincerely bewildered Palestinian merchant asked me (knowing I am an archaeologist) why the Jews were digging around the Haram: ‘What’s there that concerns them anyway?’ Explaining that the ancient remains surrounding the site are important for Jewish history only brought the further statement, ‘These are pre-Islamic, and nobody knows what they are!’ To minds that have been conditioned against critical thinking regarding their religion, no explanation is reasonable or welcome” — end quote.

The fact is that any effort to restore the temple in Jerusalem would be on the part of a very small minority of Jewish people. A large percent of Jews in Israel and worldwide are secular, non-religious, and many of these are actually agnostic or atheist. The government of Israel has no interest whatever in building a temple, and few religious Jews have any desire for one. Any such attempt would very likely spark a civil war within Israel itself! The Jewish people are so hopelessly divided both religiously and politically. The issues would be: Who would appoint the high priest? Would he be Sephardi or Ashkenazi? Who would appoint the Sanhedrin? Would it be run by this rabbi or that rabbi, or by a committee,

representing the various factions within religious Judaism? Would the Sanhedrin appoint the government? Would the temple be consecrated as Solomon did with the sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep? On and on and on the questions go and there is no consensus anywhere in Israel! It would be a nightmare of unimaginable proportions! The Holy Spirit tells us that the Old Covenant with its priesthood, sacrifices, and temple is abolished and has passed away forever (read the book of Hebrews); now consider, precious friend of mine, with what divine genius God has also ordained the structure of society, religion, culture, and military might and posturing in the middle east so as to absolutely preclude that old covenant from ever being established in Israel again! Ever! Almighty Father, HOW GREAT THOU ART!

We read in Matthew 24:1-2, "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." In A.D. 70 the Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple just as the Lord Jesus said, and not one stone was left upon another. History records (see Jewish Talmud and Maimonides) that Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem, did with a ploughshare tear up the foundations of the temple. Josephus, the Jewish historian of New Testament times, states that all the rest of the city was so demolished and leveled with the ground until it appeared as a plowed field, and they who came to see it, could scarcely believe that it was ever inhabited. If you doubt that, look at the wailing wall in Jerusalem today. A brother who has made numerous trips to Jerusalem states that the thing that amazes him about the wailing wall is THE KIND OF STONES THAT ARE IN IT. There are stones from Solomon's temple, from the temple of the days of Ezra and Haggai, from the temple of Herod, and from every other period. The wall existing today is not the remains of any one temple, just a re-laying of rubble from them all. One stone was literally not left upon another, and the prophecy of Jesus was meticulously fulfilled!

Many years ago I read an account about plans that were under way to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, that stones had already been cut in a quarry in Indiana and shipped to Israel! I'm sure a number of those reading these lines will remember that report. Ralph Woodrow, who researched this matter at the time, wrote: "Here is the story as it appeared in one magazine in August, 1967. 'Israeli government representatives have ordered 60,000 tons of the finest Bedford stone from Bedford, Indiana to be used in the erection of the Jerusalem temple. Five hundred railcar loads of stone from Bedford, considered to be among the finest building stone in the world, is being freighted pre-cut to exact specifications, and one consignment has already been dispatched to Israel. Shipments are being handled by Pier 26 in New York. This report, received from authoritative sources in Sellersburg, Indiana said that cornerstones for the Third Temple are already in Israel. Materials for this temple have been in secret preparation for seven years, and it is believed American Jews are mainly responsible for financially undergirding the whole project...'

"Those who hold the rapture-seven-year-tribulation theory became quite excited! The story was carried in religious papers and magazines. A few weeks later, however, it was discovered that the story had no basis in fact. It was a hoax! A minister in New York inquired at the New York harbor about the matter. He found there was no such pier as that named, no such shipment of stone, that there was not a word of truth in the whole fabrication! The paper from which the above was taken was honest enough to admit the error and included the following letter from the Jewish Ambassador in London: 'Allow me to refer to a story in a recent issue of your publication concerning the shipping of stones from

the U.S.A. for the alleged purpose of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. I would like to point out that this story is an absolute and complete fabrication in all its aspects. There are no such plans for the rebuilding of the Temple, no shipments for such a purpose have been made from the U.S.A. or elsewhere, and the matter has not been considered either in secrecy (as the report alleges) or openly. In view of the fact that the Temple area is now occupied by shrines of other faiths, both Christian and Moslem, and we would never touch these, the entire story must be considered an invention” — end quote.

God is not looking for a temple of stone in which to dwell. GOD HAS A TEMPLE! A temple that the hands of men did not build or plan. He not only will dwell in this temple, but HE IS NOW IN IT! Every stone of this temple is living. Every stone is speaking. Every stone is breathing the breath of eternal, incorruptible life. The living stones in this temple are the members of the body of Christ! They are sons of God and members of HIS CELESTIAL FAMILY. By adding them to Himself God is increasing and expanding Himself, as a man by fathering many sons expands his family and himself. By God's family of sons the holy temple of the Lord will fill the universe with HIMSELF, for the saints are the fullness of Him who filleth all in all. From this temple of sons God will bless all the peoples and nations of the earth, reconcile all things everywhere to Himself, and rule the unbounded universe in righteousness for evermore. Isn't it wonderful!

For two thousand years it has been rising on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and the flaming words of the prophet Malachi are even now being fulfilled: "THE LORD, WHOM YE SEEK, SHALL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE. Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. 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 sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi (the spiritual priesthood), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness"(Mal. 3:1-3). Praise God! He is reigning within His own, to dethrone the man of sin (self-ego, Adamic mind, carnal nature) which sits in the very temple of God, proclaiming himself as god (the ruler), and striving for his own will and way in all things, even the things of God. That self is being dethroned is evident as more and more of God's elect come to that place where we pray, in spirit and in truth, "not my will, but Thine be done."

## **THE ANGEL**

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God..." (Rev. 11:1).

Since there were no chapter divisions in the original Greek text, this verse naturally connects with the preceding one, connecting chapter ten with chapter eleven by the conjunction "and." I make a special point of this because this knowledge clearly shows that "the angel" who gives John the measuring rod is the same "mighty angel" who had just been talking to him! We must be very clear about the identification of each symbol or we become confused and miss the full import of the message. John himself represents the ministry within the body of Christ. The temple signifies the body of Christ itself, the habitation of God through the Spirit. And the "mighty angel" who commissions the ministry to "measure" the temple of God, or the body of Christ, is none other than our glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ! He is the One who walks in the midst of the churches having eyes of fire and feet like burnished brass, and His voice is truly the voice of the Son of God! Let us not rob Him of His supremacy by trying to make every majestic symbol in the

Revelation apply only to the “many-membered body” or the “corporate Christ.” Truly this is the revelation of JESUS CHRIST! Let us never lose sight of that.

Yet, the “angel” is not the Christ in some far-off heaven somewhere, but the Christ within. When the book of Revelation speaks of an “angel” it always symbolically denotes a messenger and his message — a fresh word or revelation from the Lord! God brings a word to us out of Himself giving enlightenment, counsel, or instruction. All truth is revealed by the Living Word of God! The living Christ, as the Spirit, is the very Word of God! Therefore, when John sees or hears an angel, he is seeing and hearing in the symbols of vision a revelation of the Lord Himself. By the symbol of an angel the Lord Himself has appeared in a new and fresh and further manifestation of Himself to reveal, teach, instruct, and deal in the lives of His called and chosen ones. John heard a word from the Lord in his spirit — that, my beloved, is the angel, and that is the mystery! And the message is just this — the temple of God must be measured! In our next Study we will consider the meaning and work of that “measuring” of those called unto sonship to God.

# Chapter 123

## *Measuring The Temple*

### *continued*

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and *measure the temple of God*, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

In beginning this message I would point out that although John is commanded to measure the temple, distinction is made between three different areas in connection therewith. In the first place, John is called to measure the “temple” or “*naos*” as it is in the Greek, specifying the sanctuary proper, the building of the temple as such, including its holy place and most holy place, along with the golden altar of the holy place as well as those who congregate there in the ministry of worship. In the second place, John is instructed *not* to measure the “outer court,” the open, unenclosed space which surrounds the sanctuary, being distinguished from the temple building itself. That is the second area specified by the angel. In the third place, the angel speaks of a still wider and more comprehensive area, namely, the “holy city,” which shall be trodden down for forty two months, along with the outer court, by the “Gentiles.” Three areas are therefore set before us! The largest is the holy city itself. Within that is the smaller space of the outer court. And again, within that outer court is the still more limited space of the temple structure. And with regard to these three John is commissioned to measure the *temple*, and the *altar*, and *those who worship* at that altar and in that temple, while he must not measure the *outer court*, nor, of course, the *holy city*. And he is told that only the temple will remain undefiled, but that the outer court and the holy city will be dominated by the abominations of the symbolical “Gentiles.”

If all of this were taken in the literal sense of the word it would have little significance for us today — it would be merely a record of natural, outward events the apostle John participated in some two thousand years ago. The temple would be Herod’s temple as it stood in all its splendor in the holy city Jerusalem when our Lord was here in the flesh and walked within both the holy city and the courts of the temple. All the glory of that temple was reduced to a miserable heap of ruins in the year A.D. 70, destroyed by General Titus and his Roman legions. Many modern day commentators contend that the literal, physical temple of the Jews is one day to be restored, the Jewish people shall again worship in that temple upon mount Moriah, and a revived priesthood shall once more offer animal sacrifices upon the altar of burnt offering and burn incense upon the golden altar in the holy place. Their interpretation is that the Old Testament Jewish glory shall for a time, under the “antichrist,” shine forth once more. These believe that it is from that restored temple that God’s two witnesses shall appear and testify to the name of God and His Christ till the antichrist and his followers shall overpower them and kill them. This scheme also views the vision in a most literal sense of the word. In this literalistic and futuristic interpretation the modern city of Jerusalem in the State of Israel is the “holy city;” the “outer

court” is the court of the rebuilt Old Testament style temple; “them that worship” there are a revived Jewish priesthood; and the nations of earth shall literally, under the antichrist, trample under foot the holy city and the court. According to this view it is this future rebuilt temple that John is commanded in his vision to *measure!*

Let us ever be mindful of the great truth that it was the risen and ascended Lord who descended in a vision of glory on the isle called Patmos, and there meeting his startled disciple, John, gave him a communication concerning the church, the called out, instructing him to write it in a scroll and send it to the seven churches in Asia. The book of Revelation is addressed to Christ’s “servants” and to “the seven churches.” This great truth is emphasized, it is stated in the plainest of language, both at the opening and the close of the book. “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace...” (Rev. 1:4). “What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia” (Rev. 1:11). “The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done” (Rev. 22:6). “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches” (Rev. 22:16).

On reading these distinct declarations it should be clear to every discerning mind that the outward nations and the unregenerated people of the world have no more to do with this prophecy than they have with the epistle to the Ephesians. They may possibly be alluded to in the one, as in the other, but it is not *for them*, nor is it mainly *concerned with them*. IT IS FOR US, the spiritual people of God! The prophecy is for the *bond slaves* of Jesus Christ, and for those who are called out and separated unto Him; and to apply it to anything other than God’s *spiritual dealings with His elect saints* is to take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs. “Yes!” someone replies, “but though given to the church, it might still be a revelation of the counsels of God concerning the kingdoms of *this world*.” It **might**. The epistle to the Ephesians **might** have been a letter about the lost tribes of the house of Israel in the British Isles, but it was not! The visions of Daniel **might** have been about the ancient Sumerians and Egyptians, but they were not! Jesus **might** have sent a message to His saints about Charlemagne the Great, about Napoleon, about the Second World War, about Hitler and Mussolini, about Mikhail Gorbachev, Henry Kissinger, or Osama Bin Laden, but He did not! He gave a spiritual book to a spiritual people about spiritual things!

Most buildings today are designed by an architect and constructed by a builder known as a contractor. Almost two thousand years have passed since God sent His Son to earth, first as a man of flesh and blood, and again in the power of the Holy Spirit, as the Master Builder, to build a church designed to reveal His glory in the earth. “I will *build* my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat. 16:18). Long before excavation begins, the architect carefully designs, plans, measures, and calculates the cost. Long centuries before Jesus came, mount Sinai was aflame with the glory of God and Moses trembled to hear the voice of the Almighty. There in that holy mount a blueprint was given for the erection of a tabernacle in the midst of God’s people, Israel. God gave specific instructions to Moses warning against any deviations from the plan. “See, saith He, that thou make all things *according to the pattern* showed to thee in the mount” (Heb. 8:5). Moses saw and understood in the spirit that the hand of God was sketching the blueprints for a greater *heavenly and spiritual temple* that was to arise in the earth. In spirit he saw the spiritual, heavenly model as it existed in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord. The literal, physical tabernacle of Moses was to serve as a miniature sketch of the spiritual temple of God’s Christ. The blueprints God gave to Moses were very unique. There had never been a structure built by this pattern before!

It is of utmost importance that we bear in mind here, as elsewhere, the beloved John receives a *vision*. Hence, the assumption by “preterists” that the book of Revelation had to be written while the temple of Herod was still standing in Jerusalem, before the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans in A.D. 70, is baseless. In a *vision* we can see things past, present, or future as well as things literal, figurative, allegorical, or spiritual. What one sees in *vision* does not need to exist either literally or spiritually at the time of the vision!

Furthermore, in verse nineteen of chapter eleven we find that this “*temple of God*” is “IN HEAVEN” — that is, in the realm of the Spirit! Though the type is the Old Testament temple of Israel, the reality is the heavenly, spiritual temple of God’s elect, the body of Christ! It cannot be merely a vision of the Herodian temple of Christ’s day, nor of a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem under antichrist, for not only is this temple “in heaven,” but the ark of the covenant is seen there, and the ark had disappeared at the destruction of Solomon’s temple in the year 587 B.C. The ark never was in Herod’s temple, and it certainly would not be found in a rebuilt temple today! Oh, let us always remember that the true temple of God is the heavenly, spiritual temple of His redeemed sons and daughters! “Know ye not that YE are the temple of God, as God hath said?” This temple is constructed of those who are “filled with all the fullness of God” — a people renewed, transformed, and conformed into the image and likeness of the very Christ. These are the temple manifesting the indwelling Christ-life, as the temple of Jesus’ body was the manifestation of the indwelling life of His Father!

When Jesus stood and looked on Herod’s temple and said sternly that all those fine stones would be one day permanently demolished, He was pointing to the great truth that the hour had now come for all the shadows to pass away, that the true reality might be manifest. God would no longer dwell in temples made with hands, as He also told the woman of Samaria; He would now raise up His true tabernacle which He Himself would build of eternal, living stones! The spirit, soul, and body of His new creation man would become the only eternal shrine where God is revered! And it was this temple of the new creation man, my beloved, that *John was invited to measure!* He was to turn from the earthly to the heavenly, from the material to the spiritual!

The word “temple” misleads. There are two Greek words used in the New Testament for “temple.” The first is *hieron* signifying the entire, complete temple complex including all courts, porches, and buildings. The word in our text, however, is the second word, *naos*, which does not mean the temple buildings as a whole, but only the innermost shrine or sanctuary, that compartment known as the “holy place” and the “most holy place,” which was separated from all the other buildings and courts of the huge temple complex. It is evident that the “holy place” is included in the *naos* for John sees the golden altar of incense there: “Measure the temple of God, and the *altar*, and them that worship therein.” The golden altar of incense was located in the holy place just before the veil separating it from the most holy place. We can also know that the *naos* included the “most holy place,” for in verse nineteen of the same chapter John records that “the temple (*naos*) of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the *ark of the testament*...” The ark of the covenant was situated beyond the veil, in the Holiest of all. Therefore the Revelation unmistakably identifies the *naos of God* as the inmost sanctuary of the temple comprising both the holy place and the most holy place.

Jesus was the first man on the earth realm to ever build God a habitation where He could live and reveal Himself in His fullness. He Himself revealed this fact when, as He stood

before Herod's temple, He told the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." This declaration angered and infuriated the Jews, but "they whist not that He spake of the temple of *His body*." Jesus raised up this temple of God within Himself by possessing His vessel in honor and holiness, in obedience and submission, in love, humility, and perfection. This was a place where God could fully live! For the first time since the creation God had a TRUE HABITATION on earth — a temple which was WHOLLY HIS — nothing reserved. Hebrews 1:8-9 says of Jesus, "But unto the Son He saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath *anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows*." Jesus did not receive the Spirit of God by measure, but was filled with ALL the fullness of God! "For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God *giveth not the Spirit by measure* unto Him" (Jn. 3:34). "For in Him dwelleth *all the fullness* of the Godhead *bodily*" (Col. 2:9). Second Corinthians 5:19 states: "It was *God permanently in Christ* reconciling and restoring the world to favor with Himself..." (Amplified Bible). Again, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call Him Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us*."

Our Lord Himself declared, "If you had known me — had learned to recognize me — you would also have known my Father. From now on you *know Him and have seen Him*. Phillip said to Him, Lord show us the Father — cause us to see the Father, that is all we ask; we shall then be satisfied. Jesus replied, *Have I been with all of you for so long a time and you do not recognize and know me yet, Phillip? Anyone who has seen me, has seen the Father! How can you say then, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? The Father who lives continually in me does the works*" (Jn. 14:7-10, Amplified). SO JESUS BUILT THE FATHER A HOUSE TO LIVE IN! He became the beginning, the firstborn of a new and divine species — the TRUE TABERNACLE which the LORD PITCHED, and not man! The Father was even then indwelling His most treasured abode at that very moment in their midst! The temple of Herod that stood before them was already of no consequence — the glory had moved from that house to the temple of God in the body of Jesus the Christ! Oh, the wonder of it!

But it is not sufficient to know only that Jesus was and is the temple, the dwelling place of God. It was with an expression of wonder that Paul demanded of the Corinthians, "Know ye not that YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE" (I Cor. 3:16-17). And again, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD; as God hath said, I will  *dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*" (II Cor. 6:16). And with still greater emphasis, "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, YE are God's BUILDING" (I Cor. 3:9).

The writer to the Hebrews presses the point even further. "Wherefore...consider the apostle...of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all HIS HOUSE. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every HOUSE is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all HIS HOUSE, as a servant, as a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over HIS OWN HOUSE; whose HOUSE ARE WE if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the *end* (consummation of the building of the house)" (Heb. 3:1-6).

It should be very evident to all who read that a *house* is being talked about in the verses above. Some Bible teachers believe that it's *one house* — the house of the people of God. They would say that Moses was inside the house as a servant, whereas the Lord Jesus is over the house as a Son. It is my deep conviction, however, that that is *not* what the apostle is saying! He is talking about TWO HOUSES! He says in verse four that both houses are made by God — He is the One who makes all things! There are two houses. One house is the people of God under the Old Testament — that's the argument all the way through the book of Hebrews — *you're to go from the old house to the new house!* You're to go from law to grace, from the natural and outward to that which is spiritual and inward, from the earthly Jerusalem to the heavenly Jerusalem, from the physical mount Zion to the spiritual mount Zion, from the temple on mount Moriah to the temple in the high place of God's Spirit, from the Levitical priesthood to the Melchizedekian priesthood, from being a *servant* to being a *son!*

That's the whole thrust — the entire issue has to do with two houses. Two houses, both of which were ordained of God. Two houses that were built by God. God was the architect of both. *Two* houses, not one! Moses functioned within one of the houses. He was inside the house as a servant. Moses was faithful in his house as a servant. Over the second house, which is the called and chosen elect of God in the power of the New Covenant, is the Lord Jesus Christ *as a Son*. Moses was faithful *inside* the old house as a servant. Jesus Christ is faithful *over* the new house as a Son. Therefore the new house is a **HOUSE OF SONS!** Jesus is *over* the house of sons as the Head of the body, as the King of the kings, as the Lord of the lords, as the High Priest of the priesthood, and as the Captain of the army of God! Oh, yes!

“For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses...” (Heb. 3:3). Remember back in the Old Testament that Moses, great man of God that he was, grew weary. The children of Israel grievously sinned. Moses went up on the mount, he received the law, and came down, and saw the gross sin of the children of Israel. In anger and desperation he threw the tables of the law down and they were broken. God said to Moses, “I want you to go back up on the mount.” Moses said in effect, “God, I’m tired, I’m weary. This is a stiff-necked and rebellious people, I’ve had it. I don’t want to go up there again.” God said, “Moses, I want you to go up into the mount again.” And Moses replied, “Show me your glory! Show me what you’re like! Show me your intrinsic, eternal perfections, give me a glimpse of what you’re really like. You’re asking so much of me — I’m tired, I’m weary — what are you like? If I’m to go back up, show me your glory!”

God responded, “I can’t show you my glory, Moses. But I’ll do the next best thing. I’ll hide you in the cleft of the rock, and I’ll pass by. I’ll put my hand over the cleft of the rock, so you won’t be blinded, and I’ll pass by. I will let you see only the hinder parts, my back. I’ll let you see my afterglow — and even in the afterglow you will see my goodness, mercy, and longsuffering.” So Moses gets a glimpse of what God is like! He comes down from that mount and the glory of God is radiating from his face. When we get to the New Testament, to John, chapter one, we read, “The law came by Moses, but *grace* and *truth* came by Jesus Christ.” And in the very context we read that “no man has seen God at any time.” What is in mind is Moses — no one has seen God at any time, not even Moses — he only saw the afterglow of God — and how glorious it was! In contrast, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, in the place of intimacy, participation, vital union, first-hand knowledge and state of being — He hath *revealed Him!* He has stepped out of the bosom of the Father and has *led Him into view!* Within Himself He has *crystallized the invisible!* The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus

Christ. Moses was a servant in a house of servants. Jesus is a Son over the house of sons! The Lord is saying, “Get out of the old house, out from under rules, regulations, laws, commandments, rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, programs and promotions of men, outward religious observances, and get into the new house of THE LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD! Go on! Go on! Go on!

This house of sons is the true temple of God, the new and eternal house that the Lord is building, and not man. In glorious words that are like letters of fire the word comes to John on Patmos, “Arise, and *measure the temple of God!*” “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*” (Eph. 2:19-22).

May our heavenly Father now give understanding to all who read these lines! To “measure the temple” signifies inspection, examination, to take inventory, an evaluation of just how much we have experienced of Christ and the life of sonship, to determine the state of our progress into the fullness of God and just where we are in our growth and development into the mind, nature, power, wisdom, and glory of sonship to God! Trying to accomplish any of this by human effort, natural understanding and logic, fleshly ability, or religious exercises is a most heinous pit into which to fall! This “measuring” can be done only by the Spirit who searches all things! “For the *Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (I Cor. 2:10-11).

Is this not what is meant when John says, “And there was *given me* a reed like unto a rod: and the angel (message, revelation from God) stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple...” Oh, yes! God is the One who speaks the word, the Lord Himself is the One who gives the empowerment for measuring, who stretches out the line, who plumbs the depths — not us! It is HIS mighty work wrought in us and through us! Unless this rod is *given* to measure all people and all things as *God sees them*, we form judgments about people and spiritual things and moves of God by outward appearances or by our own preconceived ideas, likes and dislikes, and our own standards. To do so is a great mistake, for it is not righteous judgment! It is not the measure by the reed that is *given* by the Holy Ghost! Those who walk in the living truth and in the Spirit and by the Spirit judge all things by the *mind of Christ* — hence the measuring rod! That is the mystery.

These are solemnizing truths. Oh, that men and women would cease with their elation over the rebuilding of a temple in Jerusalem and rejoice rather in the holy knowledge that we are the house of the Lord! We have become so accustomed to calling temporal and transient church buildings made of wood and brick and stone the “house of God” that we are amazed when we are shown that these are *naught but buildings* made with men’s hands. The fact is, no earthly building is sacred or holy, no matter how earnestly you dedicate it to the service of God. Men reverence buildings when they should reverence GOD. No mundane building made with men’s hands can ever qualify as the “house of God.” God does not uniquely dwell within any of them! They are not sanctified by His presence any more than a bank or a supermarket! All of these carnal, Babylonish buildings that men erroneously call “churches” and the “house of the Lord” shall meet the same fate as the temple of old. Not one stone shall be left standing upon another!

Not one of these “churches” or “houses of God” are being changed and transformed into His image, not one is growing unto an holy temple, not one can reveal one ounce of divine life or nature, not one will be resurrected by divine power, not one will be manifest as a son of God! Babylon has raised up some fantastic structures, gems of architectural genius, but it is all *vanity* and the glory of God graces none of them. If God is there it is only because *you* are there, dear saint of God; and when *you* walk into Wal Mart God is just as much present and revealed in the Wal Mart building as He was at the “church” building. May the Spirit of God so reveal to us the truth of God that we shall abandon even our perverted terminology acquired in Babylon and no longer call buildings made by men’s hands “churches” and the “house of God.” They are no such thing, and we need to correct our speech and sanctify our glossary before God and speak only the truth as it is in Jesus, and refuse to even utter the distortions and foolishness of the religious systems of man. The holy “place” where our Father has chosen to put His name is not in any earthly building, nor in a geographical location, but in His HOUSE OF SONS!

In the words of Jesus throughout the Gospels we find references to three houses — “My house,” “Father’s house,” and “your house.” The temple in Jerusalem had been “Father’s house” so long as the ministry there moved under the anointing of the Spirit. But when the Lord began His ministry, He said to the people, “I say unto you, That in this place is One greater than the temple” (Mat. 12:6). And truly, Christ is far superior to the temple and all its trappings, even God’s Christ today is far superior to all the present church orders, no matter how good we think some of it is. Jesus saw that “Father’s house” had become “your house” so He proclaimed of their house, “Behold, *your house* is left unto you desolate.” It was no longer “Father’s house” for the corrupt priesthood had usurped the glory of God and had made it “their house” with all their empty traditions and vain abominations. “And Jesus went into the temple...and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, MY HOUSE shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves” (Mat. 21:12-13). Although Jesus drove out the moneychangers, the judgment of that temple was given by our Lord, for He declared it to be a **DESOLATE HOUSE**, or a house devoid of the presence and purpose of God.

“*Rise*, and measure the temple of God” (Rev. 11:1). “*Rise*” translates the Greek word *egeiro* meaning “to collect ones faculties, to awaken from sleep or death, to stand up.” It is often used of resurrection. Jesus raised three people from the dead during His years of ministry, and each of these stands as a picture of the condition of those who are raised out of the death of the carnal mind into the life of the Son of God. First, there was Jairus’ daughter. Do you remember the story? Jesus came into the house and she was still upon her bed. She had just died. She still wore the garments of sleep. Her mother was still moistening her brow with kisses. Her father looked upon her lovingly, but she was dead. And Jesus raised her with these simple words, “Damsel, I say unto thee, *Arise!*”

Then there was the funeral procession that took place in the town of Nain where a widow of Nain had lost her only son. Like Lazarus (the third one I mentioned), he was no longer in his home; he no longer wore the clothes of sleep, but was wrapped in the cerements of the cemetery. He was already laid out upon his bier and was being conveyed to his tomb. Jesus did what He always did. He stopped the funeral — because that is why He came — and He said, “Young man, I say unto thee, *Arise!*”

“ARISE!” Paul uses the word ten times in his argument for the resurrection; the word takes different forms, but in each case it is from the same Greek word, *egeiro*. “Now if Christ be preached that He *rose* from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not *risen*. And if Christ be not *risen*, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He *raised* up Christ: whom He *raised* not up, if so be that the dead *rise* not. For if the dead *rise* not, then is not Christ *raised*: and if Christ be not *raised*, your faith is vain; and ye are yet in your sins...but now is Christ *risen* from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (I Cor. 15:12-20).

When the angel says to John, “*Rise*, and measure the temple of God,” the Spirit is bidding John to awaken to a new reality, to arise to a new realm of experience, and to follow the Lord into a fresh unveiling of Himself. David of old prophesied by the Spirit of this measuring, proclaiming, “Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell (mark, tally, enumerate, score, record) the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following” (Ps. 48:11-13). John is not told to measure the God of the temple, but to measure the temple itself! These enlightening words signify *stature*. The inspired apostle Paul unfolds for us the deep mystery of this when he writes, “And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the ***measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ***” (Eph. 4:11-13).

When the Lord commissions John to *measure the temple of God* we must understand what the measure is. Christ Jesus Himself is the measure! And all God’s sons are being brought unto “the *measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*.” Now it does not say that the temple at that time measured up to the full stature of Christ. It is my conviction that it did not! You see, John was given a reed like unto a rod with which to measure the temple. The reed was a standard of measurement which commonly was about ten feet in length. This reed was a familiar Old Testament instrument (Eze. 40:2-5) and figure. It was just a reed, a very common, plain, weak, destructible material; not golden, for it was not then time for the temple of God to be perfect. Gold is the symbol in scripture representing the incorruptible, divine nature of God. Just as gold is the perfect metal that cannot be tarnished, so God’s nature is perfection and it cannot be tarnished.

Therefore, when the *temple of God* becomes the *golden city of God* John reveals to us that “he that talked with me had a *golden reed* to *measure the city*, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof” (Rev. 21:15). Ah — now the rod is no longer a simple reed, it is a *golden reed*. Gold, as I mentioned, speaks of divine nature, revealing to us the great truth that the city has now become no longer a temple of stones, measured by an ordinary reed, but it is a city of gold — it has attained fully to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and is therefore *measured to a higher standard*, even the gold standard, as indicated by the golden reed. Full measure! The quality of the measure and the quality of the city correspond. As the temple we are measured by a lesser standard for we are still growing, developing, maturing, and becoming. But the city is a people that has attained to the full perfection of God’s nature and glory! Isn’t it wonderful!

How my glad heart rejoices in the sacred knowledge that whenever the Lord speaks of “measuring” His temple, it signifies to measure the *spiritual condition*. Thus when John is given a reed to measure the temple of God it has nothing to do with some future temple the Jews would build in Jerusalem, but he is to measure the spiritual condition and state of God’s New Testament Temple People! He is also instructed to measure “them that worship therein.” Certainly that is not to measure how tall they were, or how large their chest or waist would be! It doesn’t mean that God would only allow people six feet tall to enter His temple, or folks having a small waist-line. Oh, no! God is looking for *spiritual stature*. In its spiritual meaning John (and that ministry he represents) is to take a correct estimate of the character, nature, wisdom, power, and glory of God’s temple people and His royal priesthood! This measuring gives a revelation of what constitutes the true church in any age as contrasted with all the pious contentions of religion.

The quality of height is greatly admired. Short people desire to be tall. Tall people desire to have tall people as their mates. In fact, one shoe company advertised, “With our shoes, now you can be taller than she is.” There is a certain psychological bent in man’s very nature that demands him to be tall. If a man is not physically tall, often he tries to make up for it mentally, by egotism, position, attainment, or with a domineering spirit.

Donald G. Barnhouse once shared the following story. After the first world war there were tens of thousands of American soldiers who were left in France, and their supreme desire was to get home as quickly as possible. Discipline was greatly relaxed from the tension of wartime, and the men were securing as much leave as possible in order to see the sights of Europe. In a certain village about a hundred miles from Paris there was a detachment of American soldiers — a lieutenant and about forty men — who were guarding an ammunition dump. There was little to do outside the brief periods of guard duty, but the men amused themselves as best they could. One day, while the lieutenant was on leave, a motorcycle messenger came from General Pershing’s headquarters. He brought word that 2,700 men were to be chosen to march in the peace parades of London, Paris, Brussels, and Rome. The corporal and sergeant who read the order discovered that there were two conditions imposed as standards for selection. The first brought them no difficulty, for it stated that every candidate had to have a clean record — no man would be chosen who had been court marshaled. But the second condition made them pause. The order stated that every man applying had to be at least one meter and eighty-six centimeters tall! The corporal looked at the sergeant and the sergeant looked at the corporal and asked him how much one meter and eighty-six centimeters was. There were no answers. These Americans understood only feet and inches. Then the corporal said the most natural thing under the circumstances. “At any rate, Sarge, I am taller than you!”

When the news spread around the group, it was the same thing over again. No one knew the metric system. The men got into arguments about their relative heights, and soon they were standing up, back to back, to see who was the tallest man in the company. Finally, they knew their comparative heights, all the way from Slim down to Shorty. Slim was very proud and told them that he would send them a postcard from Rome and that he would take a look at the English girls for the rest of them. Poor Shorty received the good-natured banter of his friends. Under the circumstances these soldiers did the normal, natural thing. *They were in ignorance of the required standard!* The information was greatly desired, but this lack led them to set up *artificial standards* of their own and *measure themselves by themselves*. Some pride developed in the men who were taller. After all, were they not the most probable candidates?

Then the officer returned. He read the order and asked if there were any candidates. “The trouble is, sir,” the sergeant replied, “we do not know what one meter and eighty-six centimeters is.” The lieutenant, who knew French, went to the village and brought back a meter measure. Soon a mark was made on the wall of the required height (about six feet). Now the men were no longer measuring themselves with themselves! They had to stand up against a mark on the wall that was inflexible. It had been established by General Pershing. One or two men backed up to the mark, and their companions told them that they were an inch or so short of the full measure. Some men merely looked at the mark and knew that there was no hope. Finally, a call was made for Slim, and he came to be measured. He pulled himself up to his greatest possible height and stood there, rigid and puffed up, as they measured him. He, too, was short, even though he was short by no more than a quarter of an inch.

Of course, General Pershing got his 2,700 men. Many saw them that day when they came under the Arch of Triumph on Bastille Day, the fourteenth of July. These men, all in new uniforms, and with American Beauty roses tied to their bayonets, made a proud sight as they marched down the Champs Elysees, each one of them at least one meter and eighty-six centimeters tall! The point of this story lies in the fact that Pershing did not secure *any* of his marching men from the company described. He was not asking that they be *about* so tall, but that they fill an *absolute* requirement. And the heart of the story lies in the fact that tall Slim did not march in the parade any more than did short Shorty. As General Pershing had a perfect right to set the standard which set the height of every man that was in that parade, so it is with the high purposes of God!

Multitudes of the Lord’s people are mere spiritual *children*, and the qualifications are very low for children. But sons — mature, manifest sons — are called to meet a higher standard! To march in God’s army, to reign with Christ in His kingdom, to receive power over the nations, to be a priest of God upon His throne, to reign in life and bring deliverance to the whole creation from the bondage of corruption, can only be fulfilled by those who have attained unto ***the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST!*** Paul immediately adds to this statement the divine reason behind the requirement, “That we henceforth be *no more children*, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may *grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth...*maketh increase of the body* unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:14-16).

“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). “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in ***bringing many sons unto glory***, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to ***call them brethren***” (Heb. 2:10-11). The rule which God has made for entry into His house of sons is just this: Men shall measure up to His glory and be perfect and mature as HE IS. This rigorous standard is found expressed throughout the scriptures, and is finally personified in the firstborn Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. In our former days in the religious systems of man we did not understand what the measure was! As babes in Christ we thought that everything we should receive both here and in heaven above was simply *by grace*. And for little children it is! In those days, like the soldier boys in France, we also measured ourselves by ourselves, we were more spiritual than others,

our church was better than the other church, God still blessed and used brother Brown and sister Smith in spite of their weaknesses and failures, so we were pretty sure we could slide along also and make it in. God would just overlook everything if our heart was right. But those who measure themselves by themselves do not march in the parade! And even in this walk in the kingdom and sonship do not make the fatal mistake of measuring yourself, my beloved, by some other “son.” Oh, no! Only those who stand up beside JESUS CHRIST and measure up to the stature of HIS fullness are of that blessed company of His “many brethren”! That is the *mark!*

Because of the gravity of this calling the great apostle Paul exhorts us all with these significant words: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may *apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I **PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS**” (Phil. 3:11-14). The hour is coming and now is when every son of God is being *measured by the standard* to determine whether we meet the measure to qualify for the high calling of sonship glory and dominion.

When we measure something we judge it and discover its boundaries. God’s called and chosen elect are in these days discovering the unlimited dwelling place we have in the Lord! We also discover the limits *we put* upon His dwelling place in us. When the temple is measured that is what we discover! In order to discover the unlimited dwelling place we have in Him we must loose the limits we place on Him until all things become possible for us! John is here a representative man, having received figuratively, in eating the little book, the communication of God’s mind. He is now prepared to take into account the spiritual state of God’s people, to ascertain by the wisdom and understanding of the indwelling mind of the Lord, what is there spiritually for God. The measure is just this — only by the glorious mind of Christ are we enabled to truly see and comprehend what is the reality within God’s called and chosen elect! The *reed* like unto a rod is *the divine enablement of the mind of Christ*. The temple is the place where God’s mind is made known, as king David so clearly understood when he said, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, *to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple*” (Ps. 27:4).

A number of years ago the late Norene Nicholls penned the following enlightening words. “About a year ago the Lord whispered into my heart one day, ‘In the measurements of the temple you will find the time elements.’ My heart then turned to the thought given in Revelation 11:1 concerning the measuring of the temple, the altar, and the worshippers. As there were no measurements given there, I turned back to I Kings 6:2 for the measurements of Solomon’s temple seeking after the answer to the clue the Lord had given me. ‘And the house which king Solomon built for the Lord, the *length* thereof was *threescore cubits*, and the *breadth* thereof *twenty cubits*, and the *height* thereof *thirty cubits*.’

“With these figures in mind, let us pause a moment here to explain the meaning of the temple. It is twofold. First, ‘What? know ye not that your *body* is the *temple* of the Holy Spirit which is in you?’ (I Cor. 6:19). In one sense our individual bodies are individual and specific temples of God in which He wants to dwell in fullness. Second, ‘Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a *spiritual house* (or, temple)...’ (I Pet. 2:5). In this sense we are collectively a temple of God, each member being a living stone in the temple, in which He

desires to indwell in glory. Thus, the temple of God is an individual body or a collective body of the sons of God.

“Now back to the measurements of the temple. Solomon’s temple was 60 cubits long, 20 cubits broad, and 30 cubits high. These figures multiplied together give you the cubic cubits of the temple which is 36,000 cubic cubits. The meaning of numbers in scripture is most interesting, and we want to briefly touch on it here. The length of the temple was 60 cubits. SIX is the number of MAN, but SIXTY is SIX times TEN, and TEN is the number of TESTING or PROVING. Thus SIXTY means MAN PROVEN OR TESTED. So the first measurement refers to God’s man or men being fully proven in the fires of testing. The second measurement is the breadth, and it is TWENTY cubits. If you carefully follow this number through the scriptures, you find that it has to do with the age at which Israel was numbered, that is, from twenty years old and upward. So TWENTY means NUMBERING as it has to do with Israel in her various tribes. The third measurement is the height which was THIRTY cubits, and THIRTY signifies THE BEGINNING OF MINISTRY. Jesus was thirty when He began His ministry, David was thirty when he began to reign, Joseph was thirty when he came to rulership in Egypt, etc. So putting these meanings together, the measuring of the temple reveals **GOD’S TESTED MAN BEING NUMBERED AND BEGINNING HIS MINISTRY**. Isn’t that beautiful!

“In considering the cubic cubits which is 36,000, we again come to numerical meanings of interest. THREE is considered the great mystical number of the Hebrews, and it means DIVINE REVELATION. Again we have SIX which is, as we have already stated, the number of MAN. Then follow the zeros of the THOUSANDS, and generally speaking, when we get into 100 or 1000, it refers to FULLNESS. So the compound meaning of the compound measurement is **THE DIVINE REVELATION TO AND OF MAN CONCERNING HIS FULLNESS**. So the beauty of “measure the temple” continues to unfold in panoramas of glory!

“Right now God is dealing with His sons in a very special way both individually and collectively — He is measuring as never before! Collectively He is putting son with son and son against son until they wonder what is taking place. The answer is that GOD IS MEASURING THE TEMPLE OF THE SONS TO BRING THE WHOLE BODY OR COMPANY INTO THE FULLNESS OF THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF CHRIST! What shall we say then to all of this? Be patient, my brethren, for the measuring is proceeding on schedule. There seems to be no answer from the Lord on anything, but we have this promise, ‘He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the Day of Jesus Christ.’ This promise, too, is comforting, ‘The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.’ Rest in the knowledge that He will finish what is started, and finish it even unto the redemption of the body. This is the hour of perfection, not necessarily of healing or deliverance, but rather of being brought to the measure of His fullness” — end quote.

The apostle John himself signifies the mind of Christ in a ministry that is able to discern God’s purpose to bring His son company to the full measure of the stature of the firstborn Son. There is such a ministry in the earth today! Let me tell you something about this ministry. This ministry does not preach laws, rules, and regulations, nor does it try to legislate holiness; rather, it proclaims the truth of *Christ IN YOU the hope of glory!* This ministry does not teach doctrines and creeds, but they exhort the Lord’s elect to *grow up into Him who IS THE TRUTH!* This ministry does not preach questionings and doubts, but assures every man that *you have within you the ability of the mighty Christ to become all that God has revealed to you and apprehended you for!* This ministry does not preach that

we are all just human, apt to mistakes, and no one can be perfect, but exhorts the saints, *"Let us GO ON TO PERFECTION!"* This ministry is not out trying to build another church, denomination, organization, or kingdom of man, for this ministry knows that there are enough sects and schism dividing the body of Christ, so this ministry encourages every child of God to look to and depend upon no man or movement, but to *KNOW THE LORD FOR THEMSELVES!* This ministry does not draw men unto themselves, to control or manipulate under their authority, but freely and earnestly seeks to *raise up the nature, mind, will, and glory of the Lord in each individual member of the body of Christ*, until they have built God's true building, the temple of the Lord! This ministry does not set the "ministry" above the so-called "laity," they do not make a distinction between the various members of the body of Christ, though each member is indeed unique and every joint supplies; they teach that *ALL are the body of Christ, and everyone a member thereof, and only the glorious Head of the body has in all things preeminence!* This ministry does not preach submission to men, but *union with the Spirit of Christ within them!* This ministry does not preach about flying away to heaven, but of being *filled with all the fullness of God!*

In closing this message I am impressed to share from the anointed pen of brother Carl Schwing.

"There are realms within Father's heavenly places that over the centuries only the mystics (ones initiated into the deep things of the Holy Spirit) and saints ventured into...all of which gave their life to do so...in one way or another. Their brave spirits dared to rise above the limitations of orthodoxy and entered the realm of truth and reality. And there, in the silence of His presence, they had fellowship with the Father and their Beloved...the Lord Jesus Christ. Not that they had attained during their earth life, but, they had been apprehended to attain. They sought for the life in the Spirit, and for the realm of reality. Now they wait in the beauty of the Father's House for the hour when His perfect work is finished, and they reach their full attainment in Christ Jesus. It was their undying love for Christ, their unshakable faith, their loyalty in serving all those in need...it was their burning desire to always seek the will of God...to do the will of God...to become the will of God...it was by walking in His righteousness, His holiness, and in His Spirit, that made these precious ones the saints of the Lord. To the world they were strange, to the religious they were fools, but, the meek and lowly of heart considered them godly.

"In my spirit I see another very special dwelling place in our Father's house. To be still, to wait in His presence is one of the greatest acts of praise and worship. To be alone with the Father is a reality beyond the comprehension of the worldly, the religious, and often the spiritual. To know Him as the beginning of all things, the life of all things, and the fulfillment of all things, is one of the keys that will open the door to the unseen realm...the eternal realm. Such knowledge is the revelation of the Kingdom of God within the earth that we are...it is the pathway to the power of an endless life. Oh! What matchless love and mercy and grace for all mankind, for all creation, is hidden in the sacred words of the most High: "Be still and know that I am God." — end quote.

As the Lord measures His temple in this hour may we all measure up to the simplicity and power of the exhortation above. Amen!

# Chapter 124

## Measuring The Temple

### *continued*

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and *measure the temple of God, and the altar...*” (Rev. 11:1).

Armed with the understanding that the “*naos*” or “temple” is in fact the *inner sanctuary*, comprising both the holy place and the most holy place, it is clear that the “altar” here is not the brazen altar of burnt sacrifice, for that stood in the outer court and the outer court was not to be measured. It is, therefore, the golden altar of incense which stood in the “holy place” of the “*naos*.”

The book of Revelation is itself like unto the innermost sanctuary, it is the ‘holy place’ and “most holy place” of the Bible! In the rest of the Bible we read instruction on how to draw near to God. In the book of Revelation God sets open the door to His secret dwelling-place, and He shows us how His elect people come to Him, speak with Him, enjoy intimacy of fellowship with Him, and enter into vital union with Him. There we see the throne of grace and power and set before it the golden altar of incense — the *ministry* of worship, thanksgiving, praise, prayer, fellowship, and communion! The altar is a place of meeting God. It is a place right on the inside of us, the secret sanctum where dwells our mysterious essence of being. It is there that we touch God in our inward being, and He touches us and draws us into the Holiest of all. In that meeting He energizes and illumines us, and we minister unto Him and He ministers unto us, and in and through us, by the Spirit. It is indeed wonderful!

By inspiration of the Spirit the prophet David mused, “Let my *prayer be set before Thee as incense*, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice” (Ps. 141:2). The offering up of incense was a great part of the worship of the Aaronic priesthood, instituted by the Lord Himself. The altar of incense was one of the three articles which were placed within the holy place and priests were assigned to care for the burning of the incense. The golden altar was the piece of furniture closest to the veil — the way into the Holiest of all. It represented the worship, prayers, fellowship, and communion of the saints with its sweet odors and aromas ascending up to God. The incense was a hard, cold, material substance which by the action of fire was changed into a smoky, sweet-smelling fragrance that rose and wafted its way *through the veil* into the very presence of Yahweh, there to commingle with the very Shekinah over the mercy seat! The blood and the incense were the only two things that ever made their way right in to the mercy seat and God’s presence from the holy place of the tabernacle. What ignites real worship and praise that ascend before the presence of the Lord is the *fire* of God upon the altar of our hearts!

There was unspeakable glory manifest in the spirit of worship that was released within the Lord’s people at the time of the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit in the late 1940’s and 1950’s. There was the living stream of the *song of the Lord* as the people stood at the

golden altar of incense and worshipped the Father in the spirit and by the spirit for untold hours at a time. What glory rested upon the people of the Lord! What power flashed forth from the Holiest of all! There was the *fire of God* that ignited, energized, and empowered the worship, it came from the altar of God out of the holy fire, and there was a divine fragrance that ascended with it! There is still a residue of that glory adhering to the Lord's elect today, though much *strange fire* has since been offered in its place.

The golden altar is not any natural, physical place where we meet God, commune with Him, and worship before Him. Oh, no! The golden altar is a place *in the spirit*. Let me quote from an article in the Sharon Star, January 1975. "At the time my wife and I had been traveling in Europe and visited a number of cathedrals and places of worship that were very ornate and beautiful to behold, and as I meditated on their beauty I realized that I did not experience that wonderful presence of God that I have experienced many times in grass huts and under the trees in India and the Philippines. I saw works of art by the finest of artists depicting the works of God. I saw and heard tremendous pipe organs which sounded forth swelling praise to the God of all creation. Statues depicting the images of God, adorned with gold, were all around, yet as I meditated the following words came to me: *The abiding place of God is not among the domes and spires that pierce the sky. Nor is His grandeur amid the gilded arches and gothic domes of cathedrals. His acts cannot be shown by artists' craft upon the canvasses of walls and ceilings. Yet man, in his fruitless search for God, has given way to his feeble wisdom and tried to capture God in such as these. Man has often in his search for God missed the way because he tried to enclose God in an object, which at best was only a small part of God's creation. Because he did not heed the urges that **surged within his breast**, and worshipped the creation instead of the Creator, God caused his base nature to guide his search. Gods of wood and stone became a substitute for Him whose footstool is the earth; for Him whose presence filleth all in all, yet has desired to dwell, not in temples made with hands, but in a structure made with living stones and **hearts that beat in harmony with the will of Him who fills the universe...***" — end quote.

In this hour the glory of the Lord is filling HIS TEMPLE! In sons there is coming expression of the true ministry of priesthood before God and unto God. God is raising up within His chosen ones an establishment of worship in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Men have done all sorts of things and called it worship! Rituals, ceremonies, liturgies, singing, lifting up the hands, loud praises, shouting, and dancing have all been accepted as worship unto the Lord. I do not mean to say that those things are not of God. But God is doing a new thing! The command has gone forth, "Rise, and *measure the altar!*" God would have us *examine* all our religious concepts of worship, lay the plum-line upon them, take the reed like unto a rod and assess the very essence of them, and learn by the Spirit what true worship is! No longer shall it be contingent upon a gathering of people, no longer shall it be an outward show, a response to the command of men to stand, sing, raise the hands, clap, dance, speak in tongues, and praise the Lord, but it shall be worship that springs and flows from the inner sanctum of our inner son, ignited and energized by the fire of God upon the altars of our own hearts. It shall never draw attention to the worshipper, or to worship itself, or be dictated by man, for if man must coax and coach and manipulate then it is not true worship, not *in the spirit* and not *by the spirit*. Oh, yes, there is a worship that glorifies the Lord in the heavenly places of the Spirit. How our hearts yearn for this! Many have found themselves cut off and devoid of everything they once *thought* was worship, and this has led to some questionings about what their spiritual status is, but fear not, my beloved. What you thought was worship probably was not true worship at all; do not lust after the leeks and garlic of Egypt! They are pleasant and taste good, but they are the food of the

house of bondage. The Lord is cutting off all former realms, everything we thought to be worship, and leaving us void that we might finally recognize by the “measure of the altar” the true worship that is born of the very spirit of sonship! All the former heavens we have dwelt in are rolling up as a scroll, and we are even now being ushered into a new heaven with a brand new atmosphere of HIS presence and glory. Aren’t you glad!

Well did Ray Prinzing set forth some of the principles of this “measuring of the altar” when he wrote, “For sure, the church realm moves on a soulish level, be it a charismatic realm, or more fundamental. All their worship appeals to the ascetic sense of the soul, stimulating the intellect, or stirring up the emotions, enhanced by the will of the leader manipulating the will of the congregation to sing, shout, dance, or whatever they propose for them to do. This does not necessarily mean that the soul realm is sinful or wrong, but it does signify that we need to be FULLY JOINED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, if we are to bring forth fruit to His honor and praise.

“True discernment can keep us from becoming involved with just a ‘form of godliness’ which is devoid of the power of God. If it is only a soulish emotion that is stirred, there will be no power in it. For example, the repeated singing of a chorus — does it sing its way into your spirit, until you become lost in adoration and worship to God? Or, does it only stir your emotions to become a soulish song and dance which satisfies the flesh? We do not criticize soulish manifestations, if they are used to lead on into a deeper realm, but they must not be substituted for the pure moving of the Holy Spirit. There is no good substitute for the *anointing!* An understanding heart is also vitally needed to discern between what is ‘will worship’ and that which is truly the outflow of the spirit within. Colossians 2:23 speaks of ‘a show of wisdom in will worship.’ Far too many of our religious expressions are only a form of WILL WORSHIP. By that we mean, either someone else *willed you* to do it, or else you set your own will in that direction as a means of obtaining favor with God, hoping to become more spiritual, or for some other reason.

“Whenever a form, ritual, or ceremony is devoid of His life, will-worship takes over, a manipulative control with rigid regulations. We become a performer, according to the will of man, rather than a worshipper of God. Thus, as one man well stated, ‘Much of our worship time is nothing more than a ‘happy hour’ in which the participants can enjoy a good time.’ A contrived plan is brought out, who will lead, what songs will be sung, how the tempo will be increased, and we are on our way — programmed according to the will of man! We can sing all our favorite songs or choruses, clap our hands, dance, shout, and have an emotional spree that is carefully orchestrated by the will of the leader, so that we laugh or weep or worship according to their psychological design, and the flow of the music. But where, in all of this will-worship have we really *worshipped in spirit and in truth* Him who is King of kings and Lord of Lords? The will of man must be surrendered to the will of God!

“It has been well stated that you can praise the Lord from your memory circuits, as you recall His wonderful works, but you can only *worship* Him when you are conscious of His *presence*. Worship demands the *presence* of the one being worshipped! And there is that recognizing that He is with us in every hour of our day, so that at any given moment there might rise from our spirit a flow of adoration and worship to Him. ‘In Him we live and move and have our being.’ Therefore we can worship Him right where we are! It does not require a formal arrangement, cathedral, stained glass windows, padded pews, soft organ music so that we begin to create an atmosphere which we *think* lends itself to a form of worship” — end quote.

To sit at *His* feet means to be a worshipper. It is much more than drawing nigh to God with our mouth and pouring forth beautiful expressions of praise or impassioned petitions. “The hour cometh, and now is, when the *true worshippers* shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father *seeketh such* to worship Him” (Jn. 4:23). The emphasis in this passage is not on worship, but on TRUE WORSHIPPERS. I do not hesitate to tell you that much of the so-called spiritual worship in this hour is in fact idolatrous, for many have made an idol of worship, they worship the beauty and glory and thrill of worship, rather than worshipping the Father. But *true worshippers* are true worshippers because they do not worship for the ecstasy that comes to them, but in spirit and in truth it is all directed UNTO HIM ALONE. To worship “in spirit and in *truth*” means to worship out of our spirit in *reality*. What we do or say is not of prime importance. What we ARE is the thing that matters, for out of a state of being comes our doing. The Holy Spirit cried through the prophet, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me...”

It is not sufficient to worship God as an act. If you are not in your state of being a *true worshipper*, your worship is vanity, matters not one whit how beautiful or spiritual it may appear or sound; it is not in spirit and in truth because it is not originating out of your spirit and is not proceeding out of a state of being. “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, hypocrites” (Mat. 15:7). A hypocrite cannot worship God, matters not how high he raises his hands, how loudly he claps, or how expressive the words, it takes a *worshipper* to worship God! God is looking for those who have *become* true worshippers. “This people shall **be** unto me for a praise, a name, and a glory.” The man born blind whom Jesus healed, with wisdom and understanding declared, “If any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth” (Jn. 9:31). He did not say, “If any man worships God,” but, “If any man **be a worshipper.**” What a word that is! God heareth not sinners, he said, but if any man BE A WORSHIPPER OF GOD AND DOETH HIS WILL, HE HEARETH HIM. Multitudes of people daily “worship” God, but only a few ARE WORSHIPPERS! The simple truth is, it is impossible to worship God externally! Oh, yes, one may go through the physical motions of singing, shouting, prostrating the body, and many other physical actions, but that does not mean he is *worshipping*. God is a spirit, Jesus said, and they that worship Him *must* worship Him *in spirit and in truth*. Those are the only two “places” where the Father may be worshipped!

Abraham is a classic example of a true worshipper. There arrived for the faithful patriarch that most solemn of days in which the voice of the Almighty fell upon his attentive ear, commanding, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2). Though this command filled Abraham’s heart with pain, yet he would not be as surprised to receive it as a father would in our day; for such offerings were very common among all those people in the land where Abraham sojourned. Abraham, being strong in faith, never for one moment doubted or disobeyed God’s word. He knew that Isaac was the child whom God had promised, and that God had promised, too, that Isaac should have children, and that those coming from Isaac should become a great nation and a company of nations. He did not see how God could fulfill His promise with regard to Isaac, if Isaac should be slain as an offering: unless, indeed, God should raise him up from the dead afterward, a thought which Abraham’s unwavering faith did not discount. But Abraham undertook at once to obey God’s command! He took two young men with him and an ass laden with wood for the fire; and he went toward the mountain in the north, little Isaac his son walking by his side. For two days they journeyed, sleeping under the trees at night in the open country. And on the third day, Abraham saw

the mountain far away. As they drew near to the mountain, Abraham said to the young men, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and *worship*, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5).

Ah! He did not say, "I and the lad will go yonder and offer up a sacrifice," but "we will go yonder and WORSHIP." So great was His faith in God's promise that Abraham declared, "and WE (Isaac and I) will come again to you." He took the wood from the ass and placed it on Isaac, and the two walked up the mountain together. As they were walking, Isaac said, "Father, here is the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering?" And Abraham replied, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb." And they came to the place on top of the mountain. There Abraham built an altar of stones and earth heaped up, and on it he placed the wood. Then he took Isaac and tied his hands and feet, and laid him on the wood on the altar. And Abraham lifted up his hand, holding a knife to kill his son. A moment longer, and Isaac would be slain by his own father's hand. But just at that moment the angel of the Lord out of heaven called to Abraham, and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" And Abraham answered, "Here I am, Lord." Then the angel of the Lord said, "Do not lay your hand upon your son. Now I know that you love God more than you love your only son, since you are ready to give up your son, your only son, to God."

The message is clear — Abraham WORSHIPPED GOD in the offering up of Isaac! The "measuring rod" applied to Abraham's action reveals that he was indeed a *true worshipper!* When called on to offer up his son, he did it as an act of worship. He prostrated himself, not physically, but in his spirit he bowed low before the will of the Lord. He worshipped! He never raised his hands, sang, clapped, shouted praises, or danced, but his offering up of Isaac was an act of true worship in the presence of God!

Worship is from the Hebrew word *shahah* meaning "to bow down, to prostrate," and from the Greek *proskyneo* meaning "to prostrate, do obeisance to." Worship is the honor, reverence, and homage paid to superior beings and powers, and to God. It is not words at all, but an attitude, a state of being, a reverent and submissive bending to God's will. It is not what you are doing that matters most, but the spirit behind your action. You can pray for something and it can be just a selfish, proud, egotistical thing. Or it can be an act of worship to God. It is worship when it is GOD'S WILL you seek, that His kingdom might be brought to pass in the earth!

When David brought the ark to Jerusalem according to the word of the Lord, he worshipped the Lord in the beauty of holiness (1 Chron. 16:29). Why did David have to go back for the ark twice? Because the first time it was not an act of worship. It was an act of triumph: he was somewhat arrogant because they were conquering their enemies! If it was worship they would have brought the ark according to God's way, but they thought, If the Philistines can haul it on a cart, we can do the same. They were carelessly and thoughtlessly doing it *their way*, and so God smote them. But later David worshipped the Lord in the beauty of holiness, because he reverently brought the ark back according to the Lord's command: on the shoulders of the Levites and rejoicing in the presence of the Lord!

When Job, that mighty man of the East, received the evil tidings that his sons and daughters were dead, and all his possessions lost, "Then Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and **worshipped**" (Job 1:20). I'm sure this wasn't that beautiful, melodious high-sounding worshipful praise we hear in church meetings today, which we call worship! But Job bowed submissively and

reverently before the will of God — and he worshipped. If Job had been a complainer, he would have complained. If Job had been a backbiter, he would have backbitten. If Job had been a curser, he would have cursed. If Job was rebellious, he would have rebelled. But Job was a worshipper, therefore he worshipped! He was a man, perfect and upright, one that feared (reverenced) God, and hated evil. That was the testimony of his state of being, which was a state of worship. We may be very congenial and lovable people, with an aura of spirituality surrounding our every movement, when you catch us in the right mood and under the proper circumstances; but when things start to happen as they did to Job, then whatever your state of being is, it will come out! Job fell on his face, and what he was was manifested: he was a worshipper, so he worshipped God! Ah, what would have been our first expression had we been in Job's place? May God make us true worshippers! Anyone can draw nigh with their mouth and praise God, but it is vanity, a religious pretense if it is not proceeding from a state of being. God wants worship to be in spirit and in truth, which comes out of a worshipful nature: true worshippers worshipping the Father! Truly God is "measuring the altar" of worship this very hour in the life of every man and woman who has received the call to sonship!

If there is no complete committal to God, then the offering up of our possessions will not be worship. "Though I give my body to be burnt," says Paul, "if it is not an expression of my state of being as a worshipper, filled with divine love, it profits me nothing." Our Father wants what comes out of every one of His sons to be an expression of what He is doing and of what He has wrought in us. True worship is an expression of our relationship with God, where everything within us is done for the glory and praise and honor of God. That is why it made no difference to God whether Jesus did carpentry work for a number of years, or healed the sick for three and a half years. Jesus was a worshipper! He came only to do the will of His Father whether that meant working or waiting, or winning or losing, or living or dying. The Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom *I am* well pleased," when all He had done was carpentry work for about thirty years! When the Father said that He was well pleased with His firstborn Son that Son had never preached a sermon, never taught a multitude, never performed a miracle, never healed a sick person, never raised any dead. Think of it! Can we not see by this that it is only in the spirit of worship that one can sit at the feet of the Father and receive from His great mind and heart the instruction and counsel of His will. May God make us such *true worshippers* that our walk will be worship!

Take the shoes from off your feet, O saint of God, for the ground on which we stand is holy. The spiritual "temple mount" is the holy mount of God! The temple of God is a people. We miss so much vital truth by our careless thinking about the scriptures. Every stone in that temple is a living person, a son of God. We will understand a great mystery when we understand that every item in the temple of God is composed of people. The Holy of holies is a people. The ark of the covenant is a people. The holy place is a people. And now I want to say that the altar is a people! God has an altar people. The altar is the place of worship, and worship is not merely something we do, it is something we *are*. God is making us *true worshippers*. These true worshippers are the altar! And now God is measuring the altar. By His Spirit He is examining, investigating, inspecting, and assessing the spiritual condition and quality of His altar people. He is not measuring how melodiously, harmoniously, and sweet-soundingly we can "sing in the Spirit," or how loud we can shout praises, or how long or articulately we can pray. We can go through all the forms of what we consider worship and never touch the essence of worship. So the Lord says, "Measure the altar, the altar is a people, it is not what they do, but what they are that must be measured!" Oh, yes!

Now, my beloved, this brings us to an important thought. If you would measure the altar, don't attempt to do so in a church meeting on Sunday morning! I don't think anyone would deny that should you measure the altar in a meeting on Sunday morning you might get a false reading. A better time to measure the altar would be after the meeting, on the way home, when the kids are screaming in the car, the spouse is nagging, and the radiator overheats on the congested freeway. Don't you think that would be a good time to measure the altar? You see, I find that even many "kingdom people" still go into a meeting and turn God on and turn God off. When the meeting starts they put on what Lynn Hiles has called their "precious Jesus face" and pour forth praises and worship, sing, speak in tongues, prophesy, exhort, and appear so very spiritual, but the moment the last "Amen" is said it is all promptly *turned off* and they become as another person.

A church magazine contained a beautiful picture of a congregation at worship. The children wore smiles. All the mothers and fathers were singing as if they had been made for nothing else. All the grandfathers looked like saints. All the grandmothers beamed, as if it was Mother's Day. Meanwhile, all the young women looked as if they never had a worldly thought or care. All the young men looked as if they had just made a vow to enter seminary. The choir members wore robes and angelic expressions. The picture, sad to say, was *posed*. No congregation looks like that! Even so, none of us should have to be told to smile because we are on God's candid camera. The truth is, however, that oft times the way we appear among the Lord's people is but a facade. God is measuring His altar, and He is tearing away all our masks; but, thank God, He is also bringing forth in us the true image of His Son. There is light appearing in the face of God's Christ!

You see, dear saint of God, the true character of any person is revealed by the opposing character of another person or circumstance. Not one of us knows what is in us, until someone comes and says or does something to us, that will bring out that hidden characteristic within. It makes no difference what people say about themselves or how spiritual they appear to be. It matters not how loudly they may affirm that natural things do not bother them; if there is carnality or evil lurking within their nature, an opposing character will immediately bring it to the surface. So we can never know the real, true nature of any man until something comes along to oppose him.

When everything goes according to one's desire or will, then everyone around that person sees only their "better side." Nothing ever ruffles them or disturbs them, because they are constantly having their own way, getting what they want. But just let something cross them and the trouble begins! When you see the brother or sister in the church service, you see only the best part of them. Everyone is only sweetness and goodness. The ministers are so gracious and kind, the husbands and wives are so nice to each other and to the children. But just walk unexpectedly into the home on Monday morning, or come into the breakfast circle and you will find out how things are going. Or let someone abuse them, swindle them, cheat them, sell them a car that is a lemon, take advantage of them, steal from them, insult them, falsely accuse them, misuse them — ah, it is time to *measure the altar!*

## **MEASURE THE WORSHIPPERS**

"Rise, and *measure the temple of God, and the altar, and **them that worship therein***" (Rev. 11:1).

We wrote at some length above about the measuring of the altar. This was the golden altar, for there was no other altar in the holy place. What John saw measured was not the literal altar in the literal temple of old, for what John saw measured was a heavenly altar, and it was in the inner shrine of the heavenly sanctuary in the realm of the spirit. This is the golden altar at which we saw the angel stand with the golden censer in his hand, the altar on which the prayers of the saints were offered, and the altar from the four blood-tipped horns of which there came a mighty voice saying, "Loose the four angels which are bound." The altar, when used as a figure, is always a type and symbol of the ministry of prayer, intercession, giving of thanks, praise and worship unto God. The altar signifies the company of God's saints who fulfill this spiritual ministry as unto the Father and on behalf of creation. The measuring of the golden altar with the reed is a picture of the holy mind of Christ given to discern and determine the true spiritual quality of that wonderful ministry.

And now comes the word, "and measure...*them that worship therein.*" The emphasis in this verse is not on *worship*, but on *worshippers*. Those who "worship therein" are the priests of God! All the assembly of Israel was permitted entrance into the outer court, but only the priesthood of Aaron was admitted into the holy place there to minister unto the Lord. From out of the masses of the redeemed our Father in heaven is even now calling and preparing kings and priests, or a "royal priesthood," to minister before the Lord, unto the Lord, and on behalf of all creation, to bring the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God to all men everywhere upon earth. This is the spiritual ministry of priesthood!

In the Bible there are a great number of words, phrases, and expressions that are especially significant in the creative and redemptive plan of God. One we want to consider in these pages is the proclamation of the Lord to His people in Exodus 19:5-6: "And ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests.*" The full text reads, "Now, therefore, if ye shall obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for *all the earth is mine:* and ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests,* and an holy nation." The subject of the royal priesthood, like many of the themes of scripture, is inexhaustible. It sparkles as the twinkling stars of the heavens with glories which many have not yet beheld. Let us put our eye to the telescope of the Holy Spirit, and allow this grand subject to be brought nearer to our spiritual vision for, in so doing, we shall behold more of the grandeur and ineffableness of the "High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," and of the purpose and majesty of OUR ONENESS IN HIM. This makes it mandatory upon us to remove the shoes from off our feet and tread carefully upon this holy and mysterious ground.

And just what is God's purpose? "Ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests.*" Notice the connection between "kingdom" and "priests." Since kingship was virtually the only type of government or state known in the ancient world, "kingdom" could well be translated today as a "government" or "state." A GOVERNMENT OF PRIESTS! A PRIESTLY STATE! A HOLY NATION OF PRIESTS! God offered to Israel this glory of being a "kingdom of priests." ALL the tribes were to be priests. Because of their failure to believe God and enter the land at Kadesh-barnea and because they made and worshipped a golden calf while Moses was on the mountain receiving God's law, only one tribe was chosen to be a priestly tribe — and that not on behalf of the world, but on behalf of the unbelieving, rebellious people of Israel! God's purpose remains, however, to have an entire nation of priests in the fullness of what priesthood means. Israel collectively was to be a royal and priestly race, a dynasty of kings and priests, each member uniting in himself the attributes of king and priest. Every man a king! Every man a priest! Every man as a Melchizedek! A kingdom of priests!

The Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) states that they were to be “a priesthood of kings.” It was intended to be the way of life, the office, the nature, the ministry of all Israel, not just a selected few. Israel’s would be a priestly way of life, with priestly dignity, priestly power and authority, priestly holiness and priestly character. God’s kingdom people were to be a priesthood set at the crossroads of the world to minister to all tribes and nations the things of God. They would become the holy people, the mediating and blessing nation for all the other nations. Ah, beloved, there is a realm of living and ministry that goes beyond just being a Christian, or attending church meetings, or going through the motions of so many religious activities. God has always wanted a kingdom of priests! Priests and kings — just like Jesus! One of the chief reasons for the weakness and immaturity of the popular church is the mistaken idea that the saint’s blessing here and happiness in heaven is the main object of God’s grace. A fatal error! God’s aim is far holier and far higher. He chooses out of the nations a people, inworks into them all the triumph of HIS REDEMPTION, all the victory and power of HIS LIFE, that they in turn shall carry out His redemptive purposes on behalf of the whole creation. A Royal Priesthood! Ah, that is God’s aim, His purpose of the ages.

Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest of *our profession*, and therefore the example, pattern, and proto-type of all that priesthood means. “Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17). “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:15-16). There are two things every man needs — reconciliation to God — and grace to help, strengthen, and give overcoming victory in time of need that we may continue to journey, pressing forward into the fullness of our redemption in Him. These instinctive cravings of the soul are as mighty and irrepressible as the craving of the body for sleep or food; and they are as evident amid our luxury and refinement as in primeval forests, or beside the historic rivers of antiquity.

As someone has pointed out, to meet these two needs — reconciliation and grace to help — men have appointed one of their number a *priest*. That word has an ominous sound to our ears, because it has been associated with immoralities and cruelty. The world has never seen more unscrupulous scoundrels than its priests, whether of Baal or Moloch, of Judaism or the Papacy. All through the ages it has seemed impossible for men to receive power in the spiritual realm without abusing it to the injury of those who sought their help. Study the history of the priesthood, which murdered the Christ because He threw too strong a light upon their hypocrisies and villainies; and you have the history of every priest craft which has darkened the world with deception, fraud, crime, and saturated its soil with the blood of its prophets and the saintliest of men.

AND YET THE IDEA OF A PRIEST IS A NATURAL AND A BEAUTIFUL AND A SCRIPTURAL ONE! There is great beauty and blessing and power in the work and ministry of a true priest, as God has ordained. In the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament the priest who had a true priest’s heart was not always engaged in the bloody work of sacrificing flocks of fleecy sheep, by which alone, in those rude days, the cost of sin could be computed. The true priest would have other, and, perhaps, more touching work. He would be the shepherd of the timid souls around him; listening to confessions whispered over the heads of dumb victims; feeling compassion for erring, helpless, and wayward ones; comforting those who were passing through seasons of sorrow, till faces,

washed with tears, began to gleam with holy light, bringing peace and deliverance. Never possessed of self-interest; never looking for ease, or pleasure, or gain; never resting while one poor wanderer was away in the snowdrift or on the desert floor. Yes, and more! He would be the spokesman of souls, praying for those who did not pray for themselves; praying with those who knew not what or how to ask; interceding for the whole wretched race of man! Ah, such was the ministry of the true priest, beautifully typifying, yet only a poor faint shadow of, the greater priesthood to come, the chosen race born from above, the holy company and nation conformed to the image of God's Son, the royal priesthood, the people prepared to restore all creation back into God again!

Webster's dictionary defines priest as: a mediatory agent between God and man. In the Old Testament the word priest is translated from the Hebrew word *cohen*, the root meaning of which is "one who stands up and draws nigh for another." The Greek word, in its root, means "to minister." Thus, a priest is one who "draws near and ministers on behalf of another." And the priest always draws nigh and ministers in *two directions* — drawing nigh to God on behalf of the people and drawing nigh to the people on behalf of God. On the one hand, the priest stands and ministers unto the Lord on behalf of the people while, on the other hand, he ministers unto the people on behalf of the Lord. So it was with Aaron in the Old Testament. It is said of him and the priests of Israel, "they shall stand in my presence to minister," and, "they shall go out and bless in my name." The ministry of the priest is an intermediate or go-between ministry. He reaches out with one hand and takes hold of God; he reaches out with the other hand and takes hold of humanity; and he ***brings the two together in the power of his priestly ministration!*** This is the ministry of the sons of God, God's kingdom of priests. There shall flow from the Father to the sons, in whom He delights, a stream of blessing and life to impart to every man of Adam's benighted race. As the sunlight streams from the sun, there shall flow forth unobstructed and unceasingly the stream of life and light and love and grace and power and glory until there shall not be one soul left in outer darkness. It is flowing even now! It is flowing unto all who believe, yet the hour is wonderfully nigh at hand when it shall flow into all the deserts and prison houses and hell-holes of the whole world. It is indeed wonderful!

God has always wanted a priesthood. The priesthood is foundational to the outworking of His redemption and central to His plan of the ages. Oh, beloved, come, let us now open our hearts wide to Him! Come, and as we gaze upon this glorious ministry and its life-flow to all the families of the earth, let us yield ourselves unto God that He may work His wondrous work in our lives, bringing us into such union with Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, that we become in nature and power His ROYAL PRIESTHOOD in the earth! The manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation is in travail, is nothing more nor less than the full manifestation of God's fully developed and empowered body of KING-PRIESTS AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK! You may feel very weak, insufficient, unworthy, and helpless in the light of such a high calling, my beloved; but those apprehended to this ministry are still in the process of preparation. That is precisely why the call goes forth in this hour, "Rise, and *measure the temple...and them that worship therein!*" Does it bother you, this being *measured*? It is necessary that the Lord reveal to our hearts just how we measure up to the nature of priesthood, and just where we lack in that gracious spirit. There must be an inspection! Do we have a priestly heart? Do we have a compassionate heart? Do we have a merciful heart? Do we yearn to be a vessel for His purpose more than life itself? Are we willing to be dealt with, chastened, corrected, purged, purified, changed, and transformed? Do we welcome the man with the measuring rod?

There can be no priesthood without first a thorough change. Sin, self, ego, greed, prejudice, hatred, bigotry, criticism, retaliation, unconcern, insensitivity, immaturity, pettiness, unrighteousness, all must be dealt with. Thus, we are not seeking just a salvation experience, sins forgiven, covering over the past, and hoping for the best in the future, but we desire that the Holy Spirit of God, working mightily within, shall bring a thorough change in us, until every word, will, attitude, desire, emotion, action, and reaction shall flow from HIS HEART to all about us. You can be a believer and die and go to heaven without such a thorough change, but you can never ***be a priest without it!*** You can speak in tongues, prophesy, see visions, fall out under the power, and be a deacon or even an apostle without such a thorough change, but you can never ***be a priest without it!***

Ah — there are no arm-chair priests in the kingdom of God! There are no country-club-elite priests. There are no playboy priests. There are no honorary priests. There are no theoretical, self-appointed priests. Many of us want to deliver creation from a distance, delivering eloquent discourses in our gatherings, uttering lofty platitudes, issuing spiritual-sounding decrees in the atmosphere of praise and worship, while our hands are still clean and there is no mud or blood or guts on our garments! We view the priests of old arrayed in their garments of glory and beauty and think how noble and prestigious their office! But the priesthood is a dirty, sweaty, bloody business with cattle stomping about filling the air with clouds of choking desert dust full of poop and pee, throats cut, blood splattering, carcasses butchered, the stench of burning flesh insulting the nostrils. How do we *measure up?*

This statement, *measure them that worship therein*, is much too important to be passed over lightly. It means the MEASURING OF THE PRIESTHOOD, ascertaining whether one possesses a priestly heart, a priestly hope, a priestly character and nature. I must emphasize with all solemnity that when God chooses men to be priests He means for them to BE PRIESTS. “Ye shall BE unto me a kingdom of priests.” Priesthood is not an honorary title, not a gift of grace, not a reward, nor some emotional, sensational blessing to be worn like a merit badge for show. Priesthood is real. Priesthood is ministry, to God and to men. Priesthood is work. Priesthood is caring, loving, touching, interceding, forgiving, healing, teaching, changing, transforming, and doing all necessary to bring lost and dying, sick and sorrowing, tormented, hostile, perverted, and murderous men back to God. Priesthood is praise and worship and consecration and holiness unto the Lord. The priesthood of Aaron was set apart, sanctified unto the Lord, that they might serve in holy things. There was to be no life of luxurious idleness, of worldly ease and comfort. They were, it is true, to lack nothing, for we find that full provision was made for all their needs; but their life was to be a *life of service*, and that service in the very presence and glory of God! Oh, the wonder of it!

Priesthood is the spirit of the high priest. Jesus lives, and Jesus has loved us, and He is with us and in us, attentatively listening at every hour to our supplication, watching in each and every moment of the day and night for our need, His hand of blessing, guidance, and direction upon us without interruption. He bestows upon us the disposition of priesthood by His indwelling. His indwelling is but the first step, then follows the INWORKING by which we BECOME that which first has entered into us as an embryonic life. The spirit of priesthood is love. Love is the queen of all the graces of the Christ-life. Love is the passion of self-giving. It never stops to ask what it can afford, or what it may expect to receive in return; but it is ever shedding its heart's blood. The love of Christ, which went out so tenderly to those who walked and talked with Him when He was upon earth, is no

less far-reaching and eternal to man today. It is this fathomless love of Christ which conquers; and His all-conquering, boundless love, is the banner unfurled in the lives of His kingdom of priests. Oh, precious love divine, higher than the heavens, deeper than the abyss, broader than all the ages of time! Oh, mighty love that reached through countless ages and brought Christ down from the bosom of the Father to redeem creation; which brought Him to the tomb; which brought Him back to the right hand of God, as the high priest of the heavens who ever liveth to make intercession for us; which is now shed abroad in **our hearts** by the Holy Ghost! That is what makes us priests. THAT IS THE MEASURE! Our high priest *Himself* is the measure!

# *Chapter 125*

## *Measuring The Temple continued*

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God...but the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

In order to grasp the spiritual meaning of our text we must first understand the great truth that throughout the history of the world a holy city and temple have been in the making — not a city in the literal sense of the word, but a city of which the cities of earth are but a vague symbol or type, a spiritual city of God. In our earthly experience a city is composed of a great number of buildings of various kinds, in ancient times surrounded by a wall to keep out the enemy. It is simply a habitation for a large number of human beings who live, work, and play in correspondence with one another. So the city of God, which is in the process of completion throughout the history of the world, is the habitation and dwelling place of the Most High God! And instead of the dwelling places of wood and stone, in this city the people of God themselves constitute the habitations, for they are living habitations in whom God dwells, lives, walks, speaks, and works by His Spirit.

In the visions of John there are revealed three stages in the process of completion of this city of our God. At the conclusion of the Revelation, in the last chapters, we are shown the stage of perfection, when that city shall have been completed and perfected. We see the holy city of God pictured in highly symbolic language as coming down from God out of heaven. We shall discuss this in detail at a later time, Lord willing, but in passing we must note one peculiarity which is mentioned with special emphasis to the perfected and completed city — that in that city there is no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof (Rev. 21:22). Why is there no temple in this city? The answer is also very evident: in the state of perfection the city and the temple are one, all that was true in the temple is now fulfilled in the whole city! They are completely made one. That is the mystery!

As long as there is a temple in a city, it shows that God does not yet dwell in fullness in the entire city, but merely in that particular house which is called the temple. There He lives in isolation from the experience of the rest of the city. Ah, yes, He dwells in the city, but not in the entire city. He does not fill the city with the fullness of Himself. The city does not know the full majesty, nature, wisdom, purpose, power, and glory of the One who dwells in the Holiest of all! That shall no more be the case when the city has “made herself ready” in the state of perfection. When the holy city, which is the bride of the Lamb, shall have been purged, cleansed, purified, matured, perfected, and completed, there shall be no special dwelling place of God in the city, for the simple reason that He shall fill the whole city with the fullest glory of Himself, that is, in the mind, heart, and life of every citizen. You do not have to enter the city and ask, “Where is the house of God?” For the city itself is God’s habitation, and the temple and the city have become identical. It is indeed

wonderful! Every child of God is a citizen in this city of God. The entire church, including each and every one of the Lord's people held in the bondage of religious Babylon, is a citizen of the holy city. We must be very clear about that. But the city is not yet ready for the Lord of glory to manifest His full majesty in their midst! That state must be reached. And all history, and God's unfailing dealings, serve to bring the city of God to perfection. We all know that that city has not yet reached its state of perfection.

The earthly Jerusalem of old served as the type. For in Jerusalem there was a temple. God did not dwell in all the city. His manifest presence and flaming majesty did not fill the city, but He dwelt in a particular house. If you entered Jerusalem as a stranger, you would not immediately be aware of the presence and glory of Yahweh, so you might ask, "Where does Yahweh dwell in this city?" In response to this question you would be directed to the great temple complex on the height of mount Moriah. But once arriving at the temple you still would not encounter the glory of the God of the city! Let us imagine that we approach the temple at the time our Lord walked on earth. We must not imagine that Yahweh dwelt in all that was called the temple. Several times we read that Jesus "entered into the temple." Matthew records, for instance, that "Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves" (Mat. 21:12). Yes, Jesus went into the temple, but in the area He entered there was no fiery Shekinah to be seen! Entering the temple from the right, as worshippers were directed to do, we would find ourselves first of all in a wide, open space, a large square, seven hundred fifty feet each way — the court of the temple — and that is where Jesus entered! He certainly did not go into the holy place or the most holy place!

The temple was surrounded by three walls enclosing three open courts. These three together formed what was broadly termed "the court." The first or inner court was the court of the priests (II Chron. 4:9). Outside of this was the outer or court of Israel which was divided into two apartments, one of which was the court of the women. Outside of the court of Israel was a still larger court with marble pavement called the court of the Gentiles, because the Gentiles were permitted freely to enter into it. They could not approach the court of Israel, which was guarded by a low balustrade. Each of these courts contained various buildings, halls, and galleries. In the court of the priests toward the east stood the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and southwest of the altar stood the brazen laver, and to the west stood the sanctuary — holy place and most holy place.

But now all this outward form and show has vanished with the passing of the Old Covenant and is now fulfilled spiritually in the antitypical temple which is the body of Christ! The holy city, the temple, and the court still exist, but no longer as a city and temple built of wood, stone, and gold. There is no more such a temple! And God has ordained in the earth, throughout this age, one billion fanatical Moslems with their holy shrine, the Dome of the Rock, built squarely on the old temple mount in order to insure that never again will a temple of the old abolished covenant be constructed on that sight! It has forever passed away! Oh, the depths of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33). And by the time both Jew and Moslem have been brought to the living reality of God's Christ, through the ministry of the manifest sons of God, the Jews will have discovered the reality and will have no further inclination to rebuild a physical temple in Jerusalem.

There is no more a literal city recognized as the holy city of God. There is certainly nothing "holy" about the city of Jerusalem in the middle east! There is no more a golden altar built

with hands. The true “temple” is composed of God’s elect sons and daughters! And in the broader sense the “court” which belongs to the temple, but is not indwelt by the glory of God, is the visible community of people who call themselves born-again believers and who love Jesus and flock around the Word, which are also called the “church,” and because of their love for the Lord and the scriptures which they embrace in the limited measure they understand them, are indeed the people of God. Under the symbol of this court we therefore see before us the visible church of regenerated people which, not literally but figuratively, is called the court.

In its spiritual meaning the distinction between the holy city, the outer court, and the temple proper still exists and holds good. And it is on the basis of this great truth that we understand the words of our text. Jerusalem in its broadest sense is the representation of the entire professing church, all of Christianity, all who are baptized, who confess Jesus Christ as the Saviour, or their Leader; the entire Christian world, of all nominal Christians, inclusive of every Christian denomination, sect, and group from the Roman Catholic all the way to the weirdest of cults. Everything! That is the “holy city.”

But in this great city of what is called “the church” one must distinguish between three different classes. In the first place, in this nominally Christian world there are millions of people who name the name of the Lord, but do not truly know Him. They may have been baptized, have studied catechism, or been taught doctrines, they observe rituals, partake of sacraments, embrace the moral and ethical teachings of Jesus, and perform all kinds of good works to help and bless mankind in outward ways and on the natural plane. Most of these have never been born of the Spirit, or quickened to the living reality of the Christ within. Some have even cast away the redemptive work of Christ, embracing a purely social gospel, and some are even activists for all kinds of ungodly movements, including “gay rights” in the church! They know nothing of any spiritual truth or reality. This is Jerusalem sacrificing to Moloch, filled with abomination, the city of God serving the devil. Jerusalem of old did so, and it is the type! It is the city of desolation, captive in a strange land by the rivers of Babylon.

In the second place, there is also in the church that people which comprise the “outer court.” It represents a people who do know God, those who have drawn near to His presence in the place where the altar of sacrifice and the laver of cleansing stand. These dwell close to the temple although yet outside it; they are truly worshippers of God, redeemed people, alive unto Christ, and serving God to the best of their ability on the level they know and in the measure they have experienced Him. They are in the church, but they have never entered the sanctuary of intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ in His temple. These have received no revelation of going on to perfection, of being filled with all the fullness of God, of growing up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, unto a perfect man, conformed to His image — mature, manifest sons of God.

Oh, yes! In the temple there are the real, spiritual, transformed, mature people of God, the invisible church, unseen and unknown by all those standing in the outer court and treading the streets of the city! This is the living body of Christ, many sons brought to glory, a royal priesthood, the real temple and the true sanctuary which the Lord has built, and not man; where God dwells, and where the priests of the Lord minister at the altar of Christ in spirit and in truth. These are represented by the temple which John is commanded to measure. Three distinctions, therefore, there were in ancient Jerusalem: the city of Jerusalem proper, the outer court, and finally the temple. So there are also three distinctions in the spiritual Jerusalem of the New Testament day: the entire Christian world, the born-again

people of God, and the truly spiritual, transformed, people of the Lord who are going on to perfection and maturity as God's house of sons. It is to these three companies that our text refers plainly!

May I here point out that in all deeper truth there is a two-fold application — first, the personal, inward, and individual; second, the visible and corporate. John was told to measure the temple. He was instructed, however, not to measure the outer court. In other words, the messenger, or the message from the heavens of God's Spirit, was telling John, on the individual level, not to measure or even consider his outer man — it does not measure up, it is cut off, and old Adam's life is no longer our place of dwelling. Thus, in our personal experience we are told to check the condition of our inner man, to take inventory and assess his growth and development in life. But don't measure the outer court right now — God is not dealing with that at this time. Our spirit is quickened and our soul is being saved, but the outer man, the body realm, is under the dominion and treading down of the Gentiles, that is, sin and corruption are still in his members, the carnal, fleshly, human nature of old Adam. It is the inner man, not the outer court of the body realm, that God is growing up into the image and likeness of Christ. There is an hour for the redemption of our body, but all who are honest will have to admit that we have not seen any change there yet. As much as we desire our body to be changed our experience has often been no different than that of the great apostle Paul when he wrote, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I (my new man) that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (my flesh). For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members (body), warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. 7:18-23).

After being born again we have the idea that our flesh has been changed or transformed, but we soon find out that is not the case! When we discover the same old desires, propensities, inclinations, weaknesses, habits, lusts, sickness, mortality, and death our first thought is, "If I'm a new creature in Christ Jesus, why do I still feel these things, why do I still get angry, fly off the handle, and say things that are ungodly?" There are those times when the Gentiles, the heathen, the corrupt old natural man of the flesh, runs all over us! We're so shocked! We don't understand! Oh, my Lord, how can this be? The Lord says, "I'm not shocked. I know what is in man. Don't measure your experience in me by what you find in your flesh. Leave it out! Measure it not!" Oh, yes, God will reconcile and redeem even that realm, for growth and transformation are a process, but first He must release your spirit and save your soul in order to finally redeem that body! Give all diligence, my beloved, pay careful attention to the work of God in your spirit and in your soul — the redemption of the body will follow! That is the mystery.

Now let us consider this truth in its corporate application. John is told to measure the inner sanctuary of the "temple of God" where the golden altar stands and the true worshippers assemble. What he has in mind, of course, is the body of Christ, the temple of God which we are! The outer court is to be omitted. It is rejected, unmeasured. The people of Israel could come and assemble at the outer court, but only the priests of God, the sons of Aaron the high priest, were permitted within the inner sanctuary. Therefore it becomes clear that "the court that is without" includes all three areas of the court, for all of these courts are "without" the naos, or the temple sanctuary. Just as the court had three parts, the court of the priests, the court of Israel, and the court of the Gentiles, so the temple or naos had two parts, the holy place and the most holy place. Everything outside the temple building is

broadly called “the court which is without.” Thus the outer portion of the sanctuary, spiritually meaning the fringe of the church, the vast multitudes of those who profess to be the Lord’s people, is not included in this measure. Their hour has not come.

“Measure not...” Don’t measure what is natural, don’t measure what is carnal, don’t measure what is earthly. Don’t measure that which is exposed to the elements of the world! Don’t measure that which is not completely covered by the Christ! That realm has been cut off from you, its not part of your world any more. Cut it off from your concern, because God is in control and it is given to the Gentiles. It’s given to people who really don’t believe in the Spirit-filled, Spirit-led life, they really don’t seek the fullness of Christ, nor do they pursue the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. They take the holy city, the glory of God, the bride in her most intimate relationship with the Bridegroom, all that is high, pure, and holy, the pure gold of the street, the pure river of the water of life, the glory of sonship in the dominion of the throne, and the incorruptible word of God (tree of life) leading to perfection, full redemption, and immortality — they take all this, I say, and trample it under foot for forty-two months. All the high and holy things of God they keep treading under foot; that means they keep beating a path to the outer court; they are content to be saved by grace, forgiven but not perfected; children of God, but not mature sons; reconciled and justified but not transformed; possessing gifts to play with but no authority to rule and reign with Christ!

Those who constantly tread down the outer court take the high and holy truths of God and apply them on the low level of church doctrine, ritual, works, religious practices, golden streets in some far-off heaven somewhere where they will live in literal mansions and drink from a literal river of life, and a thousand other such childish notions. They sacrifice over, and over, and over, never secure in the finished work of Christ. They go from revival to revival, dedicate and rededicate, never experiencing union with God. They wash, and wash, and wash again at the laver, because their hearts are still uncircumcised and they can only purify the works of the outer man for a little season. “Measure not the outer court” because it can never measure up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!

God doesn’t expect much from babes, so He doesn’t demand that they measure up to the full stature of sonship! Neither should God’s elect require of babes in Christ that of which they know nothing and are incapable of even understanding. Release them to God! Don’t expect them to measure up! Measure them not! They will continue to tread through the city and do their service in the outer court for forty-two months — three and a half years — the time of the revelation of God in flesh upon this earth. Three and a half years encompasses the entire period from Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, His announcement by the Father as the Son of God, His full sonship anointing without measure, His wonderful ministry of the kingdom of God with power, signs, wonders, and miracles, His transfiguration, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to the throne of the majesty on High, and His high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Three and a half years is the full journey from being a child of God all the way to enthronement as a king-priest in the kingdom of God! Just as the religious leaders and people of Israel continued to tread the courts of their Old Testament law and order all the time Jesus was walking out His sonship, so the nominal Christians of our day continue to tread down the outer court of the old-order church systems of man all the time the sons of God are following on to know the Father in all His glorious and eternal reality! The symbolic “gentiles” will tread down the holy city and occupy the outer court until they are able to see the glory of the manifest sons of God stepping forth from beyond the veil of the Holiest of all! Only then will they see and understand that there is something more in God than the outer court!

The outer court was exposed to the elements and at night time was shrouded in darkness. There was always light in the holy place, the light of the candlestick, Christ in you the hope of glory. There was always light in the most holy place, the blazing Shekinah of the fullness of God's presence, glory, and power. But the outer court (as well as the city) knew both seasons of light and darkness. Tony Salmon once shared his own experience in this regard, saying, "Before my initial salvation experience I was in outer darkness. I was lost. I was weeping and gnashing my teeth. My Saviour found me in this miserable condition and brought me into His temple. I came seeking His light. In the outer court I identified with His sacrifice at the brazen altar and I was immersed into Him at the laver. It was a glorious experience! After a while, darkness began to engulf me again. The outer court could no longer satisfy me. When it was time to go to the next level, Father simply turned off the light of the outer court! The glory of the outer court had now become outer darkness and I was once again weeping and gnashing my teeth — desperately seeking a greater light."

In the times of the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon, each day the sun set and the outer court became a realm of darkness. The sun is now setting on this tired old age in which we have lived so long and during which the Church of Christ has dwelt for the most part in the outer court realm of spiritual experience. To each and every son of God who treasures the beautiful hope of the revelation of God's fullness in this hour, the Lord says, "I have so drawn you unto myself, so raised you up into union in my life, that there need be no measuring of the outer court realm anymore. The external realm of natural understanding, of the letter of the word, of types and shadows, of outward rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, rules, regulations, and laws — none of these can measure up to the experience of spiritual reality!" The true bread (show-bread) of the living word of God is not found in the outer court! The oil of the candlestick, the inner anointing of the Holy Spirit, is not known there! The spirit of prayer, praise, and worship at the golden altar is not experienced there! The inworking of the hidden manna of God's incorruptible life, the blazing glory of His presence over the mercy seat, the tables of the law written in the heart, and Aaron's rod that budded, signifying the divine calling of high-priesthood, are not appropriated there! Measure not the outer court!

What is happening here is that God is cutting off that outer court realm — the Greek text actually reads, "cast off" or "cast away" the court which is without. That realm is no longer credible in the life of a son of God! It doesn't pertain to us, it no longer belongs to us, it has no validity in our walk in God. That doesn't mean that we repudiate the experience of that realm, God forbid! But that is not the place of our dwelling. There is no more need for any realm of religious exercise where the glorious light, life, voice, presence, and power of God do not dwell. Measure only the naos, the inner sanctuary, where the glory and reality dwell! Everything in our experience must measure up to the reality of the most holy place! Nothing else will avail. All is emptiness, void, lifelessness, and death. The external religious realms hold nothing for us anymore!

The expression, "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not," is too mild a translation of the Greek. The Greek word is a very strong one. It does not at all signify mere omission. It means to "cast out," as though to violently throw, toss, pitch, fling, expel, hurl, or banish it from the precincts of the temple. What a word that is! A part of the temple is cast out! The court which is outside the inner temple is to be cast without. This is relative to the experience of God's TEMPLE PEOPLE! John is distinctly forbidden to measure the court or even to acknowledge it. God will take care of it! It is to be trodden in the winepress of His judgment, left to wallow in its own quagmire of carnality,

shallowness, childishness, and error. The Gentiles, or those believers who walk after the flesh, shall be allowed to trample it under foot for a determined time. Then God will take charge in His own moment.

Once we thoroughly understand by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God that the outer court realm is indeed cut off and cast away from us, our entire perception of it is altered. The environment in that entire ghost town of the outer court becomes so ineffective and unavailing, so empty and hollow, so worthless, irrelative, and inconsequential, so lacking and desolate, and so repugnant and horrible to us that we can no longer countenance it. All who have been called of the Father to sonship understand precisely what I am saying! It is no longer for us, for the Lord now commands us to “cast out the outer court and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles.” That doesn’t mean that it is given to the unbelievers of the world, or to some imagined armies of the antichrist — it signifies that the realm of religious externals is given to those people who abide in the outer fringes of spiritual life and know God only in the types and shadows of outward observances. These are the people who “tread under foot” the holy city, that is, they keep the things of God and the people of God under the feet of, or subservient to, the carnal mind, natural understanding, fleshly religious ways, bringing them into bondage on the lowest level of spiritual experience. They know nothing of the glory, life, wisdom, and power of the indwelling Lord! To these knowing about God is more important than truly knowing Him! Therefore this outer court realm becomes extremely uncomfortable to the man or woman in whose walk it has become cut off.

Ray Prinzing commented on this passage, “Religion concerns itself with the measuring of the outward, the physical, the self-worth, the fame and success, etc. And they set standards for dress, and code of action, ignoring the fact that the outward is but a portrayal ground for the inward — and sooner or later all masquerades are stripped away, and we will be seen for what we are. In the measuring of the temple, altar, worshipper, the instruction was to place the emphasis upon the spiritual, not the natural — it is the spiritual realm which is being dealt with. Another application can be drawn — for the intense dealings of God are first upon the remnant firstfruits of the new creation order — the OVERCOMER, which He is leading onward. These are being dealt with in ways and depths that the multitudes know nothing of. But the people of the ‘court’ will carry on with their ministries and programs, often blessed by God for the realm in which they move, though they are totally ignorant of the ‘wheel within a wheel,’ of the separated walk of those who go on to worship in spirit and in truth.”

For years the simple vision of John in chapter eleven of the Revelation intrigued my mind with its mystery. Through those years my understanding remained unfruitful until the glad day the light of the Spirit chased away the dark clouds that obscured the beautiful truth and great reality contained there. Not least among the meaningful symbols John heard and beheld in spirit that day is this word of the angel which showed him these things, whereby John was instructed to measure the temple, but to cast out the outer court and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread under foot forty-two months.

I have previously pointed out that when we speak of “Gentiles” we must not think with carnal, natural minds, but understand the symbol by the spirit. In its spiritual meaning Gentiles are not races of people after the flesh. Oh, no! Gentiles stand for the carnal mind, soulish nature, and fleshly ways of all men, both saint and sinner. It is that which is outside of the holy seed of the Christ within! The unvarnished truth is that the entire

religious world of man is outside of the holy seed of the Christ! Though the sacramental realm of ceremonies, ordinances, traditions, doctrines, programs, laws, and all external religious observances was once a glorious realm to us, it is no longer our place of habitation. The sun has set on that day and all that remains for those who walk there is the cold reflective light which rules the night where men walk in spiritual darkness. What was once a glorious realm has now become outer darkness!

When Israel entered into the land of their inheritance and David raised up the tabernacle on mount Zion, the outer realm of the outer court was cut off, and the worshippers worshipped only at the Holiest of all. What a day that was! And how unspeakably glorious! The truth is, coming into the fullness of our inheritance in Christ requires that the former orders of the outer court be cut off from us! Every son of God must cease to measure those who live and minister only in the outer court! They are not meant to enter beyond the veil at this time, but we must enter as Father draws us to the Holiest of all! Oh! How my heart yearns for this! Behind the veil is where every son of God belongs! The "Gentiles" tread under foot — trample with unsanctified feet — the holy things of the outer court as by carnal means and methods they function in and by a fleshly mixture of soul and spirit, of soulish promotions and Holy Spirit anointing. The spirit of the world's ways invades this carnal church and takes possession of it. Worldly church-members welcome the ideas of the world; feel themselves perfectly at home with the world. It is a real exercise of the faith, revelation, and obedience of God's chosen ones in this new day of the Lord, when God gives us the measuring reed, and enables us rightly to perceive the true character and nature of that which is of Himself. As this work has been raised up in the elect of the Lord there is a company of sons and daughters of God in this hour who are spiritually intelligent in the mind of Christ — the "wise" of Daniel 12:3 — who have been enabled by the Spirit of God to appreciate what is true and holy, and we can no longer be a part of that which is profane. There are myriad things in the religious systems of man that will not bear measurement by a divine standard!

Now consider, the Gentiles, or the believers who only know God in the externals, shall tread the holy city under foot for forty-two months. I would speak a little further about this "treading under foot." We may conceive treading under foot as indicating moving in and destroying everything, or being occupied and ruled as by a foreign army. The Greek word is *pateo* meaning a "path" or "to trample." It carries the significance of beating a path, of a multitude of people standing or walking over the same territory again and again until the grass dies and the dirt is packed down. The "Gentiles" are beating a path through the city to the outer court because they have not tasted of life and reality in the spirit. So they keep coming to the brazen altar in the outer court offering their sacrifice upon the altar. Then they go to the brazen laver where they wash their hands and their feet because they constantly feel guilty, condemnation laid upon them by the false doctrines preached to them by the ministers of religion who only know an outer court experience. They stop in the outer court, linger there, milling around, repeating over and over the outward ministrations of that realm imposed by the church systems.

Can we not understand that under the old covenant of law, because of the terrible guilt and weight of sin, men were constantly wearing a path to this place! Through the gates of Jerusalem, down the streets and avenues of the holy city they came day after day driving before them their lambs and their bulls to make sacrifice for sin and uncleanness. The multitude of Israel was continually treading under foot both the city and the court in their outward efforts to deal with sin and come under the mercy of Yahweh. They had to keep going back, going back, and going back just as the immature baby Christians in the church

systems today are fed a constant diet of condemnation and sin-consciousness. Meeting after meeting, revival after revival, altar call after altar call, the people are reminded of their sinfulness, perhaps in thought or word or deed they have offended and are not “ready” should Jesus split the eastern sky before morning light. They might be left behind!

Again and again the people beat a path to the altar to beg God’s forgiveness, to do penance, to pray the rosary, take communion, request prayer, get hands laid on them, to get everything right between them and God, to “rededicate” and “reconsecrate” their lives to the Lord. Not having grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ within, they tread down the holy city so that it never consistently radiates the triumph, victory, glory, and liberty of Christ. Were we not all there at one time, whatever our religious background, treading down, “God forgive me,” ever making another sacrifice, another committal, I must do this, I have to do that, I must not do the other, to be pleasing to God, to escape judgment and hell, going through the motions of our own self-efforts at serving the Lord, to make sure we were in good standing in the church and the grace of God.

“...the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:2).

We have already pointed out one aspect of the meaning of the forty-two months. Let us look at this a little further. This number appears repeatedly in the book of Revelation; at one time it appears as “three and a half years,” and at another time as “1260 days,” and again as “a time, two times, and half a time.” It is always the same length of time stated in different terms and figures. Here the time is given as “forty-two months.” The significance lies in it always being three and a half, that is, half of seven. Seven is the complete, perfect number denoting fullness! Three and a half, then, shows a broken, limited period or work, that which always falls short of perfection and fullness, an imperfect word or move of God on a level short of fullness, that which can never prevail, can never endure forever, but must be thwarted and cut off. All the numbers in the Revelation are symbolic. They cannot be fitted into the framework of world history, though there are a few startling coincidences which embolden the uninspired and create an enthusiasm for a historical interpretation based on outward world events. The spiritual interpretation of this great book must be maintained at all costs, for the writings of those who apply its prophecies to outer world events either past, present, or future, are strewn with the carcasses of confident predictions which now are fit only for the ash-heap of history.

If not a measurable period of chronological time, what then does the figure of forty-two months signify? We have already said that in actual time it is one-half of seven years. Thus we are dealing with an indefinite period of time, in each case known only to God and not intended to be measured by man. If it were an actual world-time that could be measured in advance what consolation would it be for those who were able to calculate that no deliverance was to be expected in their day or perhaps for centuries to come? And of what value would it be to us if we were able to calculate that this period was already fulfilled historically hundreds or thousands of years ago in some local incident in the middle east or elsewhere? Such schemes strike at the very heart of the fact that the Revelation is a spiritual revelation given for and sent to a spiritual people symbolically represented as the seven churches of Asia. In place of these carnal-minded literalistic interpretations it is my deep conviction that these strange time figures in the Revelation in each case indicate **THE BROKEN SEVEN**. Seven being the number of divine completeness and fullness it is significant to note that all the “halves” of seven are associated with dark and sinister works and operations — things that boast their power and continuity but which are in fact limited,

failing, and passing away — the enemy will not endure one day beyond the will and purpose of our Father!

The message is just this — anything in the book of Revelation that lasts for forty-two months, 1260 days, three and a half years, or for “a time, two times, and half a time” is DOOMED FOR FAILURE! It will not endure, it is limited as to both time and influence, it will be overcome, it will be cast off, it shall come to naught, and will forever pass away. Aren't you glad! The Lord's people and the holy things of God will not be trodden down by the flesh and the world forever, for Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish! (Eph. 5:25-27). Well did the apostle Paul know in writing these prophetic words that the Christ cannot fail! He will purify not only the “sons of Levi,” His Royal Priesthood, but He will cleanse and purify all His church, including the church in the outer court and the church in the holy city! He will lead every redeemed child of God out of the shackles of Babylonian slavery and bring them marching up to the glorious golden city of God! Oh, yes! The holy city shall be trodden down of the symbolic “Gentiles” for only forty-two months — her captivity will end, we will be glad and rejoice because the marriage of the Lamb is come, His wife has at last “made herself ready,” and glorious will be her final state! Oh, the wonder of it!

The people of the Lord have long been held captive by the spirit of the world. Thank God, there has been a little light in Babylon, and there has ever been the voice of the bride and the Bridegroom (Rev. 18:23), for the people chained in that horrible darkness have been the Lord's people. The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular churches to declare enough of the gospel to lead many to the Saviour. A few of these receive and teach a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit. These have in measure tasted of His reality and received of His gifts. But from here on, practically everything that is taught is nothing but defilement and shame: naught but the precepts of the elders, and the lies and deceptions of the antichrist. Organized religion today, while totally ignorant of the fact of there being an antichrist in our midst, is busy teaching his doctrines, observing his forms and ceremonies, and glorying in his shame. To His people who sit shackled in these chains of Babylonian bondage the word of the Lord commands: “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins...for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities” (Rev. 18:4-5). Thank God, the chains of the Babylon system are doomed to destruction. “Forty-two months” are decreed upon her! This mysterious system is to be finally and irrevocably destroyed. Wherefore, the Lord saith, “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and unclean. Shake thyself from the dust (flesh); arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: LOOSE THYSELF FROM THE BANDS OF THY NECK, O CAPTIVE DAUGHTER OF ZION. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money” (Isa. 52:1-3).

When the above is fulfilled, then shall the True Man — the Lord from heaven, the Corporate Man composed of “many sons brought to glory” — take His seat upon the throne in the city, and in companionship with His bride, the New Eve, the cleansed and perfected church — rule over a restored creation. This church is quickened out of the grave of Christ, taken from His riven side, being thus “of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” He is the Head and she the body, making ONE NEW MAN, as we read in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, “Till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the

knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

The sons of God are the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16; Rev. 11:1-2,19). We will see this great truth more clearly set forth in the book of Revelation as we continue on in our studies. The bride of Christ is the city of God (Rev. 21:9-11). That city is the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Every stone of that city is a living stone, a glorified CHRIST-BEING. Every stone is a living, ransomed soul just as every member of the body of Christ, which is the temple of God, is a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. We cannot fully explain or understand a mystery so awesome as this, but the eye that sees by the spirit sees the temple as a living thing, composed of living saints. In that temple redeemed men, the sons of God, are the pillars and foundations (Rev. 3:12; Eph. 2:20-21), and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, growth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom we also are builded together to become the habitation of God through the spirit.

In holy vision the apostle John was transported in spirit to a great and high mountain, the majestic heights of the kingdom of God, from which he was permitted to see the perfected bride of Christ in all her beauty and glory. From this lofty vantage point the eyes of John were ravished with the electrifying sight of the unequaled majesty and infinite splendor of the bride adorned for her Husband. Not a city of stone as was the old Jerusalem, but a New Jerusalem, a living city, a bride beyond compare, a completely redeemed wife, pure and holy, composed of incorruptible saints brought forth out of the living substance of Christ. This is the “holy city” after the “forty-two months” of treading down! Thank God, forty-two months has a limit! The forty-two months have an end! This is the “holy city” that is trodden down, but not forever! ALL of God’s precious people shall be delivered from Babylonian captivity, ALL of the Lord’s redeemed ones shall come and return to Zion with singing and with everlasting joy and gladness in their hearts! Despise not those dear saints in the outer court and in the city who are now trodden down — they are yet to be “made ready” as a bride adorned for her husband! The sons of God, the firstfruits of redemption, are being perfected under the work of the seven trumpets. The rest of the church, those trodden-down ones, will be cleansed, delivered, and perfected by the work of the seven vials. That is the mystery.

Words utterly fail me to describe the wonder of such a deliverance and transformation, for ours are but the words of men, but that holy and beautiful city belongs to THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. Now at last the perfection, the image of God, sons and daughters, male and female, temple and city, of which Adam and Eve were but a frail shadowy type, has come; the many-membered Bridegroom, the last Adam, with the many-membered bride, the holy city, Adam and Eve, the first and the last, in the image and likeness of God JOINTLY RULING OVER ALL THINGS! The nations shall walk in the light of this city and the rulers and leaders of the earth shall bring into it their glory. The tree of life is in the midst of it and the water of life flows from the throne of God in the midst of it. This is GOD, male and female, united with the image of God in man, male and female, ruling over all the endless vastnesses of infinity unto ages of ages! May the Holy Ghost unfold these things more fully and powerfully to our hearts, that we may have a deeper sense of the conduct and character which are worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called. Amen!

# *Chapter 126*

## *The Two Witnesses*

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth” (Rev. 11:3).

The passage now under consideration introduces the famous two witnesses. Immediately we must battle against the false images of the carnal mind. This is no more and no less than a spiritual dynamic released in a dramatic fashion as a poetic drama. There has been much speculation about the identity of these witnesses. Some try to make them literal, two individual men, even going so far as to name them, declaring they will be Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah, or some other combination. But the whole language is figurative! There is no literal temple of God in the earthly Jerusalem, nor are there two individual men speaking as God’s witnesses there, either! Subsequent verses tell us who they are, what they must do, who rises against them, and what the end of their ministry is.

Before discussing who the two witnesses are, I would draw your reverent attention to whose the two witnesses are! The symbolic angel who commanded John to measure the temple now declares, “And I will give power to MY two witnesses, and they shall prophesy...” There is no doubt in my mind that the voice here is the voice of none other than our Lord Jesus Christ! We have shown in a previous study that the “angel” here is a figure for our Lord. The fact that the voice speaks not merely of two witnesses, but specifically of “my two witnesses” unto whom “I will give power” reveals clearly that the Christ is speaking! We find a very similar expression from Jesus when He tells His disciples, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

It would be profitable here to mention again the great truths found in the opening verses of chapter eleven of the Revelation. The city of Jerusalem stands for Christendom in the broadest sense of the word, inclusive of every person, church, denomination, organization, and movement which calls itself “Christian.” Lying outside of both the “court” and the “temple” the “city” symbolizes the false church, that part of what is called the church, but which at the same time does not truly know the Lord by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. The outer court, on the other hand, represents a segment of the church composed of those who are born again of the Spirit and enjoy a true relationship with the Lord, yet at a great distance from His full truth, wisdom, presence, power, and glory. The temple proper signifies the true body of Christ, the called and chosen elect of the Lord, who are following on to know the Lord in all His glorious and eternal reality! These stand in the most holy place and have entered into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ! These are God’s temple people. It is in this setting that the two witnesses appear and a testimony arises from the midst of God’s elect!

God says that nothing can be established without the two. Two in scripture is the number of witness. It is laid down in the Old Testament that everything must be established by two

or three witnesses. “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin...at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established” (Deut. 19:15). When the Pharisees sought to discredit the testimony of Jesus by charging that His was but one testimony, therefore He was merely bearing witness of Himself, and His single witness was invalid, He countered with the observation that He was, in fact, two witnesses because of the oneness between Him and His Father — as evidenced in the works that He did. Jesus said to them, “It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me” (Jn. 8:17-18). So there is a concept here. These two witnesses are God’s WITNESS PEOPLE! The witness they bear is by the Spirit and the Word! Let it be known that not only does man have impact upon God, but man will have impact upon man. Truly the Lord is telling us, “The sign of a witness shall be established and my witness shall be established and shall testify of me. And they shall stand and withstand and I do give them power.” God has never left Himself without witnesses among mankind. Among other things, God is actively in the witnessing business! Just think for a moment — what could God do that would be more important than to be in the witnessing business? He is in dead earnest about it; He means business; and He spares no time, energy, or effort to bring forth His witness in the earth! Here in the book of Revelation God has two particular witnesses. These two witnesses are powerful, they are great, they are important, and they are wonderful!

In order to better understand this prophetic witness-ministry let us go back to Revelation 10:11 for a moment. “And he said unto me, thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” “And he said unto me...” Who is this “me”? There is no doubt about the fact that it is John. The question follows — who does John represent? All through the book of Revelation John is the one experiencing all the events that transpired! Can we doubt that John represents the true elect of God who must also experience within themselves every dealing of the Father revealed in the visions given to him? John stands for you, my precious brother, my dear sister, as the Christ upon the earth today! “And he said unto me, thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” The word “prophesy” literally means to speak under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. This is someone speaking the living word of the Lord! Immediately we step into chapter eleven where the two witnesses are said to “prophesy” and their testimony likewise goes out to “the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations” (Rev. 11:9). Can you not see the mystery? Both the two witnesses and John represent the very same thing — they portray to us a realm of PROPHETIC MINISTRY!

Have you ever been called to testify as a witness to an accident? A witness is simply one who reports what he has seen, heard, and experienced. He shares personal knowledge and firsthand experience. The testimony of an eyewitness can be weighty and convincing. Many a juror has been swayed by the testimony of a credible witness. The early believers were “eyewitnesses” of the majesty and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! With great power they bore witness to what they had seen, heard, and experienced! And their witness shook kingdoms and turned the world up-side down! For some people, witnessing means marketing God — as if God were the latest digital camera or house ware item you shouldn’t be without. They view witnessing in a way like doing door-to-door sales, and some methods of witnessing even involve going door-to-door trying to convince strangers that they need God. But such witnesses have no power! They are not a prophetic voice! They are the messengers of religion! But the apostle John prophesies of that which he has seen in the Spirit and of what he knows by the Spirit! A prophet, we are told, was originally known as a seer. The prophets in the Old Testament days were all of a long line

of men of God who were called “seers” (1 Sam. 9:9). “Seers” — men who see into the realm of spirit — became known as “prophets,” men who speak and articulate the message from God according as they have seen it in the Spirit and by the Spirit!

Our text assumes our familiarity with the fourth chapter of Zechariah. Many people say they cannot make sense out of any of these prophecies. I do not wonder! Zechariah himself, asked by the angel, “Don’t you know what these things are?” replied, “No, my lord, I do not!” Neither Zechariah nor John is describing literal historical events but truth depicted by symbols. In the Revelation the two witnesses have a strange and tragic career. They are called “my two witnesses” and, to add to the difficulty of interpretation, they are said to be “the two olive trees and the two lamp stands which stand before the Lord of the earth” (Rev. 11:4). Two mysterious figures, spoken of as “witnesses,” to make confusion more confounding are explained as “olive trees” and “lamp stands”! But John, who knew the Hebrew scriptures well, and who thought in terms of them, is being used by the Spirit to bring the ancient prophecy of Zechariah up-to-date. John understood, and he expected those to whom he wrote, who knew both the letter and the spirit of the word, to understand the reference to two olive trees and two lamp stands.

Zechariah was a young man, a young man with a vision. In fact, he had ten visions! God called and chose him, and raised him up in a day of discouragement and defeat. A small remnant of Israel had returned to the desolated land following the Babylonian captivity, less than 50,000 returned. Jerusalem lay in rubble and ruin. The enemies in the land were pressing in upon them. And they were disillusioned by failure. To get a picture of that day, we can go back to Nehemiah who was a contemporary of Zechariah. Nehemiah gives us a bird’s-eye view. When he came to Jerusalem he made a survey of the city. He saw the tremendous work required to clear the debris of the city and rebuild it. The almost insurmountable difficulties that these people had to overcome were incredible. But Nehemiah gave the people his report and encouraged the people to believe God and go to work.

So God raised up, among others, this young man Zechariah. He, too, encouraged the people to rebuild. He gave them a vision, showed them there was divine purpose behind all this, and that what they were doing was fitting in with God’s overall purpose for His people. It was at this time that Zechariah received the vision we referred to earlier. Zechariah records it in these words: “And the angel which talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked and, behold a lamp stand all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps on it, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof” (Zech. 4:1-3).

The vision is very simple, as you can see. It is identified with the lamp stand in the holy place of the tabernacle. In this vision the prophetic ministry is represented as a golden lamp stand (called a candlestick in the King James Bible) having seven branches, each bearing a light for God’s priesthood. Those seven branches receive their oil from a single bowl, and the oil for this bowl is supplied by two olive trees, one on either side. The purity of the oil they burn is represented by the fact that it flows into the bowl directly out of the living, growing trees! Here we are in the region of the Spirit — there is no intermediate process of gathering the olives and pressing out the oil. This reveals the great truth that the fuel of prophetic ministry flows direct from the tree to the flame. The witness is fed by perpetual streams of that heavenly oil, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which is

represented by the olive tree. The word is thus a living word, the living word of God! This oil is the oil of God's anointing and the light it produces is the illumination of the present-truth word of the Lord! The unity of the seven lamp stands is typified by the common bowl from which each gains its supply of oil. How beautiful a picture of the work of God's present truth shining forth through the power of the indwelling spirit of life and light!

To these things the word of the Lord bears faithful witness. Two is the number of witness. Thus, the two lamp stands and the two olive trees simply reveal the great truth that these are the representations of God's witness of Himself in the midst of all who are called His people. It is not because two individuals are meant! The lamp stand in the tabernacle and temple was symbolic of the priesthood of God shining, with their knowledge of God and their testimony. Light, in its spiritual meaning, signifies understanding, truth, and reality. Light is illumination, the revelation of the living word of God! "Through Thy precepts I get understanding...Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:104-105). "It is the spirit that quickeneth...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 6:63). Of this great truth the apostle Paul testified, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4). The light of the two lamp stands is thus the revelation of the living word, the present truth of God!

When Zechariah saw in vision the two olive trees he had no inhibitions about asking questions. There was no reluctance on his part, if he didn't understand something, to say so. "So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord" (Zech. 4:4). Now exactly what is he asking? He says, "What are these?" Yet he was familiar with the lamp stand and the olive tree! He knew what they were and he understood the meaning of them. His question is, "What does this vision mean for me and God's people right now — this lamp stand flanked by the two olive trees — what is the purpose behind it?" Now the angel draws him out. "Then the angel who talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No my lord" (Zech. 4:5). In other words, the angel said, "You mean to tell me you don't know what this means?" This man Zechariah is as honest as the day is long, and he says, "Well, I don't know, and I'd like for you to tell me." And I am of the opinion that a great many of us, if we didn't have an explanation, would still be in the dark as Zechariah was until the explanation was given to him. Here is the explanation, the divine meaning of the lamp stands and the olive trees! "Then he answered and spoke unto me, saying, this is the WORD of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my SPIRIT, saith the Lord of hosts!" (Zech. 4:6).

Notice that this is God's message to Zerubbabel through Zechariah. Now who is Zerubbabel? He was the head of the tribe of Judah at the time of their return to Jerusalem after the seventy-year Babylonian captivity. He is the one who led the first group of his people back to their homeland, as described in the book of Ezra. Zerubbabel's great work was that of rebuilding the temple, but the work was dogged by danger from the outside and discouragement from within. God is giving this vision of present-truth to strengthen the faith of Zerubbabel and there are two elements in the meaning of the vision, and may our Father make this powerfully real in the hearts of all who read these lines: This is the WORD of the Lord, saying, the temple will not be built by might nor by power (an army), but by my SPIRIT, saith the Lord! That is what the two items in the vision are! They are the WORD of the Lord saying that the temple of God can be built only by the SPIRIT of God! Can we not see by this that the lamp stands signify the Word of the Lord and the

olive trees signify the Spirit of the Lord! The two witnesses are the SPIRIT and the WORD! That is the mystery.

In the vision of Zechariah the two olive trees are called the “two anointed ones” standing before the Lord of the whole earth. In the vision of John both the two lamp stands and the two olive trees are said to “stand before the Lord of the earth.” The meaning is, that they stood, as it were, in the very presence of God — as in the tabernacle and temple, the golden candlestick stood “before” the ark upon which radiated the glorious presence and power of Yahweh. The truth that the Holy Spirit is making known to the Lord’s elect is that the ministry of the two witnesses is in the holy place, standing before the most holy place, preparing the way for entrance beyond the veil! The oil that was in the Old Testament used for anointing represents the Holy Spirit. The oil of the olive trees represents the anointing! The lamp stands represent the anointed Word! “And I will give power (unction) unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy!” “This is the Word of the Lord, saying...it is by my Spirit!” This is beautiful indeed!

But the olive trees and the lamp stands are not the Spirit and the Word apart from a people — it is indeed a people, a two witness company, an anointed body of people bearing the present truth of God, just as all the prophets of old were anointed by the Spirit to speak the present truth of the Lord. The two witness company is called prophets and they are commissioned to prophesy. This further identifies them as an ANOINTED PROPHETIC MINISTRY! This does not mean merely that they must speak concerning the future. I have met men who believed they personally were God’s “anointed end-time prophet” and they were always prophesying judgments upon cities and nations — famines, pestilence, storms, earthquakes, revolution, terrorism, rise and fall of governments, etc. They thought that made them “end-time prophets.” Alas, many of their prophecies failed to come to pass and some were proven wrong almost before the ink was dry on the paper! A prophet is simply a person who speaks for someone else. Just as Aaron is called Moses’ prophet in scripture, so the prophets in general are persons who speak for someone else. These two witnesses are uniquely the LORD’S PROPHETS, they speak for Christ the Head and they are a people who speak His living word! “I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy!” Like the two olive trees, they stand feeding the lamp of truth. Like Elijah, the type of all true witnesses in times of spiritual decline, they have power to shut the heavens. Like Moses, they have power to turn water into blood and to smite the earth with plagues. Their words, like Jeremiah’s, are consuming fire burning up the dross and revealing the gold. These are just vivid ways of saying that this is a prophetic ministry in the power of the Spirit and the Word!

The vision of sonship is not fulfilled through self-promotion or self-effort. In my more than sixty years of ministry, I have met many who claim to be mentioned in the Bible! There have been those who have claimed to be Moses, one of the prophets, John the Revelator, Elijah, or even Zerubbabel or the two witnesses! Two or three times I even had people tell me that they were the Lord Jesus Christ! It is heady wine, indeed, for those claiming religious credentials to “discover themselves” in the Bible! When a religious leader claims before his followers that he is mentioned, personally — mentioned in the same way great prophets and patriarchs are mentioned — then he can lay claim to divine credentials, and this aura of mystical spiritual credentials gives him unique control over his followers. Many years ago the Chicago preacher, healer, and founder of Zion, Illinois, John Alexander Dowie, because of the phenomenal ministry and great miracles the Lord poured through him, came to believe that he personally was Elijah the prophet who was to come and restore all things, preparing the way for the second coming of Christ. With his beard,

ceremonial robes, powerful preaching, and world-wide following, he could well fit the part in the eyes of undiscerning men. But he suffered a serious stroke, his kingdom fell into discord, Zion city revolted against him, his cousin-wife divorced him and accused him of polygamy, and he died a painful death. Many thousands of people believed that the prophet and healer, William Branham, was Elijah, the seventh angel of the book of Revelation with the final message for the church, to prepare the bride of Christ for the rapture, and that he was the forerunner of Christ's return. But he was killed in a tragic car accident more than forty years ago now!

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. They shook the dust off their feet against the city of Las Cruces when they packed up their tent and left town. I met another of the two witnesses in St. Petersburg, Florida, in the spring of 1974. That set of witnesses later split up, the elder witness excommunicated the younger witness from his church, and the dismissed witness came to Texas and founded his own organization, which I have heard later dismissed him from the movement on the grounds of sexual immorality. Incidentally, neither of these two witnesses were clothed with sackcloth, they both wore the finest clothes, ate the finest food, and flew around the country in their own jet airplanes!

## PROPHETIC MINISTRY — THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

Clearly, the two witnesses are not a man and his wife, nor two contemporary preachers, nor yet two Old Testament prophets returned to earth in physical bodies! It is my deep conviction that the answer regarding just who these two witnesses are lies in the words of the angel to Zechariah when Zechariah posed the question, "What are these, my lord?" He then says, "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the WORD of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my SPIRIT, saith the Lord of hosts." Can we not see the secret truth revealed in these words? The lamp stand and the two olive trees were THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORD that was sent to empower Zerubbabel to raise up the temple of God! The Word empowered by the Holy Spirit is God's prophetic witness which flows out for all the ages!

The greatest and most powerful thing on earth is witness — the witness of the Spirit and the Word which God has raised up in the earth to testify of Himself and to accomplish His plan and purpose! In I John 5:8 we read, "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood." The Spirit then is one of the witnesses, even as the writer to the Hebrews states, "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us" (Heb. 10:15), and "The Spirit itself beareth witness," (Rom. 8:6), and "It is the Spirit that beareth witness" (I Jn. 5:6). In the apostle John's first epistle we find that Jesus Christ came by "water and blood" (I Jn. 5:6). So the water and blood both witness through Him who is the living Word, the divine Logos. Therefore the two witnesses become the Spirit and the Word! "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Mat. 24:14). Of course men are the human agents through whom this witness becomes effectual, "YE shall be my witnesses," and in this connection we remember how our Lord sent His disciples two by two (Mk. 6:7). After the day of Pentecost the apostles often traveled in twos, Paul and Silas, Paul and John Mark, etc. Two, as we have shown, is the number of witness required by law and approved by the gospel. It was and is and ever has been the purpose of God to bring forth a PROPHETIC ARMY, in whom the spirit of prophecy moves to unfold in the written word and in the spirit realm the living Word of God. This is that "Elijah which is to come" and who is to "restore all things" — a company of prophets, a many-membered prophet!

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

The mystery of God is not far-off in heaven somewhere. GOD IS THE WORD AND THE WORD IS GOD. Furthermore, THE WORD IS THE SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT IS THE WORD. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn. 6:63). Words are the most powerful thing in creation! All things, visible and invisible, were created by God's Word with the moving of His Spirit. "And God said, Let there be..." (Gen. 1:3). "And the Spirit of God moved..." (Gen. 1:2). We are not born again by the spoken word, we are born again by the Word which is energized by the Spirit, the Spirit and the Word in union — the LIVING WORD! "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). The spoken word is not Christ, and the scriptures are not the Living Word.

Of the seven churches of Asia in the opening chapters of the Revelation, only two of them received no indictment from the Lord, nor were they told to repent. It is my conviction that these two churches, the church in Smyrna and the church in Philadelphia, represent the Lord's elect and chosen remnant in the earth throughout the church age. They also correspond to the two witnesses in chapter eleven! We know that a candlestick signifies a church. There are two churches out of the seven that received no condemnation or reproof from the Lord, and were given only great and precious promises. Of the two witnesses it is testified, "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." Two candlesticks! Two churches! Two given a special standing before God! Ah, Smyrna and Philadelphia, what a calling you have!

On the personal and individual level the two witnesses are the Spirit and the Word. The two witnesses speak of the awesome power and word of authority given to the Lord's elect on the pathway to sonship! The two witness company is not the manifest sons of God, for the manchild of chapter twelve of the Revelation represents the manifest sons of God who are "caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Rev. 12:5). Upon the throne of the Father the

manchild, the manifest sons of God, “rules all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5). Furthermore, the manchild, the manifest sons of God, receives his authority and dominion under the seventh trumpet, where the mystery of God, which is the mystery of Christ in you the hope of glory, is finished. The two witnesses, however, receive their ministry of power and authority under the sixth trumpet and they “ascend up to heaven in a cloud.” They are caught up to a heavenly place of glory, but not to the omnipotence and dominion of the throne! When they are caught up nothing is said about a throne. In addition, the two witnesses are overcome by the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit, and they are killed. But the manchild is never overcome, for he rules over all things!

There is a glorious prophetic realm, prefigured by the two witnesses, that God’s called and chosen elect enter prior to the manifestation of the sons. Since the great move of God that came in 1948 and the years following, I have been, with many who read these lines, and thousands of others besides, a glad partaker of the glory of that prophetic realm of ministry. It was indeed a heavenly realm of signs, wonders, and miracles! It was also a blessed realm of enlightenment and revelation from God! I have tasted of the power and glory of that realm by the prophetic anointing of the Spirit! From it has come the revelation of manifest sonship and many other marvelous truths of the kingdom purposes of God! Through it we received the call to sonship! But that prophetic and revival realm ends, and it has for the most part already ended! And after the two witnesses, or the two candlesticks realm, the very next thing on God’s prophetic agenda is THE BIRTHING OF THE MANCHILD! That’s where we really are in God’s great program of the ages. Isn’t it wonderful!

Elijah is an Old Testament type of one of the two witnesses. If you look at the ministry of these two witnesses you will find that one of them has a ministry like unto Moses, and the other has a ministry like unto Elijah. The ministry of Moses was to bring God’s people out of Egypt, that is, out of the world, out from under the taskmasters and cruelty of slavery to the world system, the flesh, and the devil. Moses delivered the people of Israel from their bondages, from the tyrannies that ruled over their lives. The ministry of Moses was a deliverance ministry! The other ministry is prefigured by Elijah, where the prophet said, “The God who answers by fire, let Him be God!” Elijah was a ministry to the people of God who were already in the land of promise, but they were idolaters, they were worshipping Baal. Elijah was a ministry that brought people into right relationship with God and dealt with their idols, that is, the false religious images in their minds and hearts, false ideas about God. Moses delivered the people from the ungodly oppressors over them, and Elijah delivered the people from the idols within them and brought them to righteousness, purity, and perfection.

In the great move of the Spirit that came in 1948, what kind of ministry did we have? There were two streams of ministry in that visitation, one stream was a deliverance ministry, while the other stream was a prophetic flow. There were mighty deliverance ministries that arose in the land, great crusades attended by tens of thousands of people in every major city of the nation and around the world. Powerful deliverances were wrought, thousands of people were healed of every manner of sickness and disease, delivered from habits and addictions of every kind, saved out of sin and the world and worldly ways, great signs, wonders, and miracles were performed in the name of Jesus Christ, demons were cast out, and untold thousands of people were baptized in the Holy Spirit. This was a Moses ministry, and multitudes of people were led forth out of the house of bondage, out of the spiritual Egypt of this world! But where are the great deliverance ministries today? Where is William Branham, Jack Coe, A. A. Allen, Oral Roberts, Tommy Hicks, Thomas

Wyatt, the Voice of Healing evangelists, and many others? They are all gone! They have passed from the scene, either by death or by apostasy. Their great tents are folded. The lights have been turned out. The glory has departed. The few who remain are on the decline. They still have the name that they are alive, but the power is gone, and some, in an effort to keep their momentum going even after the Spirit has fled have become deceivers and charlatans.

The second stream, which first began to flow in the outpouring of Latter Rain in Canada and quickly spread around the world, was a prophetic flow. This was truly an Elijah ministry! It was more than deliverance, it was divine quickening, it was days of heaven on earth, it was the voice of God speaking to His people, it was the song of the Lord, heavenly choirs of praise and glory which, as George Hawtin described it, echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! It was revelation, it was the edifying of the body of Christ, the Lord establishing a people unto Himself, bringing the call to sonship, "let us go on to perfection," till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! The ministry of this stream is an Elijah ministry that says God is going to answer by fire! God will burn everything that will burn, shake everything that can be shaken, remove everything that is shaken, and then we will receive a kingdom that cannot be moved! God is dealing with our idols, all our false religious images and false Babylonian doctrines and ways. He is dealing with those things we have given life to — the image of the beast — all the religious idols made by our hands. We have given life to a whole religious realm, by our emphasis on things other than Christ we have given life to demons, devils, carnal methods, fleshly techniques, man-made systems, external religious observances, and a thousand other things done in the name of the Lord that have not been born of His Spirit. The Elijah ministry is designed to break the religious bondage in His very own people. These are the most subtle of all bondages. So God has caused His called and chosen elect to turn away from all their idols, for the Lord has come in the power of His Spirit and He has answered by fire!

Both of these ministries are corporate ministries, not just individuals. It's not a one man show, it's a many-membered company! They are witnesses. Two witnesses. Two streams of revelation, glory, and power. In the mouth of two witnesses a thing is established! And what is the thing He establishes? He establishes that "holy thing" that is to be formed and birthed in us, even the Son of God! That's the holy thing God is establishing in the earth through the ministry of His two witnesses! Each ministry in the body of Christ, on whatever level it is, will fulfill that calling for which they are chosen, but in the spirit I see a ministry of the manifest sons of God that surpasses that of the two witnesses. The two witnesses are the "two anointed ones that stand before the Lord of the earth," they are also called the "sons of oil," and these empty themselves, as we will see later on, into a greater ministry to follow — as Elijah prepared the way for the greater Elisha, as Moses prepared the way for Joshua, as David prepared the way for Solomon, and as John the Baptist prepared the way for the firstborn Son of God, so does the two-witness ministry prepare the way for the woman to bring forth the manchild! (Rev. 12:1-5).

The very fact of what the Lord has been doing among His elect through the past sixty-five years reveals to our wondering hearts that we are about to enter a new and glorious unfolding of His purpose in the earth. There has been the sending forth of a chosen few to prepare the way for Christ. These have announced the coming of the King, the many-membered Christ body, the sons of God. The revealing of God's sons comes after this time of announcement. The process of announcing has been a time of killing and pulling down, as well as a time of planting and building. God's pre-elected and pre-ordained

witnesses have been for many years now preparing the way for the glorious Christ who will bring the kingdom of God to pass in all the earth and will rule in mercy, truth, and great power! This time of witness has evoked great anger in some and great expectancy in others. Many who are bound within the walls of religious Babylon have rejected, opposed, and withstood God's witnesses, but multitudes have accepted gladly the testimony of the witnesses with singing and great rejoicing!

The following words of confirmation by brother Carl Schwing are so very precious. "The voice of Elijah is being heard among the sons. His words defy all the teachings of the prophets of doom. He is here to silence the blind leaders that minister for hire, to tear down every human idol, and to overturn the altars of Babylon. He brings to us the consuming fire of God, to purify and to make holy the sons of his God. All mixture is to be removed. He calls to our inner son to come forth from the tomb of flesh and to ascend unto the realms of the pure and the free; to gather in the presence of our Father and to receive from His mind the life-giving words of truth and freedom. He sends us to a fallen and moaning creation...to set the captives free and to give light to all who grope in darkness, and to declare to all creation the power and glory of the Father's everlasting kingdom. This is the hour when Elijah passes the mantle to the sons of God, covering them with the divine unity of the Father, and placing upon them the garment that was removed from our father Adam in the long ago. Be still, my beloved, glorious things are transpiring in the heavenlies...be still, I say, for most glorious things are transpiring in the kingdom of God. Hallelujah!"

## **THE POWER OF THE WITNESSES**

"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. They have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. 11:5-6).

The reference to shutting heaven that it rain not, is associated with the work of Elijah, when he closed the heavens in the days of Ahab, the king of Israel. The reference to inducing various plagues is a reminder of the ministry of Moses who brought the ten plagues upon Egypt in order to secure the release of the people of Israel from the house of bondage. In view of the fact that these prophecies are couched in highly symbolical and figurative language, and in view of the fact that John deals with spiritual events and manifestations, while describing them in symbols and pictures, we must allow these metaphors and phrases to typify the spiritual significance intended by the Lord!

For example, if we insist upon the literal return to earth of Moses and Elijah to fulfill the vision, we miss the point altogether! John is not referring to the actual prophets but to the qualities which they express. It was Moses and Elijah which stood with Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah had the ability to challenge the established order of their day and lead God's people forward into the purposes of God, so the witnesses are also credited with that ability. Just as John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" but was not by any means the physical man Elijah, so we see here a spiritual "prophet company" or a spiritual "prophetic ministry" typified by the Old Testament ministries of Moses and Elijah. Furthermore, we should not expect the "devouring of their enemies with fire out of their mouths," "shutting the heavens that it rain not," "turning

waters to blood,” and “smiting the earth with plagues,” to be done in the literal, outward way of Moses and Elijah, but in a deeper, more meaningful spiritual fulfillment. The witness of their work will be seen through the visible body of Christ on earth as a testimony to the Lord’s people still dwelling in the “earth-realm” of Babylonian bondage. In this light, “smiting the earth with plagues” speaks of smiting the “earthiness” and “carnality” that grips and controls so many of the Lord’s people! Thank God for the “plagues”!

The destruction wrought by the two witnesses against their foes, does not consist in literal fire proceeding from their mouths or in some cosmic calamities brought down on the heads of their enemies, for such a carnal, childish interpretation of such majestic symbol is a dry and barren thing compared to the deep spiritual truth and light the Spirit brings. Fire out of their mouths. Do you believe that is really, literally going to happen? Do you think the day is coming when we will open our mouths and flames of fire will literally leap out of our throats? There are some, I’m sure, who relish the thought of having such a ministry! But notice, dear friend, that these witnesses are clothed upon with sackcloth — which is a type of humility, repentance, and brokenness. In the Revelation, we have much about white robes; here is something about black robes! We read about the sun becoming as black as sackcloth of hair (Rev. 6:12). Sackcloth was made from the hair of goats and camels and for that reason, it was very dark and coarse in texture. Sackcloth was generally the garb of the poor, and was also used for mourning. As long as the witnesses remain clothed in their sackcloth, as long as an humble, broken, and meek spirit accompanies their witness, they retain their power!

The “fire” of God is a glorious spiritual reality! Our God is a consuming fire! Daniel says that a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. The Lord Jesus Christ is compared to fire: He is like a refiner’s fire. The Holy Ghost is also a fire into which the Lord’s people are baptized! And the ministering servants of the Lord are likewise represented as a flame of fire (Heb. 1:7). Now hear the prophet Jeremiah when he declares, “Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it (his fiery words) shall devour them” (Jer. 5:14). And again, “Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” (Jer. 23:29). It seems obvious to me that the imagery of fire proceeding out of the witnesses mouths and devouring their enemies is drawn directly by the Holy Spirit from these words in the prophecy of Jeremiah! The fire that comes out of their mouths is a burning word of authority, it is their prophesying the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit which burns and consumes all the opposition of those who fight against it. That’s the fire! Aren’t you glad!

You know, if someone were to take a blow torch and touch the flame to your body, you wouldn’t like it. As your flesh began to melt you would scream in excruciating pain! That’s the exact image the Holy Spirit would impress upon us. These two witnesses — with a ministry like this — would you receive them? They speak with such power that if you try to resist, their word will burn you up! Is this an imagination, or is that what is really written by the prophet of God? It is written there, and it is surely God’s way of dealing spiritually with the obstinacy of man! The phrase, “devoureth their enemies,” in the Greek says, “it eats up or consumes the adversaries.” Multitudes of believers get confused about the meaning of these things because of literal, carnal thinking. They suppose the two witnesses are two physical men, as Moses and Elijah, that send literal flames of fire out of their mouths and instantly cremate other living people. But the symbols of the Revelation never mean what they appear to be in a literal way. They point to something else. The “enemies” that are “devoured” are not flesh and blood people, but the true enemies within each of us — that

old man of sin, the carnal mind, the flesh nature which always resists both the Spirit and the Word! It is not the wicked physical men God is out to destroy in this day of the New Covenant of grace and salvation, but the “wicked” nature of “old Adam” that dwells in mankind!

Have you ever heard anyone say, “That preacher just burns me up!” I have. That’s how the word of God seems to us when it comes in power and it is also how it works in us! As fire warms, illuminates, purifies, beautifies, and destroys, so the living, burning, authoritative word of the Lord warms, illuminates, purifies, beautifies, and destroys. The power to cause fire to proceed from the mouth, is the power to speak in the might of the Spirit and change things, change men! What revealing light of revelation is contained in the gracious words that issued from the lips of the Lord Jesus when He said, “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” “The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save.” Our wonderful, all-powerful Redeemer and Saviour is not in the business of “devouring” the wicked people of earth, either now or during some supposed future “tribulation period.” Oh, no! God is not out to destroy wicked men in a physical way — but He will certainly consume the “man of sin,” that “wicked” one which sits in the temple of God which we are, whom He shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His appearing (II Thes. 2:3-10). Every saint of God should dissuade himself of the notion that there are wicked people whom God shall destroy, and sweet Christian people who are going to make it. God is destroying the wicked nature of the Adamic man in those who oppose His Christ! God has a wonderful plan and purpose! The carnal minds of unspiritual men twist and distort the deep spiritual revelation of the Lord into all kinds of wild and weird imaginations — but that’s not where the truth and reality lie!

Let us digress for a moment. Those who are “devoured” by the fire from the mouth of the two witnesses are those who try to hurt them. “If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.” This may sound strange at first! We have already seen that the witnesses do not “kill” their adversaries in the literal sense of the word. The question follows — what does it mean to “hurt” the two witnesses? Can they be hurt by persecution or by tribulation? Do you hurt them by inflicting physical pain, by casting them into prison, torturing them on the rack, or slandering them? If the “killing” were literal and physical, then we could assume that the hurting is also literal and physical. But such cannot be the case! They are not hurt by persecution or torments afflicted upon them physically. They have learned of their Lord that they need not fear those who can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. And therefore these two witnesses can never be hurt in the physical sense of the word!

To hurt them you must get at their spiritual existence. You must fight with them spiritually. You must make them waver, stagger, vacillate, or apostatize from their pure walk in the Spirit of God. You must lead them to renounce their vision, to be silent about the word God has entrusted to them, to compromise with the religious systems of man for some advantage. Then indeed you hurt them! Oh, how the religious unceasingly seek to hurt the elect of God! They attempt to gainsay their words and make them of none effect, or lure them into some form of Babylonian religious system. But if that is attempted, the fiery word of the Lord proceeds out of their mouth and in this manner the mouths of the adversaries are stopped and they are put to naught! The fire is not their own word, but the living word of God that is in their mouth. The opposition and cunning cannot be successful, nor can it stand. In this manner they fight the battle. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but

are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3-5). It shall not hurt them! Aren't you glad!

In closing this message I am impressed to share the following quote from one of Stephen Jones' writings. "In 2001 I received a prophecy from a friend about 'the power of the flame.' It was from Isaiah 47:14. I did not understand what this was about until recently. This verse is in the context of the fall of Babylon. 'Behold they have become like stubble, fire burns them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame; there will be no coal to warm by, nor a fire to sit before!' The word 'power' is from the Hebrew word yad, which is also from the Hebrew letter, yod. It means an open hand, a work or deed. The word 'flame' is lehabah, feminine for lehab. Strong's Concordance says it means 'to gleam, a flash; figuratively a sharply polished blade or point of a weapon.'

"This is where the New Testament gets the idea of the sharp, two-edged sword coming out of Jesus' mouth. Revelation 1:16 says, 'out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword.' Revelation 19:15 says, 'And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations.' It is a flaming sword, as we see in Revelation 11:5, for this same sword is in the mouth of the two witnesses: 'And if anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies.' James 3:6 also refers to the tongue as a fire. So this was well-known symbolic language in biblical times. Thus, Revelation 18:8 says of the great harlot of Babylon, 'For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord who judges her is strong.' The fire or flame comes from the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Paul listed it with the armor of God for anyone involved in spiritual warfare.

"A final word about the word lebabah and lebab (flame, or point of the sword): It is the Hebrew word leb (heart) with the letter hey in the middle of it. Recall how God put the hey in the middle of Abram's name to make it Abraham. When the hey comes in the middle of a word, it indicates revelation or inspiration of the Spirit. It is the breath of God! Leb means 'heart.' Lehab literally conveys the idea of the Holy Spirit in the heart, as well as the revelation of the heart. This is the root idea behind the power of the flame. It manifests the heart of God! The intent of His heart is brought into the world through God's hand (yad) working by the sword of the Spirit to consume all that is not of God!" — end quote.

# *Chapter 127*

## *The Two Witnesses*

### *continued*

“These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy...” (Rev. 11:6).

There has been a general misunderstanding of the word of God throughout Christendom concerning the truth of the coming of the Lord; for it is clear as we consider all the scriptures on the subject that the Lord’s coming is first and foremost a spiritual visitation in the midst of His people. James therefore associates the bestowal of the “latter rain” with the “coming” of the Lord: “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming (Greek: parousia — manifest presence) of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:7-8). Can we not see by these inspired words of the apostle that in a very real sense the coming of the “former and latter rain” IS THE COMING OF THE LORD into the midst of His people. The rain is really the LORD HIMSELF, in His MANIFEST PRESENCE, coming upon us!

It is our deep conviction that Christ has appeared to His people as both the “early rain” and the “latter rain,” and scattered “showers of refreshing” betwixt and between, throughout this age. There have also been those dry times when the heavens were shut and there was no rain from the heavens of God’s Spirit. Multitudinous and glorious beyond description have been the appearances of Christ as the rain! When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he clearly established the fact that the outpouring of the Spirit (the Lord is that Spirit) at that time was the early rain (Acts 2:16; Joel 2:21-32). During the mighty outpouring of the Spirit in those glory-filled years following 1948, the Lord often spoke in prophecy, telling the saints that that visitation of the Spirit was Christ coming to His people as the latter rain. All major denominations, including the Pentecostal denominations who were closest to that outpouring of the Spirit, rejected that wonderful move of God. And when they rejected that deluge from heaven they also rejected Christ, for it was none other than HE who came to His thirsting people at that time as latter rain!

“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth” (Hos. 6:3). He comes TO US as the rain! Rain brings the manifest presence of the Lord! The presence of the Lord gives times of refreshing. Rain brings times that cause the water to soak the ground to mature the crops for the harvest. But notice! There is an “if” in there. We will know His coming as the rain if we “follow on to know the Lord.” His coming is prepared as the morning, that is, it is as sure as the sunrise; we will know it if we follow on to know Him; and He will come unto us as the rain! These have been days of the coming of the Lord! He has come to us in times and seasons of refreshing!

Seasons — if we are going to fulfill the purposes of God in our lives in our day we must walk in God’s “seasons.” All farmers know the importance of observing seasons. You don’t expect to harvest apples in May or watermelons in December. Why? Because it’s the wrong season! You always cooperate with the seasons and if you do you bring in a bountiful harvest. Now if I went out and started plowing and planting corn in September I would be in trouble. Why? Because I am not cooperating with the seasons! As that seed germinates and begins to grow, it’s going to come up at the wrong time and, ere long, the first freeze will kill it. I must plant my corn in the spring and expect a harvest in the fall; thus I am flowing with the seasons. A good farmer will always understand that rain coming at the wrong time will only spoil his crop, for the rain will beat down the grain, making it impossible to harvest. Can we not see by this how infinitely important it is to observe God’s spiritual seasons — God’s times. If we know these seasons and flow with them, there will be great fruit in our lives!

Centuries ago the prophet Zechariah wrote a message that I feel certain applies to our day above all other days. First he said, “Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field” (Zech. 10:1). And then he said, “And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso shall not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and...have no rain; there (that) shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16-18).

Here, keeping the feast of tabernacles is associated with receiving the rain of God. There is a mystery about the feast of tabernacles. As George Warnock has pointed out in his book *The Feast of Tabernacles*, it is the only one of the three major feasts of Israel that as yet has not had a New Testament fulfillment. Therefore it has not been celebrated in a parallel feast by Christians the world over as has been the other two festivals, those of Passover and Pentecost. Truly we can say — Passover has come, Pentecost has come, and Tabernacles must come, for each is a part of God’s great plan for His people. We have had the feasts of Passover and Pentecost and both of these feasts have been fulfilled in this age in the church in a spiritual way in the body of Christ, and right here on earth. For some strange reason people seek to totally change the order for the last feast, postponing it to some future age, or giving it to the Jews, or relegating it to some beautiful “Isle of Somewhere,” and consequently the real spiritual meaning and import of the feast of tabernacles is completely obscured and lost. The grand truth is that like the others, it will be fulfilled dispensationally, it will be fulfilled in us individually, and it will be fulfilled in us as the Corporate Man. The grand truth of this has been wonderfully quickened by the Spirit of God to multiplied thousands of saints around the world in these last years.

There were seasonal rains in Palestine that pertained to this feast. The feast of tabernacles was the “feast of ingathering” at the end of the agricultural year. At Tabernacles there was plenty of corn, oil, and wine! This feast, like the first two, was associated with the harvest. Whereas Passover was held at the time of the firstfruits of the barley harvest, and Pentecost was held at the time of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, Tabernacles came at the close of the cycle, when with the ripening of the grapes, olives, corn, figs, etc. the harvest was complete. Therefore, we see that the feasts were associated with a progression in harvest, and speak of the ongoing process of the growth

and development of spiritual life, the maturing of His life within the experience of His people!

Thus, this feast speaks to us of the FULLNESS OF GOD, and therein lies the challenge to move on “unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST” (Eph. 4:13). It speaks of the full appropriation of the life, mind, wisdom, nature, glory, and power of Christ! It speaks of Christ being perfectly formed in us! It speaks of being fully conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God! It speaks of the manifestation of the fullest measure of His sonship power and dominion! Ah, whereas Passover gets us started in our spiritual life as babes in Christ, and Pentecost adds a further measure of His Spirit with gifts of glory, the feast of tabernacles speaks to us of a completed harvest, full growth and maturity in Him, the fullest measure and manifestation of ALL THAT HE HAS AND IS! Oh, what a grand and glorious realm lies before us in the feast of ingathering! The time of full and complete redemption, in spirit, soul, and body! The full and complete experiencing of HIMSELF, abounding in life and immortality! The fullness of strength to go forth and do great and mighty things in the kingdom of our Father! The feast of feasts! It is God in His great love and goodness inviting His people to enter on in to their full inheritance! We have breakfasted at Passover, we have lunched at Pentecost, and now the table is spread with the great feast of fullness that comes at the close of the day!

It is obvious from the passage quoted earlier that when the Lord comes in the majesty and power of the feast of tabernacles there will be many of the Lord’s people who will refuse to move on, to come to the feast! Just as the historic denominations rejected the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit in the early 1900’s, and just as the Pentecostal denominations rejected the more glorious Latter Rain outpouring of the mid 1900’s, so will many refuse to enter on in to the glory of this new kingdom day. Paul Mueller once expressed it so well when he wrote, “The church system and the religious denominations of man have a history of rejecting every true visitation or outpouring of the Spirit! And, with the passing of time, they have not gotten any better; they have only gotten worse! The religious systems of man and of this world, because of their anti-Christ spirit and nature, will also reject every future outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that Father sends to the earth. The mind of man that governs the church system is directly opposed to any new revelation, as well as any new truth that is given by the Spirit. Their numerous false doctrines will prevent them from accepting and receiving Christ when He appears!”

Is that not what is meant when the prophet Zechariah says that any of the peoples of earth who refuse to come up to the feast of tabernacles, upon them shall be no rain! And is that not what is meant when the angel tells John that the two witnesses have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy! It signifies to withhold the blessing and power even of the realms the Lord’s people have been moving in up until that time! By their word, because of the rejection of the Lord’s moving, the curse of spiritual death and death comes upon them! Their anointing lifts, their glory fades, their power departs, and they are left with only the dead, empty shell of outward religious observances. The heavens of God’s Spirit are shut to them! There is no heavenly rain upon them, not even the intermittent showers of blessing! Their land is desolated by spiritual drought, and the once fruitful field becomes a dry, thirsty, hot, lifeless desert! As the scripture says, “Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not (does not come to the feast), from him shall be taken even that which he hath” (Mat. 13:11-12).

Shut the heavens, that it rain not — shut the previous existing heavens, the old order that used to minister life, bringing it to an end by a declaration of the word of the Lord! This is the power of the witnesses! Rain signifies the Spirit, water signifies the Word — the Lord withholds the anointing and revelation of a passing order. What used to work doesn't work anymore! Jesus did just this with Israel when He lamented over Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate...there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Mat. 23:37-38; 24:2). Within thirty-five years after our Lord uttered these fateful words, both the temple and the city were razed to the ground, the Jewish nation ceased to exist, the Jewish priesthood ended, and the Jewish people were dispersed and scattered into every nation under heaven. They wouldn't come to the feast! So the Lord shut their existing heavens and from that day to this THERE HAS BEEN NO MORE RAIN UPON THEM!

### **WATER TO BLOOD**

"These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood" (Rev. 11:6).

The waters that the witnesses turn to blood are not, of course, the literal waters of the rivers, lakes, and oceans of the world, but the rivers of man's fallible word, the ideas, concepts, philosophies, teachings, precepts, creeds, doctrines, traditions, ideologies, observances, customs, and laws of the carnal church systems of man which are the sources from which the religious draw their life, their enjoyment and refreshment, their ways of thinking, their view of themselves, their understanding of the world and of God's purposes both now and in the hereafter.

Long centuries before Elijah, the prophet Moses was raised up by the Lord to strike oppressive Egypt with ten plagues in order to force Pharaoh to let God's people go. The first plague with which Moses struck Egypt was the turning of all its waters into blood, so that the fish all died and the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile or from any of their usual sources. As shed, coagulated blood is the symbol of death, the two witnesses, by their anointed word of revelation and power, show God's people that the spiritual waters from which they have been drinking in the church systems of man, in the form of religious teachings, creeds, traditions, and doctrines, are really death-dealing, like blood, and therefore not to be drunk by those elect saints who follow on to know the Lord in all His glorious fullness.

Water symbolizes life and blood signifies death. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth the bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth" (Isa. 55:10-11). "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat" (Isa. 55:1). "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. 2:13). "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn. 7:37). "For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light we shall see light" (Ps. 36:9).

The turning of the waters into blood can only indicate the prophetic ministry by the Spirit and the Word that declares the word (doctrines and teachings) of the carnal, worldly church systems to be false so that that which was once life to them is now turned to death for all who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. How well I remember when the Lord sent His prophetic spirit into our midst and suddenly, by the quickening power of divine moving and revelation, the blinding scales of man's religious interpretations fell from our eyes as in one blessed moment we saw in the light of the Spirit how the cherished church doctrines we were raised on were but the inventions of carnal minds! Hell-fire and eternal damnation, legalism, condemnation, a powerful devil that was always thwarting God's purposes, a rapture to escape the wrath of God, a far-off heaven with golden streets and wonderful mansions in the sky, a boogey-man antichrist who was going to take over the world, and a whole host of other notions that we took as "gospel truth" and which before enthralled us, motivated us, and dominated our lives, suddenly became a terrible abhorrence to our spirits! We saw it all for the error, the spiritual death that it is! Our waters were turned to blood! That which had been life to us was now only putridness and death. It was the powerful, liberating, transforming prophetic ministry of the Spirit and the Word that did this!

### **WHEN THEIR TESTIMONY IS FINISHED**

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them" (Rev. 11:7).

Everything in nature has a beginning and an ending. Summer, winter, spring, fall, nations, empires, men's lives in the flesh, day, night, weeks, months, years, centuries, millenniums, wars, peace, famines, plenty, prosperity, poverty, sickness, health, inflation, depression, apostasy, revivals, civilizations, and on and on. All the cycles of nature and spiritual life have been ordained by God (Gen. 1:14-18; 8:22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, the mighty Creator, is Himself the beginning (source) and the end (disposer, consummator) of everything in creation! There are in God's spiritual order "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." "Seasons" signifies that which has a beginning and an end. The purpose of God is progressive, on-going, ever from glory to glory. Each stage of Father's revelation and inworking, His discipline and transformation, has both a beginning and an end. This great principle is seen clearly throughout church history. Today we stand at the hour of another great move of God which will effect a mighty change as the feast of Tabernacles brings to an end the former religious orders that have come to us from the feasts of Passover and Pentecost. The feast of Tabernacles is establishing in God's elect a new order of spirit and life that has been covered by the veil of religious tradition that makes the Word of God of none effect. Yet all that has gone before has been orchestrated by the same One — He who is the beginning and the end!

Those saints of God who are seeing and hearing by the Spirit in this hour understand that we have even now come to the end of a cycle which brings the conclusion of the passing order of the church age, in order to inaugurate the new order of the kingdom of God! This speaks to us of the fading glory of a past move of God, of an old order that is passing off the scene. You cannot carry a first day or a second day agenda into the third day of greater glory! You cannot carry a Passover or a Pentecost experience into the greater reality of Tabernacles! This principle has worked again and again on different levels, generation after generation, dispensation after dispensation, revival after revival, throughout the long history of God's dealings with mankind. How unspeakably marvelous

was the glory that enveloped Moses on the misty heights of mount Sinai as Yahwey committed to him the administration of His law for Israel. And what a glorious covenant it was! Yet, the apostle Paul revealed the great truth that the glory of that old covenant was not permanent but merely transitory — it was ordained for a wonderful purpose but in time that purpose was accomplished, the covenant waxed old, and was ready, with all its glory, to pass away (II Cor. 3:6-18).

When we look back through the history of the church we see how God sent various visitations of His Spirit, unveilings of His glory, revelations of His word, and manifestations of His power. Each time the Spirit moved on a higher plane it brought to an end a former order and way of thinking and acting, establishing a new and more perfect order, ministry, and understanding of Father's plan and purpose. As each new moving of God begins people are either vomited out of the old order, as Jonah was vomited by the whale, or they are constrained by the Spirit to come out of the old order of church life, and embrace the new, fresh, deeper, higher, greater, and more glorious revelation of the Lord, until that becomes the established order. And is it not true that once the new order is established, when it has in turn accomplished its purpose in the earth, it eventually becomes a tradition, a form, a structure, from which the glory begins to fade! Yet — can we not see that this is all the Lord's doing — and when we do see, it is marvelous in our eyes!

Let us now notice just what truth is stated here. “When they shall have finished their testimony.” The Lord had previously said, “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” These “thousand two hundred and threescore days” set a definite limit on the exercise of the witness's power and prophesying. Notice that the witnesses finish their testimony! When their testimony is finished, when God is through with that order of ministry, when it has accomplished all that God raised it up to do, then their invulnerability ends. The witnesses are not cut short! They fail in nothing! God's plan, work, and purpose are not in one iota thwarted when the beast rises up against them and overcomes them! Oh, no! There is an eternal order in God, but no “in-part” ministry is either eternal or invincible. It is invincible only until its work is done, its purpose finished, accomplished, and consummated. Then the anointing lifts, the glory departs, and the order falls into ruin and forever passes away. This is a great mystery understood only by those enlightened souls that know the ways of the Lord!

### **THE BEAST OVERCOMES THEM**

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them” (Rev. 11:7).

If the above words are plainly understood, we shall have no difficulty in understanding the rest of the scene. It is perfectly plain, in the first place, why the beast which rises up out of the abyss comes against these witnesses. It is because they have finished their testimony! As the Lord removed the hedge from around Job, so He lifts His protecting hand from the two witnesses. You may notice that although the beast has never been mentioned before in the book of Revelation, yet the plain presupposition is that he is well-known by those who read with understanding. It is the beast. And while the beast has not been mentioned before, the bottomless pit from whence he rises is mentioned in chapter nine. There, it is a “great smoke as of a furnace” that is ascending out of the pit! It is my conviction that the beast is the bestial nature right within man, the carnal mind, the fleshly

nature, which ever seeks to usurp the place of the Spirit and the Word and thwart the purpose of God.

Here, the Lord uncovers within us that man of sin who arises out of the abyss of the carnality of the old Adamic heart and effectively makes war against the word, the anointing, the ministry, and the hope and expectation of the witnesses, overcoming the Word and the work of the Spirit, symbolically, yet actually “killing” that ministry. This bestial nature not only lurks in the hearts of all mankind but is also the controlling principle in all of man’s religion! Yet, we should not be dismayed by this! How true are the words of the Lord wherein He instructs the wise, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it SHALL ACCOMPLISH that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:9-11). Oh, yes! No word of the Lord will ever return unto Him void — without producing any effect, useless, a failure — but it always accomplishes everything that He pleases and purposes, and it prospers, is successful, in the very thing for which He sends it.

The great visitation of the Lord in 1948, like all previous moves of God, was not a failure — it accomplished precisely what the Lord purposed and ordained, establishing in the earth the word of reconciliation, the great truth of sonship, and the living reality of the kingdom of God, which has continued to bring forth a harvest unto all the ends of the earth. God never purposed to propagate and preserve the “order” of that move, only to plant a “seed” in the field of the world which would grow, change, and increase, in due time producing a vast harvest of sons of the kingdom. Oh, the wonder of it! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! And now, some seventy years later, who can deny that His word has accomplished all that He sent it to do!

What, then, is portrayed by the slaying of the two witnesses? Is it a past event? Or is it yet future? Is it a physical martyrdom, or spiritual? It is evident that the blessed spirit of truth is setting before us a divine principle which has been manifested in the earth again and again through the ages and is likewise finding a specific fulfillment before our very eyes in this new day of the kingdom of God! Every move of God in the earth is sent for the specific purpose of planting a “seed” in the hearts of men. Contained within that seed is the hidden germ of life for the next move of God! Yet the mystery is just this: Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it springeth up and bringeth forth much fruit! When the seed dies the outer form passes away, but the life is preserved and becomes manifest on a higher plane and in a greater measure in the eventual harvest produced. Man’s inclination is always to preserve the outer form, but the divine intention is for it to fall into the ground and die! When the outer form is preserved, there can be no harvest. Seeds have been found in the tombs of the Pharaohs in Egypt that have lain there for thirty-five hundred years, and during those long centuries there was never a harvest from any of them. They were preserved for the wondering eyes of men in this, our day. If the farmer does not cast his seed into the earth, permitting the outer shell to decompose, there can be no increase. Can you not see the mystery? Does this not explain why, when our great Father-husbandman is through with an order and ready to bring forth a new thing, a new move, a new day, He always allows the old order to die. We view the death as a great tragedy, but our all-wise heavenly Father sees it as one of the greatest wonders of His creation!

What a flood of heavenly light fell upon the world in the ministry of the apostles of our Lord and the early church! The gift of the Holy Ghost, with its attending gifts of power, knowledge, and utterance, followed on the ascension of our risen Saviour. The church, the body of Christ, was birthed and gathered from Jew and Gentile alike, a vast multitude into its bosom. The shadows of the old law were replaced by the glorious and eternal reality of the living, indwelling Christ. In those few holy years Christ was the only Head of the church and unity and harmony flowed like a river and the body of Christ was one. There was no government but the government of the Spirit. Love and wisdom shone like the sun from the mind of God. What glorious days those were! One only has to read the book of Acts to see how much God blessed His people in those days. Mighty signs and wonders were performed as God confirmed His word with signs following. The Word of God, anointed by the Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early believers that they turned the world upside down! — so powerful was their message and spirit. In spite of persecution it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea.

In the midst of such a precious walk in the Spirit the apostles Paul and John, filled with divine wisdom and keen in spiritual discernment, foresaw that the church would spread over the world, and that, becoming popular, many would arise within its ranks who would appreciate its form without having been transformed by its spirit. Grace had wrought a wondrous work, but alas! with many the inner nature remained unchanged. The natural man with his carnal mind was still at enmity with God, and the cloak of Christianity would not long conceal his corruption. The beautiful infant virgin church was not very old before the seeds of rebellion against Christ began to appear. The very moment the love of God and the power of His indwelling life begin to wane from our spirits and fly out the windows of our soul, then external forms, creeds, rituals, and observances with all their emptiness and foolishness stalk boldly through the door. Then men begin to cry for something other than Christ, or for something in addition to Christ, saying, “I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas” (I Cor. 1:12).

I do not believe there is any way to explain, imagine, or understand the many ways in which the beast ascends out of the bottomless pit and overcomes the ministry of the Spirit and the Word. Even before the apostles had passed from this life, a spirit and system had set in among the saints of the Lord and many people were wearing the Babylonish garment. They were instituting rules and regulations, formulating creeds, observing days, establishing sacraments and ordinances, and elevating human government. The babble had begun and the mysterious beast from the abyss was raising his ugly head! Soon the glory and power, the presence of God in the morning-time church began to be eclipsed, and the power of carnal-minded men gradually took the place of the awesome presence of Christ and His living Word. Consequently, man’s carnal understanding was put upon the scriptures, and as the spirit of Christ fled from their midst, men established a vast and elaborate system of substitutes to take the place of reality. As the blind led the blind and the visions of the people were in error and darkness, the pure vision and experience of the life of the Spirit and the power of the Word was lost to them. The beast had ascended out of the abyss and had overcome them, and killed them!

Can we not see how the witness of the Spirit and the Word had now been effectively slain, killed in the street of the great city of religion! Ah, but never forget, precious friend of mine, the seed of Christ was still lying in the earth, awaiting the blessed day when the Father

would send “showers” from heaven — and that seed would germinate and rise again! There would be a great field of grain and a vast harvest! The impact of the next move of God would be greater than any previous work of the Lord! The resurrection of our Lord from death and the grave is the keystone of the Christian faith. And the spiritual resurrection of the Spirit and the Word from the grave of carnality is likewise imperative! When great reformers, set aflame with Holy Spirit power, declared truth at the peril of their lives, Rome’s walls of bondage burst like a tomb in an earthquake. The Word, which had long been chained in static creeds and lifeless rituals, became alive in the power of the Spirit! O glorious day of the blessed Reformation! Rome’s tyranny was conquered. The gospel was again preached to the poor. Prisoners were loosed and chains of sin and religious slavery were broken. Vast areas and nations and empires of the world were impacted by the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Spirit and the Word ascended up into the new heavens of the Spirit in the midst of God’s people!

But this happy state of affairs did not long continue. Within a few years the followers of the reformers were divided into hostile sects and began to oppose and persecute each other. Luther denounced Zwingli as a heretic, and the Calvinists would have no dealings with the Lutherans. The first Protestant creed was the Augsburg Confession (A.D. 1530). This date marks an important epoch. From this time the people began to lose sight of the Word of God and the Spirit of God as their life and to turn to the disciplines of their sects, which they upheld by every means possible. Thus we find Calvin at Geneva consenting to the burning at the stake of Servetus, because of a difference of religious views, and Luther ordering the extermination of my own forefathers, the Anabaptists, as heretics. In the years following, great wars arose between the various factions as armies were placed in the field to fight for their creeds! A great darkness and a somber death settled over the old historic churches and once again the two witnesses — the ministry of the Spirit and the Word — lay dead in the street of the great city of religion.

Dreadful as all this is, let us never lose sight of the fact that in the midst of man’s disconcerting confusion the Lord of the universe is progressing unhindered with His purpose of the ages to bring many sons unto glory, His anointed Christ-body which shall bring the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation and shall govern the earth and the whole vast universe in righteousness, peace, joy, and life forevermore. History confirms the guiding hand of our omnipotent Father as out of the ashes of Protestantism came new and greater moves of God in England, Wales, Scotland, Russia, America, and throughout many other nations of the world. Finally, in the early 1900’s the great Pentecostal revivals out of which came in mid-century the glorious outpouring of the Spirit and coming of the Lord as Latter Rain unto His seeking, thirsting people. None of these were isolated moves of God, but quickly spread around the world impacting the Lord’s people unto the uttermost parts of the earth. What a mighty God!

The gifts and callings of God have always been a source of joy and wonder to me. It gives me great joy to behold the work of God in His called and chosen elect in this significant hour! Far away in the depths of my spirit the perfumed breezes of spiritual discernment cry in the street of my city that there has never been a day like this day! The blessed sons of God have been in preparation throughout this long church age and today our heavenly Father is perfecting the final members of this enChristed body with accelerating intensity and thoroughness. We are rapidly approaching the joyful moment soon to come when together we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall be wondrously clothed

with immortality. The holy sons of God shall be manifest in resurrection power and in great glory! But today, as the vehicle of this preparation, the ministry of the two witnesses has stood up in the earth again and are now prophesying of the one who is coming, the manchild, the many-membered Son of God who shall deliver creation from the bondage of corruption and restore all things into the harmony of God again. Just as John the Baptist was the forerunner and announcer of the firstborn among many brethren, so the two-witness prophetic ministry has appeared right on schedule in this weary hour of sham and shame, abounding in false prophets, worldliness, religiosity, and universal turmoil, to call all of God's sons to walk only and fully in the light of the Lord.

God has raised up again His witness in the earth! The Spirit and the Word are testifying by the power of God right in the street of the great city of religion! As one has written, "The spirit of Moses is blowing over the face of the earth as it did over the face of Egypt in that long ago. The cry has gone out through the land, Let my people go, that they may worship me! The plagues are hitting the systems of the Pharaohs who are the rulers of this world system, and their kingdoms are crumbling from within and cannot put themselves together again. This is the result of the prophetic spirit of Moses which has been released in the world!

"The spirit of Elijah is blowing as well! Elijah came against king Ahab when he made affinity with Jezebel and introduced the worship of false gods in Israel. Jezebel, with deadly hatred in her heart, came against God's prophets and determined to kill as many of them as she could. Elijah hid in a cave and prayed unto the Lord. He asked Him if he was the only prophet left in the land, to which God replied, 'Nay, I have seven thousand more like you who have not bowed their knee to Baal.' The rulers of the worldly church have espoused the ways of the world's systems. Like Ahab, they have made themselves one with the spirit of Jezebel who is determined to put an end to the Word of God proclaimed by God's true prophets in this hour. The people are languishing under their ministries, not able to discern any more that which is holy from that which is profane. But the spirit of Elijah is blowing in their land!

"The day came when Elijah called all the prophets of Baal to mount Carmel. He gathered all of Israel and spoke unto them in that place. 'And Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long will you falter between two opinions? If Yahweh is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him. But the people answered him not a word' (I Kings 18:21). The same spirit of Elijah is blowing over the people of God today that they might awaken to the Light and recognize the bondage which the systems of religion have kept them in. We witness the uncovering of the works of darkness which have been hid behind pious facades. Men of God which had been admired and adored in the land are falling from their pedestals. Elijah gave the prophets of Baal the whole day to prove their god. They carried on from morning until noon calling out to Baal... 'O Baal, hear us!' but there was no voice; no one answered. They leaped upon the altar which they had made. And Elijah said, 'Cry aloud for he is a god...so they cried and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances until the blood gushed out on them' (I Kings 18:26-28). This ceremony continued until the time of the evening sacrifice, all day long. Then Elijah took over...he repaired the altar and put in order the proper sacrifice. The prophets of Baal had exhausted all their tricks and gimmicks to move the hand of their god, but Elijah only needed the last hour to show forth the glory of the one true God.

"The false prophets in our land have had the whole day to bring out all their tricks that are up their sleeves...they have sought the admiration and substance of God's people...they

have worked by intimidation, but beloved, it will take 'Elijah' only the last hour to restore the true worship and open the eyes of the people to know the one true God! Indeed, Mystery Babylon is crumbling before our very eyes! It is a great hour we live in! God by His own hand is leading His sons, whom He is carefully preparing as His great army, that they might go forth and fulfill His mighty plan of the ages, to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption once and for all, forever and ever, Amen! The Lord Jesus is meticulously preparing His body for this glorious day. He has not left His remnant nor has He forsaken His elect. He has made visitations upon them and upon each member in particular" — end quote.

This brings us to an important question. Just what is it that "slays" the two witnesses and causes such a spiritual sense of death to fall upon them? In my heart I know this does not speak of the world system literally and physically martyring the witnesses! Nor do I believe they are by outward laws, legislation, pressure, coercion, imprisonment, police action, or any other external force suppressed and silenced. This is a spiritual thing! They are killed by the beast that arises out of the bottomless pit or the abyss. It will help us to understand that this is not the same beast that in chapter thirteen arises out of the sea. The sea is not the abyss, the abyss is a realm deeper even than the sea!

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 unmeasurable. 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 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? It 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 it 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 in the great flood (Gen. 7:11; 8:2). Again we read of the waters of the great deep, or abyss (Isa. 51:10). 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 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 eleven are all symbols standing for spiritual realities, both positive and negative. That the "bottomless pit" or the "abyss" in the symbolisms of scripture portrays the human heart is beautifully expressed by 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 used here means not only something deep, but "deeper than" other things. The heart of the natural man is his deepest and innermost sense of being. The 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, "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 (arise) from (deep) within, and defile the man" (Mk. 7:18-23). 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. And just as these evil things come from deep within and rise up out of the heart to manifest in the flesh, so does the beast that overcomes the witnesses rise up out of the abyss within them to "kill" them!

Now, what could it be that would arise out of the very heart of God's witnesses to slay them and silence their testimony? I am not of the persuasion that this could be the gross sins of the flesh. I do not for one moment think that the witnesses are overcome by lust, fornication, pornography, lying, deceiving, robbing, going back into the worldly systems of man, or defrauding God's people! I cannot prove what I now say, and you, dear reader of these lines, may yourself be given further light upon this subject; but I have been impressed that the beast will arise in the form of discouragement, hesitation, questionings, doubts, fears, and dejection. After boldly prophesying for the symbolic 1260 days, as the vision tarries, the weary years drag on into decades, precious brethren who treasured the beautiful hope of sonship, who were the very apostles and pioneers of it, and hopefully embraced our final change from mortal to immortal, at last pass from the scene, going by

way of the grave, their intense conviction that they would live to see the manifestation of the sons of God and be blessed participators in it, dashed to the ground.

It is clear in my mind that the day will come when the brethren begin to question just as John the Baptist was disturbed and plagued by questionings in his heart when he sent his disciples to inquire of Jesus, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" What a question is that! Was it not John who, when he saw Jesus coming to the waters of the Jordan, cried out by the Spirit, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John was a prophet, the called and chosen forerunner of the Messiah, himself a type of the two witness company, and he recognized Jesus by the Spirit! John was standing right there in the water beside Jesus when the heavens opened, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, and he himself heard the voice that came from heaven declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" But the years dragged on. Jesus had no army, no political clout, no acceptance by the establishment, and appeared uninterested in overthrowing Rome and assuming kingship. Following the greatest prophetic ministry ever to grace this earth, John now muses within his heart, wondering to himself within himself, whether he was really right, did he truly hear from God, was Jesus indeed the Messiah he had so boldly announced?

How can one so blessed and enlightened by God question whether the thing he has believed in, hoped for, and prophesied by the spirit of revelation from God, will actually come to pass? Ah, the prophet David also questioned many times in the Psalms! And he was a man after God's own heart! The two faithful disciples, Cleopas and his friend, walking the road to Emmaus, hearts heavy with sorrow and brokenness because of the crucifixion and death of Jesus, sadly lamented to the stranger who joined them in the way, "But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done" (Lk. 24:21). The third day signified to them the point of no return — all hope lost!

No darker hour ever came to any of God's people than the disappointment and despair that hung like a pall over the twelve disciples of Jesus, the men who had walked with Him for three and a half years, had witnessed all His wonderful works, had communed with Him most intimately, had heard every gracious word that fell from His divine lips, and themselves shared in that ministry, performing mighty signs and wonders in His name. This little flock followed Jesus out of the city and ascended mount Calvary. They beheld their Lord and Master hanging naked upon a Roman cross, crucified as a common criminal between two thieves, and they followed His dead body to its resting place in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. These disciples did not understand! This was a shocking blow to the inborn hope which still held a prominent place in the hearts of these men. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" Peter had stoutly affirmed.

They had believed that their Messiah was to come and restore Israel to her lost heritage of world dominion. And just at the moment it appeared the multitudes were ready to crown Him and make Him their King, He is humiliated, reproached, dishonored, and disgraced before the eyes of all men. He who had raised the dead now lay still in the dark, dank tomb, Himself bound in grave clothes. Though Jesus had tried to warn and prepare them, they still were incapable of comprehending that other events must transpire first: that the King whom they had truly found and followed was not to reign immediately, but must die for the sins of the world. In their disillusionment and dejection Peter finally blurted out, "I am going fishing!" All seemed hopeless and lost. Their cherished expectations were every one dashed to the ground. The great drama was over. It was all over! They must

have been mistaken. Things weren't supposed to end this way. Why, by now, they should be reigning with Him in His kingdom! In heart-rending sorrow and in cold, stark fear of the Jewish leaders who had killed their Master, the disciples quickly scattered and went into hiding. I do not hesitate to tell you that better men than I, have questioned, wondered, doubted — greater men than I, have deserted!

When the vision tarries — will we persevere through the dark night of testing to lay hold upon the glory that shall be revealed? No matter, when the vale of unfulfilled expectations has been crossed, the witnesses shall rise again! They will stand upon their feet! Their enemies will behold them! They will ascend into heaven in a cloud! And immediately after their ascension into heaven the blessed Seer of Patmos beholds a “great wonder in heaven!” “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered...and she brought forth a manchild, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne” (Rev. 12:1-2,5). Ah, can you not see the mystery? Only the symbols have changed. For you see, my beloved, we are not shown several different things in these visions, only ONE GREAT TRUTH. The temple that is measured is a people. That temple people in turn become the prophetic ministry of the two witnesses! The two witnesses caught up into the heavens of God's Spirit then become the great wonder in heaven, the woman who is with child. The woman then brings forth out of herself THE MANCHILD! Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

It has well been said that “the darkest night is just before the dawn.” With what eternal gladness and everlasting astonishment and wonder the disciples of Jesus greeted the dawn of the resurrection morning! And so shall it be with God's elect in this great hour. The symbolic “death” of the witnesses will appear no less disappointing and heartbreaking than was the death of Jesus for those twelve men in the long ago. But, thank God, there is another resurrection morning! Hope rekindled, faith reborn, and the glory of manifest sonship shall burst forth out of the tomb of disillusionment and despair. Aren't you glad!

# Chapter 128

## *The Two Witnesses*

### *continued*

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And *their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city*, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified” (Rev. 11:7-8).

The present ministry of the two witnesses will not continue much longer. This ministry will finish, all that God purposed shall be accomplished, and the glorious manifestation of God’s sons shall at last appear before the startled eyes of mankind. The ministry of the two witnesses will come to an end before that great and terrible day of the Lord! Here we have presented in a pictorial manner, the fate of the two witnesses. This dire fate of the witnesses comes from two different sources, one within, the other without. It first comes from the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit, signifying that which arises from within, out of their own heart, overcoming and killing their testimony. We spoke of this at length in last month’s message. Then we have also their treatment at the hands of “the great city.”

I pray that all who now read these lines will seek the Holy Spirit to gain understanding of what it means that their dead bodies shall lie in the street of Jerusalem, the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. This cannot mean that two dead bodies shall lie in the literal sense of the word in the literal street of Jerusalem! In the Revelation the high significance lies in the fact which cannot be denied that “the street” where the bodies of the two witnesses lie is the street of the great city of religion, common to all the believers in the world who dwell in the “earth realm” of carnality, and therefore cannot be confined to one particular city or one certain street. “The great city” is no more a literal city than is the beast who ascends out of the bottomless pit a literal beast! The text itself clearly shows that something entirely different is meant, something spiritual. “...the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt.” Jerusalem signifies false Christianity, the city of God that has corrupted its way before the Lord. The title, “the great city,” is used no less than eight times elsewhere in the Revelation, and in every case applies to religious Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10,16,18, 19,21). By a careful examination of these passages, it will be clear that the reference is not to literal Babylon, but exclusively to mystical Babylon. We have noted that this “great city” is “spiritually,” or symbolically, called “Sodom,” for its soulical sensuality and wanton spiritual immoralities. It is spiritually called “Egypt,” for its tyranny and oppression; and “Babylon” now for its confusion, heresy, and malignity. The Gentiles, that is, the flesh, the carnal mind, and the worldly ways of natural men trample under foot the “holy city,” that is, the people of God, for the same period of time that the witnesses prophesy. The two witnesses, the prophetic ministry of the Spirit and the Word through an anointed company, now lie dead in the street of the great city of religion, the large, popular, recognized world church system of man. The elect still exists in

their midst, but they are now declared dead. Their voice has been silenced. And they are the object of contempt and ridicule throughout the great city of religion!

It is of interest to note the “street” or “broad way” in this great city, and compare it with the “street” or “broad way” in the Holy City, New Jerusalem which comes down from God out of heaven. The “great city” has a street or broad way, and “the Holy City,” representing the Lord’s purified and perfected people, has a street or broad way. In the street of the great city we see darkness, death, revelry, and merrymaking of different kinds. We see the citizens of the great city fraternizing with the ungodly people and systems of the world. In the street or broad way of the Holy City, we see gold, speaking of true riches, the divine, incorruptible nature of God! We see the throne of God and the Lamb, and we also see the tree of life abounding by the sparkling waters of the river of life which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, bearing twelve manner of fruits every year — the living Word of God! “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God.” In the broad way of the great city there is death and decay; in the broad way of the Holy City there is abundant life, growth, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

What are these streets? Do they exist on the earth today? I think so! All large cities of the ancient world had great broadways, and these broadways were the places of public assembly. The Greek word indicates such a broad way, not a simple street as we think of streets today. These broadways were more like our “city square.” It was in these broadways where the leaders of the people delivered their messages, and where they harangued the populace. The broadways of “the great city,” or the carnal church systems, are their places of public assembly and gathering, their great church edifices, fellowship halls, and educational facilities. It is where their leaders, the priests, pastors and others, celebrate the masses, and deliver their sermons; where great choirs sing, concerts are held, and religious entertainment of all kinds are delivered to the people. But the “Holy City,” the pure, matured, and prepared bride of Christ, also has her broadways, her public places of assembly! These are not physical places of earthly buildings, but places *in the Spirit*, for God has raised us up and “*made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus!*” It is in these broadways of spiritual life that you will see the throne of God, the Lordship of Christ raised up in the lives of His people! In these broadways you will see the tree of life, the living word of God that quickens men in divine life, growth, and development; yes, and it is in these broadways where you will see the ministry of the Spirit, the river of life flowing out from the throne! Isn’t it wonderful!

The bodies of the two witnesses were cast out into “*the street*” of the great city, and there they were left exposed to the elements, and exposed to the vision of the citizens of that city, and also of the ungodly who dwelt upon the earth. It means that in the eyes of the worldly church the Lord’s anointed prophetic ministry is counted as just another of the world’s many “religions” or “churches”! They are not esteemed as anything holy or special, just another “group,” indeed they are looked upon contemptuously as a heretical “cult”! To cast their dead bodies out into the open street after this manner, to deny them burial, and to make merry over them, is to treat them dishonorably, insultingly, scornfully, and with disdain, scurrility, and abuse. Ah, methinks I have lain in the street of that city! Yet, they don’t want to bury them, they don’t want to totally destroy the witness of the Spirit and the Word and the revelation they bring, they just want to take that revelation and fit it in to their own church teachings on a *lower level*, carnalizing and trivializing the deep truth until the life is clean gone out of it. They want to preserve the witnesses in the street of the city of religion as a dead, lifeless *form of godliness without power*, a doctrine or creed apart from the *spirit and walk of sonship to God*.

## SODOM AND EGYPT

“And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of that great city, which *spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified*”(Rev. 11:8).

The key to understanding the book of Revelation does not lie in the dictionary but in the heart — the heart consecrated, humble, meek, inquiring, ready to receive and do the will of God (Mat. 11:15; 13:9). The Revelation is part of God’s prophetic message, rich in mystery, clothed in the language of symbol, preserved from the prying eyes of the curious and the carnal, and all whose appetite for prognostication is insatiable. By the Spirit the beloved John prefaced the visions of this book with this admonition, “*Blessed are...those that hear the words of this prophecy, and **keep** those things that are written therein.*”

In our verse now being considered, “the great city,” “Sodom,” and “Egypt” are equated with “the place where our Lord was crucified.” Our Lord was crucified by religion in the city of religion, which at the time was the Jerusalem to which He came and which rejected Him and cast Him out. It was an apostate church which crucified the Son of God, and we must therefore search the mind of the Spirit and find the solution of these mysteries not in the physical and geographical sphere, but in the realm of the spirit where religious men wage war against the true testimony and purpose of God. Therefore we conclude that the names and titles given to this “great city” are not literal but spiritual, describing that one great city which is in perpetual opposition to that other city, the CITY OF GOD, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, whose citizens are one and all *spiritual and heavenly* men! Cain, who built the world’s first city, was a carnal-minded man who drenched its walls in his brother’s blood (Gen. 4:17). The founder of Rome did the same! Romulus first murdered his brother Remus to ensure that the city of Rome should bear his own name and that he should be its ruler. Thus it ever is with the city of this world, for in it “our Lord was crucified” — who came unto His own, but His own received Him not.

Israel in her apostate condition in the days of the prophets came to be described in these hated terms, “Sodom and Egypt.” Isaiah writes to the rulers of Jerusalem, “*Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah*”(Isa. 1:10). Of Jerusalem, he inquires, “*How is the faithful city become an harlot...?*”(Isa. 1:21). Again, in the same chapter, “*Except the Lord of hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah*”(Isa. 1:9). Therefore this world church system of man is here being portrayed as the “great city” which no longer is called God’s city, but which *spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*” it is not Sodom, nor is it Egypt, but in John’s vision it is “in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt.” Sodom is the picture of the carnal life, of worldly unnaturalness, of sensual living, that is, of a sense-centered, man-focused, and need-oriented religious program!

Egypt is the picture of spiritual bondage and oppression where men serve God under the demanding taskmasters of religious systems who seek to control their lives, monopolize their time and talents, and fleece them of their money. Understood as a symbol, not a name, the Hebrew for Egypt means “the twice-narrow place.” It is a place of constraints and claustrophobia, a passage so constricted that a man or woman can only walk forward, from a given past to an unavoidable future, without being able to turn. “*From the **narrow place** I cried out, Lord,*” says Psalm 118, using another form of the word, “*In the **wide place** the Lord answered me!*” Egypt is a condition of the spirit. When the Lord’s people are enabled to

discern, see, and understand the great and horrible bondage of religion over their lives, they then see *their Egypt!*

“And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that  *dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another*; because these two prophets *tormented* them that *dwell on the earth*”(Rev. 11:9-10).

Those who rejoice and make merry when the prophetic testimony of the witnesses is silenced, apparently coming to naught, are those who “dwell upon the earth,” that is, the “earth dwellers,” carnal Christians who are “of the earth, earthy” — those who follow Jesus for temporal blessings, the prosperity crowd who seek fame and riches in the name of Jesus, who “mind earthly things” and “walk after the flesh” — who are more concerned about God blessing their bank accounts, blessing them with the best jobs, the finest clothes, the most expensive cars, the most plush homes, with divine healing and health and every earthly amenity. Their sole home is this earth and they have no connection whatever with heaven! They are not those who “dwell in heaven,” who “live and walk in the Spirit,” who “sit together with Christ in the heavenly places,” and are “blessed with all *spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus!*” The earth-dwellers follow the earthly blessings and benefits of the gospel but have no passion to “go on to perfection,” to have “Christ formed in them,” to be “conformed to the image of the Son,” to “come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” and to “inherit the kingdom of God as kings and priests upon His throne!”

The reason why the earth-dwellers rejoice over the silencing of the witnesses is because their conscience is tormented by the truth of that witness. “These two witnesses tormented them that dwell on the earth.” The Lord told His disciples in the upper room, “*If ye were of the world the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*” To this perverted Sodom and worldly Egypt the two witnesses, the prophetic ministry of God’s remnant people, seem as *the dead*, because they appear to walk in the streets with no ministry and no followers. Now this people who dwell on *earthly things* are no longer tormented by a living word so they rejoice because the moving of the Spirit of God is gone, and they make merry and give gifts one to another; in other words, they crank up the soulish, sensational, flesh-oriented and entertainment-centered church programs that tickle the ears and attract the crowds, and make a great religious splash in the community. It is ever thus, the earth-bound, especially those in the denser realms of the religious bondage of Babylon, inwardly rejoice with one another and make merry when they hear of the “death” of any deep and profound move of the Spirit and Word of God! They are pleased when the anointing lifts and the glory departs, and when those who were the Lord’s instruments in the move are vomited out from their midst. Now they can settle down in their little routine of form, ceremony, social activity, man-made programs and promotions, and entertainment. The prophetic ministry is a torment to them and their worldly systems! The strong word of the Lord in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost distresses, agitates, confuses, convulses, and torments the earth-dwellers! This prophetic ministry has no interest and no part in their lust of the eyes, their lust of the flesh, and their pride of life, nor in their promotion of the things of this dying world order. This ministry is spiritually set, appointed and destined of our Father to bring an *end* to all that is in and of *this world*. It prepares the way of the Lord, and makes straight His paths! It is indeed a torment to all who dwell on the earth-plane, because of the holiness and

majesty of God! And when at last it seems that this witness is dead and gone and forever passed from the scene, what a celebration this evokes!

The following words by George Warnock bear eloquent testimony to the truth we now present.

“We have already talked about the Testimony of Jesus...that corporate witness of the Light that shines from His people who are walking in the Spirit. That witness was clear and powerful in Jesus...and God must have it that way in His people. I recall reading some of the journals of George Fox, and the powerful Light that shone forth upon the people in that day. But as George Fox emphasized that the Light was for all men, and sought to bring others into the Light, the movement that came out of his ministry became a corporate Testimony. They did not idolize him, but they emphasized what their leader emphasized: every man who comes to the Light must walk in the same Light, and there must be an equal brotherhood. And because it was a light that penetrated a church that was greatly overshadowed by darkness — there was much persecution *from the established church*. He and his *Friends* walked in it together, as brothers. And shared persecution together, as brothers. Repentant sinners as well as antagonistic church members would literally quake and tremble as he stood before them! It was the *fear of God* that made the word of God go forth with might and with power. I used to wonder why it says of the ‘two witnesses’ that they *tormented* them that dwell on the earth,’ but I understood when I read in Fox’s journals this account of what happened in *The House of Correction*, in Derby, England:

“The keeper of the prison, being a high professor, was greatly enraged against me, and spoke very wickedly of me; but it pleased the Lord one day to strike him, so that he was in great trouble and under much terror of mind. And, as I was walking in my chamber I heard a doleful noise, and standing still, I heard him say to his wife, ‘Wife, I have seen the day of judgment, and I saw George there, and I was afraid of him, because I had done him so much wrong, and spoken so much against him to the ministers and professors, and to the justices, and in taverns and alehouses.’ After this, towards the evening, he came into my chamber, and said to me, ‘I have been as a lion against you, but now I come like a lamb, and like the jailer that came to Paul and Silas trembling.’ And he desired he might lodge with me. I told him I was in his power, he might do what he would; but he said ‘Nay’ that he would have my leave, and that he could desire to be always with me, but not to have me as a prisoner. *He said he had been plagued, and his house had been plagued, for my sake.* So I suffered him to lodge with me.

“When the morning came he rose and went to the justices, and told them that he and his house had been *plagued* for my sake. One of the justices replied (as he reported to me) that *the plagues* were upon them, too, for keeping me.” At this point George Warnock comments: “I believe *the two witnesses* represent the corporate testimony of Jesus Christ, whose clear witness will shine throughout the earth. Their sphere of ministry is ‘Sodom and Egypt’ (*where our Lord was crucified*); not the Sodom that Lot lived in, or the Egypt that made slaves of the Israelites. But those cities speak of the world system that crucified Jesus — Sodom, which was affluent and wealthy and at ease, and filled with moral corruption. And Egypt, representing the opposition from without, as it was with the children of Israel in the days of their captivity”— end quote.

Let us now notice that there is a depth of meaning in this word “tormented” that lies beyond all that we have said thus far. The Greek word is *basanismos* which is derived from the root *basanos* which 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 touchstone would leave a peculiar mark, different to that of all 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. Can we not see by this that the “torment” of the “earth-dwellers” is not because the two witnesses physically torture them by sadistically inflicting upon them outward curses, plagues, and judgments, but rather by the living testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy, the earth-dwellers are *convicted within themselves*, being tested and tried by the Spirit and the Word for their own truth and purity.

Is this not the very same thing that so angered and infuriated the scribes and Pharisees when they saw the anointed ministry and heard the majestic words of the firstborn Son of God? In the light of their own impotent religion, static creeds, lifeless traditions, and hard, legalistic hearts they were powerfully convicted by the holy life, gracious words, wisdom, and mighty works of Jesus! It pricked them in their hearts! They were condemned, not by Jesus, but *within themselves!* Oh, yes, it was a torment unto them because it applied the touchstone to their own lives and religion, and they knew in their heart of hearts that they were poor, blind, powerless, empty, and wretched! When the scribes and Pharisees brought the woman taken in the very act of adultery and set her before Jesus they said to Him, “*Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting Him that they might have to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground, as though He heard them not. So when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more*”(Jn. 8:4-11).

The torment, then, is that which is inflicted by the LIVING and ENERGETIC WORD of God, for this Word is the “discerner and analyzer and sifter (Wuest) of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). When the earth-dwellers are being tormented by the two witnesses they are having their genuineness and quality tested and challenged by the essence-word of God, which is the living spirit of prophecy, which also is, in reality, God Himself — for our God IS A CONSUMING FIRE!

A friend has ably written, “Thus we find that it is as Paul said, ‘*We are a fragrance of life — unto life, but we are a fragrance (odor) of death — unto death.*’ To those who are alive, we smell fragrantly alive. But to those who are dead, we have the stench of death! But it is the *same anointing* that does *both works*. There is not a word of life for one group and a word of death and judgment for another. It is the SAME WORD — but falling on different ears. It is the same rain — but falling on different ground. It is the same sun rising — but shining on different material. As the old saying goes, ‘The same sun that melts wax, hardens clay.’ That is why, in Revelation 22:11 the Lord says, ‘*He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*’ One Greek commentator said that the sense of the Greek in this passage is, ‘*Let him be more and more filthy, more and more unjust, more and more righteous, more and more holy.*’ In other words, the LIGHT **reveals** the condition — it does not CREATE IT!! like what I read in Wuest the other night: ‘Light rejected, blinds!’ Jesus

said, ' *Men refuse to come to the light because their deeds are evil.*' The same Word that blesses one will become a curse to another because of the difference in the heart that receives it. This is why I say there is no need to judge Babylon, because ' *He that believeth not is **condemned already.***' A BEAUTIFUL WORD will condemn an unrighteous heart — and will at the same time deliver the righteous" — end quote.

## THE RESURRECTION OF THE TWO WITNESSES

"And after *three days and an half* the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they *stood upon their feet*; and great fear fell upon them which saw them" (Rev. 11:11).

The two witnesses continue in that condition of death for three and a half days, according to prophetic time. This is half the perfect time of seven, or half the fullness of time, indicating a temporary state that cannot last nor be victorious. They will not remain "dead" forever! Truth crushed will rise again! It is a prophetic time, the spiritual meaning is found in the significance of the number, not a literal period of three and a half days or three and a half years, as some count it.

The spirit of life from God entering into the fallen witnesses so that they stand upon their feet once more to the terror of those who had been rejoicing in their death, has an obvious connection with the prophecy of Ezekiel 37 — the resurrection of the dry bones of the house of Israel after the Babylonian captivity: "Come from the four winds O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live..." The word used for "breath" here is the same as for "Spirit" in Genesis 1:2, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters..." As Ezekiel prophesied to the dry bones "the breath came into them and they lived, and **stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.**" Compare these words with those in our text: "And the spirit of life from God entered into them and **they stood upon their feet.**" The word for "spirit" is *zoe*. It is not the normal life of all animals and even of the insensate creation, but the very divine life of God which enters them. Though the witness of the Spirit and the Word through God's anointed prophetic company may seem to be dead, it shall be breathed upon by the very breath of God and it shall live again, and stand up in the earth again — raised up to an even higher realm of spiritual revelation, heavenly reality, and divine purpose, glory, and power. Hallelujah!

We have all experienced a personal, individual, inward aspect of this great truth. The word of truth that we formerly heard, the word of revelation that once was spirit and life, but which became to us just a fading hope as the demands and struggles of life pressed in upon us and beat us down and we found ourselves in our own wilderness experience, dry, parched, barren, and dead, suddenly begins to vibrate, coming to life again with quickening power by the sovereign moving of the Spirit of the Lord! O glad day! Within us the two witnesses stand up again! They were lying in the street of our soul, but now they are standing up in the power of God!

## ASCENDING IN THE CLOUD

"And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, *Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud*; and their enemies beheld them" (Rev. 11:12),

While the King James Bible says that the witnesses ascended up to heaven in "a" cloud, it is significant to note that the Greek text reads, "And they ascended up to heaven in THE cloud." On that momentous occasion when the Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John up

into the mount and was transfigured before them, suddenly there appeared A BRIGHT CLOUD — a cloud with a light in it! And out of that bright cloud the voice of the Father spake concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, “This is my beloved Son: hear Him!” It is more than coincidence that, as Peter spoke, a CLOUD overshadowed them and a Voice came out of the cloud. One of the significant facts in connection with the glory cloud of God’s presence which manifested at various times throughout the Old Testament, is that God always *spoke* from the cloud. This began first on mount Sinai.” And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may *hear when I speak* with thee...and the Lord came down upon mount Sinai...and the Lord *called Moses*...”(Ex. 19:9,20).At a later time God spoke from the same cloud after that it had descended upon the tabernacle.” And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the CLOUDY PILLAR descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and *the Lord talked with Moses*”(Ex. 33:9).

What was that bright cloud with the light in it from which the voice of God spake? It was none other than the pillar of cloud housing the glory fire, the Shekinah glory of God that had led the children of Israel in their exodus out of Egypt and guided them for forty years! As Jesus prayed on the mount, He was transfigured before His chosen disciples. At that moment of transfiguration the glory cloud enveloped Him and God spoke from the midst of the radiance of glory.

Here I wish to point out a most significant fact of scripture which has entirely been overlooked by the average Bible student and almost all preachers and teachers in the church systems. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel to the ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always only ONE SINGLE CLOUD. One cloud over mount Sinai. One cloud guiding the children of Israel through the wilderness. One cloud resting upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. One cloud shining in the most holy place. One cloud filling Solomon’s temple. One cloud overshadowing the virgin, implanting the seed of the Christ. One cloud shimmering over the summit of the mount of Transfiguration. And finally, we read, “And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and A CLOUD (only one!) received Him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9).Christ ascended in ONE SOLITARY CLOUD of God’s Shekinah glory — the very *same* cloud in which He had manifested His presence throughout the long ages of time.

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

The question follows: Why are there *many clouds* attending Christ’s coming again, and what are these clouds? To aid our understanding of this truth, let us not for one moment forget that we are dealing with *the cloud of God’s glory and presence*. The Shekinah. When Jesus,

the firstborn Son of God, was in the world John said of Him, “And we beheld *His glory*”(Jn. 1:14).When did they behold His glory? You may reply that they beheld His glory when He went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, forgiving sins, and teaching the glorious truths of the kingdom of God. I do not deny that in all those things they beheld His glory, but the apostle Peter pinpoints for us what is really meant by them beholding the glory of the Son.” For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eyewitnesses of His majesty (glory)*.For He received from God the Father honour and *glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory (the glory cloud)*,saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, *when we were with Him in the holy mount*”(II Pet. 1:16-18).

How very significant that at the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry He said, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us...and the ***glory which Thou gavest me I have given them***...I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, *be with me where I am*; that they may behold ***my glory*** which Thou hast given me” (Jn. 17:20-24).And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation’s light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, our heavenly Father manifested to creation in a singular way *His own glory*. He, the one eternal God, exhibited His presence in the form of *one glory cloud*. But as Jesus approached the cross and the glorious events to unfold shortly thereafter, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to *share His glory with His vast family of sons*...that glorious body which is *the fullness* of Him that filleth all in all! Oh, the wonder of it!

Let us see then what great encouragement God has given us concerning His glory.” And ye know how we exhorted you, as a father does his children, that ye should walk worthy of God, who hath called you *to His kingdom and glory*” I Thes. 2:11-12).Peter asserts, “I...also am...*a partaker of the glory* that shall be revealed” (I Pet. 5:1).“Whereunto He called you...to the obtaining of *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*”(II Thes. 2:14).“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with *the glory that shall be revealed in us*”(Rom. 8:18).The writer to the Hebrews adds this significant testimony: “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing *many sons to glory*, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10).That there is to be a mighty and universal revelation of the glory of God in and through His many sons, that very same glory which was revealed in the cloud of old, is evident!

When Jesus ascended two thousand years ago, He ascended glorified in that singular glory cloud in which He had dwelt from eternity. He was the One God manifested in all fullness in one Man, the Son. But, blessed be God! When He comes again He comes to be” ***GLORIFIED I-N H-I-S S-A-I-N-T-S***, and to be admired ***I-N T-H-E-M*** that believe in that day” (II Thes. 1:10).The glory is shared, so the *cloud* which represents that glory *is shared*. Each elect son becomes a manifestation of His glory — of the *cloud*— of the Shekinah. Each is as a cloud, but none manifest in individuality, for it is written, “And if (we are) children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be GLORIFIED TOGETHER” (Rom. 8:17).

But now we find that the two witnesses ascend up to heaven in THE CLOUD. Now, can you not see that this signifies an ascension into a higher heaven of the Spirit of the Lord, into the glory of our glorious Head and Lord? There is nothing wrong with desiring to ascend higher

into the spiritual heavens of our Father! It is an honorable goal, the aim of every saint of God with a holy passion to apprehend that for which we also have been apprehended in Christ Jesus. But remember, *there is a proper way of ascending*, and that proper way is in **THE CLOUD** — that is, IN CHRIST JESUS! It is always in oneness and union in Him! Ascending by any other means makes one a thief and a robber (Jn. 10:1). No one, not even one person, can ascend into heaven by his own volition or efforts, or by his own worth or merits. Trying to flap your own wings to get there is *futile*! There is no formula, no easy seven point program, no method or technique apart from **oneness and union in Jesus!** Our Lord Jesus Christ is THE CLOUD! We will ascend IN THE CLOUD or our feet, spiritually, will never get off the ground! Jesus ascended *far above* all heavens, which would be above all other exalted positions, above all other ruling factions, above every other glory of men and of angels!

The witnesses ascend up to heaven in *the* cloud — raised up into the perfection, fullness, and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is the highest dimension of the Spirit and the Word — the full measure of the Spirit of Him who was filled with the Spirit *without measure*, and the absolute purity and omnipotent power of the Word as it is in Christ who *is the Word*. This is not the expression of the Spirit and the Word in the lower heavens of prophetic anointing — all that is past — this is the fullest move of the Spirit and the ultimate revelation of the Word that will produce the *manchild*! Let all who would ascend into this high and holy place loose their grip on all the old things belonging to the natural realm and the traditions of men. *All the old things and all the old orders are passing away* and we are entering a new era, a higher plane, a brighter day, and a greater glory! Let the old things go! Do not set your heart on any old realm you have passed through, including the present “two-witness” prophetic ministry announcing the imminent appearing of the fullness of God’s Christ — the manchild. Our heavenly Father will allow even this ministry to die in the street of the city. Set your heart on the heavens above! Make Christ Himself your life and your very existence. HE is the resurrected, ascended, exalted One! We all have set our faces to ascend up to the spiritual heaven where He dwells, and we *shall ascend* IN THE CLOUD. Isn’t it wonderful!

## THE EARTHQUAKE

“And the same hour there was a *great earthquake*...”(Rev. 11:13).

As the two witnesses ascend into the heavens of Christ’s glory it causes a great earth-shaking as the carnality and earthliness within us is dealt with in a deeper measure. Our spirit man ascends into a new place and it produces shock waves in our natural life. And I have some good news for you — for God’s firstfruit company *this is the final shaking!* Aren’t you glad!

Some years ago Rosemary Garzon wrote, “We have recently heard of a prophecy given concerning a terrible earthquake this summer in this country. Through the years we have heard of similar prophecies being given, which most of you have also heard. Be that as it may. We do know that the hour of the manifestation of the sons of God must surely be nigh at hand. There is enough proof in His word that when we have a breakthrough of great intensity from the natural earth realm into the realm of His Spirit, an earthquake is assured! We might liken this reaction to the ‘sonic boom’ we are all familiar with when a jet plane breaks through the sound barrier. This reaction is one of God’s laws in His vast universe. When Jesus Christ broke through His flesh body and ‘yielded up the ghost’ we read of what took place.’ *And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent: and the graves were opened: and many*

*bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many'(Mat. 27:51-53)."*

"And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and *the tenth part of the city fell...*" (Rev. 11:13).

What is a tenth? It's a tithe, a firstfruit, an earnest — that which is uniquely God's and guarantees the balance! All of Babylon, the "great city," will fall, but here it is a partial fall. Individually, the confusion of Babylon does not fall all at once. When we first heard the call of the Spirit to come out of Babylon, truly we thought that the great city had fallen within us! But through these years of walking with God we discovered that only a tenth part of the city fell! Yet, that tenth was the firstfruit, the "earnest" — the guarantee that one day every citadel, wall, tower, and fortress of Babylon would come tumbling down to lie in complete and eternal ruin within us. The tenth part prepares the way for further desolations to come!

George Hawtin spoke of this very truth when he wrote in his little booklet *Mystery Babylon*, "God does not leave you in a dry land for long if you are bound to be one with Him. Should my life be very long on earth, I shall never be able to forget the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power that came to our class room as we waited on God that glorious 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 1948, when God began to do a new thing that was destined for a time to *shake* the church system all over America. How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praise of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs of earth went sweeping up the sky steps while angels stood at heaven's gates and swept their harps of gold. Day after day, month after month the celestial wonder continued. Heaven came down our souls to greet and glory crowned the mercy seat. People came for thousands of miles to drink at the ever flowing fountain of life and it looked for a time as though the walls of Babylon were to be broken down and the whole church would come marching to Zion. *But the Babylonian captivity was not yet over.* As I look sadly in retrospect now, I can see with clearness that the great and blessed move of God was not two years old before the sectarian spirit began to show its ugly head and men began to hide the Babylonish garment in their tents together with the silver and the wedge of gold"— end quote. Brother Hawtin then continues on to show just *how much* of Babylon had not yet fallen within them.

Corporately, the sons of God themselves are the "tenth" part of Babylon that is now falling. As the Spirit of the Lord has destroyed the strongholds of Babylon within us, we are all aware that not all of this symbolic city has fallen! The other nine-tenths, the structure of the church system, has continued till today, but it has suffered some loss from the earthquake that has freed God's elect from its clutches. What it has lost and is losing from itself is here called "a tenth." This reminds us that, when the prophet Isaiah was told about the destruction coming upon Jerusalem and its kingdom of Judah, "there will still be in it a tenth, and it must again become...like a massive tree in which, when there is a cutting down of them, there is a stump; a holy seed will be the stump of it" (Isa. 6:13). This "stump" or "holy seed" proved to be the faithful remnant that survived the exile in Babylon and returned home to rebuild the holy temple at Jerusalem and restore the kingdom of Israel. Though the application is a little different, the principle is the same — the "tenth part" is the promise that the whole kingdom of Babylon will come down!

Only after the blessed sons of God are manifest and the glorious bride of Christ has "made herself ready" will the entire city of Mystery Babylon be eternally desolated, burned with fire, and reduced to ashes. And yet — when the two witnesses go up the city is shaken mightily

and a tenth part of it comes down. The witnesses *go up* and the city *falls down!* Oh, the mystery of it! The message is just this — when the prophetic ministry of this hour is raised up into a higher realm within us, when the present truth we have received *becomes life and reality*, raised up into the glory of the Christ within, Babylon is mightily shaken and begins to fall!

“And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake *were slain of men seven thousand*: and the remnant were a frightened, and gave glory to the God of heaven” (Rev. 11:13).

These seven thousand bespeak of a remnant out of Babylon in whom the carnality of the soulical religious realm is slain. To our minds it seems like a horrible judgment for seven thousand men to be killed! If John were speaking *literally*, so it would appear. But is it not a *good thing* for the carnal life of the Lord’s people to be slain within them? It is a deep mystery, but *all death is not the same death.*” You are dead, and you (new) life is hid with Christ in God” doesn’t mean your body is in the grave and your spirit has flown away to some far-off heaven somewhere to be with Jesus. Oh, no! Theologians read the book of Revelation with the literal understanding of the natural mind and never see beyond the letter of the word! These seven thousand are captives of Babylon! When the prophet Elijah fled from the face of the threatening queen Jezebel into the mountainous region of Horeb, the Lord told Elijah, “Yet I have left me *seven thousand* in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him” (1 Kings 19:18). The apostle Paul applied this to the remnant of Israel that did not stick to Jerusalem in rejecting the ministry of Jesus the Christ, but forsook her, leaving her to the consequences of murdering the Son of God. Similarly, in the symbolic “earthquake” when the two witnesses are caught up to their higher realm in the heavens of the Spirit, a symbolic “seven thousand persons,” that is, the complete remnant company, *die* to the church systems of man. They cease to exist to the Babylon system! No longer can she retain their “names” on her church registries. They are no longer alive and active in her! Thus, the “seven thousand men” correspond to the “tenth part” of the great city that falls!

The number, of course, is not literal — seven is the number of completion and perfection and one thousand signifies the day of the Lord. Furthermore, the slaying of seven thousand “men” requires a deeper consideration. The Greek text actually reads, “And there were killed seven thousand *names* of men.” This is a peculiar expression, and is similar to the usage in Revelation 3:4, “Thou has a few *names* even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments...”; also in Acts 1:15, “The number of *names* together were about an hundred and twenty.” In the scriptures “names” are of utmost importance and are generally used to denote the character, nature, or office of the person bearing the name. Names are very significant in the meaning of the prophecies of the scriptures, and often the names of the prophets signify the nature of their prophecy. The name reveals the character, or nature of the person. Seven thousand “names” of men were killed! Thank God, He is killing, destroying the nature of old Adam and the character of religious Babylon in the life of each and every member of His called and chosen elect! There is to be a complete, total eradication of the carnal mind, human identity, Adamic life, and the soulical religious spirit — only Christ will remain!

So God does His perfect work in this company, causing Babylon in them to fall; the error, bondage, delusion, deception, ignorance, and darkness of Babylon within them is brought to an absolute death. The illumination of the day of the Lord dawns in their hearts! Truth and reality flood in upon their understanding and they behold the majesty of God’s Christ as they

ascend into the heights of the Spirit! The old religious mentality is wiped out by the revelation and quickening of the truth as it is in Jesus!

“The *second woe is past*; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly” (Rev. 11:14).

The three “woes” are upon Babylon. The ministers in the Babylonian church systems all think the woes are to be poured out upon all the wicked sinners of earth, but such is not the case. The woes come upon the very spirit and system of which they are a part, and which they suppose safeguards them from the woes. On the other hand, let not anyone who reads these words imagine that the woes are reserved only for “them,” those poor Christians in the organized church systems. Oh, no! Many saints are inclined to point to the church systems and call them Babylon. But this is not enough! I do not hesitate to tell you that the very root of Babylon has been *within us all* to this very day. Make no mistake about it! You have had to contend with it all along the way, and so have I. And I still see it shooting out its tentacles from even prominent brethren in this *kingdom walk* as they put their names to their ministries, make buildings and money their centers, publish and sell their books, and charge, putting a price on everything they send out. Religion is big business, my brother, my sister, and now “kingdom” is becoming big business! Don’t tell me that the taproot of Babylon doesn’t run very deep within each of us! The outward form is merely the visible manifestation of the inward nature and spirit. But now, my beloved, the ax is laid to the root of the tree and the deep root of Babylon is being cut out and cast into the fire! Aren’t you glad!

A “woe” is no longer a woe when it has passed away, and very often what seemed to destroy us is the very thing that propels us forward into the new heights in God. This “woe” was a misfortune only as long as it lasted, but if the time of its duration is troublesome, its consequences are glorious beyond words to describe!

# Chapter 129

## The Seventh Angel Sounds

“And the seventh angel sounded...” (Rev. 11:15).

Our text carries us back to a previous mention of the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Strange to say, there have been numerous individuals throughout church history who have presumed that they, personally, were the seventh angel sounding the seventh trumpet! In Martin Luther’s day Michael Stiefel regarded himself as the “seventh angel” of Revelation 11:15. Benjamin Purnell, founder of the communal religious colony known as the House of David, in 1895 claimed a revelation which told him that he was this angel. Charles Taze Russell (1852 — 1916) not only claimed this honor for himself but also held that the first six “angels” were Paul, John, Arias, Waldo, Wycliffe, and Luther. In my lifetime there has been more than one person who has proclaimed himself as this seventh angel, the most notable, perhaps, being William Branham in the mid-1900’s. The human heart being what it is, we have probably not yet heard the last of such claims and counterclaims. My soul sings a thousand hallelujahs in thanks and praise to God that the sounding of the seventh trumpet signifies something far transcendent to the word proclaimed by any of these illustrious men!

When the blessed seer of Patmos first introduced the seventh angel, he wrote, “And the angel which I saw...swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever...that...*in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the **mystery of God should be finished***” (Rev. 10:5-7). The words, “***In the days*** of the voice of the seventh angel,” and the words, “***when he begins to sound,***” speak volumes to me because the complete sounding of that trumpet involves a process of time and shows us that our change which comes with the sounding of seventh, or last, trumpet is not to find its total consummation in one specific moment. There is the obvious implication of a prolonged sounding extending through various periods and dealings. Yet at the initial sounding, the “mystery” of God’s purpose in His elect shall no longer be restrained or 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 wonderful things take place — the temple of God is opened in heaven, the ark of the covenant is seen in His temple, a great wonder appears 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 cries, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brings forth a manchild, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child is caught up unto God, and to His throne. None of these things happened as a result of the word or ministry of the men named above who claimed the identity of the seventh angel, yet many thousands of the Lord’s people *have heard* the sounding of the seventh angel, not from the lips of any one individual, but in the Spirit and by the Spirit as the Lord has moved in the midst of His elect! By a deep, spiritual work of God the stage is being set for glorious things to come!

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 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!* This is the mystery of “godliness” or “God-likeness.” Except God be manifest in our flesh, as He was manifest in the flesh of the firstborn Son, there can be no visible image or expression of God. 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 made 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*. 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 just 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 fullness of the stature of Christ! Christ the Head and Christ the body are joined in the blessed union of *fullness*. The great purpose of God revealed in sons has been accomplished. The **mystery** of God manifest in the flesh will be finished!

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 by His servants the prophets.*” 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 is **no longer a hope** — HE IS BECOME THE GLORY! The mystery is finished, completed, fulfilled, realized, attained, accomplished, perfected, concluded, and consummated! Isn’t it wonderful!

Just as soon as the seventh angel begins to sound his trumpet-message and the mystery of God formed as Christ in His many brethren is finished, the very next scenes are of the temple of God opened in heaven, the ark is seen in His temple, the great wonder of the woman in heaven travailing in birth, and the birth of her remarkable manchild who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron! The seventh trumpet, therefore, 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 the omnipotence of His authority! No man can rule over the nations *without* until first he has ruled the “nations” *within* — all the inclinations, propensities, and powers of the carnal mind and the flesh nature within each of us which also are the characteristics of all the external “kingdoms” of men of the world system.

Those who have overcome all of the “seven nations” which occupy the “land” of our inward spiritual inheritance in Christ, shall then be caught up unto God and His throne, given a “rod of iron,” or “divine authority” to rule *all nations in all realms* until all have been subdued under the glory and majesty of the kingdom of God! In the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet-message the mystery shall be finished, the Christ body completed, the long and

tedious work of preparation of God's sons shall at last be consummated. The trumpet has begun to sound! There is no doubt that you who now read these lines have heard the sound thereof! I am not referring to hearing my word, my message, or my ministry, or that of any other of God's ministers and scribes, but to that voice which you have clearly and powerfully heard *by the spirit within yourself*, of which the things we speak serve merely as a confirmation. There is an acceleration of God's revelatory word in the midst of God's called and chosen elect, an intensified trumpet-declaration, 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, world government, great tribulation, denominationalism, sectarianism, mansions over the hilltop, cabins in the corner of gloryland, pie in the sky, religious programs, rituals, ceremonies, endless meetings, coverings, bishops, set men, cunningly devised fables, grandiose programs and promotions of men, 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, 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!

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 no carnal ear can discern them, and only the Spirit can reveal its message to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Do not miss what the Spirit is saying; gird up the loins of your mind with the truth that will fully redeem and transform you, in spirit, soul, and body!

## **THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD IS BECOME THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND CHRIST**

"And 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*" (Rev. 11:15).

When the seventh trumpet sounds great voices are heard in the heavenly realms of the Spirit, and mighty shouts of acclamation and praise to God are lifted. Why here, but not at each of the previous trumpets? Is it not because this seventh trumpet *finishes* the ages-long mystery of Christ being formed in His body, resulting in the birth of the manchild, the manifest sons of God, who are caught up unto God and His throne, given divine authority over all nations to rule them with a rod of iron. O glorious consummation! The Revelation echoes with voices. It rings with shouts of triumph. Singing breaks forth at almost every turn. No other book is quite like it. In the Revelation the song of the Lord swells and sweeps through the sky-streets of the city of God each time the Lord's people are caught up into a higher realm! Fifty-six times voices are heard, and they are all voices of victory and singing. The voice of the Lamb, angels' voices, elder's voices, voices of "living creatures" and of redeemed souls, voices of the 144,000 standing upon mount Zion, twice ten thousand times ten thousand, and the voice of every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, all combine to give such a vision of victory as would assure us that our glorious Father's redemption reaches

unto all creatures in all realms, from the lowest depths to the highest heaven, until the entire universe resonates and vibrates with the songs of deliverance, restoration, and triumph in Christ! It is worth noting that no devils in the drama have singing voices, they are all tone-deaf devils. Beastly passions do not awaken song. Sin and death are not musical. The flesh, the world, and the devil smother the celestial melodizing impulse in the heart and paralyze the vocal chords.

As a result of the sounding of the seventh trumpet John hears somewhere out of the heavenly spheres great voices proclaiming, “*The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ.*” He hears the ransomed of the Lord singing this glad refrain, “*We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast; because Thou hast taken Thy great power, and didst reign.*” It is important for us to understand what these voices say! The text says that they shout, “The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.” In the King James Version we read of **kingdoms**, in the plural. “The **kingdoms** of this world are become the **kingdoms** of our Lord, and of His Christ.” This would leave the impression that the reference is to the various civil nations, kingdoms, and empires in the political sense of the word that exist upon the earth. In that view it would signify the total and complete triumph of the kingdom of God in all realms, so that every diverse tongue, tribe, people, and nation in the whole world would now be subjugated to the reign of God’s Christ, living in peace, righteousness, and harmony unto the ends of the earth. Yet, reading through the rest of the book of Revelation, it is abundantly clear that such is not the case! Many things must yet transpire before such a glorious outcome has been achieved! While it is true that God rules in the kingdoms of men, and shall in His time bring them all under the dominion of His holy saints, the subject in chapter eleven of the Revelation is not that — it is the establishment of Christ’s spiritual rule within His king-priest company!

The great truth that the spirit of truth would impress upon us here is that *everything* in chapter eleven of the Revelation relates to God’s elect — *not the world!* The Greek text reads, “The **kingdom** of the world is become the **kingdom** of our Lord, and of His Anointed; and He shall reign for the ages of the ages.” Note, it is not the “kingdoms,” plural, of the world, but the “kingdom,” singular, of the world that becomes the “kingdom,” singular, of our Lord, and of His Christ. Our English word “kingdom” conveys the idea of territory or of a political entity. It is true that the Greek term *basileia* also includes the connotation of territory and that it may mean a political entity ruled by a king. But there is another meaning that the Greek word has, and that meaning is “sovereignty” or “rule.” Unfortunately the English word “kingdom” does not carry over this meaning, therefore something vital is lost in many translations where a different word than “kingdom” should be used. That this idea of sovereignty, rule, or dominion is actually the most common meaning of the word in the New Testament, is plainly evident to anyone who will take the time to study its usage. The kingdom of God is the *rule* or *dominion* of God by any agency, especially *by the power of His Spirit!* When Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is within you,” He was telling us that the *rule* of God is within us, in the very life, authority, and power within our spirit!

And what shall we say, then, of the *dominion* God has promised to men in His own image? Did not His lips declare from the very dawn of man’s existence on earth, “Let us *give them dominion?*” Hear the words of the first blessed Son of God, the true man in the image of God, as He in triumph declares, “All power (authority) is *given unto me* in heaven and in earth.” It is gloriously true, the kingdom of God is within you, and God rules within men by His Spirit. But is that the whole truth? I am inclined to think that our heavenly Father not only rules *in* men, but He also rules *through* men. Does He not rule *in* our Lord Jesus Christ,

so that the Son says that He does only what He sees His Father do, He speaks only what He hears of the Father, that He does always what pleases the Father, and that it is the Father that *dwelleth in Him* that does the works? Yet — does God rule only *in* Jesus, or does He also rule *through* the firstborn Son? Does the Lord Jesus have no authority to intervene in the events of the external world? Ah, the devils heard His voice and cried out and came out of those whom they possessed! The winds and the waves obeyed His voice! The water turned into wine, and the bread and the fishes multiplied in obedience to His word! Blind eyes were opened, deaf ears unstopped, withered limbs regained form and strength, and dead men arose and stalked out of their tombs in obedience to His command! Judgment came upon Jerusalem and the temple, until not one stone was left upon another, according to His word and at the turn of His mighty hand! Oh, yes! God does not only rule *in* men, but He also rules *through* men!

Now here is the great proclamation that is revealed when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, “The kingdom (rule, dominion) of this world is become the kingdom (rule, dominion) OF OUR LORD (JESUS THE HEAD), and OF HIS CHRIST (ANOINTED BODY).” Just as the firstborn Son said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,” so now the anointed body of Christ, His many brethren conformed to His image, can say, “All power is now *given unto us* in heaven and in earth!” So many of the Lord’s people are blind to the great truth that God is forming a government, and that the judgment and the dominion under the whole heaven shall *be given* to the saints of the most High! People seem to entertain the notion that either the Lord only rules in the hearts of men, or else they are waiting for Jesus to come crashing down out of the heavens as the great King and single-handedly snap the whole world into obedience. People testify that Jesus is their Saviour, Healer, Baptizer, and *Coming King*. But He is not a coming King! When He comes He does not come as King. He is already King. He has been crowned as King upon the throne. He sits today at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He rules. When He comes He comes as *King of kings*. There is a great difference! Let us put Him where He belongs. Let us not drag Him down to just a king level — for the world has had a bumper crop of kings. He comes as King *of* kings, and Lord *of* lords! This suggests a people who assume the same authority and power He possesses — yet He in all things has preeminence! It indicates that He is forming His elect into a *ruling government* of kings and priests.

It is God’s declared purpose that His *people*, His *holy nation*, His *peculiar treasure*, should be the domain over which He would rule as King, that through them He should ultimately win the allegiance of all the earth and all things and every creature. 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. Then we shall be able to rule as He rules, extending His dominion unto all the vast expanses of His creation until God becomes all in all. This is the present truth of the kingdom of God!

Can we not see by this that “kingdom,” that is, rule and dominion, also denotes a *government*. To aid our understanding let us quote our text thus: “The government of this world is **become** the government embodied in our Lord, and in His Anointed body.” Permit me to say it this way — God has formed a **new government** for the world! Jesus spoke of this very truth when He told His disciples, “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may...sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Lk. 22:28-29). These words were spoken by Jesus to the twelve apostles on the night of the

last supper, when their commemoration of the Passover had ended. The words assure us that Jesus had the authority to promise His disciples *appointment to positions of rulership in His kingdom!* Jesus was aware that within a matter of only a few hours He would be brutally seized and mocked and beaten and accused and led away to His ignominious crucifixion. These disciples would be very perplexed and distressed, wondering whether there would actually be a kingdom, after all, or whether they had followed a false Messiah. And so, in the last few hours of His earthly time with them, He spoke prophetic words which they would remember after His resurrection and ascension and would comprehend when they had received the Holy Spirit.

Jesus knew that His disciples had been raised to cherish the hope of the long-promised Messianic kingdom, and He knew that they were firmly convinced that they would be associated with Jesus in His kingdom (Mat. 20:21). Yet He also recognized their very limited understanding of what that hope actually embodied, and the weakness of their flesh which made them vulnerable to doubts, fears, and utter dismay when they saw Him crucified, dead, and buried. How could there be a kingdom when the King was gone — arrested, tried, convicted, sentenced, crucified until dead, and buried in a tomb? In the dreadful darkness of that hour Jesus sought to encourage them with this word, *“I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.”* Yes, our Lord had the assurance that God had appointed unto Him a kingdom! What a great impetus this was to the firstborn Son of God when He fulfilled His ministry on earth! He knew the words of the prophets, and He opened the scriptures to His disciples concerning His mission and coming of the kingdom. And now He states plainly that He has appointed unto them a kingdom, just as His Father has appointed unto Him!

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the *government* shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the *increase of His government and peace* there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this!” (Isa. 9:6-7).

The kingdom, the rule, the dominion, the government of God is established in that domain where God’s *saving power* has defeated all opposition, broken down every wall, transformed all that is contrary to God’s nature, mind, and will, and has brought men into willing submission to His authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the *kingdom of God*. What a *government* that is — one that does not rest upon demanding external obedience, but in effectually working internal transformation! Where hearts are changed, where sin and error and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where the will and ways of God 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! What a government this is!

The kingdom of God that John was in, and the kingdom of God that I am proclaiming today, is composed of that company of elect sons of God who have aligned themselves with God; who lean upon His breast, who listen to His voice, who put on His mind, who obey His commands, who walk in His nature, who do His will and carry out His divine purpose in the heavens and on the earth. They are loyal subjects of the King of the kings, for they ever do His bidding. Their King is the Lord God Almighty and He is their Father. They obey without question; for it is their nature to do only and always those things that please the Father. They are true citizens of the kingdom of God, and true members of His divine government,

for He has appointed unto them a kingdom, a rulership, a sphere of dominion , power, and authority! They are first under His rule and authority, but they are kings and priests in that divine and heavenly government. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ! They are destined to share all His glory and sit with Him upon His throne! They are the members of the heavenly government of God and the kingdom of heaven is expressed through them and the power and the glory of the kingdom is being committed into their hands for the age and the ages to come, for Christ has appointed unto them a kingdom, as His Father has appointed unto Him!

“The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ.” It should be observed that such a statement does not rule out the fact that God alone has exercised at all times sovereignty over the world and all mankind. The proclamation affirms that there is a change — the sovereignty over the world is now delegated into the hands of someone other than the eternal Spirit — the sovereignty of the world came to our Lord (Jesus) and to *His Christ*. When the scriptures speak of “Christ,” they do not speak only of our Lord Jesus the Christ, but also of His *anointed body*. “*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is CHRIST. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one (Christ, anointed) body*” (I Cor. 12:12-13). It is God’s will and purpose to commit the government of the world into the hands of His Anointed, the Christ, Head and body! It is the rule of God through His human instrument, the many-membered Anointed One, the manifest sons of God! My soul has been bathed this day with heaven’s fragrance from this great truth that the *government* of this world *is become* the *government* of our Lord, **and of His Christ!**” That is the mystery. “And He shall reign unto the ages of the ages.” It is indeed wonderful!

The government of the world has not yet passed from the hands of sinful mortals who have been ruling from ancient times until now — all earthly governments from the beginning of the race until now are represented in the scriptures as wild beasts of prey, having no lawful owner nor control, and full of destructive savageness and offensive corruption. But as the two witnesses are caught up into the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord, and as the seventh trumpet sounds in which the mystery of Christ formed in His elect body is finished, or consummated, John hears great voices out of heaven saying, “The government of the world *is (now) become* the government invested in our Lord, and in His anointed ones!” The government is *become* — it has *come to be* — the government is now formed and ready to take the reigns of its dominion and rule! Actually, the verb is in the past tense — “The government of this world *has become* the government of our Lord, and of His Christ” — but the past tense can be used *proleptically* of a certain event in the near future. “Proleptically” — that’s a hundred-dollar word many are not acquainted with, but it denotes something of the nature of an *anticipation*. Webster says that it is an expression by which a thing is represented as *already done*, though in reality it is to *follow as the consequence of the action which is described*. A natural example would be the morning after an election, when a new man has been elected President. Proleptically, we might say, “Last night we got a new administration!” Yet, the administration has not really been put together yet, nor can the President-elect exercise presidential authority yet. In one sense we already have a new administration, whereas the actual rule is still to *follow*. Referring to His impending conflict with the powers of evil involved in His death, Jesus said, proleptically, “Now **is** the judgment of this world, now **shall** the ruler of this world be cast out” (Jn. 12:31).

Thus, our text simply signifies that God *has formed* a government for the world, a ruling body, a kingdom, a company of king-priests, who *are to assume* the governance of the world; this government is here designated as ready to rule, though not yet ruling, for “they

**shall** reign unto the ages of the ages.” Is not this what the blessed prophet Daniel spake of when he wrote, “*I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom (reigns of government)...and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him*” (Dan. 7:21-22,27).

Immediately following this wonderful declaration of God’s government in chapter eleven of the Revelation, John sees “a great wonder in heaven; 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. 12:1-2,5). With what unspeakable joy and sublime anticipation do we await the birth of that wonderful manchild — the *government* of our Lord, and of *His Christ!*

In that day there shall be no more godless, atheistic nations; no more pagan nations whose people bow before false gods; no more radical, Christ-hating Islamic nations; no more affluent, pleasure-mad, crime-ridden, self-seeking nations who have *forgotten God*; for the word is sure: “Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: *all nations* shall serve Him” (Ps. 72:11). Again, “Let the people praise Thee, O God; let ALL the people praise Thee. O let the *nations* be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and *govern the nations* upon earth. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let ALL the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and *all the ends of the earth shall fear (reverence) Him*” (Ps. 67:3-7). “And the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and *all the kindreds of the nations* shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord’s: and He is the *governor* among the nations” (Ps. 22:27-28).

It is a great mystery, but it is a grand fact of truth nevertheless that Christ first reigns *in* us, that He may consequently reign *through* us. “Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Mat. 25:34). “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD” (I Cor. 6:9-10). I exhort every saint therefore to lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets them. The Holy Spirit does not say that a person guilty of one or more of the above mentioned things cannot be *saved*. Salvation is not the issue! The message is just this — those who practice such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God** — that is, they shall not be part of God’s *government*, such will not be given power over the nations nor shall they rule or reign in the holy administration of God’s Christ!

The word “kingdom” indicates the richness of the heritage of the saints. It is no petty estate, no happy corner in obscurity. I have heard good men say that they would be content with a cabin in the corner of gloryland or a spot just inside the gate. I shall not be! The Lord says we shall inherit a *kingdom*. Jesus said that He has appointed unto us a *kingdom*, as His Father has appointed unto Him. We could not be satisfied to inherit less, because less than that would not suit our character. “Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall *reign on the earth*” (Rev. 5:10). Those blessed ones who have received the call to

sonship must reign with Christ, or be as wretched as deposed monarchs. A king without a kingdom is an unhappy and unfulfilled man! If I were a poor servant, a servant's quarters would be a great thing, for it would correspond with my condition and degree; but if I am made a son of God, an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus; if I am made a priest and a king, I must have a kingdom, or I shall not have attained to a position equal to my nature and potential. He who makes us kings gives unto us a kingdom to fit the character He has bestowed upon us. Aren't you glad!

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

What Christendom in general cannot comprehend is that Jesus does not rule alone but through a many-membered body. Man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God, is God's government in the kingdom of God! I have met men who professed that they had no desire, no ambition whatever to rule and reign with Christ. It is enough, say they, to know that we are saved by grace, faithful church members, and shall make heaven at last. In fact, I have been greatly criticized and abused by some for my hope of inheriting the kingdom of God and sitting with Christ upon the throne of universal dominion. In the eyes of these accusers I am vain, conceited, self-righteous, egotistic, presumptuous, heretical, and power-mad, suffering delusions of grandeur because I cherish the beautiful hope of sonship and rulership in the kingdom of God. But I do not hesitate to tell you that Christ Himself has graciously bidden us to overcome, to sit down with Him in His throne, and to share with Him His authority over the nations and all things. *"Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth!"* (Ps. 2:8-10). Such reward to His faithful followers is merely the tangible expression of the approval and purpose of God, and we may no more deny Him the pleasure of sharing His glory with His footstep followers than we may renounce it once it is conferred. HE WHO DESPISES A THRONE DESPISES HIM WHO CONFERS THE THRONE. It was one of our Lord's rebukes to the Pharisees — "The glory that cometh only from God YE SEEK NOT" (Jn. 4:44).

## THE WORSHIP OF THE ELDERS

*"And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God"* (Rev. 11:16).

The twenty-four elders sitting on twenty-four thrones around the central throne bear a special signification for they are represented as distinct from both the four living creatures “in the midst” of the throne and the great multitude “before” the throne. These elders occupy a unique position described in Revelation 4:4 as “round about” the throne — yet UPON THRONES! In order to fully appreciate the scenery here drawn by the Spirit, we need to refresh our minds concerning one particular of the order established by God among the people of Israel after they came up out of the land of Egypt. It is important that we get a clear idea, not only of the structure of the tabernacle of Moses, but also of the arrangement of both the people and the priesthood in relation to it.

In the second chapter of the book of Numbers we find the order given for the encampment of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness. The camp of Israel, as it was established in Sinai, formed a hollow square. In the center of the hollow was the tabernacle of Moses. Around the tabernacle Israel was divided into four camps: one camp of three tribes on the east side, another camp of three tribes on the south side, another camp of three tribes on the west side, and the last camp of three tribes on the north side. The tabernacle in the center of these four camps was the dwelling place of God — His throne, His sphere of activity, the center of His goodness, glory, and power. The camp of Israel, the great multitude “before” the throne stands for the whole world of mankind *outside of God*, estranged from His life, yet redeemed, blessed, and brought nigh.

But there is a third company — the CAMP OF THE PRIESTS — situated, as it were, “round about the throne,” directly *between* the tabernacle-throne and the great multitude! The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “The Israelites shall encamp each by his own tribal standard or banner, with the ensign of their fathers’ houses, opposite the tent of meeting (tabernacle) and facing it on every side. Then the tent of meeting (tabernacle) shall be set out, with the **CAMP OF THE LEVITES IN THE MIDST OF THE CAMPS**” (Num. 2:2,17). The tribe of Levi was not counted among the tribes of Israel, therefore they were not camped with the other tribes, for they were the Lord’s priests, ordained to be camped in the center of the encampment near the tabernacle. Divine infinite purpose lies behind this whole arrangement and the moment the wonderful significance of this dawns upon our spiritual understanding, we see that God has a PRIESTHOOD COMPANY *between Himself and the world of mankind!* Thus, the priesthood of Israel was camped in the open space in the center of all the camps of Israel, *round about the tabernacle-throne*, and *between* the tabernacle and all the other camps of Israel. Can we not see by this that in the book of Revelation the four living creatures “in the midst of the throne” correspond to the tabernacle-throne where Yahwey dwelt in divine majesty, answering to the ministry of *sonship*, God’s *kings*. The camp of Israel out “before” the tabernacle-throne answers to the *great multitude* of the redeemed John saw “before” the throne in the heavens of the Spirit. Finally, the camp of the priests, situated *between* the tabernacle-throne and the great multitude of Israelites, answers to the twenty-four elders seated “round about the throne,” signifying the ministry of priesthood

A priest or priesthood suggests that there is a reason why such has been raised up by God. It denotes that there has been in the minds of men an estrangement between God and His creatures and the priest ministers to bridge that gulf and bring about peace and at-one-ness. Deep in the heart of every man there is a strong and instinctive demand for a priest, to be a mediator, to lay one hand on man, and the other on God, and standing between both to bring the two together into unification through the power of priesthood. Webster’s dictionary defines priest as: A mediatory agent *between* God and man. In the Old Testament the word priest is translated from the Hebrew word *cohen*, the root

meaning of which is “one who stands up and draws nigh for another.” The Greek word, in its root, means “to minister.” Thus, a priest is one who draws nigh and ministers in *two directions* — drawing nigh to God on behalf of the people, and drawing nigh to the people on behalf of God!

The priest ***stands between***. The ministry of the priest is an intermediate or go-between ministry. He reaches forth with one hand and takes hold of God; he reaches out with the other hand and takes hold of humanity; and brings the two together by the power of his priestly ministrations. Can we not see that this is the very reason God placed the priesthood of Israel in an encampment directly *between* the tabernacle-throne and the great multitude of the people. That is the picture! Most people miss this great truth, and I don't remember ever seeing a drawing of the tabernacle and the camp of Israel in the wilderness with the tribe of Levi correctly positioned in the open area of the hollow square between the tabernacle and the camps of the tribes. It is abundantly evident that they correspond precisely to the twenty-four elders that John beheld “round about the throne.” Isn't it wonderful!

Notice, now, in our text it is the twenty-four elders, God's priesthood company, who, when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, and the mystery of God in his elect is finished, fall before God on their faces, and worship God. I don't think the scene has ever been more eloquently articulated than it was by Dr. Seiss when he wrote, “When the mighty *God* took the book, the elders also fell down before the Lamb, and gave their solemn and adoring vote to His worthiness; but here the prostration is even lowlier. They not only fall into the posture of reverent adoration, but *'upon their faces,'* bury their immortal countenances in the pavement around the throne; by their very emotion hurled from their golden seats, overwhelmed and almost undone. There (in chapter five) they expressed their adoring sense of the Savior's worthiness, exulting in the prospect of what was to result; but here they celebrate the whole issue reached, the blessed consummation come, the thing of hope for all these ages now translating into fact; and, crowned princes of heaven, and anointed coregents with the great Eternal as they are, they cannot contain themselves. Their glorified limbs sink under the weight of the contemplation; their heads bow down to the place of their feet; their whole being melts into one flux of overwhelming realization of what now is come, and the gush of their adoring soul-dissolving joy breaks like a sea of thankfulness against the throne.” End of quote

These are not literal scenes in any event, but beautiful symbols which convey to us the great truth that in the lives of God's sons who are called to share Christ's throne there is no spirit of self-importance, no grasping after power for power's sake, no lifting up in pride, no attitude of arrogance toward God or any man, no sense that we have attained to this place by any works that we have done or by any self-effort on our part, but we are keenly aware that He has called us and chosen us *by His own grace and purpose alone*, and HE it is who is worthy, and we have been made kings and priests to show forth the virtues and excellencies of HIM who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light and by His mighty hand exalted us to His throne of glory. What a word!

Oh, how they give God thanks because He has now formed His kingdom in His king-priest company, and in them He is reigning! They greatly rejoice because, though the “nations” within and without were angry, God's passion has been stirred, and He has arisen to reward His faithful servants, great and small, and to defeat with finality all their enemies. All this action is a blessed and triumphant part of His accomplishment in the days when the seventh angel begins to sound! So shall reality surpass our boldest expectation! Now we are

children of God. Now we have a revelation of God's great plan and purpose and of things that are to be, of the power of God and His Christ that is to be revealed before the face of all peoples, the glory that is to be revealed in the sons of God! Now we can speak, nay, stammer about these things in imperfection; and joy fills our hearts when we speak of them. And even now as we behold the mighty transforming work of God in those apprehended ones in this significant hour, we fall down in humble worship and thanks as we obtain a glimpse of the glory of God's grace and power that is to be manifested in us!

# Chapter 130

## *The Seventh Angel Sounds continued*

“We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned. 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...” (Rev. 11:17-18).

Which are the “nations” that “were angry”? The Lord promised the overcomers in the church of Thyatira, “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give *power over the nations*: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:26-27). Generally all believers, of whatever persuasion, interpret these words to mean that the Lord’s people shall rule and reign from the throne of God’s glory over the physical nations of the world, thereby bringing the kingdom of God to pass in the earth. I have taught it that way myself! There is an abundant array of scriptures that clearly point to a rulership of God’s elect over the kingdoms of man, over all the peoples and nations of the earth, in fact, over the endless vastnesses of infinity — indeed, over *all things!* That rule is given to man — God’s man! In chapter twelve of the Revelation the manchild clearly begins to assume that rule and dominion!

The thing we must bear in mind here is that in chapter eleven we are still under the trumpets, signifying the progressive transforming work of God in His chosen elect. Without doubt all these events relate to God’s remnant, His *temple people* in the days when the mystery of God, which is the mystery of Christ formed in us, is consummated. This enables us to understand how the “nations” in this instance bespeak something within the Lord’s elect, rather than the outward peoples and nations of the world. Much of the book of Revelation is rooted in events, conditions, and arrangements set forth symbolically in the Old Testament. The tree of life is drawn from the Old Testament. The hidden manna is taken from the Old Testament. The white stone and the new name are from the Old Testament. The Lamb, the throne, the living creatures, the twenty-four elders, the city, the temple, the altar, the court, and many, many more things are all pictures out of the Old Testament. It is here that I see the key to what the Spirit is speaking about when he says, “To him that overcometh will I give power over *the nations*.”

Which were “the nations” that Israel of old was given power over? It was not by any means all the nations of the world! The imagery here is drawn from Israel’s *conquest* of the land of Canaan! To *conquer* is to *overcome* — that is the precise meaning of the word overcome in the Greek language. When Israel came out of the wilderness to enter in and possess the land God had promised them, for which purpose He had brought them out of Egypt by a mighty hand and had watched over them for forty years during their wilderness wanderings, the record states, “When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out *many nations* before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites,

and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perrizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, *seven nations* greater and mightier than thou; and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt *smite them*, and *utterly destroy them*; and thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them: neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall *destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire*. For thou art an *holy people* unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath *chosen thee* to be a *special people unto Himself* above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:1-6).

Let every spiritual mind think deeply and spiritually about the above scene! Does this not sound, in its spiritual connotation, exactly like the word of the Lord to the saints: “To him that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give *power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers...*” (Rev. 2:26-27). All that time in history, Israel’s new land had been occupied by the seven “ites” — by seven heathen nations who were exceedingly vile and corrupt, which they had to conquer, drive out, break to shivers, destroy, and possess. As we compare the above scripture passage with the Lord’s admonition to the overcomers in the Revelation we see revealed not only the “nations” we are given power over but also *why* we must break them to shivers and rule them with a rod of iron — we are to make no covenants (compromises) with them, nor make marriages (soulical, fleshly unions) with them, nor preserve their images (priorities, ways, systems, methods, etc.), idols, and groves. Our new land in this new day of the kingdom of God is **the fullness of Christ!**

In the hidden language of the Spirit, the symbol of “land” often has the meaning of “inheritance.” In some cases it deals with our inheritance in Christ, in other references, to the inheritance of the Lord in His saints. Incredible as it may seem, the land of Israel is but a figure of the true land — Christ as everything to us and in us! Abraham from the beginning understood this wonderful truth clearly, even if modern-day Christians don’t! The writer to the Hebrews tells us, “By faith Abraham when he was called, obeyed and went forth to a place which he was destined to receive as an inheritance; and he went, although he did not know or trouble his mind about where he was to go. By faith he dwelt as a temporary resident in the land which was designated in the promise of God, in a strange country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs with him of the same promise. For he was waiting expectantly and confidently, looking forward to *the city which has fixed and firm foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God*. Now those people who talk as they did show plainly that they are in search of a *fatherland — their own country*. But the truth is that they were yearning for and aspiring to a *better and more desirable country*, that is, a *heavenly (spiritual) one*. For that reason God is not ashamed to be called their God...” (Heb. 11:8-10,14,16, Amplified).

Now we know what is meant by **the land!** It was but a shadow and figure of the true land, the heavenly land of the Spirit, where the called and chosen elect of the Lord dwell in Christ in God! Everything that God prepared naturally for the children of Israel was concentrated in that land. “For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year” (Deut. 11:10-12). They were called to live on the land and to enjoy all the provision and abundance of God. They were to be formed into a kingdom in that land, observing the

statutes, judgments, laws, ways, and will of the Lord in the land. They were to become a kingdom of priests and an holy nation in the midst of the land so that through them all the nations of the earth might be blessed! Notice — they were to *subjugate and destroy every vestige of the wicked nations that possessed their own land, but they were to **BLESS ALL THE OUTWARD NATIONS OF THE EARTH!*** Selah. Pause and meditate on that!

All the promises, provisions, plans, and purposes of God were concentrated in the land. All these types are fulfilled in Christ as a piece of land! All the promises, provisions, plans, and purposes of God for mankind are concentrated in Christ! Christ is the true, real, appointed, abundant, fruitful, heavenly land to us! Our citizenship is in Christ in this heavenly land of the Spirit! We are not of this world, and regardless of our ethnicity in the flesh, we are not of the earthly Jerusalem, nor of the physical seed of Abraham, nor of the land of Canaan in the Middle East! God has given us a citizenship in the heavenlies where we are seated together in Christ Jesus! God has given us this heavenly, spiritual, incorruptible, eternal, all-sufficient land that we may become a kingdom of priests, an holy nation, and that through us as the very sons of God all the nations and families of the earth may be *blessed!* Isn't it wonderful!

God has promised to give us the land, which is the fullness of Christ. There is just one problem with this beautiful hope. THE LAND OF PROMISE IS OCCUPIED! It is infested! It is not vacant, ready to be settled into by God's elect. It presently is occupied by God's enemies. Seven mighty, vile, intransigent nations occupy the land! The natural, outward promised land of old was lived in by brutal and ruthless tribes who practiced devilish idolatries, including the worship of their own sexual lusts and the burning of their children in the fire as sacrificial offerings. Their abominable, degrading, disgusting patterns of behavior had been inviting the wrath of God during the time that Israel was multiplying in Egypt. When we say that Christ is our land of promise, this doesn't mean that Christ Himself is full of wickedness and abominations! You see, my beloved, the land is the realization of Christ *within ourselves*. The land is not in some far-off heaven somewhere. The land is within us! And in that land of the experiencing of Christ within ourselves we find a great number of hindrances, problems, bondages, fears, false perceptions, ideas, concepts, fleshliness, carnality, self-will, habits, lusts, sin, sickness, and death — all enemies of the realization of Christ. All the abominations of the seven nations of Canaan lie right within the very soul and body of each of us!

Now we are crossing the Jordan, in spiritual type, and are entering the new land of the kingdom of God or the fullness of Christ on the earth! We may have held the erroneous idea that upon entering the new land of the kingdom we would at once know absolute peace, joy, righteousness, kingdom blessings, power, and incorruptible life. Perhaps we once thought that by entering into the kingdom of God, by simple faith the entire order of things within and without would change overnight! But I call you to remembrance, my beloved, that the new land of Canaan was the place where Israel of old **faced their enemies and conquered them**. It meant warfare! It meant obedience and sacrifice! It meant struggle and bloodshed! It meant going on the offensive and effectually *conquering*, one by one, each and every enemy!

Only now are we discovering our enemies! As we cross over our Jordan all our enemies, including death, the last enemy, must be driven out before we shall inherit the kingdom of God in all its glorious fullness. But the battle is not ours! Our enemies are also the Lord's enemies, and HE has promised to drive them out before us as we walk forward in obedience to Him! Here in this new land of the fullness of Christ we shall be fully saved in spirit, soul, and body. Then even death, the last enemy, shall be totally conquered within ourselves and

defeated. Some say that it is in crossing the Jordan that death is overcome, but such is not the case! Death is the “last” enemy that shall be destroyed, not the first! The battle only *begins after* we have crossed our spiritual Jordan! Jordan is simply the “crossing over” of leaving our wilderness journeyings behind and stepping forth in faith and obedience to enter in and begin possessing the land of our inheritance! As we enter into this land and begin to conquer the enemies and possess our inheritances, we will know that we are truly His people and He is our God!

Do not think, precious friend of mine, that you will face no resistance as you rise up to conquer the enemy nations within your “land”! You will come face to face with all their passion and fury! “...and the nations were *angry...*” Ah, how eloquently those words describe the reaction of our enemies, those entrenched “nations” within, as the battle rages! This is all part of the process. Yet how I praise God with joy unspeakable and full of glory for the words that follow: “and THY WRATH IS COME...” What a word that is! Only HE within us has the power to deal with these nations! Only our Almighty Father has this power over the flesh to subdue it unto Himself. He alone can bring about this transformation of our beings. That is the mystery! On the one hand the Lord says, “You drive out the enemies,” while on the other hand He says, “I will drive out the enemies from before you.” He alone can make the enemies within us subject to the will of God. He can subdue this flesh of ours, and the powers of darkness within it, so it is necessary for us to turn it over to Him that this transformation can take place. As we turn our body over completely to His control He will go before us and give us the victory! We must be obedient and follow our heavenly Joshua! It is HIS WRATH that works in us and through us to gain the victory!

### THY WRATH IS COME

“We give Thee thanks...because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned. And *the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come...*” (Rev. 11:17-18).

What is God’s “wrath”? Two kinds of wrath are revealed in the scriptures — the wrath of man and the wrath of God. The wrath of man springs from a carnal, fleshly, unholy nature. It is therefore vindictive, vengeful, retaliatory, implacable, unmerciful, retributive, spiteful, and malicious. The wrath of God, however, derives from a spiritual, loving, holy nature. The wrath of God is no more like the wrath of man than is the love of God like the love of man, or the heart of God like the heart of man, or the thoughts of God like the thoughts of man. God is *not a man!* Yet people speak of the attributes of God as though they are of the same character and quality as the attributes of man, attributing to the holy God the unregenerate traits and emotions of man. But the wrath of man is no model of the wrath of God!

One brother wrote, “Revelation speaks frequently of God’s terrible wrath, and it frightens people to think that the earth will feel the full fury of God’s anger, of hellfire, the fire that burns forever. A woman once told me that she always thinks of the wrath of God as the intense fire of *infinite love that burns up that which is not true*. This is a beautiful way of looking at it! We can think of God’s fiery judgment as a purifying fire, and if we read Revelation with the thought that it is speaking of the intense fire of infinite love that is too pure to behold evil, then we can see why anything less than Truth has to go.”

The word “wrath” in our text is the Greek word *orge* meaning *desire, excitement, passion*. That certainly doesn’t sound like the kind of wrath most people think of! There is another Greek word, *thumos*, and surprisingly Strong’s Concordance also gives as the basic meaning of this word, “*breathing hard, passion*.” Why haven’t the preachers told us this

before! Let me give you an example of the use of *thumos* right here in the book of Revelation. Speaking of the great harlot, Mystery Babylon, the angel explains to John, “All nations have drunk of the *wine of the wrath* of her fornication” (Rev. 18:3). Now, I ask, who ever heard of wrath being sweet and intoxicating like *wine*! And who would ever think of the sensual pleasures of fornication as being angry, vengeful, full of rage and violence! But when we consider the true meaning of the word *thumos* it becomes very clear — “For all nations have drunk of the *wine of the passion* of her fornication.” What a difference that makes!

God’s wrath is not that which is vindictive and vengeful, but rather that which is impassioned, fervent, zealous, enlivened, glowing, vigorous, intense, burning, and dynamic. In the face of the “anger” of the symbolic “nations” God is moved into action by His *passion* for righteousness. My friend, John Gavazzoni, once wrote, “Ed Brown translates the Greek word *orge* as (God’s) ‘intrinsic fervor.’ I like that. I think Ed has captured the essential meaning. For me it suggests ravishing love. Since God IS love, then wrath, necessarily is a form of love, for nothing could proceed out from the nature of God that is inconsistent with the love that He IS. The conclusion is just too obvious once one has been delivered from the dark, demonic imagination that fuels eternal torment dogma; namely, that God, when faced with the ontological contrarianism that seeks to impose on us a false identity, with us being overcome by a false persona, His love is aroused to reclaim us, to lay claim with divine jealousy to that which belongs to Him. With intrinsic fervor He reaches out to possess that which is His, and we are His both by creation and redemption!” — end quote. Men of passion can certainly be angry, but the anger is not the basis of their passion. Even in a punitive way passion may be expressed in terms of *love*, as when a parent is moved with passion to sternly discipline a misbehaving child. So it is clear that “wrath” has to do with passion, or feeling very strongly about something. It does *not* mean either anger or vengeance!

God has a passion to make right what is wrong, to cleanse and restore His creation, like any Father who wants his son to grow up straight and strong. He has a passion, therefore He will spare nothing, not even the rod, to accomplish His great purpose. The wrath of God is the wrath of a Father and in His wrath He remembers mercy! His purpose in wrath is not vindictive, but corrective and redemptive. Mankind is full of anger, bitterness, torment, and fury — the wrath of man — but now *God’s wrath* comes! “The nations were angry, and Thy wrath, Thy passion, has come.” What a revelation that is! Oh, the wonder of it! How sublime the very thought! How awesome the implication! How divine and glorious the outcome!

We will not dwell long upon the other beautiful thoughts in verse eighteen. Mention is made that the time has come for “the dead to be judged.” Immediately we conjure up the thought of a great white throne out there somewhere in the distant future where dead men will rise up to appear in order to be judged. But that is not the thought here! Everything in chapter eleven is *related* and it all concerns the final work of the Lord symbolized by the “seventh trumpet” sounding, and this is His great work *in His called and chosen elect*. May I suggest that the “dead” referred to are the very same “dead” found in verse thirteen: “And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were *slain of men seven thousand...*” Oh, yes! These are the ones who “die” to the “great city,” religious Babylon, and their “names” are erased from the registries of that symbolic “city.” It means to die out to the flesh, to the carnal mind, to the soulful emotions and desires, and to every vestige of the *religious spirit*. It is not said that these dead are *raised*, only that they are *judged*. We need to always hear what the Spirit *saith*! To judge simply

means “to render a verdict” which may be either favorable or unfavorable, depending upon the context.

The only judgment most people understand is the negative aspect of judgment, the *unfavorable verdict*, which is unto condemnation and wrath. It should require only a moment’s reflection, however, to enable anyone to see that the very same judge who sentences one man to pay a fine, another to die in the electric chair, may suspend the sentence of a third man, declare a fourth man “not guilty,” acquitted, and may *reward* a fifth man the sum of one million dollars as recompense for some wrong done to him! It is plain that a great many different “judgments” or “verdicts” may come from this one judge. Thus, the work of the judge is not merely to condemn and mete out sentences, but to weigh all the facts, take all the circumstances into consideration, and render a just verdict, favorable or unfavorable, as the case may demand.

Furthermore, the “judge” of a beauty contest does not condemn or damn *any* of the contestants who fail to receive the highest recognition. He merely renders a “verdict” as to whom, in his estimation, is “the fairest of them all!” The Psalmist spoke of this when he said, “For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But GOD IS THE JUDGE: He putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Ps. 75:6-7). The positive aspect of judgment, the rendering of a *favorable* verdict, and the granting of a *reward* for some purpose, is implored of the Lord by king David in Psalm 43:1-2: “JUDGE ME, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: for Thou art the God of my strength.” Ah, *promotion* — promotion that comes from the Lord — clearly that is the idea conveyed by the words of our text! The dead ones are judged — our great and glorious heavenly Father renders His verdict — it is time for promotion in the ranks of His separated ones!

The great truth of what I now say is incontrovertibly confirmed in the very statement that follows: “...and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, *and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets (two-witness prophetic company), and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, small and great*” (Rev. 11:18). It is evident that the “judging” leads to the “reward.” And it indicates a reward for faithfulness, obedience, and kingdom works. It is a *reward for works*, not a dealing with sin, nor a discipline for the perfecting of sons. It is vital to our understanding of this subject that we see clearly the distinction between these important biblical terms: *salvation, inheritance, and reward*. Salvation relates to the sinner, inheritance relates to sons, and reward relates to servants. SALVATION means to be rescued from the power of sin and death and is the *free gift of God to the believer*. “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their *sins*” (Mat. 1:21). “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).

INHERITANCE, on the other hand, is that which a son receives *by virtue of his relationship to the Father*. It is not a gift. It is not earned. It is his by right! “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a *son*, then an HEIR of God through Christ” (Gal. 4:7). “And if children, then HEIRS; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17). REWARD, furthermore, is something that is given *for service rendered*. It is not a free gift, as is salvation, nor is it bestowed because of right, as an inheritance. It is *earned by work!* “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His messengers; and then He shall REWARD EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS” (Mat. 16:27). “And the nations

were angry, and Thy passion is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest *give reward* unto Thy *servants*” (Rev. 11:18).

It is when we come to this thought of *servants* that there arises a great deal of misunderstanding among the Lord’s people. When we speak of servants, some boast that this calling does not apply to them, for they are no longer servants, but sons. And that is true in the spirit in which Paul argues when he states, “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). It is far from the truth, however, to say that there is no sense in which those who are sons are also servants. Paul is speaking of ***our relationship to God, the Father***. Under Old Testament economy the people of God had not received new birth by the Spirit and so were not, by spiritual regeneration, conscious of being the children of God. They were conscious only of servant ship to God and the book of Hebrews calls them a “house of servants” (Heb. 3:2-6). Their relationship to *God* was the relationship of *servants*. They were not counted as sons.

Now, bless His name, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law that we might receive placement as sons, and He has birthed into our hearts the Spirit of His Son, the very spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, “Abba, FATHER!” This has brought a change of relationship to God. *To Him* we are no longer servants, but sons. However, as sons we enter not only into a relationship *to God*, but we also become ***uniquely related TO MEN***. It is here that we must be very clear in our understanding! Unto GOD I may be a *son*, but unto MEN I may be a *servant* — the servant of God unto them — because I am a son! I can not be a servant *to God*, for I am a son. But I cannot be a son *to men*, therefore I must approach unto men in a relationship through which I can minister to them *out of the life of the Son* which indwells me. The only agency through which I can minister the life of the Son unto men is as a *servant* — the servant of the Lord unto them. To minister means “to serve,” and both “minister” and “servant” are frequently translated from the same Greek word. If I am a minister, then I am a servant — not a servant unto God, but a servant sent from God to serve men!

Can a son be a servant? Jesus, the Pattern Son, declared: “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (serve), and to give His life for many” (Mat. 20:28). Jesus was a *Son* to His Father, but He came as a *servant* unto men. It is the SON that SERVES! The Son is a Servant-Son. The very same Jesus, the Son, of whom the Father witnessed, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” of Him the Father also witnessed, “Behold my SERVANT, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the nations” (Isa. 42:1). Matthew 12:15-21 shows unmistakably that this SERVANT of the Lord is JESUS. The Son came into the world as a Servant-Son! The beloved John understood this beautiful truth, for the same John who wrote, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called *the sons of God*,” later penned these significant words, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His *servants* things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it unto *His servant John*” (I Jn. 3:1; Rev. 1:1).

The great apostle Paul also understood this great truth, for the very same Paul who wrote, “Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son,” also said, “Paul, a *servant* of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle” (Gal. 4:7; Rom. 1:1). Is Jesus a son or a servant? Was John a son or a servant? Was Paul a son or a servant? And lest we would exalt ourselves above

John, or Paul, or even Jesus, we further find that the 144,000 in the Revelation, that glorious company of the manifest sons of God standing with the Lamb in the governmental heights of the heavenly mount Zion, even of this exalted company it is written, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed THE **SERVANTS** OF OUR GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS" (Rev. 7:3). So there you have it! The *sons* are the *servants*! Not servants to God, of course, but sons who are servants unto men, humble ministers of the life of the Father. And *the servants receive a reward!* That is the mystery.

## **DESTROY THEM THAT DESTROY THE EARTH**

"And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time...that Thou...shouldest *destroy them that destroy the earth*" (Rev. 11:18).

That there is a natural application of this idea of "destroy them that destroy the earth" none can deny. We are now witnesses of an ever-looming catastrophe that potentially could take place between the nations of earth on a scale never before seen. There is an increasingly dangerous level of corruption, fanaticism, violence, and terrorism in our world, with the potential for the release of various weapons of mass destruction. The attempt to procure these devastating means of destruction includes chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, which are now openly and aggressively being obtained by rogue nations and numerous terrorist groups world-wide.

Our day is also marked by impending environmental catastrophes that appear ever larger upon the horizon. Most of these conditions have come about as a result of man's pride and selfishness. The idea that man could actually, literally, destroy the earth would have appeared ludicrous to any previous generation. Even less than a hundred years ago it would have been hard to imagine that *anyone* could destroy the earth! Sure, mankind tended to *misuse* the earth, but *destroy* it? For the first time in history, mankind *does* have the capability of totally destroying all human and animal life from the planet! The effects of air pollution, the transportation and storing of hazardous materials, depletion of the earth's ozone layer, pollution of the atmosphere, rivers, lakes, and oceans with some of the most dangerous chemicals known to man, the kind that just don't go away; these are penetrating the food chain even in pristine environments like the Arctic. U. S. citizens alone produce some two billion pounds of hazardous waste a day, not to mention vast quantities of automobile lead deposits, tire rubber, backyard pesticides, chemical fertilizers, plastic products, fossil fuels, refrigeration equipment, and a thousand more.

But how can it stop? Pollution is only the by-product of all the goods and services upon which the modern world has become so dependent. If big business is to continue to produce goods and provide jobs, if big finance is to continue to fund growth and expansion, if government is to continue to make it all possible — and since **greed** is the undiminished underpinning of *human nature* — then the continued wreckage of the earth is the inevitable course of the natural man! All the modern technology which we now consider irreversible and indispensable to our way of life, products of man's ingenuity to wrest the secrets of nature, the handiwork of the "wise," all combine to terminate as a Frankenstein monstrosity — threatening man's annihilation! No personal benefits can survive this level of irresponsibility indefinitely! It is apparent that man's careless and greedy tendencies are responsible for this systematic destruction of the natural earth. Even those nations that produce the highest levels of pollutants are ill-prepared to act swiftly and seriously because of *economic reasons*, and the situation continues to deteriorate.

Yet — as true and awesome as all of this is, we are not interested in the *natural*, except as it serves as a parable, for the revelation given to John by the Spirit is not a warning for the natural man about earthly and physical catastrophes, but a *spiritual revelation* given for the edification, understanding, instruction, and transformation of the saints! All the outward is merely a shadow of the true and greater realities to which the Spirit points. It speaks spiritual truth and sets forth spiritual dealings! The “earth” signifies the *soul realm*, and all that is soulical in the religious life of man. Out of man’s fleshly nature arise those things which instead of bringing the soul into union with the spirit of life, enslave and destroy the work of God in the soul, barring man from entrance into the kingdom of heaven. The meaning of the Greek word “destroy” in our text is “to rot thoroughly, decay utterly, ruin, pervert, corrupt.” The clear import is just this — *to pervert, kill, or destroy by corruption!* To destroy by corruption signifies to destroy by *the flesh*, “for he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption” (Gal. 6:8).

When the soul is united to the fleshly life instead of being joined to the spirit, the restoration and transformation of man is thwarted and at best the Lord’s people are held captive in the *soulical religious realm!* In order for truth, righteousness, life, and reality to be raised up in our life, sin, lies, error, deception, and the spirit of the world *must be destroyed*. That means all earthly concepts and fleshly ways have to be destroyed, for they bring man under the dominion of the carnal mind and the old Adamic life. The “earth” is their dwelling place, for the carnal mind dwells in a body made of dust! The thoughts, desires, and ways of the mind of the flesh are “those” which *by corruption kill the soul!* They “kill” or “destroy” the soul by keeping it from life in the spirit! To destroy those who destroy the earth does not mean that God is going to send destruction on all the people in the giant corporations, factories, refineries, and governments of the earth that are physically polluting the planet. Nor does it mean that people are going to be put into hell and tortured. Oh, no! **When their wrong thinking and fleshly ways are destroyed, “they,” the powers of the carnal mind and the natural man, are destroyed!** Oh, the mystery of it!

So the passion of God arises and destroys the carnal mindedness and fleshly life within each of us and so astonishes the power of Self that it silences its desires, its aspirations, its determination, and all its unrighteous and worldly religious ways! Paul spoke of the Galatians who did run well for a time, but were hindered. That is ever the problem for those who are not consumed by the flaming passion of the Lord! We do well for a time, but the cares of this age, the deceitfulness of riches, the desires of the flesh, and the old religious spirit enter in and choke us, and we become unfruitful and drop out of the race altogether.

We have previously pointed out that in the book of Revelation the “earth” is a symbol bespeaking the realm of the soul and all that is soulical, especially the religious realm. The soul has been created to be joined in union with the spirit, as a woman is joined in union with her husband. Eve, as a type, stands for the soul as Adam stands for the spirit. “Now the Lord is the spirit,” says Paul, and may I add that the bride of Christ is the soul of the new creation man in union with the Head, the Lord who is the spirit, or Christ *in you* the hope of glory. Peter admonishes the saints in his first epistle, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from *fleshly lusts*, which *war against the soul*” (1 Pet. 2:11). Can we not see by this that “those who destroy the earth” are those who corrupt the *soul* by leading it into a carnal union with the body of death (flesh realm) instead of the life of the spirit. It is the defects of man’s fleshly emotions, thoughts, understanding, desires, and will that usurps and prevents the life of the spirit, thereby keeping the soul from life and perpetuating the death of carnality. These are “they” who “destroy the earth!” When the Lord’s passion strikes the enemies of our soul and destroys them, He effectively destroys

them that corrupt the soul, leads the soul out of her captivity to the flesh, woos her with His cords of love, and claims His rightful bride as His own! It is indeed wonderful!

George Hawtin has given a very perceptive and inspirational insight into this truth, and I quote:

“Now, since the flesh lusts against the spirit and is at endless conflict with it, then anything that seeks to make you earthly and fleshly-minded is a great evil. The things that belong to the realm of the flesh (the body) are passing away. Even the flesh itself is passing away. Anything that is passing away is not real. It is like a bubble that floats prettily in the air only to burst and never to exist again. It is like the darkness that disappears with the dawn and has no certain dwelling place. It is like a flower in the field that blooms for a moment and disappears, a vision of the night, a fleeting shadow, a moment of joy, a passing sorrow, or a sudden pain. When such things have passed by, no one knows where they came from or whither they have gone. Those, however, who indulge themselves in the things that belong to the body grow to think that nothing is true or real but what is bodily and can be touched or seen or eaten or drunk or enjoyed by the passions of men. Unwittingly they change true riches for false; things that are unseen by mortal eyes for things that are seen. They exchange things that are spirit for things that can be touched, tasted, and felt by the body.

“The soul now begins to think that these things which belong to the body are real and therefore becomes fleshly-minded. The carnal or fleshly mind is an enemy of God and an enemy of all things spiritual. It follows, then, that because the soul is burdened down with the earthly and visible, it is impossible for it to be spiritual, and when the time comes to depart out of this world by death and enter the realm of the spirit, it will fear to die and want to remain in the body, because it is a stranger to the realm of the spirit and has come to believe that the realm of the body is the only realm that is real, when in truth it is the only realm that is unreal” — end quote.

# *Chapter 131*

## *The Temple Opened In Heaven*

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament” (Rev. 11:19).

The temple of God in Jerusalem was made after the pattern of the heavenly or spiritual temple, as it was shown unto Moses on the mount. The idea of the temple is that of a dwelling place of God. The temple was the house of God, His habitation. It was the place where the manifest presence, glory, and power of God resided in the most holy place. But to this must be added that it was a limited place, where God dwelt on a different level of manifestation than He did in the outward world, and in distinction, too, from the holy city without. It speaks of the fact that in the world at large God does not manifest His presence, glory, and power in an overt way. But that distinction is only temporal. God shall not remain in His temple separated from the world, and unseen by mankind! There are precise steps in the progressive unfolding of God among men. The first step is that He builds a temple and dwells there in the midst of mankind. The second step is that the temple is opened in the heavens of the Spirit, and the glory and substance of Himself is caused to be seen, or revealed throughout the city of God. The third step is that His presence, glory, and power fills the whole city so that there is no more temple! At the conclusion of that work John describes the city itself as “having the glory of God.” Then the city descends into the earth realm and His glory shines forth from the city, flooding and enlightening the whole earth and all peoples and nations. What a plan!

Naturally, when the temple (naos, inner sanctuary) is opened, the ark of His covenant is seen! For the ark stood in the most holy place, under coverings of skins and separated by a thick veil. It was in a most specific sense the representation of the character and majesty of God Himself, His plan and purpose, and His covenant with mankind. It is called the throne of God in scripture. It stood in the immediate presence, glory, and power of God, as represented in the cloud, and on its mercy seat the blood of atonement was sprinkled, bespeaking God’s nature of goodness, mercy, and blessing toward the whole world. It contained the law of the covenant as well as the golden pot of manna and the budding rod of Aaron. And therefore it is the symbol of God’s righteous nature, His law put into our minds and written on our hearts; His priestly heart revealed in Aaron’s rod; and His eternal and incorruptible life in the Spirit. As the temple is opened, that ark now appears and is seen! As the temple is opened by the revelation of the Lord within us we are even now able to see by the spirit and in the spirit the great glories and realities contained therein! In God’s due time these wonderful things shall be seen, known, touched, and experienced by all the Lord’s people who constitute the holy city of God!

There is no place where the temple of God is opened on earth. Yet — the temple of God is on earth! “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Cor. 3:16-17). The temple of God is on earth, but earth cannot open it. Any time the temple of God is opened, it is opened where He has

raised it up, in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord. You are the temple! And just where is this temple? “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). As we pursue these thoughts concerning the temple in heaven and the ark that is seen in the temple, we are brought to that most glorious Psalm that has been such an inspiration to so many all through the years — the ninety-first Psalm. Truly it is a Psalm for those who, while physically on earth, consciously dwell in the heavens of the Spirit! “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling...” (Ps. 91:1-11).

The Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament was connected with the secret place of the tabernacle or the temple, the most holy place made with hands, where dwelt the ark of the covenant, the ark of the Lord’s manifest presence, glory, and power. This was the secret place for the Aaronic order of priests, and it was so sacred and so secret that no one dare look upon this place unprepared, uninvited, or unfit lest he die. Only the high priest, and that once each year, was permitted to enter that most secret and sacred spot. The physical and earthly “secret place” of the Aaronic priesthood points forward to the true and spiritual SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH where again, only those apprehended ones who receive the call, quickened by His Spirit, have boldness to enter in by the blood of Jesus! This is but a parable of the fact that deep within the heart of each of us there is a spiritual temple, a spiritual most holy place, in which the divine presence shines, and where our Father is worshipped with humility and awe and reverence by all who enter there.

The Hebrew word for “secret” means hidden, concealed, protected, disguised. The Hebrew word for “place” indicates standing, spot, locality, condition. Thus this secret place of the most High is a hidden, concealed, protected, and disguised location, condition, and standing. It is not open before the eyes of all men, but is reserved for those prepared for it. It is that deeper spiritual realm “within the veil” whither our Forerunner is for us entered, where the most High may be seen, known, touched, and experienced in all the glorious fullness of Himself!

There is a most holy place within us, in our spirit, where our Lord ever dwells beyond the passions of the soul and the lusts of the flesh; it is there we must enter! No enemy can reach you in this precious retreat: neither can any enemy get you out of it if by faith you abide in HIM. Is the adversary tormenting you with fears and forebodings? Hide away in the secret place where you know the truth as it is in Him! Is there something that is disturbing and distressing you? Hide away in God in the inner sanctum of your spirit; be still before Him there, commit your way unto Him and He will bring it to pass. Are you misunderstood and unjustly accused and maligned? Find the rent place in the veil, Christ, and hide away; for this veil was rent for you and me and for every son of God that our lives might be hid with Christ in God. People who see us in our outer form do not know that we are hiding away in the secret place of the most High! They see only a heavenly, supernatural calm, which abides through every storm and pressure; but God knows we are hiding away in the secret place, and He communes with us there. When we abide in the secret place of His spirit and life, we are as much hidden away as God can hide us. Walking in the conscious awareness of His indwelling presence and His overshadowing

power is a secret realm the world cannot see nor comprehend. Those about us see our bodies walking around on earth, just as the ancient Israelites could gaze upon the outward form of the temple; but they do not know that we, who live in these frail tents, are hidden away so that neither man nor devil can find or touch us!

When we take this place and abide there, at every step we prove that Yahweh, the authority of God's life, the most High, is a wall of fire round us and that He is the glory within. Dear sons of the most High, ABIDE IN HIM! It is alone with our Lord; it is when the strife and opinions of the human have ceased; it is when earth has receded and heaven and eternity have drawn near enough for us to begin to see the unseen, that the voice of our Lord is heard in our hearts, and His beauty appears in His temple! It is in such separation and communion, that His image begins to be manifested. God would have us dwell in His presence until it is the atmosphere we breathe, the breath and source of our life; until it is so our identity and our reality that we are hardly conscious of this holy relation with God as anything distinct from our outer world. O precious Secret Place, O wondrous Habitation, which can only be found when new vision is given to the sons of the most High! O blessed hiding-place where no one but God is with us, and no eye but His beholds us as we perfectly abide there! What strength and power, what refreshing and holy swiftness to those who make the most High their habitation, who dwell in the secret place of the most High!

Yet, it is not enough that we dwell there in this secret, holy place. You are the temple in heaven! God wants to "open" the temple of God in heaven! He purposes to open you up, to bring forth a revelation and a manifestation out of your innermost being. He seeks to completely uncover that holiest place within you where He resides in your spirit, the ark of His covenant inside of you. This brings the visible expression and manifestation of His presence, purpose, nature, life, glory, and power in your life. He is moving to open that up that it may be seen by all in the city of God and ultimately by the whole vast creation!

In this connection Ray Prinzing has shed wonderful illumination upon our path. He wrote, "For so long God has quickened truth to His 'hidden ones,' and sealed it up within them, to work in their own being its transformation process. 'Until the time that His word came: the word of the Lord tried him' (Ps. 105:19). 'I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world' (Jn. 17:14,16). It is HIS WORD, and we receive it, not to immediately run and broadcast it everywhere, casting it as pearls before swine, but it is to WORK IN US until we are fully changed. However, not forever does the process continue — though the 'bread corn is bruised; (yet) He will not ever be threshing it' (Isa. 28:28). Threshing — breaking — NOT FOREVER, only until it has done its work, then follows a joyful victory. There came a time, when on the cross, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' And there shall come that day when He shall have brought to a successful conclusion His redemptive work in His people. When the temple is opened, 'there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.' All of the Christ within His elect shall be revealed, seen in His temple! He is the ark of the testament, the center of our testimony and victory, and it is to Him that we shall bear witness — of His salvation, of His life!"

The temple was opened, John says. Beloved, we too are going to be opened to reveal what manner of man we are. Seeing that this temple is in heaven, those believers who love and live and walk after the flesh will not be found there! They have already, for two thousand years, been opened and out of them flows corruption, fleshly programs and promotions, pride of life, static creeds and lifeless forms, because their desires and

methods and works are of the spirit of the world, and the world is filled with the foolishness of what has been exposed in the temple of religion. The saints and ministers in these carnal, church systems of man have not dwelt in the heavens because of their carnal understanding of the Word and their fleshly living. Since this temple is opened in heaven, it can only be those elect of the Lord who have the Christ so formed in them that when they are opened for all to see, only Christ is revealed!

Chapter eleven of the Revelation opens with John being instructed to measure the temple of God. But now the temple is completed, built up a spiritual house, a habitation of God through the Spirit. The temple has grown unto a holy temple in the maturity and fullness of Christ! All the meticulous inworkings of God have been consummated, the temple has been thoroughly measured, fully judged, and stands approved of God. The temple is opened in the realm of the Spirit, in the high places of Christ in God. Now “opened” is an interesting word!

That the temple was opened bespeaks a truth higher and far more glorious than that of the rent veil. In that long ago temple on earth centuries had passed and it seemed as if that veil would hang there forever. And then a lone and desolate figure, upon a cross on a hill outside of Jerusalem, cried out to God, “It is finished!” Suddenly the earth shook and reeled like a drunkard, the mighty immovable rocks rent and split. In that awesome moment two huge and invisible hands reached down and took hold of that veil of the temple, so strong that six yoke of oxen could not pull it apart, and those divine hands tore it apart from top to bottom. I have heard people say that when that veil was rent at the crucifixion of our Lord, the two compartments of the holy place and the most holy place were made one. But that cannot be! Yes, the veil was rent, split — but the veil was still there! It had only been split down the middle. The compartments were still divided.

In His resurrection and ascension the Lord Jesus did not stand in relation to His elect in a most holy place from which the veil had been removed, for of His entrance into that realm of fullness in God the writer to the Hebrews testifies, “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 6:18-20). Again, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh” (Heb. 10:19-20).

Can we not see that Jesus went through the veil into the fullness of divine life and glory. He opened and consecrated the way for us to follow, to pass through the veil into that glorious realm. The veil in its spiritual meaning is identified as the veil of His flesh. Many people speak of passing through the veil of flesh and they mean our flesh, getting into the realm of the Spirit beyond our outward flesh man. There is indeed a truth there, but it is not the truth presented here. To enter the most holy place one must enter in “through the veil, that is to say, HIS FLESH.”

Our little minds are far too limited to grasp heavenly realities. We are limited in our thinking to earthly interpretations and understandings. We can only conceive of the “flesh” of the animal kingdom, and of fish and fowl and creeping things of earth. But it should not seem strange to discover that all flesh is not the same flesh and that there are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial (I Cor. 15:39-44). The flesh of the Son of man, of which

Jesus said we must eat in order to have life, is not the flesh that was upon the bones of Jesus as He walked the pathways of earth. It is not that flesh born of Mary, which suffered hunger, weariness, weakness, and death. That human flesh was just HUMAN FLESH. Human flesh is dead flesh, for the Holy Spirit calls our human bodies “mortal (dying) bodies.” That which is dying can only produce corruption and death. Adamic flesh is doomed from the moment of its conception in the womb, and in that flesh can be found no hope whatever of eternal life. The law of creation is that everything brings forth “after its kind.” It can never be, then, that Jesus was offering us that mortal flesh in which He was clothed, for that flesh could be killed and laid in a tomb. Only that which is incorruptible can produce life, and Jesus testified of Himself, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven,” and again, “He that eateth my flesh...shall live.” The flesh of which Jesus spoke is an incorruptible flesh, yea, a celestial flesh, and our Lord promises that those who eat of this flesh will have the life of the ages.

My sincere prayer to God is that He may grant to every reader of these lines eyes to see and hearts to understand this simple but sublime truth: ALL FLESH IS NOT THE SAME FLESH! ALL BODIES ARE NOT TERRESTRIAL BODIES! There is a flesh that is corruptible and there is a flesh that is incorruptible. There is a flesh that is a shame and there is a flesh that is a glory. Behold, I show you a mystery! The body that Jesus brought out of the tomb is the incorruptible, eternal body of Christ. The body that Jesus brought out of the tomb is the only glorified human flesh that has ever existed. He is the firstfruits of them that slept. Jesus is the only perfect man empowered to raise His flesh body up into the state of spiritualization — a spiritual body, truly a body, but not a natural body, for now “there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (I Cor. 15:44). The spiritual body is His body! The incorruptible, life-giving flesh is His flesh!

There is a flesh with which we are familiar. There is a flesh about which the natural man knows nothing at all. There are bodies which are earthly, physical, visible, and tangible. And there are bodies which are heavenly, spiritual, invisible, and imperceptible. The flesh with which we are acquainted is OUR FLESH. That which yet remains a mystery is HIS FLESH. The natural mind is very dark and without understanding. Only the Holy Spirit can awaken it! Only the Holy Spirit can give us eyes to see that Jesus was not offering us the flesh of His earthly tabernacle, NEITHER WAS HE OFFERING US SOMETHING WITHOUT SUBSTANCE. When Jesus said, “Eat my flesh,” He spake of a flesh invisible to the human eye but a flesh that was and is, nonetheless, very real. Not corruptible flesh, but incorruptible! Not decaying flesh, but living flesh! Not flesh that would splatter when struck by an eighteen wheeler, not flesh that lives off of steak and potatoes, not flesh that uses mouth rinse, deodorant, and cologne to keep it smelling fresh, not terrestrial, temporal flesh — but celestial, eternal flesh! Only heavenly, divine flesh can impart eternal life!

The partaking of divine flesh (the celestial body) of Christ produces life. And what is this heavenly flesh, this celestial body? We know how the Word, the Logos, who had from eternity existed in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of manifestation when He was lowered into the earth realm and was made flesh, the Son of man. After passing through His earthly experience, when He ascended to heaven, back into the realm of the Spirit, He was still the uniquely begotten Son of God who had been witnessed to by the Father throughout His earth life — and yet not altogether the same! For He was now also, as Son of man, the first-begotten from the dead, CLOTHED WITH THAT GLORIFIED HUMANITY which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself, as the second Man, the last Adam. And now, as we receive into our lives the Spirit of the firstborn Son we truly

receive the Spirit of the LAST MAN ADAM, the SECOND MAN FROM HEAVEN, the GLORIFIED JESUS, yes, the Spirit of the risen and exalted Christ, the bearer and communicator to us, not merely of the life of God as such, but of that divine life as it has been interwoven into the perfect manhood of the person of our Lord Jesus the Christ.

Let us now return to the passage quoted earlier from the epistle to the Hebrews. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, HIS FLESH...” Jesus passed through the veil. “Through the veil” is the new and living way He has consecrated for us! And what is the veil He passed through, and which also has been consecrated for us to pass through? Is it not the veil of His flesh? Dearly beloved brethren, consider prayerfully and reverently what I now say. NOWHERE IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS DOES IT SAY THAT THE VEIL IS REMOVED! The veil was rent, not removed. The way into the most holy place consecrated for us is through the veil. Therefore the veil remains! We will understand a great mystery when we see that the veil is the converging point between time and eternity, between earth and heaven, between flesh and spirit, between mortality and immortality.

Take the shoes from off your feet, O saint of God, for the ground upon which we stand is holy. There are two sides of the veil — that is the mystery. One side of the veil faces the holy place. The other side of the veil faces the most holy place. It is the same veil, but two sides, each side in a different realm. The side of the veil that is toward the holy place faces a realm of mixture and imperfection. Nothing in the holy place is perfect, pure, and incorruptible! There is the golden lamp stand, but the oil in the lamp stand burns out and must daily be replenished. There is a wick which must continually be trimmed. The light it sheds forth is a weak, flickering light. The loaves of showbread upon the table contain leaven, the very symbol of fleshliness and sin, and weekly they have to be replaced. Even the altar of incense must again and again be replenished with fire from the brazen altar and a fresh supply of incense. Nothing in this order is pure, unmixed, incorruptible, and eternal! This signifies the life of Jesus (and us) as He walked in the flesh, in a natural body, subject to all the sorrows, weaknesses, pain, and death of this earth realm. He was made in all things like unto His brethren, and was tempted in all points like as we are!

The other side of the veil is in the most holy place! In this most holy place everything is pure, perfect, full, and incorruptible. There God dwelt in the Shekinah Glory between the outstretched wings of the cherubim on either side of the ark of the covenant. The light of this realm is the shimmering, blazing, self-generating light of the glory of the incorruptible God! It never needs to be rekindled and it never burns out! The manna in this realm is the hidden manna which never breeds worms, for it is transformed by the incorruptible power of divinity. The tablets of the law were that which was written by the very finger of God, untouched by human hand. Aaron’s rod of priestly authority is that which blossomed and bore almonds by the law of a higher life. When Jesus passed through this veil He revealed to us the great truth that He penetrated through the veil of flesh on this side and passed through to the other side. He entered the veil on this side in His earthly, mortal body of flesh and came out on the other side in His resurrected, immortal body of glorified celestial flesh! Both sides are flesh, His flesh, this side is this mortal body, the other side is the immortal body of resurrection and glorification. And He consecrated this way for us through the veil of His flesh, from the flesh of this side to the flesh of that side. And let me tell you something — He is the forerunner, He consecrated this new and living way for us, and we must pass through the veil from imperfection to perfection, from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality, and it can only be accomplished IN HIM,

THROUGH HIM, AND BY HIM! It is the veil of HIS FLESH! As we are baptized into Him, buried with Him, risen with Him, and ascend in Him we shall bear the image of the heavenly even as we have borne the image of the earthly. There is no doubt in my mind that we may by faith penetrate through that veil even as we stand upon our two feet, because the way into the Holiest is through the veil from one kind of flesh to another kind of flesh. It means to cross over out of this realm, out of this natural man, out of this carnal mind, out of this corruptibility, into the mind of Christ, into the heavenly man, into the glory and majesty of the life and immortality of the divine! It means a thorough change — from earthly to heavenly, from natural to spiritual, from corruptible to incorruptible. Our Lord Jesus consecrated this way for us, and He did it in His flesh so that we may have boldness to enter in by the blood of Jesus! Aren't you glad!

The tabernacle in the wilderness, with its high priest entering within the veil into the most holy place, and coming out again from that glorious precinct invested with the authority, power, and glory of God to bless the whole nation of Israel, is surely a parable of our union with Christ in God. We now have boldness by the blood of Jesus to enter into the Holiest — but that is only one half of the divine equation. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest...let us draw near.” It is a call to God's elect to enter in through the rent veil, into the place to which the blood has been brought, where our great high priest lives, and where the ineffable glory of the Most High God shines brightly, there to live and walk and work always in the fullness of the Father. Christ Jesus has opened the way into the Holiest of all! This is the full salvation and the full inheritance of God that belongs to the saints! Oh, the glory of the message! For fifteen centuries Israel had a sanctuary with a most holy place into which, under pains of death, no one might enter. But now the call goes forth: Enter in! The veil is rent! The way through has been consecrated for you! God wants to welcome you to His bosom, into His fullness. Henceforth you are to live in union with Him. Son of God, daughter of God, thy Father longs for thee to enter in, to know and dwell in His fullness forevermore!

This has been present truth in our generation. Multitudes of God's elect have received the call to enter beyond the veil into the fullness of God! Yet — when the sanctuary of God is opened in heaven and the ark of His covenant is seen in His temple, something transcendent transpires — The veil is removed! In fact, even the outer covering of skins that enclose the “sanctuary” is likewise stripped away and the temple of God stands opened, revealed in the heavens! The coverings of skins and veils are no longer there. There is no need for any to have boldness to “enter in beyond the veil,” nor is there any need for any to “come out from behind the veil.” THERE IS NO MORE VEIL! The temple of God stands wide open in the heavens of the Spirit, revealed for all to see!

We find our final reality in God, of course, in that box called The Ark of His Covenant. In the Hebrew language the word for “ark” is the same as the word for “coffin.” You have probably noticed that this Ark was present in a spiritual manifestation in the sepulcher where Jesus had lain for three days after His crucifixion. His fleshly humanity was carried there, and rested there. Yet in that same place He was quickened by the Spirit of God and raised up by the power of God into the glory of resurrection! The One who came out of that tomb stepped forth in the fullness of divine, incorruptible life and glory and testified, “ALL POWER is given unto me, in heaven and in earth!” Now notice that at the time of His resurrection in the tomb the scene of the most holy place and the ark of the covenant was re-enacted in a spiritual dimension. When the disciples came and stooped down to enter, they saw the slab where Jesus had been with an angel (cherub) at each end. The glory and radiance of His resurrection was first manifested over that slab (mercy seat) between

the cherubim, just as it had been in the most holy place of the tabernacle and temple. With astonished hearts they beheld the lid of the Ark with the golden cherubim recreated right there before their eyes!

Though the disciples had to stoop to enter, that they could enter at all was made possible only because the stone had been rolled away. Before arriving at the tomb the disciples had questioned, "Who shall roll away the stone for us?" It's an important question! When we compare, as Paul said, "spiritual things with spiritual things" we see that the question also is, "Who shall remove the veil for us?" It is wonderful to be behind the veil and experience the glory there, but before there can be a manifestation (unveiling) of the sons of God, the stone must be rolled away, the veil must be taken away! There must be an unveiling, an uncovering, an opening of the sanctuary of God that we are! The Ark, Christ in us, must be seen! Ah, who shall roll away the stone for us? Who shall remove the veil? The omnipotent power of Christ in us, and us in Christ, shall remove the veil, open the temple, and cause the Ark to be seen! Isn't it wonderful!

I know that some say we are not passing through the tabernacle in our experience of Christ, moving from the outer court to the holy place, and on in to the most holy place. They tell us that since we have been quickened by the Spirit we are already in the most holy place and that all that remains is for us to come out from behind the veil to be revealed in our sonship and to minister to creation. But let me tell you something. No priest could come out of the most holy place until he first had passed through all realms of the tabernacle, completed the ministry in each, and entered in beyond the veil, and completed all the ministrations there. All of this represents progressive experiences in our lives! We can't leave the outer court until we have thoroughly experienced all the reality of the outer court. Nor can we go beyond the holy place until we have completely appropriated all the reality of the holy place. So-called "positional truth" won't do here! Now I know God has given us boldness to enter in beyond the veil into the Holiest, but I can assure you that I have yet to meet the brother or sister who has fully appropriated and experienced all that the most holy place is! Do me a favor, my brother, my sister, and don't come back out of there until the most holy place is what you are! Should you come out in your present state of limitation you will have little to add to the lower realms, nor will creation be set free from the bondage of corruption. And that is the truth!

Our all-wise heavenly Father has a safeguard. None of us can come back out from behind the veil of our own desire or volition; no not one! All that God has ordained for us in that realm must be completed according to His word before any can step back out. And though you should come out from behind the veil, you will still minister in a realm of limitation. When the high priest came out of the sanctuary he blessed the people (Lev. 9:23). It is wonderful to "bless" people! But it will take more than "blessing," my brother, my sister, to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. Here is the mystery. When the temple of God was opened in heaven, immediately John saw a great wonder in heaven, a woman with child, crying, travailing in birth 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. Can we not see by this that only the opening of the temple in heaven brings forth the unveiling of the manchild, the manifestation of the sons of God! Our full sonship is not manifest by "coming out from behind the veil." Oh, no! When God's sons are revealed, manifest, there will be no veil to come out from behind! The temple of God will be opened — the veil will be removed! All that the most holy place represents will be put on glorious display, not by passing back through the veil, for that would mean the reversal of the transformation experienced by passing in through the veil of His flesh! The manifestation of

the sons of God comes only by OPENING THE SANCTUARY so that the ark of His covenant may be SEEN in all the splendor of the realm it pertains to! Oh, the wonder of it!

Creation is in pain and agonizing travail waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! Only the manifest sons of God will possess within themselves the full measure of the power of the kingdom of God as did Jesus! Only the sons of God can deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption. Jesus is not the firstborn among many Christians, or among many believers, or among many saints, among many church members, or among many ministries — He is the firstborn among many brethren! The brethren are all sons of God and they are like Him. Each and every one is like Him! God is not bringing many gifted saints to glory, He is not bringing many apostles to glory, He is not bringing many prophets to glory, He is not bringing many teachers to glory, He is not bringing many musicians or many praise teams to glory, He is not bringing many preachers to glory, but He is bringing many SONS to glory!

Sonship is glorious beyond anything our eyes have seen or our ears have heard. Jesus Christ is the firstborn Son of God. And now all His brothers are empowered to follow Him to maturity! All will follow His steps, becoming what He is. The spiritual life of every son of God has the same origin as the firstborn, for all are born of God. We are being perfected by the same process, and will ultimately achieve the same result! Jesus Christ was the personification of the Father within Himself, and so shall we be! The holy nature of Jesus is ours to be raised up within us. The works that He did, we shall do as well! The authority of Jesus Christ, even the dominion of the ages and all things, He will share with those who come to the measure of the stature of His fullness. Jesus possesses the totality of God's substance, and this is the heritage of every manifest son of God. The present resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus is the portrait of our destiny! It is indeed wonderful!

In the days before us, those who have attained to sonship will be displayed in the blazing glory of immortality. This climatic finale is a fast approaching certainty. From the difficulties, struggles, testings, and processings of this present time the son company will burst forth into everlasting splendor, streaming glory, wisdom, and power as a shower of stars. With Jesus as the Captain, this reigning government of God shall invade the bastions of darkness and by war, yea, by spiritual warfare they shall wrest the rule from the kings, presidents, and prime ministers of the earth. These are celestial kings and priests, trained and tested in conquest! They are invincible in the nature and power of the Father. Nothing shall confound them; all will succumb to their sway! This company of sons is the final world government — it will never be overthrown! They will subdue every enemy, and be the fountainhead of every blessing! They are the solution that God has ordained for the travail of earth's teeming billions. All humanistic philosophies, all false religions, great and small, all the entrenched institutions and organized powers of man will melt, wither, break, and collapse before their wisdom, glory, and power. God's sons will enter into His state of being — they will become what He is in an unchangeable personal possession.. This is the destiny of God's Christ, Head and body!

### **THE ARK IS SEEN IN THE TEMPLE**

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament...” (Rev. 11:19).

In this vision the temple of God, which is the Christ body, is opened in heaven, or in the spiritual realm. The ark of the covenant is then seen in His temple, or in and among the saints who make up the body of Christ. The work of the unfolding of the fullness of Christ in His body is a progressive work, and is set forth prophetically and progressively through the visions given us in the book of Revelation. Therefore, as John now sees the ark of God's covenant, including the articles within it, in and among Christ's body, this signifies that the time for that which the ark symbolizes to be fulfilled in the sons of God, is now at hand!

The ark of the covenant that John sees is the spiritual reality pictured by the physical ark that was in the tabernacle in the wilderness (Ex. 25:10-22). That ark was made of acacia wood, which was a hard wood typical of the humanity of Christ, and consequently of our redeemed humanity. The ark of the covenant, or the ark of His testament, as it is called in the King James Bible, was overlaid with gold, which represents the divine nature of God; it is divinity swallowing up humanity so that only the nature of God is in manifestation! Is it not true that the fullness of the glory of the Christ life shall swallow up this old human identity, including this body of flesh, covering it completely with the glory of the resurrection life of Christ? Thus it is written, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II Cor. 5:4). Indeed, we most certainly do groan daily as we wait for our transformation. We are waiting and believing that one day soon this body of flesh and blood shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, changing our outer manifestation from a fading glory of earth to a much greater glory of divine life by the Spirit of the Lord. As the gold covered the acacia wood of the ark of the covenant, so the resurrection glory and life of Christ shall cover this flesh and blood body, swallowing up or devouring the old corrupt, dying thing to replace it with the transforming life and glory of God. Because we are in Christ as sons of God, our transformation is assured! Even should we go by way of the grave we shall rise up in the power of His resurrection to stand in our place with all the holy sons of God in the hour of manifestation! God has given His word and sealed that word or oath with His very presence and power in the midst of the saints!

In the history of the ark, we observe that a strange divine power always accompanied it. The waters of the Jordan rolled back to the right and to the left under the shadow of it, while the people passed over dry shod. The walls of Jericho fell down flat in their places on the approach of that holy piece of furniture. When the ark set forward, the enemies of God and His people were scattered. When the ark rested, the people were peaceful and happy. The ark of the covenant, as seen in this vision, unveiled for all to see by the Spirit, speaks of the speedy fulfillment of all the promises of God! God engaged Himself to do certain things for His people, for the whole earth, and for all His creation, and He has progressively been doing them, but He will put forth His power in a more open and fuller way and fulfill all that He has pledged to accomplish! As the sign of this, the ark, the symbol of His covenant with man, appears. God's promises, all of them, without one exception, as spoken through prophets and apostles, since time began, will be fulfilled by the strength of His mighty word!

The ark was the very center of life for the children of Israel. It was not merely an article of religious furniture, but it was the dwelling place of the very presence, glory, and power of Yahwey in their midst. In the wilderness, its centrality can be seen typologically in its central position in all the activity of the tabernacle and in its central position in the set up of the camp. So important was the ark that, were it not in its place, all the other pieces of

furniture and all the spiritual ministry in the tabernacle would lose its purpose for being. The primary reason for the tabernacle, and the later temple, was to provide a house for the ark of the covenant! There upon the mercy seat, between the golden cherubim, Yahweh was in visible and audible manifestation in the midst of His people! Its sacredness and power was so overwhelming that improper handling of the ark resulted in death. In the natural, all electricians understand that power must be handled properly or it may result in death. The power in and upon the ark of the covenant was very real! God wasn't out to "kill" people, so He gave very precise instructions about how the ark was to be handled!

Almost everyone knows about the "lost ark." Even a popular Hollywood movie was made about it. Sometime along the line of Old Testament events the ark mysteriously disappeared from history. One thing is certain — at the time of the ark's disappearance it was not transported to heaven, for it was made of acacia wood and gold, material things, and it was symbolic of heavenly realities, a mere shadow of true, whereas heaven itself is the realm of those very realities! The question has always been "What could have happened to the ark of the covenant?" First we must ask, "What is the ark?" The true ark, the pattern for the earthly ark which Moses saw in and by the Spirit in the holy mount, and which the beloved John also saw in His visions on Patmos, is not a little box of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Oh, no! In its heavenly and spiritual reality the ark is God expressed, revealed, and manifested in and through a people!

There is great soulful sentimentality and excitement today in various religious circles about the discovery of the old, earthly ark of the covenant. In spite of the destruction of Jerusalem, the earthly ark of the covenant was preserved for a long time. The apocryphal books which are contained in some Bibles contain some interesting information. In Maccabees 2:4-8, for instance, it says that the prophet Jeremiah ordered, upon divine command, that the ark of the covenant be hidden by those who were led into Babylonian captivity, and that it was done. Some believe that the prophet Jeremiah himself oversaw the hiding of the ark before the captives left for Babylon. Thus, it was not harmed at the destruction of Jerusalem. This, however, is not the only story surrounding the lost ark!

During the reign of king Solomon, the queen of Sheba (Ethiopia) visited him in Jerusalem. II Chronicles 9:12 tells us that "King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which she had brought unto the king..." In a September 1935 article in National Geographic, L. Roberts recorded his interviews with various priests in Ethiopia who consistently recounted that the queen of Sheba had married king Solomon (Solomon had 1,000 wives, many were from the royal families of surrounding nations) and had a child named Menelik. Solomon educated the lad in Jerusalem until he was nineteen years old. The Ethiopian epic, The Glory of the Kings, recounts that the queen of Sheba died and Prince Menelik prepared to return home. King Solomon wanted to give him a replica of the ark of the covenant to take with him to Ethiopia. However, Prince Menelik was concerned with the fact that his father, Solomon, was now placing idols in the temple to please his pagan wives. King Solomon gave his son a banquet and later Menelik switched arks and left the replica in its place. Menelik reverently took the true ark to Ethiopia for safekeeping until Israel should return to the true worship of Yahwey. Unfortunately, Israel never returned to following God exclusively. Thus the Ethiopians never returned the ark! Some people believe that this ark is still preserved and guarded in a church, the historic Church of Zion of Mary in Aksum, along the northern boundary of present-day Ethiopia. Some years ago I read a confirmatory report on this in the Jerusalem Post and the investigative reporter who wrote the article

included a picture of the Church of Zion of Mary along with one of the priests who is a guardian of the ark.

One charlatan, a gentleman who claimed to be an archeologist, reported that he had discovered the lost ark hidden in a cave under mount Calvary where our Lord was crucified. He published some very professional and impressive videos, tapes, and articles concerning this. He explained that God ordained the ark to be hidden there in the days of Jeremiah, so that when the true Lamb of God was slain on mount Calvary His blood ran down and seeped through a fissure in the rocks and dripped right onto the mercy seat on top of the ark! According to him, his discovery of the ark there is a carefully guarded secret by the Israeli government. How c-o-n-v-e-n-i-e-n-t! The only problem is that this man was later proven to be one who misrepresented his credentials, and with a long history of being a compulsive liar and a con-man. So much for the ark beneath mount Calvary!

Dear man of God, dear woman of God, let all who possess a spiritual mind put away such childish prattle. Is it so difficult to understand the simple truth that were the lost ark to actually be found there would be nothing special about it? It would be merely an antique, an interesting archeological exhibit. It pertains to a covenant that is now abolished and has forever passed away! The glory has departed from it; there is no fiery presence of Yahweh flaming out from between the cherubim, no divine presence flooding its environs, no heavenly voice emanating from its radiant cloud, no flashing lightnings of power, and no blinding glory. It is all gone! Forever gone! The only value it could have would be that of a famous religious relic. The presence, voice, glory, and power of the Lord now rest upon the anointed people of God, the body of Christ! This is the heavenly and spiritual reality to which the old ark pointed! The blessed prophet Jeremiah (who may indeed have hidden that ark) prophesied by the Spirit of this day and this new and greater glory, "And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass...in those days, saith the Lord, THEY SHALL SAY NO MORE, THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD: NEITHER SHALL IT COME TO MIND: NEITHER SHALL THEY REMEMBER IT; NEITHER SHALL THEY VISIT IT; NEITHER SHALL THAT BE DONE ANY MORE!" (Jer. 3:14-16).

You see, precious friend of mine, the old ark was only a picture, a type, a shadow pointing to the greater reality to come. When the real has come, you have little interest in a model of it! Here I would draw your attention to the very next verse which follows the one quoted above. Jeremiah's prophecy continues, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it...neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:17). The old ark used to be the throne of the Lord. Now, praise God, His New Jerusalem people has become the throne of the Lord — the seat of His almighty, omnipotent, glory, power, and majesty! There is a mighty ingathering coming as the glory of the Lord arises upon the sons of God who have followed their forerunner through the veil into the Holiest all! And when the temple of God is opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant is seen, the light of the Lord shall shine upon all the nations and the whole earth shall be full of His glory!

Those who are searching for the Lord's ark are looking in the wrong place! The ark was found two thousand years ago — John saw it and it was in the temple where it should be, right in the Holy of holies where it belongs, and the temple is the temple in heaven. Now, there may be an ark, a box of wood overlaid with gold, with two golden cherubim on top at

either end, hidden somewhere in the world today. But that ark is not the true ark, it is only a cheap imitation of the real ark which has always been in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! When the reality came, the shadow forever passed away! Christ Himself is the ark, yea, Christ in you is the ark, and John saw the ark in the true temple which we are!

Hear the word of the Lord! "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and keep thee, and GIVE THEE FOR A COVENANT of the people, and for a light of the nations" (Isa. 42:6). Oh, yes! The ark of the covenant has become a people. "I will give thee for a covenant of the people." We don't have to concern ourselves with the outward any longer. It matters not one whit to us where or when the old ark was "lost," or where or when it might ever be "found." We have no more use for the outward ark than we do for a brazen altar and a bullock to offer upon it. I have no idea where that ancient brazen altar has vanished to, and it would be quite meaningless were it found. The one sacrifice of Jesus has been offered once and forever for all, by which the world has been reconciled unto God and we have been sanctified. The shadow has forever passed away! I would spend no more time looking for the ark of the covenant than I would looking for the brazen altar, the laver, the candlestick, the table of showbread, the altar of incense, or even one of the hooks from the curtain of the outer court. You, my beloved, contain within yourself the covenant — the evidence and proof that HE is God!

The temple of God is the elect of the Lord, the enChristed. The life, the power, the nature of every son of God is Christ in you. Christ Himself is the ark; still the mystery is deeper than this glorious fact! The ark is Christ in you. You are, in union with Him, both the temple and ark, yet it is HE who is the indwelling life and reality! The temple opened and the ark seen is the manifestation of Christ out from His body! The heavenly manna, His own incorruptible life, is within you! The tables of the law, His own divine nature, is within you! Aaron's rod that budded, His own heavenly appointment and priesthood, is within you! And the glory is upon you! Look with me into the realm of the Spirit, and you will see that the temple of God, or the Christ body, is open and revealed. Look and behold with the eyes of the Spirit, and you will also see that the ark of His covenant is among us. Because the temple is open, the ark of the covenant can now be seen. The throne of God is now manifested, in His body. It is here among us now so that all that is represented in that ark shall be fulfilled by the Spirit. YOU are the covenant, my beloved, the covenant of God unto all the ends of the earth!

When in our vision, the Seer declares that he saw the inner sanctuary opened, he means to tell us that he beheld the glory of God in manifestation! In those days to which the "last trumpet" refers, the Lord God Almighty will be unveiled within His elect, so that all the Lord's people will truly see Him in His love, power, wisdom, and grace, as it is not possible for them to see Him now while we are still "behind" the veil. The greater revelation of heavenly things belongs to the "days" of the great consummation. In that glorious time, all veils will be rolled back, all mists lifted, all clouds dissipated, and all barriers broken down and removed, and the Holy of holies, with the ark of the covenant, the glorious Christ within, will be fully disclosed to the vision and the hearts of the redeemed and to all God's vast creation!

"Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst;

neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them” (Isa. 49:8-10). What exceedingly great and precious promises for us and for all mankind! You realize now — you’re the covenant. You’re the ark now. You contain within you the promise and God’s commitment to all men. The mercy seat of God rests upon you! Oh, the wonder of it!

# *Chapter 132*

## *The Temple Opened In Heaven*

### *continued*

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament” (Rev. 11:19).

In this vision the temple of God, which is the Christ body, is opened in heaven, or in the spiritual realm. The ark of His covenant is then seen in the temple, or in and among the saints who make up the body of Christ. The work of the unfolding of the fullness of Christ in His body is a progressive work, and is set forth prophetically and progressively through the visions given us in the book of Revelation. Therefore, as John now sees the ark of God’s covenant, including the articles within it, in and among Christ’s body, this signifies that the time for that which the ark symbolizes to be fulfilled in the sons of God, is now at hand!

The temple of God is the elect of the Lord, the enChristed. The life, the power, the nature of every son of God is Christ in you. Christ Himself is the ark; still the mystery is deeper than this glorious fact! The ark is Christ in you! You are, in union with Him, both the temple and the ark, yet it is HE who is the indwelling life and reality! The temple opened and the ark seen is the manifestation of Christ out from His body. The heavenly manna, His own incorruptible life, is within you! The tables of the law, His own divine nature, is within you! Aaron’s rod that budded, His own divine appointment and priesthood, is within you! And the glory is upon you, over the mercy seat within! Look with me into the realm of the Spirit, and you will see that the temple of God, or the Christ body, is open and revealed. Look and behold with the eyes of the Spirit, and you will also see that the ark of His covenant is among us! When the temple is opened, the ark of the covenant can be seen!

The temple is opened and the ark is seen by the quickening of the Spirit. Two thousand years ago the first spiritual temple and the first spiritual ark appeared among men. Just as the ark of old, this spiritual and heavenly ark had been kept hidden from human view until it appeared in sonship when the heavens were opened at the river Jordan. Jesus came into the world of flesh, and He was truly the temple and the ark of the Lord in the midst of mankind! Yet, is it not true that even He, in all His glory, could only be seen, perceived, and known, by those who had spiritual eyes to see! When Jesus came into the world, He came as a little baby, and I want to tell you that He was no different than any other baby. There was no halo around His head! When He was laid in the manger and the shepherds came in at the word of the heavenly hosts, baby Jesus didn’t wave at them from his manger and announce, “Hi, fellows — I was expecting you!” Oh, no! But when He was eight days old Mary and Joseph carried the child into the temple, and the old prophet Simeon took Him up in his arms, and proclaimed, “Mine eyes have seen the salvation of

the Lord!" Now, how did Simeon see this? How did he see the salvation of the Lord in that weak, helpless little baby? It was by the spirit of revelation!

Long years later Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" And they answered, "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist, some say that Thou art Elijah, and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." And Jesus said, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and boldly declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." I do not hesitate to tell you that no man knew Jesus but by the Spirit of God. The Pharisees did not know Him or see who He was, for their eyes were blinded by their carnal reasoning and religious traditions. The Christ of God is seen and known only in the Spirit and by the Spirit! To this day the ark of the Lord has been hidden in the spirit realm from the view of the carnal mind, veiled by the natural reasoning of carnal minds and fleshly religious concepts of human philosophies and theologies. Jesus said that it was hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. Paul calls it the "mystery" hidden from ages and from generations and from before the foundation of the world.

This brings us to a most significant passage of scripture in which the prophet Isaiah proclaims, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isa. 40:5). But did you know that the word "it" in that passage is in italics, indicating that it is not in the original, but is supplied by the translators. What the Hebrew actually says is, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall SEE TOGETHER!" The glory is the glory of the temple. It is the glory of the Lord! It is the glory that floods the most holy place! It is the glory upon the ark! Ah, there is yet coming an unveiling of the glory of God in His house of sons, and there shall be such a quickening of all flesh, such an opening of men's eyes, such a revelation shed down by the Spirit, until all men everywhere shall proclaim of that which they see, "Thou art the Christ, the sons of the living God!" They shall be quickened to see the glory in the temple, upon the ark, and they shall then know and understand that God has raised up a people that is the salvation of the Lord! The temple shall be opened, and the ark shall be seen! Aren't you glad!

The opening of the temple in heaven and the appearance of the ark speaks of reality breaking through. It is a picture, a representation and parable of the corporate man that is coming indwelt by God, with the fullness of His divine nature, with the rod of God's authority, and with the incorruptible life of God within him. Every time the high priest saw the ark of God he saw what was coming — the spiritual man! Christ Jesus is the prototype of this spiritual, heavenly, and divine race. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and men beheld His glory. They beheld the spiritual and heavenly reality of the ark of the covenant of the Lord in the midst of Israel! HE was then the ark. And now, my beloved, Christ in you is the ark!

Now, within the ark of the covenant were three items: the tablets of the law written by the finger of God, the golden pot with the hidden manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. All of these are important types and shadows to us. The articles that were placed in the earthly ark are not mere empty and useless articles. They are prophetic symbols of all that God is raising up within His elect in this significant hour. As the old ark of the covenant, upon which rested the glory of the Lord, dwelt in the most holy place in His temple, so the ark of His covenant with all mankind dwells within our hearts. Christ, the Lord of glory, has taken His throne of rule and authority in our hearts, and He has established His kingdom reign within us. If this is not your testimony it soon will be if you have truly received the call to

sonship! To see the graciousness and the glory of these three contents, we must take a closer look at them as they are now applied and manifested to God's new covenant ark, His many-membered son. As we do, we will rejoice that our Father has so magnanimously chosen us to be the bearers of His will and purpose! The ark is the ark "of the covenant," that is, it is the repository of the covenant of the Lord! It holds the covenant. Can we not see by this that the three items in the ark represent the covenant. They embody what the covenant is. They are indeed the covenant! The ark itself is not the covenant, but the covenant is in the ark. Understand these three things by the spirit and you will know the mystery of the reality, glory, and power of the new covenant — Christ in you! Because we are "in Christ," we have the assurance that our spiritual growth is progressing on time and according to the omnipotent purposes of our Father. At His appointed time, when the Christ is fully formed in each of us, He will tear away the veil and strip off the coverings, the temple of God will be opened in the heavens and the ark of His covenant will be seen!

### **THE TABLETS OF THE LAW**

The two tablets of stone containing the law of God are the first item in the ark, representing the law and word of the Lord written on the tables of our heart. That the two tablets of the law in Moses' ark were unbroken tablets is a very significant truth indeed (Deut. 10:1-5). When Moses came down from the mount, after receiving the tablets of the law from the very hand of God, he heard a great ruckus and saw that his people had disobeyed God's word and violated His goodness by making a golden calf, and there they were dancing naked and worshipping before it. Moses was so angered by this that he violently threw the two tablets of stone to the ground and broke them into pieces. Thus, the broken tablets represent the law of God broken, disobeyed, and violated. But the two tablets placed within the ark of the covenant were replacements for those broken tablets, and not being broken they showed that the law of God is kept, obeyed, and fulfilled by nature in all who enter into the Holiest of all. Through the processings and preparations we are all going through, the Lord is writing His law in our inward parts. The carnal mind is being replaced by the mind of Christ! And the mind of Christ gives us access by the Spirit to all that is represented in the Holiest of all!

The believers in the church systems today seem to think that all they need to do to establish a "righteous nation" is to pass more legislation based on that Old Testament law of Moses. They would legislate the morals and behavior of our nation with a view to having men ruled by the "law" of God. But they are attempting the impossible! External regulations of man are a failure! They failed first, and perhaps most miserably, in the nation of Israel! Christ is the law of the new covenant, and His law is an indwelling nature, not a rule imposed upon rebellious flesh from without. Only God can change people and bring about righteousness in mankind! And this He does by a spiritual transformation! This is the truth to be seen in the Ark of the Covenant. The law must be within, and it can only be the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus! In that glorious realm of His Spirit, all is fulfilled by the Spirit, and not by human, carnal means. A legislated law over men's outward lives is Old Testament weakness and failure and has nothing to do whatever with the kingdom of God, and it is not the law of God that will be ministered to creation by God's ark people!

If we would see a righteous society, a holy nation, a world free of crime and filled with peace and righteousness, and a creation loosed from the chains of sin and death, then a consecrated remnant must press on through the veil into the most holy place of God's life

and glory. Our spiritual growth and development is the key that will unlock the door into the future of God's purpose on earth! The remnant must let Him write His word upon their hearts, thereby renewing their minds and enabling them to live the new-creation life of Christ. By the mind of Christ, I see a holy remnant, God's ark of His covenant, arising in the Spirit and finding their reality in Christ within the veil. These are the hope of all creation! These are the people who are being formed in the image of God's Son, prepared for the hour of unveiling when the temple is opened in heaven! These are the people who shall establish the kingdom of God in the earth, by the power of the Spirit of holiness, and not by the failing, faulty legislation of the laws and legalism of man. And they shall deliver the whole creation! For "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall SEE TOGETHER!"

The law of God bespeaks the nature of God! The old law of commandments portrays to us what God is like in His nature. For example, when the Lord gave the law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," He had something infinitely greater in mind than just controlling the sexual behavior of human spouses. The behavior of those who keep that law reveals to us the nature of faithfulness that is rooted in love. God is telling us that He deeply loves us, and come what may He will be faithful to all His commitments to us and to the world and to all mankind! His spiritual law, symbolized by the external law of commandments, is now being put into our minds and written on our hearts so that we will by nature be just as loving and just as faithful to God, to His purpose in us, and to all men everywhere, regardless of how deserving they may or may not be, as He is! He changes our nature, giving us a new power of life, and the ability to live the life of the kingdom of God and manifest that life to the world. His law written on our hearts makes us new-creation people who are called to establish the new age of the kingdom of God on earth!

When one spiritualizes and internalizes the Ten Commandments, a whole new depth of meaning comes to light. Having no other gods before you means not worshipping Self. And that's how God is! God Himself does not worship Self, for God is Love, and love is not Self-centered, but is always sacrificing and pouring out for others! "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son!" The Adamic nature always puts Self above God! In fact, the Adamic nature is very religious! It goes to church, pays tithes, tries to live a "holy" life, doesn't smoke, curse, drink, lie, cheat, etc. It "tries" to keep the Ten Commandments and "tries" to act like what it has been told a Christian is supposed to act like. Such behavior makes it feel it is a Christian. But that is a false god! It is outwardly conforming to imposed standards, but there is no internal growth in the grace, wisdom, love, holiness, glory, nature, and power of the Lord! They fail to realize that they should focus on growing up into Him, and not on the doing or not doing of things!

The power of the new covenant is to convert the old external law into an inner life and state of being, to so establish the spiritual essence of that law in the heart that it shall be its inmost life, so that, as naturally as we have willed and acted in our natural life, we now will and act and live to fulfill all the righteousness and purpose of our Father. That, my beloved, is why the Lord instructed Moses to put the unbroken tablets of the law into the ark! He was revealing the great truth that the law must be written by the finger of God (the Spirit) on the fleshy tables of our heart! Why does a little acorn spontaneously grow up into a mighty oak? Because the law of the oak is written in the heart of the acorn! God in all His holiness, wisdom, and power does not sit up in His heaven dishing out commandments and laws for us to obey. Oh, no! He has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts! The law (nature) of God is closer to us than the air we breathe, closer to us even than the blood coursing through our veins! His law is in the very center of the ark

which we are! Yes, He has done that, so that we can say, as the firstborn Son of God did, “Thy law is within my heart; I delight to do Thy will, O God!”

## **THE HIDDEN MANNA**

The second item in the Ark of the Covenant is the golden bowl filled with the hidden manna which came from the time in the wilderness when God fed the millions of people directly from the sky with something akin to coriander seed. Normally, if the manna was kept longer than one day it quickly corrupted, bred worms, and stank. Only on the Sabbath was the manna preserved through one extra day without corrupting. Yet, the manna placed within the golden bowl and deposited in the ark was preserved by the power of divine life and never corrupted! This, then, reveals the wonderful truth of incorruptibility — the inward nature or state of being beyond the possibility of being debased, perverted, adulterated, polluted, warped, contaminated, or prostituted. The Lord’s promise to the overcomers is, “I will give him to eat of the hidden manna” (Rev. 2:17). The “hidden manna” is the manna from the golden bowl in the Ark of the Covenant! No spiritually enlightened person supposes that the overcomers will one day go to heaven and eat literal manna from a literal golden bowl! But all who are apprehended to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus are given to eat and eat and eat of the incorruptible bread of HIS INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE until all the death of the carnal mind and the corruption of the flesh in them has been swallowed up of His life and the day comes when in the totality of being, spirit, soul, and body, there is nothing that can be corrupted! How much more glorious this is!

It is quite meaningful to see that the manna, like the tablets of the law, are in the ark. The ark represents Christ! It is not open manna, it is not manna on the ground, in the lowlands of the corruption of our earthiness, or of carnal man-made religion; it is not manna displayed — not something you will hear on TBN! And it is no earthly substance of vitamins, herbs, or supplements of any kind, for there is no power in any earthly substance to impart incorruptible life into our spirit, our soul, or our body! It is manna in the secret place, in the secret depths of Christ in our spirit. It is not surface and shallow, it is not for the multitudes, not even the multitudes of God’s people — not at this time. This is that which goes beyond the veil, hidden in the ark of Christ in you. Hidden manna is from heaven, truth unfolded, life imparted, enlightenment and quickening from the throne room of God! Can you not see the mystery?

Not only is the manna hidden in the golden bowl, but this bowl is hidden in the ark! “For ye are dead, and your (new) life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). In the wilderness the children of Israel enjoyed the manna, but the manna they enjoyed was public manna; it was manna fallen to earth before the eyes of everyone, not manna hidden in the heavens of God’s Spirit. The hidden manna is not the obvious manna that everyone else is eating, but that which is stored away in the blazing presence of God, in the ark of His covenant, in the most holy place of His glory and power. It is covenant manna! It embodies God’s covenant to give and inwork incorruptible life first within His elect — and in due time the temple will be opened, the ark will be seen, and there will be a revelation of incorruptible life for all creation! Most Christians today eat of the ordinary manna, the letter of the word, the truths of God on the level that is understandable and applicable by natural minds. They never get to the depth of truth that can only be received by the quickening of the Holy Spirit! Instead of merely believing the letter of the words of scripture, every son of God is being quickened to hear the heartbeat of the Father, to receive the words of God in and by the Spirit.

The hidden manna is Christ speaking words of spirit and life from the sanctuary of our innermost being! The showbread was exhibited on the table, it was shown forth and seen by the Lord's priests that never passed beyond the veil, but ministered in the realms of imperfection. But the incorruptible manna is hidden in the golden bowl in the ark! Multitudes today eat of the showbread in the holy place! In gatherings, in meetings, in conventions, on radio and television, in books and magazines, they eat of the bread of life that is displayed, that all can see and hear, and be strengthened thereby. But it does not give the measure of life that the hidden manna gives! It is like the milk for babes, of which Paul wrote. The hidden manna is Christ in a deeper way, Christ in the most holy place, Christ in the inner chamber, Christ in the secret place of the most High, Christ in the heavenlies of our inner son!

## **AARON'S ROD**

The third article in the ark is the rod of Aaron. You remember the story in the Old Testament when all the elders, the leaders of the twelve tribes, questioned Moses' choice of his brother Aaron to be high priest. In fact, these leaders were not merely challenging Moses on this issue, they were challenging God! So God said He would give a sign to them to indicate whom He had chosen for this high office. The principal elder of each tribe was to take his rod (staff) and place it with the others. They were to write the name of each elder on the rod of his tribe. Aaron's name was written on the rod for the tribe of Levi. All the rods were taken and laid up in the most holy place, before the Ark of the Covenant. The Lord's "sign" would be that the dry rod that belonged to the man the Lord would choose would miraculously, overnight, bring forth buds, blossom blossoms, and bear almonds! The leaders accepted this dramatic action by God. All the rods were taken into the most holy place and laid up before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. The next day Moses went into the tabernacle and brought out all the rods from before the Lord and delivered them to the children of Israel. They looked, and gave each prince his rod. Only Aaron's rod had brought forth buds, and blossoms, and borne almonds! All the other rods were still dead wood. Then the Lord instructed Moses to take Aaron's rod back into the most holy place and deposit it in the ark as an everlasting testimony against the murmurings and rebellion of the people against the Lord and His servant, Moses.

By bringing life and fruitfulness on Aaron's rod of office the Lord demonstrated His divine appointment and the divine life and power of His priesthood! Authority from God comes only by divine appointment. God does not use volunteers, He only takes conscripts. The honor of being priest was not open to man's ambition. No man could take it for himself, or assume it out of his own fancy or self-will. The priest ministers in such holy matters that only God can choose and empower him! Thus it was that Aaron was called of God to this task. He did not take it to himself; nor did Moses of his own will make him high priest. God called him to this work, and no one else could have done so. And so we read, "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto him, thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee...saith also in another place, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:4-6).

And what was true of Aaron was also true of his sons, they also were "taken" or "called" unto the priesthood! And what is true of Christ as our great high priest, is also true of His priestly house, the body of Christ, or the sons of God — they are called of God! "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. 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. 8:28-30). "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Heb. 3:1). "Thou...hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10).

A brother in Christ has written; "There is a widespread tradition among Christians that is freighted with fateful error. How often we have been told that God is looking for volunteers for His service. I wish to inform you that this is one of the biggest lies that ever sprang from the deceptive mind of Satan. God does not want volunteers. God only accepts conscripts. Search the scripture from cover to cover and you will find without one exception that every ministry from Genesis to Revelation was called and chosen of God and conscripted to do God's bidding, and we may further add, that many of these men were chosen against their own will and in spite of their own protestations and objections. Did Moses volunteer for service? Certainly not! He argued that he was not able to speak, that the people would not listen; but he was conscripted. Did Gideon volunteer for service? No! He was conscripted, too. Can you not hear Jeremiah saying, 'Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a child' (Jer. 1:6). Did any of the apostles volunteer for service? Not one! They were all especially called and conscripted by Jesus Himself. Did Saul of Tarsus volunteer for service when he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians? This was the last thing in his mind; but Jesus said, 'He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.'

"Perhaps the greatest single curse of the centuries has been the presumptuous tradition that men and women should volunteer for the ministry of the Lord. Nothing could be farther from the truth, and nothing can be more detrimental to the true work of God than to have the church cluttered up with men and women who have themselves chosen the ministry as a vocation. They are not tried. They are not tested. They have not God's burden upon their hearts. They have no real love for the flock; and worst of all, they have no commission from God. Therefore, they lack His blessing and His anointing. Well did the Holy Ghost say by Jeremiah the prophet, 'In the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from the evil of their doings' (Jer. 23:20-22). If you are thinking of entering the ministry, forget it and just go right on picking cotton, or whatever your hand finds to do, until He comes and conscripts you. It will be this volunteer crowd who will come at the last, saying, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works.' And it will be to them that the Lord will say, 'I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity (rebellion).' God does not know nor accept the ministry of anybody except those whom He calls and commissions Himself" — The Page.

In any ministry, to receive a divine call is a matter of first importance! If such a calling was necessary for the carnal priesthood of the old order and of Christ, how much more should the ministry of this age and that of the ages to come assure themselves that they are there because of a divine call. The great apostle Paul said, "For I take no special pride in the fact that I preach the gospel. I feel compelled to do so; I should be utterly miserable if I failed to preach it. If I do this work because I choose to do so then I am entitled to a reward. But if it is no choice of mine, but a sacred responsibility put upon me, what can I expect in a way of reward?" (I Cor. 9:16-18, Phillips). It becomes clear, Paul did not

volunteer his services of his own free will, so he was not entitled to any reward as such for preaching. He had no choice in the matter, he was conscripted by God and given the responsibility from above. Let it be known in this day of Babylon's religious institutions and hirelings — God does not use volunteers in the work of His kingdom! Ministry is not something one chooses as a vocation, a profession, an easy way to earn a living. All such are HIRELINGS, and hirelings are the ministers of Babylon, and will fall with the system.

I do not hesitate to add that only those who receive the call, who come to realize within themselves that they are, beyond any shadow of doubt, apprehended unto sonship to God, will be fully processed and positioned and birthed by the dealings of the Father into the new order of the new age. Many come to this holy realization through a personal encounter with the Lord. Each son must receive the call and each must come to know the Father for himself. In order to be a king-priest after the order of Melchizedek our existence must spring from our heavenly and divine origin and not from our earthly one. The new creation life we have in Him becomes a super-charged power that lifts us above the law of sin and death and into the power of His endless life. Ah, when the temple of God is opened in heaven, the Ark of the Covenant is seen! And within that ark is Aaron's rod that budded, revealing the great truth of the divine appointment and power of the Royal Priesthood of God!

## **THE MERCY SEAT**

For a cover for the Ark of the Covenant Moses was commissioned to make a "mercy-seat," a slab of solid gold, which was in fact a lid, with cherubim, one at each end facing each other, and all in one piece. The tablets of the law of the Lord, the golden bowl of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, were placed within the ark and the mercy-seat placed above it. Nothing could either enter or leave the ark without passing through the mercy-seat! This mercy-seat was also called the throne of the Lord, and it was there upon the mercy-seat, between the cherubim, that the glory of the God of Israel dwelt, and from there God communed with His people and set judgment and mercy in the midst. "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above the ark...and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark" (Ex. 25:21-22). "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel...Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth" (Ps. 80:1).

The covering of the Ark of the Covenant was the place of the judgment-of-mercy for the forgiveness of sin. It was the judgment-throne of the Invisible One, Israel's King. It was the throne of mercy! Everything in the law of Moses and the Old Testament economy of redemption centered in that mercy-seat. All the sacrifices had to do with that mercy-seat within the veil. All the shedding of blood of offerings had to do with that one chief sprinkling of blood upon the mercy-seat. The mercy-throne was, in the arrangement of things, the center of all! The tabernacle was in the center of the camp. The most holy place was in the center of the tabernacle. The mercy-seat was in the center of the most holy place. So the mercy-throne was in the center, or midst, or centrality of everything! The mercy-throne was what the most holy place was made for! The mercy-seat was not a "seat" as we think of a seat; the old English word means the origin or center, just as you speak of "the seat of pain" or "the seat of government" as the point of origin or center of it. The mercy-seat was the place where MERCY ORIGINATED! It was the CENTER OF MERCY! This is the description of something supreme — MERCY!

The mercy-seat is an absolute picture of God's Christ, Head and body. There is no wood in it at all. It speaks of God and all that is the nature of God as revealed in Christ! The Lord Jesus Christ is first, and foremost, the revelation of the mercy-seat. The word for mercy-seat in the Greek language is *hilasterion*. In the New Testament there are only four verses of scripture that use this word, and it is translated once as "mercy seat" (Heb. 9:5) and three times as "propitiation" (Rom. 3:25; I Jn. 4:10; I Jn. 2:2). In these passages our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be the "propitiation" for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world! That means that Jesus is the "mercy-seat" where the issue of our sins is dealt with. To propitiate means to appease, soothe, cause to be favorably disposed, to conciliate. There is no condemnation in propitiation! The only judgment in propitiation must be one that has an outcome that is favorable toward us! It is a MERCY-THRONE! The only reason to approach a mercy-throne is to obtain mercy! And Jesus is the mercy-throne for the sins of the whole world! Aren't you glad!

If the Christ, who is our mercy-seat, the origin and center of all love and grace and life, had turned away from us, we would have at once been everlastingly finished. I do not hesitate to tell you that God has not dismantled His mercy-seat, nor shall He as long as there is one poor sinner in earth or in hell who needs it! He is not taking His Spirit out of the earth, the day of grace is not, as the preachers so ridiculously proclaim, about to end; indeed, the day of grace is barely begun! "His mercy endureth for the ages," and none can deny that there are yet "the ages to come!" Therefore, though we have but tasted of His mercies, through vast ages yet unborn He will continue to unfold the riches of His grace, manifesting it through His vessels of mercy, until the fullness thereof is revealed, and God becomes, finally, ALL-IN-ALL!

I would be remiss if I failed to point out that all the sons of God also shall fulfill this same ministry of the mercy-seat! Growing up into Him who is the Head, coming unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, being partakers of the heavenly calling, the high calling of His priesthood, kings and priests reigning with Him upon His mercy-throne — all bespeak the same truth — we are destined to become His mercy-seat! This beautiful truth is stated so simply, yet so graphically, in Psalm 103:4 wherein we read, "Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." In the Hebrew "lovingkindness" is *hhesed*; "tender mercies" is *rahhamim*, which is equivalent in power to our English word "compassion." This is the God of all grace placing a crown upon those who rule with Him! This is the God of love placing upon your head the insignia of anointing as one of His king-priests. "He crowns us!" the blessed Psalmist says. What is this crown, this kingly, priestly anointing, this power and authority to rule? The crown is *HHESED* and *RAHHAMIM* — LOVINGKINDNESS and TENDER MERCIES! What a crown to be crowned with; what a throne to reign from!

Think of it! God's crown, God's ruling authority and power! Crowned with mercy! Ruling by mercy! This is truth of unfathomed depth. What kind of a crown do you have in mind when you think of "wearing a crown" in the kingdom of God? It is my prayerful hope that these words will prove helpful in bringing many of God's precious elect into their crown-fitting! "In mercy shall the throne be established" (Isa. 16:5). "Mercy shall be built up for ever" (Ps. 89:2). It is when this mercy company has fully become, matured in the nature of God, then shall the completeness of the mercy-throne be revealed in the earth! The Lord Jesus is now "our" mercy-seat, and in due time God's firstfruits are to become that mercy-seat for others — to unfold God's transforming mercy to all!

I mentioned earlier that the mercy-throne is what the most holy place was made for. As we today are given boldness by the blood of Jesus to truly enter the most holy place not made with hands — the realm of God’s fullness — may we enter humbly with this knowledge, and in this spirit — the most holy place is prepared and ordained — for MERCY! It is made just for the mercy-seat. I do not say this critically nor harshly, but I do not hesitate to tell you that anyone who truly understands the mercy-seat will also understand that any man or woman who claims to have entered beyond the veil into the Holiest of all, but yet preaches eternal hell and damnation unto the billions of mankind who have lived and died outside of Christ, that man and that woman is truly deceived, for they neither know, nor have they seen, nor can they describe the nature of the God who sits between the cherubim upon that MERCY-SEAT! The unmerciful will never stand upon this holy ground. No place here to view any man with the thought, “Does he deserve it?” Mercy is not about what people deserve! We have not deserved it, any more than any man, not one of us had any merits to claim His favor, but it was freely given to us just the same, and from this holy station we have learned to freely give in like manner, not imputing men’s sins unto them, but revealing HIS REDEEMING MERCY.

This is oft times difficult at first for those priests-to-be who have come out of the church systems of man with a heavy hangover of condemnation and charging every man with guilt and shame. It was a sin to do this, it was a sin to do that, and God could not look upon sin, could not countenance sin, and we were so sin-conscious that we were unable to kindle any consciousness of the awesome power of HIS ABOUNDING MERCY! How we have ranted and raved and stormed at men about their sins and judgment! But it has been well said that “There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love will not heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge; no wall that enough love will not throw down; no sin that enough love will not redeem. It makes no difference how deep-seated may be the problem, how hopeless the outlook, how muddled the tangles, how grave the mistake — a sufficient realization of love will dissolve it all — if only you could love enough and love long enough you would be the happiest and most powerful being in the world!” As I read those words I thought, “Now we know how God became the Almighty God!” And we also know how the sons of God become the sons of their Father which is in heaven! Oh, the wonder of it!

All who rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom rule in mercy. The throne of God is the throne of mercy! “And in mercy shall the throne be established: and He shall sit upon it in truth...judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness” (Isa. 16:5). In mercy shall the throne be established, saith the Lord! God has come to our lives in mercy. The only reason we are breathing today is because of His mercy. Mercy is an aspect of God’s nature that flows out to all men, for our heavenly Father causes His sun to rise upon the good and on the evil, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. Man does not know how to be so merciful! The Greek word for throne is *kicce*. It means the place or seat of authority. The throne of God is not a golden chair somewhere out in space, nor is it a chair in London, England nor in Jerusalem, Israel. It is the authority that is invested in the name of Jesus Christ within His elect! His name signifies His nature. The Lord is taking all the authority that is in the name or nature of Jesus Christ and He is establishing that authority and that nature in His sons and daughters as the power of life. And this throne is the throne of MERCY!

The Hebrew word for throne also means “a canopy; something that is covered.” The mercy-seat in the tabernacle in the wilderness was covered by the skins and the veil of the most holy place and by the overspreading wings of the cherubim of gold. “To him that

overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my covered place — THE MERCY-SEAT.” It was upon the mercy-seat that the glory of the God of Israel dwelt. He is preeminently a God of mercy, who remembers mercy in time of judgment. The writer to the Hebrews says, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16). This can be a reference to nothing else but the mercy-seat! The same writer to the Hebrews who speaks here of “coming boldly to the throne of grace...to obtain mercy,” is the one who also says, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus...” Oh, yes! Boldness to enter the Holiest and approach the mercy-seat to obtain mercy! God is the God of mercy.

Mercy is the ability to get into other people’s skin until you see the way they see, hear the way they hear, feel the way they feel — so that you can be touched by the feelings of their infirmities, and then act toward them the way you would wish them to act toward you in that same place! That is exactly what Jesus did for you and me! And it is what every son of mercy must attain to. God’s throne is a covered place, a canopy, the place of mercy where all sin is covered. Would you “cover” your erring brother? God “covers” His erring creation! As members of His body, we are the tabernacle of God and the ark is in us. The throne of mercy is established in our hearts. “In mercy shall the throne be established.” Where? IN US! “And He shall sit upon it.” Where? IN US! “And He shall judge.” Where? IN US! “And He shall seek justice.” Where? IN US! “And He shall accelerate righteousness.” Where? IN US! Nothing that God’s throne is or that it represents is worth a hill of beans until it becomes reality and life in His mercy-seat company. God must reign in us and through us — in mercy!

The greatness of a man is measured by his attitude toward his enemies. While living here on earth, our Lord was extremely kind. He picked up little children and blessed them. He healed all who were suffering with disease and pain. While relatives were weeping over dead loved ones, He raised four of them to life again. Four is the number of that which is worldwide or universal, signifying God’s intention to raise all men from their graves of sin and death! The Saviour of ALL said to the woman caught in adultery, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more.” His kindness made an evangelist out of the licentious woman at the well in Samaria. Because Jesus really loved the weak, helpless creatures whom He had created, He wept over them, prayed for them, succored them, and taught them continually. Except those religious Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes, Jesus never spoke one cross word, nor one condemnatory word, nor one threatening word to the multitudes of people, saint or sinner. He was very tender and kind and merciful in all His dealings with men. His approach to them was very gentle, delicate, and considerate. Hanging in excruciating pain and misery upon the wretched cross He cried out for His murderers, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!” Surely, then, we are safer in His hands than anywhere else! This is the Man that sits upon the throne! The things He has in store for every one of us are far greater than we could plan for ourselves.

Does God expect His sons to be either better or less than Himself? In Luke 6:35-36 we read, “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be THE SONS OF THE HIGHEST; for HE IS KIND UNTO THE UNTHANKFUL AND TO THE EVIL, BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER ALSO IS MERCIFUL.” In this instance Jesus plainly says that if we desire to be the sons of the Highest, we must be merciful as He is merciful. THE HIGHEST IS MERCIFUL TO ALL!

It is the property of God to always have mercy, and mercy triumphs over judgment. His mercy is above the heavens. It is from everlasting to everlasting. He has provided a way that the banished may always return. There can be no limits to God's mercy. Men have limits to their mercy, but our Father has none! The mercy of God is not only mercy, it is tender mercy. It is mercy of the utmost tenderness and compassionate love and infinite kindness. It is mercy that reaches to all, to the darkest sin, and to the lowest hell. Christ Himself manifested that mercy. It is mercy without any alloy, pure, and without any restraint. It is mercy without any remembrance of the transgression. It is the blotting of it out. The record is erased. It is the casting of it into the deep sea of eternal forgetfulness. It extends through all time and into eternity. Those who would be priests of the most High must be ministers of His mercy. That is the spirit of sonship! And that is what is seen when the temple is opened in heaven and the ark of the covenant is unveiled, revealed, laid bare before the wondering eyes of mankind! The ark is SEEN! The top of the ark is the mercy-seat — the throne of mercy! What is seen is the Father's divinely appointed priesthood of mercy, all the holy sons of God who reign from that glorious throne in the power of divine love and redemption! It is indeed wonderful!

# Chapter 133

## *The Temple Opened In Heaven*

### *continued*

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven...and there were *lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail*” (Rev. 11:19).

Let us look a bit more at what John sees when the temple of God is opened in heaven. Out of the throne are seen proceeding lightnings, voices, and thunderings; then there is an earthquake, and great hail. Three other times in the Revelation it speaks of lightnings and voices and thunderings. These things, of course, along with the hail, are the familiar accompaniments of a storm. It is significant that each time they are named in the book it is in connection with some direct action taken by the Lord out of the heavens of the Spirit which produces a reaction and has an effect in the earth realm. And each time there is some added action intensifying the scene!

A physical storm is caused by two areas of unequal temperature coming together. The storm is the process of coming together and equalizing of the atmospheric conditions. The inference here would seem to be that the storm is created when the two “atmospheres” of heaven and earth meet, that is, when the atmosphere of the spirit realm touches the atmosphere of the earthy, carnal, soulical realm, and a storm results which equalizes the atmosphere, bringing clear weather, or true clarity in both the atmosphere of the spiritual *and* the soulical. It suggests that the Lord is taking the next step in bringing forth the *revelation of Jesus Christ in His elect!* In this storm, we see God breaking through to the people. He has risen up from His secret place, pulled away the veil, opened the temple, and made Himself visible. The ark of the covenant is seen in all the glory that it contains, and a great storm in the lower nature breaks out as God moves to MAKE ALL THINGS NEW! Isn't it wonderful!

The “storms” of the book of Revelation are interesting. In chapter eight a storm is created when something symbolically represented as “fire of the altar” is cast into the earth and becomes a disturbing element in the atmosphere of the earth causing great disturbance there. When the Lord comes in His Holy Ghost fire it always changes the temperature and creates a disturbance! The fire of God *heats up* the atmosphere of Adam's world, quickening the spirit within man, and the heated atmosphere of the spirit meets the *cold atmosphere* of man's soulical life, and a great storm is generated! God *speaks* out of the storm, and there are heard voices proclaiming heavenly things! In the storm God manifests His *power* in the thunderings! He gives brilliant flashes of *illumination* and *revelation* by the lightnings! By this storm He *shakes* (symbolized by the earthquake) everything of the old carnal understanding, the old natural life, the old worldly system of things, purifies the atmosphere, pours down the rain of His Spirit and Life, and MAKES ALL THINGS NEW! The vision reveals the great truth that in the outworking of God's kingdom purposes, *first* something happens in *heaven*, and then as a *consequence*, certain *events* take place *in our earth*. And the outcome is glorious indeed!

## LIGHTNINGS

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there were ...*lightnings*” (Rev. 11:19).

First, there are seen lightnings that flash throughout our earth! Undoubtedly, we have all seen, when clouds turn the sky into terrible blackness, how there suddenly flashes forth from their awesome darkness almost terrifying streaks of lightning that light up earth and sky. Lightning is a powerful discharge of atmospheric electricity. Benjamin Franklin knew that lightning and electricity are the same thing. Spiritually, there is a word and revelation of the Lord that flashes within our consciousness like a bolt of lightning! When man's darkness seems impenetrable and unbearable, then suddenly we behold the brilliance of a storm of moving charges as God's lightning flashes and the Lord breaks through the darkness of the carnal mind by the swift and powerful illumination of His Word by His Spirit. His glory is seen in the “lightning” and we discover where we are in His great purpose! This declares to us with unspeakable clarity that lightning is the symbol of **divine illumination!** These symbolic lightnings are spoken of in Psalm 97:4 wherein we read, “His *lightnings enlightened the world*; the earth saw, and trembled.” The lightnings of God bespeak the illumination of men when the Lord moves suddenly and powerfully by His Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and revelation! They are vivid spiritual displays of the light and glory of God which earth-men can neither deny nor ignore, and they are changed thereby!

## VOICES

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven... and there were...*voices*” (Rev. 11:19).

After the lightnings John heard *voices*. One of the key words in the book of Revelation is “voices.” It is important to note in each case what the voices are, what the circumstances are, where they come from, and what they say. Here in our text the voices come from the mercy-throne upon the ark of the covenant in the opened temple; they are the **word of the Lord** spoken out of the mouths of His kings and priests! It is the one Voice of the Lord becoming many voices, as the sound of many waters, issuing from the many sons brought to glory. How do I conceive God? As a personage with a body? No. As some spirit who flits about disembodied with a lot of force and energy? No. I conceive of God as a *voice*. That is how I conceive of God. That's how I experience Him. The very first thing we read of God is that “God *said...*” He spoke! And the only manifestation of God that Adam knew in that long-ago Eden was simply “the *voice* of the Lord God walking in the midst of the garden in the cool (spirit) of the day” (Gen. 3:8).

In an article some years ago David Wilkerson penned some penetrating words about hearing the voice of God, which still have meaning for us today. He wrote, “It is possible to hear God's voice today as certainly and clearly as did Abraham and Moses — as clearly as did Samuel and David — as clearly as did Paul, Peter, the apostles, and John on the isle of Patmos! God has this message for all who have been called out: The voice of God that has shaken the earth in past generations will be heard in power again in one great shaking! ‘Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven’ (Heb. 12:26). Why is God gathering together a people out of the dead churches? Why is the Spirit crying out, ‘Come out of Babylon, my people! Partake not of her sins!’ It is because God must have a people, a Zion people, in these troubled days who are not confused or tossed to and fro by the horrible winds of false doctrine. These are sheep who do not follow false teachers, who

know their Master's voice. God speaks to them clearly and certainly, and they *live* by His voice! They are directed by His voice, comforted by His voice, guided in all things by His voice! This is the one great characteristic of a holy people: They are *not* mistaken about God's voice! They know it, they hear it, they are governed by it. It is sure, steadfast, and unmistakable!

"The children of Israel wanted God's voice filtered through a holy servant. 'Now therefore why should we die? for the great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it' (Deut. 5:25-27). God's people haven't changed much today! They are still afraid of the responsibility of being shut in with God to hear His voice! But the Lord wanted every Israelite to know and hear His voice personally. He made them know that He is a *talking* God: 'We have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and liveth.'

"It is no wonder that thousands are being led astray. They have put their very lives in the hands of a teacher or a pastor, who then becomes God to them — and whatever he hears or teaches becomes their voice of God! But even holy, meek Moses 'spoke unadvisedly with his lips' (Ps. 106:33) and misrepresented God's holiness. Therefore, even if your teacher is as meek and holy as Moses, his voice is not infallible. You need to know and hear God's voice directly to be able to judge what is taught!" — end quote.

While I am quoting others I am impressed to share the following words from a spoken message delivered by John Wright Follette. He is speaking of the fact that Adam and Eve "*heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden...*" Then he comments: "It does not say they heard the Lord God walking. Rather, they heard a 'voice' walking. At first I thought the grammar was wrong, but it is right. Then I diagramed this verse. Voice is the subject, a noun. Walking is a verb. It is a participle. I thought, who ever heard of a 'voice' walking? In the Hebrew text, this word is not 'voice' as we use it. It is 'sound.' When the source of the 'sound' is human, it is called a 'voice.' 'They heard the sound of God moving.' What was it that they heard? It was not His footsteps. He had not yet drawn near to them. It was not His voice. He had not yet spoken to them. *This is a spiritual thing!*

"We are sensitive, responsive creatures and every object has, in a sense, its 'atmosphere.' Have you ever been near someone and 'felt' their spirit? This is because we are sensitive. The presence of the Lord is like this! Whenever the Lord moves, He chooses a means through which to reveal Himself. Sometimes it is the rushing of the wind. At other times it is thunder. The Hebrew text confirms that this is what it was — sound. The 'sound,' or the voice of God in thunder, in whirlwinds, in winds. Whatever 'form' the Lord may take in making Himself known is called 'His voice.' At Pentecost it was the sound of a rushing wind. In the book of Revelation, the word 'sound' or 'voice' of God is repeated forty-four times. '*The sound of the trumpet*' is sometimes called '*the voice of the trumpet,*' for these are interchangeable.

"Is not this wonderful? The voice of the Lord is a sound that man can perceive. Therefore, whenever God moves in relation to man, there is a sound that man can sense. '*There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them are without signification*' (I Cor. 14:10). Paul is talking about the 'sounds' of God's movings. When Jesus prayed,

He said, *'Father, glorify Thy name. Then there came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes'* (Jn. 12:28-30). All do not detect when God speaks. Some thought that it thundered, others translated the thunder into His Word and they heard Him say, 'I have glorified Him and will glorify Him. **There are those today who are only hearing thunder!**

"The Lord teaches me just like a child. Education is good, but it does not function in the field of the Spirit. Truth comes by revelation of the Spirit. The voice, the message, must become articulate within. The Lord showed me this in scripture. When Jesus came to be baptized in the Jordan River, John the Baptist introduced Him and then baptized Him. As Jesus came up out of the water, there came a voice from heaven which said, *'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased'* (Mat. 3:17). In what did His Father's pleasure consist? It was in the fact that His Son had taken upon Himself a human concept of living in order to become a redeeming factor which would bring humanity back again to God. This was a sacrifice that pleased the heart of God. The pleasure that God should have found in Adam, He is now finding in the Last Adam. But there is something more to be considered.

"After Jesus had fully overcome in His human temptations and struggles, and was ready for His acceptance by God, He went up on the mount of Transfiguration. As He was glorified, a voice from heaven came saying, *'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him'* (Mat. 17:5). The vocation of the Christ had become articulate in a life which is to be heard and VOICED to the ends of the world. He was the Voice, but when He had lived and brought it through to its glorification, it became incarnate. Now it had become flesh, articulate, and God could say, *'Hear ye Him!'* **Again, He has come to walk and speak in us!"** — end quote.

In the Revelation the voice always comes out of heaven. It comes from the throne (4:5). It comes from the altar (8:5). It comes from the temple (11:19; 16:17). If you hear a voice speaking out of the earth-realm, do you know what it will talk about? Earthly things! And men and preachers will quote scripture to talk about *earthly things* — the state of Israel, Israel Identity, the Stone of Scone, Christian politicians, external laws of righteousness, monetary prosperity, physical blessings, church buildings, convention centers, and a thousand more — but all their scriptures will be interpreted out of natural, carnal, earthly minds! If you hear a voice speaking out of heaven, do you know what it will talk about? Heavenly things! *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto placement as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will"* (Eph. 1:3-4).

Where is the temple? **"Ye are the temple..."** Where is the voice? *Out of the temple!* It is the lightnings, the voices, and the thunderings that cause the earthquake. Let me say this — if there is no voice from heaven there will never be an earthquake in your earth or in any other earth! It has to be the voice out of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! It takes the voice of the spirit of truth sounding out of our heavens, to cause our earth to shake as it has never been shaken before. This all takes place right here *within us, in the house, or the temple of God.* It's a pure voice out of the temple of God speaking to all who have ears to hear! Hear the voice! Hear the voice out of the temple! Don't just hear me, or any

other man. Hear the voice that sounds in the temple of God which *you are!* Hear within yourself the word of the Lord! Know His voice for yourself! As long as what you hear is just a word or a teaching from some source outside of yourself, you have yet to hear the voice out of the temple! This voice is heard only by a spiritual ear. There is no other voice worth listening to. In previous days we have heard many voices, go here, go there, do this, do that, this is the way, etc. But today every called and chosen son of God is hearing the voice of the spirit of truth! Oh, yes, God ministers the word through others, but you must hear it within yourself, out of the inner sanctum of God in your spirit. It is there it must resonate, there must be a hearty “Amen” from within. Sometimes the word you hear from others will confirm the voice you hear within you. Other times the voice within will confirm the word you receive through others. And, precious brother, dear sister, if you are isolated somewhere, cut off from fellowship, and all alone in your walk with the Father — remember always — THE VOICE IS IN THE TEMPLE!

I look at the present generation of the church world and it is clear to me that they have never had the opportunity to come into living contact with a fresh, new, glorious, powerful, transforming present truth sound from heaven; they are still enjoying the leftovers from the over-flow of the former feasts of Passover and Pentecost. And many of those leftovers are very stale and putrefying! But there is a people in the earth today to whom God has spoken and promised and covenanted the opportunity to come into a brand new feast — the feast of Tabernacles. As we enter into this new spiritual feast of the Lord it won't be a revival of Passover, it won't be a renewal of Pentecost, it won't be another Latter Rain outpouring, but it will be the *manifestation of the sons of God* and the *kingdom of God coming in great power and glory upon the nations of the earth*. Praise God, even now we are beginning to **hear the new sound!** Silence is descending upon all our former heavens, a reverent, divine, and holy hush has filled the temple of our being, and the trumpets are being quietly passed to God's prepared messengers as they stand in worshipful awe before the throne.

John the Baptist began his ministry by announcing himself as “the VOICE of one crying in the wilderness.” John was a voice, a sound, a trumpet-message to call God's people into a new day in Him. When Jesus came on the scene and began His wonderful sonship ministry, the scripture says of Him, “And immediately His *fame* spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee” (Mk. 1:28). It is interesting, the word “fame” is the Greek word *akoe* meaning “hearing.” Ah, it was the *sound* of Him that went throughout the land, for His word and His mighty acts spoke more loudly than all the other voices the people had heard; they were like a trumpet-message proclaiming that a new administration of God had come into the earth!

The miracle of what God has already done ravishes my heart. I am enthralled beyond measure at the prospect of what our heavenly Father has prepared for them that love Him and seek His fullness. I am moved by all those multitudinous and indescribable sounds throughout the ages that God has released for creation to hear — yet here we are standing at the very end of the church age and of this Pentecostal dispensation, and is it not just as true today as it was two millenniums ago when the apostle Paul penned those heart-stirring words, describing how the whole creation is standing on tiptoe, in breathless anticipation, to see the glorious sight of the *manifestation of the sons of God*. After two thousand years of Pentecostal power and blessing, once again God is speaking to those who have ears to hear that there is yet to be an appearing, there is yet to be a message, there is yet to be a move of God, there is yet to be a sound, there is yet to be a glory revealed that will flood the earth and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption, from

the tyranny of sin, sickness, ignorance, sorrow, and death. Here we are in the early part of the twenty-first century and this surpassing wonder still hasn't been seen in the earth! Yet — I tell you today that just as Jesus instructed His faithful disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father; and there to *tarry until* they would be endued with power from on high — so there is in this hour a company of footstep followers of the Lamb whom He has called aside to wait for this greater promise of the Father, and to *tarry until* the *manchild* is birthed and caught up to God and to His throne!

“And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a *distinction* in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an *uncertain sound*, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (I Cor. 14:7-8). I would draw your attention to the word “*distinction*.” “Except they give a *distinction* in the sounds...” It means to be able to distinguish between sounds. It denotes the presence of variation and diversity, and the ability to discern, differentiate, or tell apart one sound from another. Except there be a distinction in the sounds how can one tell whether it is a call to battle or the announcement of good news? When one is used to a certain sound, trained to discern a particular sound, there is no problem in distinguishing and understanding the sound and knowing how to react to that sound. But it is when there is inserted a different note, a variation of tones, a new sound not heard before, that one is faced with the challenge of making a distinction of sounds and learning to respond appropriately.

This, then, in no small part, is the significance of this important hour to which we have come! The hour of God's greatest glory and honor is now at hand! It is very near! Two thousand years ago Paul wrote by revelation that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, *waiting* for the manifestation of the sons of God. The people to whom Paul wrote had witnessed the power and glory of Pentecost and drank from its refreshing, quickening stream. But Paul wrote often of a greater glory *yet to be revealed in the saints*, of *another day* in which the glorified Christ with His glorious brother-sons-of-incorruption would no longer cast devils out of a few individuals, as the apostles did, but would cast the devil out of the world system, rebuke every evil power, bind the principalities of the darkness of this world, destroy the face of the covering cast over *all people*, and the veil that is spread over *all nations*, swallow up death in victory until there is *no more* sin, sickness, pain, or death anywhere in God's vast creation, wipe away tears from off *all faces*, and make *all things new*. Ah, my beloved, that is truly a NEW SOUND! I am certain I don't need to tell you that after two thousand years of Pentecost the Christians of the world, the church systems of the world, and the preachers, priests, and ministers of the world have NEVER HEARD THAT SOUND! It's a strange sound to their ears! It's a new sound they have not heard before. And they know not how to either distinguish or respond to a sound so unfamiliar and unparalleled!

## THUNDERINGS

And the temple of God was opened in heaven... and there were...*thunderings*” (Rev. 11:19).

Leaving now the “voices” John heard out of the temple, we proceed on to the “thunderings.” The word of the Lord to His people in the eighty-first Psalm is this: “Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I *answered thee in the secret place of thunder...*” (Ps. 89:7). As Noreen Nicholls once pointed out, “This raises the question as what thunder really is! Thunder is the noise (a sound) that accompanies a flash of lightning due to the air disturbances caused by the sudden heating and expansion of air

during the electrical discharge. Electricity is power, and in the discharge of power air, which represents *spirit*, is heated and expanded with the resultant thunder or the issuance of noise or voice. Such phenomena as a flash of lightning with its accompanying thunder is awesome to say the least, and how much more so when this natural occurrence is fraught with spiritual meaning!”

Thunder is thus associated with lightning — no lightning, no thunder. Lightning is *power*; thus the thunder is the “voice” or “noise” resulting from that power. Lightning brings sudden and powerful *illumination, understanding, and revelation*, but the thunder is the voice, the sound, the noise that results from the illumination. Notice that the Lord said in the passage quoted above, “I *answered thee* in the secret place of thunder.” God spoke by the thunder! The lightning bespeaks the illumination of the word of God, whereas thunder signifies the **power of that word or illumination**. Perhaps this simple explanation will aid our understanding: God *speaks* (lightning) in *power* (thunder). Paul calls it THE WORD OF HIS POWER! That is lightning and thunder together! The word “thunder” in the Greek also means to “roar.” It is when God *roars* out of Zion! Our church age ministries have often seemed so impotent, but when God SPEAKS HIS WORD and RELEASES HIS POWER to begin His deliverance of the whole creation and restore all things into Himself again, it shall burst forth with a roar, a mighty thundering, getting the attention of the whole world with all its powers and institutions, and awakening new hope in the hearts of the prisoners who have long been waiting under the tyranny of sin and death. Who can comprehend the power of our God? Who can tell the workings of His energy force? We have personally experienced the demonstrations of His might, the roar of His deliverance, as the power of His word turns everything upside down, and assures us that it is *His doing* and He will accomplish all His purpose. Thank God, the temple shall be opened in heaven, the ark shall be seen, and the thunderings shall be *heard!* It happens in us, and it shall also be experienced by all mankind!

## THE EARTHQUAKE

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven... and there was...*an earthquake*” (Rev. 11:19).

The great ‘storm’ produces an *earthquake!* Throughout the scriptures the earthquake was a regular feature of divine visitation. When God descended upon mount Sinai, “the whole mountain quaked greatly” (Ex. 19:18). Isaiah prophesied that men would hide in caves from the terror of the Lord, “when He ariseth to shake mightily the earth” (Isa. 2:19). “Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth,” writes Haggai (Hag. 2:6). Earthquake denotes a sudden, powerful, and violent disruption of the normal state of things. No human power can control or bring about earthquakes. Many times we have seen on the news cities that were shaken by temblors, and have seen the wreck of some of the finest dwelling places and commercial buildings the ingenuity of man can devise. In a few seconds, while the hearts of men stood still with terror, while no human hand could possibly aid them, the great concrete structures crashed and shattered to ruins in the street below. Men and women grabbed their babies and fled blindly for shelter — they knew not where. No human power can stay an earthquake, or even definitively warn of its coming.

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then **shook the earth**: but now He hath promised, saying, **Yet**

**once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.** And this word, *Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably*" (Heb. 12:25-28).

Reference to the *shaking of the earth and heaven* comes closer home than just the upheaval and doing away with man's earthly orders, governments, institutions, cultures, and religious systems. Certainly all of that, too, shall pass away! It also speaks of God's dealings with all who aspire to become the sons of God in the here and now. Not only *the earth* in us — our humanity with its faults, weaknesses, limitations, emotions, ways, powers, and attributes — but also *the heaven* in us must be shaken! The heaven in us embraces all our spiritual blessings and experiences of the past. The purpose of this shaking is not to destroy but to replace what has been of God in our spiritual journey but only intended for a specific time and purpose in our growth and development in Christ. The removal of those things is to reveal something far greater! Never does the Lord take something away unless it is to give us something better! He removes the natural to give us the spiritual. He replaces the good with His best. When the transitory (shadow, letter of the word) has fulfilled its purpose, He then introduces us to what is real, heavenly, and eternal (divine substance). Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a *kingdom that cannot be shaken!* This wonderful kingdom of our Father is *earthquake proof* — it will never pass away, and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be NO END!

Earthquakes are mighty **shakings!** On the physical level, an earthquake occurs where the cooling of the earth has caused two layers of earth to overlap rather than to come together flush. As they try to settle into a more natural position, they release energy. Spiritually, this is fulfilled within each of us in those areas of our life where the flesh and the spirit, the carnal mind and the spiritual mind, truth and error, or our will and God's will *overlap within ourselves*, causing intense pressures to be formed! We have these places deep within us where things do not fit together properly, for soul and body have not been synchronized with the spirit, so that they do not "mesh" together. The flesh *wars* against the spirit, and the spirit *wars* against the flesh! When both the spirit and the flesh want to dominate great pressures are created. When we meet a situation that begins to trigger this conflict, we cannot help but experience the rumbling! As the Spirit of God moves sovereignly in our life, exerting a force beyond the capacity of the natural man, the great "earthquake" then ensues! The earthquake touches the fault-lines of our life, not just surface things, but the very depths of being where the foundation is defective, imperfect, and unsound. When there is a shaking from deep within there is a change on the surface, not from outside in, but from inside out! It should not be difficult to understand that *no man* can be conformed to the image of God apart from spiritually devastating and destructive earthquakes! In order for creation to be delivered and restored into God everything of the natural constitution, the human mentality, the Adamic consciousness, the carnal mind, the flesh life, our own will and ways, yes, and even all our former heavens of spiritual experience must be utterly removed and demolished!

When the earthquake comes there are great commotions within and we react and feel in a spiritual way exactly like those people experience naturally who are victims of physical earthquakes. Cars in the streets roll back and forth, trees thresh about, broken like toothpicks; buildings collapse, the terrain moves violently, bridges buckle, hospitals are devastated, water supplies are broken, communications are cut off, highways and railways are split asunder, our whole equilibrium is thrown off balance, and there is great suffering

and death. Oh, yes! When the spiritual earthquake occurs within us, the old world of our carnal understanding, the powerful citadels of the flesh, and all the entrenched spirit of man-made religion are wiped away! This is the awesome work of the earthquake that strikes when the word of our Father comes in power and shakes us out of heaven!

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

## **GREAT HAIL**

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven... and there was...*great hail*" (Rev. 11:19).

Hail in its natural state is nothing more than *hard water*. When the heavens drop down the hail it always is destructive in some measure, depending on its size and duration. Water is one of the best known biblical symbols, used in many places as a type for both the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The rain is usually perceived as a spiritual blessing and a life-giving power. The Word of God is quick and powerful, and the Spirit of God is refreshing and life-giving. But not so when it freezes in the heaven and falls upon the earth as hail! Hail is indeed water, and spiritually it is truly the Word of God or the Spirit of God falling upon our land, but it is not a blessing in the way we think of blessing, but comes as a judgment from the Lord. It is a *hard word* and a *hard dealing* of the Spirit that beats down all the proud fields of man! A single word of God's rebuke will smash to smithereens the strongest vanity of the carnal man. When this judgment falls upon the earth it does a precise work, not pleasant at the time, but needful and ultimately corrective and redemptive!

The following words by Ray Prinzing are truly instructive here. "*Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the HAIL shall sweep away the refuge of the lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place*" (Isa. 28:17). Although it is written, '*My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord*' (Deut. 32:2-3), yet it is equally true that the truth shall have a SOLID IMPACT upon the lies and the false doctrines of the religions of our day, and shall utterly demolish the refuge of credal error and the traditions of men.

"Men have built their kingdoms, walls and barriers seem to abound, but when God sends forth HIS HAIL from His temple, it will bring an end to the works of man. Who can tell of all the ways and methods this shall be fulfilled, for prophecy has amazing ways of fulfillment, far beyond the speculation of man. But the vision is sure — John saw the temple measured, he saw the finished temple OPENED — and so shall God's truth be declared, and established in all the earth. '*For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*' (Hab. 2:14). God will have a people through

whom this tremendous work shall be accomplished. His power and glory shall be revealed, and His name shall be glorified in all the earth!" — end quote.

*"I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plummet; and **hail will sweep away the refuge of lies...and your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol (hell) shall not stand**"* (Isa. 28:17-18). The prophet Isaiah declares that the **hail sweeps away the refuge of lies**, that is, of all the falsehoods of the doctrines of men, all the foolishness of the religious systems, in which men take refuge, in which they trust for their blessing and eternal salvation. I am substituting the word *falsehoods* for *lies* because lies infer a deliberate, intentional, malicious deception. Very few preachers, teachers, and church systems deliberately intend to deceive God's people. They themselves *are deceived* and the message they proclaim is laced with falsehoods. The hail is a strong, hard, corrective word from the Lord which He sends into our lives with such solid impact that it sweeps away our refuge in falsehoods. I have experienced the hail, and I tell you that in just a very brief period of time the word of God can come to us in such power that it completely lays to ruin all our strongholds of carnal thinking and religious error! The ultimate result of this wonderful deliverance is that He will abolish our covenant with death and destroy our league with hell! It is a complete salvation, yet it cannot be wrought apart from the hail-storm of God's strong and powerful word which sweeps away the falsehoods that have kept us from laying hold upon life and immortality. Aren't you glad!

## FROM THE TEMPLE TO THE MANCHILD

As we conclude our meditations upon chapter eleven of the Revelation and prepare to enter upon chapter twelve, I trust that all have become aware that the visions of these two chapters are not separate and dis-jointed visions, but are progressive unfolding revelations of our heavenly Father's great work in His elect *leading to* the manifestation of the sons of God. The wonderful truths here are so clothed in mystery that when men read them with carnal minds and natural understanding they wonder, yet fail to see what God is saying by His Spirit. Only in the Spirit and by the Spirit are we able to clearly see how the Lord is meticulously leading His elect through a series of transformations into new levels of growth and development in Him. Each step is significant and has a glory which pertains to it, which must give way to the new glory that follows it. The old glory must be dissimilated, broken down, and then re-assembled and raised up into a new expression of glory. As we experientially pass through these realms of passing orders and glories, we experience the process of one glory fading, followed by the anticipation and arising of the next dimension of glory. We begin to hunger and thirst for that new glory, yearn for it, pant after it, and travail for it as a woman travails in birth-pains to be delivered of her child, until its reality is birthed within us.

In chapter eleven we first see John measuring the temple of God. When the Lord commissions John to *measure* the temple of God we must understand what the measure is. Christ Jesus Himself is the measure! And all God's sons are being brought unto "the *measure* of the stature of the *fullness of Christ*." How my glad heart rejoices in the sacred knowledge that whenever the Lord speaks of "measuring" His temple, it signifies to measure, that is, to evaluate, assess, judge, weigh, and investigate the *spiritual condition*. The great revelation that the Holy Spirit would make known to us by this measuring is that the temple of God has now progressed to the point of bringing forth out of its midst a *prophetic ministry* that will begin to announce the imminent birth of the manchild, the manifest sons of God.

Have you not noticed that as soon as John is commissioned to measure the temple of God the Lord declares, “*AND I will give power unto my two witnesses...*” Here is the divine order: “*Rise, and measure the temple...and I will (then) give power unto my two witnesses.*” The latter is contingent upon the former! Discovering the “measure” of the temple brings the divine assessment: God’s temple people are now ready to move into the prophetic ministry which shall herald and prepare the way for the manifest sons of God!

When the two witnesses finish their ministry, the beast “kills them” — signifying that the prophetic order *passes away!* The great visitation of the Lord that came beginning in 1948, like all previous moves of God, has not been a failure — it accomplished precisely what the Lord purposed and ordained, establishing in the earth the word of reconciliation, the great truth of sonship, and the living reality of the kingdom of God, which has continued to bring forth a harvest unto all the ends of the earth. God never purposed to propagate and *preserve* the “order” of that move, only to plant a “seed” in the field of the world which would grow, change, and increase, in due time producing a vast harvest of sons of the kingdom. Oh, the wonder of it!

After three days and a half God calls the two witnesses back to life, not back to the same old prophetic ministry which was *finished* at the conclusion of the symbolic “1260 days,” for now we find that the two witnesses are ushered into a new realm and a new glory, ascending up to heaven in a cloud. Now, can you not see that this signifies entrance into a higher heaven of the Spirit of the Lord, where more glorious things await them! There is nothing wrong with desiring to ascend higher into the spiritual heavens of our Father! It is an honorable goal, the aim of every saint of God with a holy passion to press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The witnesses ascend, raised up into a greater degree of perfection, fullness, and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is a higher dimension of the Spirit and the Word — the realm where the *fruit* of the former prophetic flow is now to be realized!

Following this ascension the temple of God appears again, but there is a difference — this time it is *in heaven!* Is it not interesting that the Holy Spirit placed the testimony of the two witnesses right *between* the two references to the temple of God! At the first mention the temple is pictured as being on earth, as are the two witnesses. As soon as the two witnesses ascend up to heaven, the temple is also *seen in heaven!* As we read these marvelous things, surely we must realize that in the imagery of the vision John sees *the two witnesses ARE the temple!* When they are on earth the temple is on earth. When they ascend up to heaven, in that very moment the temple is in heaven! The temple has grown unto a *holy temple* in the glory of the Lord! All the deep inworkings of God have brought the temple to a new and high place in the Spirit, prepared to fulfill a greater destiny in the plan of God. The temple is opened in the realm of the Spirit, in the high places of Christ in God. And it is there that Christ (the ark) is *seen in His temple!*

The temple of God is measured on earth and then found in heaven. Yet the mystery does not end there. As soon as the temple is seen in heaven we step forth upon the celestial shore of chapter twelve. Immediately John cries out, “*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brought forth a 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).

You will understand a great mystery when you see by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that the temple in heaven is here appearing under a *new symbol* — a *glorious woman in heaven*, in the pangs of childbirth, travailing to bring forth a manchild who is appointed to rule all nations with a rod of iron. These are all progressively changing pictures signifying the transition of the Lord's called and chosen elect from one order to another, on to another, and on to yet another, until we have all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST! How we do groan within ourselves, waiting for our final change which will bring the full manifestation of the sons of God! Not only we, but all creation is in pain and agonizing travail waiting for the *manifestation of the sons of God!* (Rom. 8:18-23). Only the manifest sons of God will possess within themselves the full measure of the **power of the kingdom of God** as did Jesus! Only the sons of God can deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption. Jesus is not the *firstborn* among many Christians, or among many believers, or among many saints, among many apostles and prophets, or among many pastors and ministries — He is the firstborn among MANY BRETHREN! The brethren are all *sons of God* and they are *like Him*. Each and every one is fully and completely like Him!

Sonship is glorious beyond anything our eyes have seen or our ears have heard. Jesus Christ is the firstborn Son of God. And now all His brothers are empowered to follow Him to maturity! All will follow His steps, becoming what He is. The spiritual life of every son of God has the same origin as the firstborn, for all are born of God and have come from God. We are being perfected by the same process, and will ultimately achieve the same result! Jesus Christ was the personification of the Father within Himself, and so shall we be! The holy nature of Jesus is ours to be raised up within us. The works that He did, we shall do as well! The authority of Jesus Christ, even the dominion of the ages and all things, He will share with those who come to the measure of the stature of His fullness. Jesus possesses the totality of God's substance, and this is the heritage of every manifest son of God. The present resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus is the portrait of our destiny! It is indeed wonderful!

Our dear brother Bob Torango once touched the heartthrob of all those who have in this hour received the call to sonship, with these poignant words: "If we are all feeling the same anticipation concerning the break-through of life in our midst, then we can rest assured that the change is at hand, even at the door, for us to enter into it. I have never had such an expectation within me concerning this tremendous truth of *transformation* as I have right now. Regardless of the fact that it seems that so much is happening in our lives that would appear to make it impossible for such a thing to be happening, I declare to you all that are reading these words, IT IS HAPPENING! Even in the midst of such sickness and death throughout the ranks of the sons of God, I cannot hold back this declaration, although it may grind against our logical mind and what we see with our natural eyes and hear with our outward ears; I tell you of a truth, we are on the precipice of the greatest event the world has ever known!" — end quote.

Truly we are in transition, my beloved! The temple of God on earth *becomes* the two-witness prophetic ministry proclaiming the imminence of the kingdom of God. This prophetic ministry in turn *becomes* the temple of God in heaven, in a higher realm of the Spirit. The temple in heaven *is then presented* under another symbol as a glorious sun-clad woman in travail to give birth. Then *out of herself* she brings forth the manchild company of the sons of God! Oh, think of it! The chapter division between Revelation chapters eleven and twelve is man-made and artificial. It is perhaps the best natural minds could do in an effort to simplify the reading of the scriptures. But chapter eleven does not

portray one thing and chapter twelve another! Oh, no! It is all one continuous flow of revelation presenting through an ascending scale of spiritual visions the progressive unfolding of THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST WITHIN HIS BODY. That is the mystery!

# *Chapter 134*

## *The Woman And The Manchild*

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rev. 12:1).

Many Christians today are concerned with what they call the “signs of the times” or the outward “signs” of certain events in the world which they suppose fulfill particular prophecies of scripture and point to the end of the world, the end of the age, or the so-called second coming of Christ. While we do not deny that we are living in a transition of ages, the fact is these precious people have no understanding whatever of what God is doing in this significant hour for they are looking at the wrong signs! Even God’s elect must beware lest the political, economic, military, geophysical, and even religious upheavals occurring throughout the world distract our attention from what the Spirit is saying to the body of Christ, and from receiving from the Father His instructions concerning His great plan and purpose in this new day of the Lord.

Jesus once told His audience that when they saw a cloud rising in the west, they knew a shower was coming, and that when the south wind blew they knew they could expect a heat wave. “You hypocrites!” He said, “You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky; but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?” (Lk. 12:54-56). They could predict the weather with accuracy but failed to recognize HIM who had come from heaven to usher them into God’s kingdom! You see, my beloved, the scribes and Pharisees were able to interpret natural, outward, earthly signs, but had no comprehension at all of spiritual, divine, heavenly signs! There are vast multitudes of the Lord’s people today who, sad to say, are no different than those scribes and Pharisees in that far-off day of blindness and unbelief. Like them, they are looking at the wrong signs in an effort to discern the times! Therefore they speak of earthly signs and miss the revelation of Jesus Christ!

Many a sermon has been preached on the signs of the times and practically none of them have taken note of the fact that in the whole book of Revelation the word “sign” (wonder) is used only three times. In each case the sign is “in heaven” — in the realm of the spirit! Not once is there a sign given on earth to indicate where we are in God’s great program of the ages! I remember when I was a child in the Pentecostal Church, they always spoke about going to heaven as “somewhere” out beyond the blue, but in due time I began to question that, because the heavenly realm is the spiritual dimension where God lives as eternal, omnipresent spirit. It’s not on some far away “isle of somewhere,” wearing a white night gown and playing a harp! It’s where our heavenly Father dwells as spirit, and He longs for you and me to be joined together with Him and to dwell in His presence, and hear Him speak to us and send us forth in the power of His Spirit until the whole world shakes and is transformed by the presence of our God. Heaven is naught but the omnipresent realm of the spirit which upholds all things and fills all things. It is all about us just as the air is all about us and in our lungs and permeating every cell of our body. It is a higher realm than the physical world of matter, but it is not a far-off place. It is a dimension of life, glory, authority, holiness, wisdom, knowledge, and power which transcends every natural,

earthly, and physical thing. The “signs” given us in the book of Revelation are all in heaven, in the spiritual world, and that is why they can be seen and interpreted only in the spirit and by the spirit! Can we not see by this that all who are looking at wars, famines, earthquakes, tsunamis, pestilences, worldly rulers and empires, and a thousand more carnal, earthly things are beholding there no vision whatever of the time in which we live in the purposes of God!

In Matthew chapter twenty-four Jesus did indeed give His disciples some outward, earthly signs that would point to the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the dispersion of the Jewish people in A.D. 70. But those were all earthly things! The old, outward, fleshly, natural city, temple, sacrifices, priesthood, law, and national identity were passing away. But I do not hesitate to tell you that Matthew chapter twenty-four and the book of Revelation are not sequels! They are not parallel prophecies! They are not about the same events! They are not addressed to the same people! And their climax and consummation are diametrically opposite! The former is now history in the natural world; the latter is an on-going unfolding in the spiritual world! Matthew chapter twenty-four prophesies the end of the old Jewish economy, which happened in A.D. 70 when the Roman general Titus besieged, destroyed, and burned the city of Jerusalem. When his fury was finished Jerusalem appeared as a plowed field and the words of Jesus were literally fulfilled, “There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Mat. 24:2). The book of Revelation, on the other hand, is addressed to the church, the body of Christ; it prophesies of the glorification of the church and the manifestation of the sons of God which will result in the salvation of all nations, and the deliverance of the whole creation from the bondage of corruption! It brings the triumph of the kingdom of God in all realms forevermore!

In the spiritual realm something spectacular is taking place! This is not up in the sky somewhere, not out beyond the Milky Way — this great sign is in the heaven of the Spirit of the Lord! John describes it as a “GREAT” wonder, which means a particular, out-of-the-ordinary, important, significant, consequential, momentous, imposing, sublime, remarkable, and preeminent picture, appearing in very vivid colors, is here being displayed, not only to John, but to us as well — a woman appears in heaven! At the very beginning, then, we are cautioned not to take this woman as a real character. She is a sign, a “great sign.” She is a symbolic or prophetic woman and stands for a people of great glory, significance, and importance.

With anointed eye and with unsaddled foot we approach to behold this great sight. What John sees is called a “wonder” in the King James Bible. This is from the Greek word *semeion* which means a “sign.” A “wonder,” on the one hand, is something that arrests, surprises, amazes, and astonishes. A wonder is something unexpected, unprepared for, unprecedented, and surpassing all our experience. A “sign,” on the other hand, is a symbol or prophecy of the reality it represents. The purpose of a sign is to call attention to a person or a thing as special or supernatural. It has regard to the significance of the work wrought as represented by the vision which stands for it. And by calling it a “sign” John reveals clearly that in the chapter before us we must not expect a literal description of something real in the form in which he sees it, but symbolism, and we must get beyond the outward symbol to the deeper reality for which it stands. Thus, the vision must be understood in its spiritual meaning. Actually, there is no one who makes the mistake of taking this chapter in the literal sense so that the woman is a woman clothed with the real and literal sun and with the real moon under her feet. But few ever plumb its depths by the

spirit of wisdom and revelation from God to discern the true and deep spiritual reality to which it points!

The first sign which John beholds in heaven, or in the spiritual realm of God, is that of a woman. She is of great and glorious appearance, for she is arrayed with the glorious light of the Aegean sun as her magnificent dress, she is standing upon the moon, and we are instructed that she is of royal rank, for on her head she wears a crown of twelve stars. What a picture! And how wonderful in its meaning!

On the one hand, this woman as to her appearance is mighty and glorious, of such a majestic nature that even the heavenly bodies of light serve to add to her splendor. On the other hand, it must also be said that with all her glory she has not yet reached the purpose of her existence and is not perfectly happy, blessed, and fulfilled. For she is described as being pregnant and in pain and travail of birth. She lives in the expectation of motherhood, and that of a very special and powerful son, and it is clear that she is about to be delivered. A woman, therefore, of high spiritual stature, clothed with the glory of the sun of righteousness and crowned with the power and dominion of divine illumination, but a woman also at the same time in distress and in helpless condition — such a woman is that described by John.

Let us meditate briefly on this thought of “woman.” A dear sister in Christ has shared the following penetrating words. “Doubtless there is a mystery in the epistles of the apostle Paul, when he writes about women and their place in the church. He forbids women to speak in the churches. They are commanded to be silent, and if they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church (I Cor. 14:34-35). All scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. If these instructions are simply explained as pertaining to ancient customs and conditions, when most women were uneducated and unlearned, we must admit that they have no value to us today.

“If women must learn from their husbands, what of unmarried, or widows, or those whose natural husbands know nothing of spiritual things? We must go deeper to find what husband is meant! Is not the believer, whether male or female, espoused to Christ? (II Cor. 11:2). Again, in I Timothy 2:11-12, Paul suffers not a woman to teach but to learn in silence, with all subjection. If this were followed to the letter, the church would be robbed of some splendid and anointed female teachers and ministries. Besides, this conflicts with Galatians 3:28, where no more distinction or preference is to be shown between male and female than between Jew and Greek, or between slave and free. If the Greek or slave be free to speak, why should the female be forbidden? And the scriptures are plain that the churches had prophetesses who spoke the very word of the Lord to the saints!

“But Paul makes a strange and even more startling statement in I Timothy 2:15 wherein he makes the salvation of a woman dependent upon her bearing a child! That is, IF we must accept it in the literal sense of the word. Some have interpreted this verse to mean that expectant mothers are assured physical safety in bringing children into the world, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. This has apparently not proven true. Rachel died in giving birth to Benjamin. Many faithful mothers in both Old Testament times and New Testament times, as well as in our own day, lost their lives as a result of childbirth. Can we not see that the CHILDBEARING which the Spirit in Paul was speaking about, the childbearing that BRINGS SALVATION, is NOT NATURAL CHILDBEARING!

“Rotherham reads, ‘She shall be saved: however through means of childbearing.’ Fenton reads, ‘She will be saved because of THE childbearing.’ The Diaglott and Clementson both read, ‘...through THE childbearing.’ Out of nine translations I have examined seven support the thought of salvation through, because of, and by means of, childbearing. Four of them definitely define it as ‘THE’ childbearing. The long hidden mystery is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:26-27). May I submit that ‘Christ in you’ is THE child, the holy seed, begotten of the Father by the word of truth (James 1:18). Many suppose that when Paul speaks of the woman being ‘saved’ by ‘childbearing’ he is speaking naturally and physically. But more often Paul spoke allegorically of spiritual realities, using natural things as the picture or symbol. Thus he says, ‘My little children of whom I travail in birth again, until CHRIST BE FORMED IN YOU’ (Gal. 4:19). Every believer, whether male or female, must have formed in them and brought to birth, the new man, the Christ! This is the hope of the groaning creation and the ‘salvation’ of the ‘woman’ who bears the manchild!”

### **WHO IS THE WOMAN?**

Now who is represented by the woman John sees?

It is not hard to understand what is meant by the symbol of the “woman” — almost immediately we recognize her as the true church, the body of Christ. This is not a reference to any or all of the various religious systems and organizations of man which call themselves “the church.” The church — from the Greek ecclesia — means simply “called out.” It is composed of those who by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost have been called out of this world’s system, to become a part of the new creation species of which Jesus Christ is the Head. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” (I Cor. 12:13). The body of Christ is a living organism, and the life of each member of that body is the one and selfsame Spirit. God has separated each member unto Himself and has placed each member in the body as it has pleased Him. Whatever our place, position, and function may be in the body, the calling is HIS. There are many levels of development, expression, and function, but all make up one glorious multi-faceted manifestation of the indwelling spirit of life.

The woman is the virgin church. We know this “wonder” or “sign” indicates a marvelous development in the church realm, because the church has not been who she is supposed to be nor has she done what she was called to do. This woman is in the supernatural realm, she is a supernatural woman in a supernatural state of being. The fact that she is a “sign” signifies that she is not the whole church — she is something unique, remarkable, out of the ordinary, phenomenal, incredible — something supernatural in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! She is moving in the highest realms of the Spirit! This is a truly spiritual church as contrasted with those to whom the apostle wrote, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal” (I Cor. 3:1). This woman speaks of a people with a revelation and an indwelling life, who is about to come forth into the reality and power of that revelation and life. She is a people of God that is not content to just see a revelation, but yearn for, long for, and travail for that revelation to come forth into full manifestation.

As God continues to deal in this hour with a people, to bring them into His fullness, there are some questions which arise concerning definitions and application of terms which the Spirit of God is bringing forth as He speaks to His elect. Two of the terms which the Spirit is emphasizing are brideship and sonship. Some become confused by these terms and

wonder whether there is a difference between the two — or whether the bride and the sons are the one and same company of people. If we have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying there need be no confusion at all. God wants us to UNDERSTAND!

It should not take much reflection to reach the conclusion that a bride and a son are not the same! If you are a married man with a family, think! Are your wife and your son the same? Though it is evident that they are two distinct persons, what is it that really makes the difference? You may answer, “Well, one is female and the other is male.” True, but that is still not the basic difference! A member of your family may be female and yet not be your wife. She could be your daughter, your sister, or your mother. Likewise, a male member of your family may be someone other than your son. So, while it is true that a wife is always feminine and a son is always masculine, the primary difference is one of RELATIONSHIP — the way in which each is related to you. In like manner, through the new birth we have become consciously aware of our identity in the God Family — the very universal family which IS GOD! And being birthed into the God Family we are now related to God, we have entered into a family relationship with our heavenly Father in His very own life-form and species!

One can enter God’s family only by birth. Jesus said, “Except a man be born again...he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3,5). “But to as many as did receive Him, He gave the authority, power, privilege, right to become the children of God...who owe their birth neither to bloods, nor to the will of the flesh, nor to the will of man, but to God — they are born of God!” (Jn. 1:12-13, Amplified). Newborn babes in Christ, and all children who have not grown up into spiritual maturity, are always referred to simply as the “children” of God without reference to gender or sex. “Consider the incredible love that the Father has shown us in allowing us to be called children of God — and that is not just what we are called, but what we are. Here and now, my dear friends, we are God’s children. We don’t know what we shall become in the future (when we are mature). We only know that when He appears (revealed in us) we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (I Jn. 3:1-3, Phillips translation). So you see, precious friend of mine, in our spiritual infancy and immaturity God does not call us either His sons or His wife but His children! A study of the various Greek words for children and sons is most helpful in understanding this truth. “Children” is our first relationship to God in His family. We are His children. And what we are ultimately destined to be has not yet come into view or become reality — until we pass through and beyond our spiritual adolescence!

I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of this truth of relationships. Each of us is related to a great many people in a variety of ways. To my wife I am a husband. To my sons and my daughter I am a father. To my father I am a son. To my siblings I am a brother. To many I am a friend. To others I am an uncle, nephew, or cousin. Obviously, this does not make me more than one person! I remain but one individual, but in my relationships to others I play different roles. The Lord Jesus is spoken of in scripture as our Father, Brother, Husband, Friend, Master, King, High Priest, Judge, etc. All such names and titles are but designations of offices held, of particular relationships Christ has to us, or we have to one another. And yet each is, in a sense, like a DIFFERENT PERSON in each unique relationship!

There are so many profound and beautiful ties between Jesus and the elect, which are shadowed forth in the tender relationships between Adam and Eve in that long ago beginning; for Adam was in reality both father and mother to Eve, and then she was not only his child, but his sister as well, and also his wife. The same person can stand in

varied relationships, wearing, as it were, different hats, while remaining the same person. All the right and natural relationships in which human beings stand to each other are meant to reveal something in God — some relation in which He stands to us. He is as a King to His subjects, giving them laws and governing them for their good. He is as a Father to His children, providing for their needs, training and disciplining them in love to become mature members of the Family of Elohim. But there is something, if one may say so, deeper even than this — something that corresponds to the tenderness of a mother, especially in her gentle power of comforting the weary and wounded spirit of her child. Isaiah cried out in the spirit of wisdom and revelation declaring, “For thus says the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; then you shall be nursed, you shall be carried on her hip, and be trotted on God’s maternal knees. As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you” (Isa. 66:12-13, Amplified).

The word “one” in the passage above is in the Hebrew “a man.” And the prophet is not thinking of a little child, but of the grown man. His words are, in the original, “As A MAN whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you.” The feminine name of God is El Shaddai meaning “the breasted — a woman’s breast” and indicates the One who out of maternal bountifulness is the shedder-forth of blessings, comfort, nourishment, and life. There is something in God which corresponds to that power of the tender mother-comfort, something of which, indeed, earthly mother-comfort is only the shadow, the earthly reflection. Ah — the motherhood of God! Consider the wonder of it! And when we get a clear spiritual discernment of these multiplied relationships of God to us, it breaks us into perfect abandonment to Him, and draws us like the resistless tide of a sucking whirlpool, down into the fathomless gulf of His love and all-sufficiency!

Children are children. Children are not sons in the scriptural sense, for sons is from the Greek *huios* meaning a mature son, one who has grown up into the nature and authority of the Father. A girl, as long as she is a child, is neither prepared for or capable of fulfilling the role of a wife. In order to enter into marriage a young girl must pass through years of physical, mental, and emotional development. Finally, upon becoming mature in all these areas, she is fitted for marriage and her role as a wife. And so is it in God’s family! The term “child” describes the believer in his walk of immaturity in God. But as one begins to grow up into spiritual maturity it is then that the truly feminine and masculine aspects of his or her relationship to God begin to form and become manifest. “Vive la difference!” someone once said. And starting from early childhood we all begin to notice there is indeed a difference. We become increasingly aware of it as we grow up. But it is only as fully developed adults that the true power, potential, and purpose of the feminine and the masculine attributes find their fulfillment.

As God becomes so many things to us, even Mother, so must we become many things to Him. When God created man male and female in His image He revealed the great truth that He is Himself male and female in His attributes and nature. In spiritual maturity we enter into relationship with God in all the facets of His nature. We may truly become the bride of Christ and the sons of the Father and many other things as well. A dear friend has expressed it so succinctly: “Sonship has a power — the power of knowledge, authority, and what might be called heroic deeds; but brideship has a power, also — the power to submit, to lay down one’s will, to yield to another. Sons have the power to be strong; the bride has the power to be tender. While it was the masculine nature of Christ that gave Jesus such resolve to face the cross, to set His face as a flint toward Jerusalem, for example, it was the feminine nature of Christ which could say, ‘No man can take my life

from me; I lay it down willingly. I have power to lay it down (feminine), and I have power to take it up again (masculine).’ Both aspects at work in the same man; both aspects at work in the same body of believers; both aspects at work to fulfill the purposes of God!”

The bride relationship bears the feminine nature whereas the son relationship bears the characteristics of the masculine. Aggressiveness, boldness, strength, valor, authority, power, and dominion are among the traits of the masculine sex. Hence the Lord says to the overcomer, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. To him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 21:7; 2:26-27; 3:21). Clearly the full overcomers are identified as the sons of God with power and authority!

Modesty, gentleness, tenderness, love, sensitiveness, and dependence are attributes of the feminine sex. Spiritually, these are the characteristics of the bride of Christ, as the apostle says, “Wives, be subject — be submissive and adapt yourselves — to your own husbands as a service to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church, Himself the saviour of His body. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the church to Himself in glorious splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such things — that she might be holy and faultless. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:22-28,32).

Can we not see by this that brideship bespeaks the spiritually feminine relationship of intimate love and reverent submission to Christ, whereas sonship embodies the spiritually masculine characteristics of strength, authority, power, and dominion to rule and reign over all things. Ah, beloved, let us never become so over-balanced in our zeal to become sons of God that we circumvent the marvelous reality of brideship! The simple yet sublime truth is just this — THE WAY TO SONSHIP IS BRIDESHIP! This is why the Spirit has given us in the Revelation the example of the glorious sun-clad woman giving birth to a remarkable manchild who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. It is the inworking of brideship that births the realm of sonship! No woman, no son! Jesus said, “I am the way...no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Dear man of God; dear woman of God; your relationship to Christ as a bride will forerun your relationship to the Father as a son. Brideship is the harbinger of sonship! It is through intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ, made ONE IN HIM IN LOVE, that we are initiated into that illustrious glory of strength and dominion over all things as sons of God. This is a true and inviolable principle in God that I pray no earnest saint of God who reads these lines will miss!

Any man can come to know something of the acts and ways of God, but only those born from above, who also follow on to know the Lord, can ever come to know Him in the most wonderfully personal and intimate manner. The depth of “knowing” Him is like the intimate relationship of a man with his beloved wife, in which love he seeks to reproduce after his own kind. In fact this is precisely the way in which the scriptures often make use of the word “know” — to describe the giving and receiving of seed in the act of love. For example, we read in Genesis 4:1, “And Adam KNEW Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain.” This statement does not mean that Adam was able to recognize his wife as she walked about the house! Oh, no! “KNOWING,” in the sense of recognition, does not

beget children! When Adam KNEW His wife he explored her emotional and physical being, and she KNEW him in return on a personal and intimate level that words could never communicate. Only by the experience of the sexual relationship does man know woman in this sense, and she him.

May the blessed Spirit of God help us to understand that it is only in that exquisite relationship where the believing heart completely yields itself to the spirit, to the presence, the mind, and the will of God, where the believer proves by his wholehearted response that he totally and truly loves the Lord, that he knows and is known of God. This is the basis for Israel as a people being given the name “wife of Yahweh,” and the chosen ones of this age the intimate title “the bride of Christ.” As husband and wife, by means of the act of “knowing” become one flesh, so Christ and the believer, by the spiritual act of “knowing” become one spirit. “He which is joined (in union) with an harlot is one body...but He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (I Cor. 6:16-17). The intimate relation and ecstasy here portrayed are not found in the lives of any but those who are following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

While we write much in these pages of the glorious truth of sonship, we want to contemplate in our meditations at this time what it means to be the bride of Christ. If you have never really fallen in love with the Christ of God — and made Him your Head and absolute Lord — don’t ever expect to be manifest as a son! If you are not truly virgin in your desires toward the Lord; if you are not walking in the spirit, keeping yourself unto Him and unto Him alone; if you have not truly forsaken the company of the wanton harlots of Mystery Babylon, the carnal religious systems of man called the church; if you have not renounced the schemes, plans, and ambitions of the carnal mind nor abandoned your love of the world and the desires of the flesh — you cannot expect to be birthed into that illustrious company of the sons of God who shall set creation free from bondage and corruption. If you have any other love before Him, any other master that rules your life, any other lordship that dictates your actions, any hidden and “reserved” areas of your life, then you have not yet learned HOW TO BE A BRIDE to Christ! One must first bow in feminine love and submission to Jesus Christ the Lord — as a wife — before he can pass beyond, birthed to stand tall and erect in the majesty and splendor of sonship! It’s just that simple. There IS NO OTHER WAY! The glorious woman must give birth to the manchild!

Only the blessed Holy Spirit can teach us how to truly BE a bride. As I have pointed out, the key to being a wife is love and submission. We are prone to think of submission in such a carnal way. The term conjures up images of the husband ruling, bossing, lording it over, barking commands to his wife while the little woman, intimidated, coweringly complies with his every demand. But true, godly submission is the love of a woman that is so pure and intense that she wants to yield herself to the high desires of her husband — a woman so in love with her man that it transcends infatuation — her submission becomes a willing and loving laying down of her own life until she no longer has a life because HER LIFE IS SURRENDERED TO ANOTHER! Her cry becomes, “I no longer want my life...I want to share yours.” Oh! many of us know so little of HOW TO BE A BRIDE!

I think I understand why so often men fall in love with their secretaries and leave their wives. A secretary is totally devoted to the man by whom she is employed. His every wish is her desire; and a good secretary even anticipates his needs before they arise. Men are always impressed by such devotion in a woman. She has no goals of her own. Her only priority is to meet his needs. And, my beloved, when once we enter into the bride relationship to Christ we lay down our own name, our own identity, and take upon us a

new nature. In the feminine aspect of this nature we learn to yield — obey — this is the action of our will, giving our will over to become aligned with His will. Submission is more than blind obedience to demands laid upon us, it is the loving surrender of the will, otherwise one will soon revolt and try to throw off the yoke, or find a way of escape.

LOVE! Ah, this is the key. There is a call to love Him so passionately, that everything else appears as hatred in comparison. When we are mere children, we love Him out of a childish, immature love. We love Him primarily for what He gives us. When you hear someone testify, “I love the Lord because He saved me,” or, “I love the Lord because He healed me,” or, “I love the Lord because He has done such great things for me, He answers my prayers and supplies all my needs,” you know that you listen to the testimony of a child, imperfect in love. Everything centers in them and what they get out of it. That kind of talk is like the girl who married a rich man and said, “I love John because he provides me with a beach house, a new Mercedes, beautiful diamonds, a mink coat, vacations around the world, and a \$1000.00 a week allowance!” Obviously, she loves John ONLY FOR HIS MONEY! Should John lose his wealth her love would soon wither and die. And many immature believers, the little “children” of God, profess to love God out of these same base and selfish motives! But a true wife loves her husband for WHO AND WHAT HE IS! When a wife really loves her husband, she loves him just as much if they are poor and have nothing. As God brings forth a people into brideship to Christ, this people is coming to love our Lord Jesus Christ for WHO HE IS and not because of the blessings and benefits received from His loving hands. Children are always excited about the gifts, but the bride is excited about the GIVER!

Do we really love Him, or are we merely using Him? Methinks that the prosperity crowd today are primarily using Him! Do we know what it means to enter into His lovely presence, asking nothing, reaching out to Him in the beauty of His holiness and with gratitude and thanksgiving for loving us so completely. Haven't we become very selfish sometimes and ego-centric in our prayers? We will pray to save America from judgment. “Spare us, don't judge us,” we cry. “Give us, meet us, help us, deliver us, protect us, bless us, prosper us, use us,” — and that may all be good in its place, but the focus is still on US. Even in our work for Him we become selfish. We want Him to bless our service to Him to prove our faith is genuine. We want to be considered diligent, capable, successful — as a sign of His blessing upon us. But the bride wants none of this. She prefers to be shut up alone with her Lover! The claims of the Bridegroom are paramount upon the bride — she loves Him, not for His gifts, not for what He can do for her or make of her, but for HIMSELF! “For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (II Cor. 11:2). To be a virgin means to be pure, undefiled, and separated unto our Lord. God is creating the desire in a people in this hour to be truly virgin in their desires toward Him!

The question is arising in some minds: “What company am I in? Which am I apprehended to — brideship or sonship? Am I destined to be of the sun-clad woman company, or a member of the manchild? Which should I desire to be? Can I be both? Is there really a difference — a separation — between the two?

Ah, my beloved, we have had such a veil over our minds! May the blessed spirit of truth quicken the understanding of all who read these lines to see and discern that what the revelation of God teaches us is just this: The woman gives birth to the manchild — THE WAY TO SONSHIP IS BRIDESHIP! It is the relationship of brideship that births the reality of sonship. That is the great sign John saw in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and

the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; she is with child, crying, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered! One must fall madly, fiercely, intensely in love with the Lord Jesus, making Him Head and absolute Lord, keeping oneself from all others, unto Him and Him alone, entering the secret chamber of His loves, reserving nothing unto oneself. We first bow in feminine love and submission before we are birthed to stand tall in the majesty of sonship to God. There is NO OTHER WAY!

Union with Christ is most assuredly not a physical union! It is a spiritual union, joined to the Lord in one spirit. Being a spiritual union, it does not necessitate by any means the physical presence of the man Jesus coming as the Bridegroom. Many believers entertain the mistaken notion that the marriage of the Lamb portrayed in chapter nineteen of the Revelation can only take place after Jesus has physically come back to earth. Gaze not, my brother, my sister, into the sky to behold Him coming down through the clouds. I tell you the truth when I say that you will never see the Bridegroom riding upon a cloud should you stare into the heavens through long millenniums to come! Just as a physical man joined to a physical harlot is one flesh, so the Lord's new creation spiritual people joined to the Lord who is the Spirit are one spirit. It has nothing to do with either Jesus or us as flesh and blood people! Surely the song of the bride is this:

Shut in with God in the secret place,  
There in the spirit beholding His face  
Gaining new power to run in the race,  
I love to be shut in with God!

The woman with the crown of twelve stars is a great sign in heaven. This woman is surpassingly glorious before her child is born. I write these things, holy brethren, because to me the truth is so very evident that the manifestation of the glory and power of God upon this virgin bride of Christ precedes the manifestation of the sons of God. The woman is manifested in great glory in the heavenly sphere, although it is quite evident that she is right here on earth at the time. Paul spoke of the wonder of this woman in heaven in these words, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). We have rejoiced to see that she is clothed with the sun and has conquered the moon, but let us take into further consideration that her head is crowned with twelve stars and she is crowned before her son comes to birth, not afterwards. She has a great authority given her before the manchild is born, and she is a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, and her dominion is not given because her child is born as the manifest sons of God, but is given her of God before the sons are manifested, while they are still hidden in the womb. There shall be manifested great anointing, power, and glory upon God's true virgin church ere the sons of God arise to reign and restore all things back into the life of God again. Aren't you glad!

# Chapter 135

## *The Woman And The Manchild*

### *continued*

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And she brought forth a 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. 12:1-3).

For many years now, those who are moving in this present truth anointing of the Spirit of God have been hearing proclaimed what is called the “manchild message.” When John saw a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars upon her head, she travailed in birth to bring forth a manchild who, as soon as he was born, was caught up unto God, and to His throne. We understand by the Spirit that the sun is a type of the glory of Christ, for He is the “Sun of Righteousness,” and on the mount of Transfiguration His countenance shone brighter than the noon-day sun. The fact that this woman is clothed with the sun speaks of the garment of the bride, who has made herself ready. The moon is a type of the old order reflective light of outward religious observances of rituals, ceremonies, programs, creeds, ordinances, sacraments, etc., none of which have any light of their own, but all reflect light just as the cold, barren, lifeless moon reflects a portion of the light of the sun. It signifies indirect and partial revelation. This woman, therefore, represents the true church, not having the limited, reflected light of the old order church systems of man, but she has been given the living knowledge of the Son of God and is clothed upon with the radiant glory of the reality of the living Christ!

That crown of twelve stars upon her head signifies that she has come under the divine government of the mind of Christ, for twelve is the number of divine government, and the stars speak of the power, glory, and dominion of the wonderful illumination of the mind of Christ. The moon being under her feet signifies that this woman has been lifted up to a higher place in God, in both revelation and experience, than the old order church systems of man, the moon. This tells us that she is hearing directly from the Lord, rather than responding to others, who have heard about the Lord.

“...clothed with the sun...” Norene Nichols has shared some interesting and edifying insights into this important theme. “The garbing of the woman of Revelation twelve is unusual in that she is clothed with the sun. On the surface one might refer to this as being clothed in light or understanding which it is, but there is much more meaning lying under the surface of these words than most of us realize. With the help of the Lord we may ponder this matter a little further and see some of what is involved. In the Greek there are two words used for ‘clothed,’ one is *enduo* and the other is *periballo*. In this particular case the word *periballo* is used, and realizing that every word is important in respect to where and how it is used by the Spirit of God in the scriptures, we know that *periballo* is distinctly illuminative. *Enduo* means to ‘go into clothing’ which infers that the clothing is of a certain

size and specification into which a person must fit. In other words, a person up to a particular size could fit into a certain garment, but over that size it would be impossible to get into it. On the other hand, *periballo* means to 'cast around about' which would infer some sort of a garment that can be put on and cast around a person and made to fit the person rather than the person fit the garment.

"For instance, Luke 24:49 speaks about being ENDUED (*enduo* — clothed) with power from on high' referring to the infilling of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Here the word used means to be clothed with power in the sense of going into clothing, or having the garment of a particular size into which the person must fit. We have seen much in times past of people who claimed so much because of the enduing of power, when in reality they fitted as best they could into that garment. Thus we have seen many trying to do great wonders and signs in a garment they are in but which is too big for them, into which they have not grown up, and which drags in the dust realm (carnality), bringing a reproach and criticism from many looking on.

"On the other hand, the word *periballo* used of the sun-clad woman infers that this full grown woman has a covering of the sun that is cast about her in such a manner that the garment fits her rather than her trying to fit into the garment. This woman is a mature woman — matured in God, matured in love, matured in understanding — and God grants her the clothing that fits her maturity. Her clothing is comprised of one thing — the sun. The sun is the light and warmth of our solar system and rises upon the just and the unjust alike. It is no respecter of persons. The planets revolve around it and are benefited thereby. Thus this woman is clothed with the light (understanding, revelation) and warmth (effect, blessing) of Him who is 'the Sun of Righteousness.' She does not withhold her light and warmth from anyone either just or unjust, but beams alike upon all. In other words, her light of understanding is dispersed abroad, not by words, but by BEING, EVEN AS THE SUN SPEAKS NOT BUT WHAT IT IS BY VIRTUE OF ITS NATURE. She claims nothing for herself — no position, no gifts, no power, no ministry — but simply IS what she IS by the grace of God. The sun does not have to say, 'I am the sun!' It is that by reason of its being, and this woman is what she is by reason of her being who she is, and as a result, her light and warmth are spread abroad without stint" — end quote.

**"...and the moon under her feet..."**

Through the summer months Lorain and I enjoy sitting on the front porch of our house in the late evenings listening to the night sounds and watching the stars, moon, satellites, and airplanes in the heavens above. We especially like to be out there at the full moon and see it rise up over the Hueco mountains in all its brilliance. What do we know when we see the beautiful moon shining so brightly? We know the sun is in the heavens; we can't see it, but we know it's there because the moon is shining, reflecting the light of the sun! Now, this woman that John beholds in spirit, this wonder in the heavens, has the moon under her feet. Do you know why? She doesn't need an external proof anymore that the Sun of Righteousness is shining — for she is clothed with the sun!

May God open the eyes of every reader of these lines to clearly see and understand the great mystery that we now unfold. Israel of old with her outward law, outward sacrifices, outward temple, outward priesthood, outward feasts, outward rituals and ceremonies — all these external ministrations were merely a sign that Yahweh was in the heavens! All these things merely reflected the light of God, the Spirit, but they were not the light and not one of them had any light within itself. The moon shines so we know that the sun is there. The

great truth that the Holy Spirit would make known to us is that external religious ordinances of every kind are typified by the moon — they are not the true light of Christ, they merely reflect light. As the writings of the New Testament progress, we see a theme unfold before our wondering eyes which eventually bursts forth in all the splendor of a blooming flower of truth. The writer to the Hebrews exudes the fragrance of this blossoming truth when he writes, “Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect...which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings (Greek: baptismos — baptisms), and carnal ordinances, **IMPOSED ON THEM UNTIL THE TIME OF REFORMATION (CHANGE)**” (Heb. 9:9-10). These externals were needed when men could neither see or know God and needed to be assured that God was there. But now, praise His name, He has sent the Spirit of His Son and we are putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, we are being clothed with the light of the glory of God that radiates from the face of Jesus Christ! Therefore, we no longer have any need of the moon for we are clothed with the sun! Isn't it wonderful!

In nearly every religious system today we have a lot of reflected light of outward rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, and ordinances. Water baptism, for example, is merely an outward symbol of reflected light, for it is an external exercise which stands for and represents and portrays that true spiritual baptism into the death of Christ whereby our sins are carried away into the sea of forgetfulness and our new creation life arises in the power of His resurrection. The Lord's supper or communion is but an outward symbol or reflected light of that deep spiritual experience whereby we truly eat the flesh (word) of Christ and drink His blood (spirit) in truth and reality. The whole Christian world, including some who profess to be sons of God, continues to walk on in the semi-darkness of the reflected light of the moon. But this woman, this heavenly woman, this sun-clad woman, this woman pregnant with the Christ has put the moon under her feet! **SHE IS LIVING IN THE REALM ABOVE ALL TYPES AND SHADOWS AND SYMBOLS, ABOVE ALL REFLECTED LIGHT, CLOTHED WITH THE SPLendor OF THE NOONDAY SUN, THE MAJESTY AND GLORY OF THE LIVING CHRIST.** She has risen above the outward shadows!

This woman doesn't need to appear in church on Easter morning to proclaim the resurrection of our Lord, for she has risen with Him and is now seated together with Him in the heavenly places in Christ. She has no need to sip wine or eat a wafer in order to recognize the death of the Lord and her union with Him, for she bears within herself the marks of the dying of the Lord Jesus, and she is dead, and her new life is hid with Christ in God. She doesn't need to be baptized in water in any particular name, by any certain formula, for any special work of God, for by one Spirit she has already been baptized into one body, baptized into the Christ, she has “put on” Christ, and is now bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Oh, yes! This woman, this virgin bride of Christ, dwells in a heavenly place in the dazzling glory of spiritual understanding, reality, and power. Only the woman thus clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, is able to birth the manchild, the manifest sons of God! The sons of God are not birthed out of carnal, earth-bound religious systems of men who are ruled in the night time darkness of their walk as carnal Christians by the reflected light of the moon. Coming out of Babylon was not our birth into sonship! It is the woman who has come out of Babylon. It is only in the high place of pure spiritual experience that the life of sonship is conceived and brought to birth. The Lord is now bringing His elect into the hot, throbbing, pulsating, radiating, penetrating **LIGHT OF LIFE!**

Even at the most elemental level of our spiritual walk every saint of God who yearns for peace, victory, and growth in the spirit must begin to put the moon of external rules, regulations, laws, commandments, and man-imposed standards of righteousness under his feet. I believe the dream of every child of God is to walk fully in the will of the Father. The ability to do so lies right within HIS NATURE WITHIN US! All nature teaches us this simple but sublime truth — the root determines the fruit. The mystery is just this: Adam can never be holy; Christ can never sin. So once the consciousness of the new man arises within you, you are on your way to victory! God is not judging you — we have all been judged already at Calvary. Once the law of the spirit of life has been quickened within you your natural man will still be the natural man and he will fail at times, but God is not looking at that! Our heavenly Father, more than anyone in the universe, understands perfectly that Adam cannot be anything but what he is — a sinner! He also knows that only Christ in you has the power to be holy, for Christ is holy. And even God isn't trying to lay the law on old Adam (your natural man) and make him reform. That's not the plan! The plan is for Christ in you to daily increase while the Adamic man, the flesh, daily decreases. As we learn to live out of our true identity, the new man, Christ in us, there is no more consciousness of sin. That means we stop worrying about sin and getting all bent out of shape every time Adam acts up! Instead, we concentrate on our new life and feed, water, nurture, and cultivate the Christ within!

I'm a great believer in setting men free — free from rules and commandments, free from condemnation, free from the consciousness of sin — for the strength of sin is the law. You are going to be who you are! It's as simple as that. Someone says, "If you don't teach people the law, if you don't instruct them in what to do and what not to do, if you don't lay down the guidelines and set the standards, how will they know how to live and do righteousness?" The answer is just this — by nature! Every man lives by his nature, and every man who does righteousness does so by the nature of Christ in him or he will not do righteousness! "The law made nothing perfect." Nothing! Can we grasp that? "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom. 8:3-4).

If I have to instruct you on how to live you are not benefiting from me because I have not the power to cause you to obey what I tell you. But if I set you free you are free to do one thing — you are free to be who you are! If you are living in the consciousness of Christ you are going to act like Him and be like Him! The reason Christ has redeemed us is not to save us from hell and take us to heaven, as the churches foolishly teach; rather, it is to quicken us within our spirit so that we can discover our life, our real self, our true identity as sons of our heavenly Father! Oh, yes! Our spiritual life within is the secret place of the most High. It is Christ within us, our only hope of glory! Once we learn that laws, rules, regulations, commandments, standards, sacraments, and so-called church disciplines are absolutely and utterly impotent to do one thing for us, we will put that cold, sterile, reflective light of the moon under our feet and begin to put on the Lord Jesus Christ — CLOTHED WITH THE SUN! Isn't it wonderful!

"...and upon her head a crown of twelve stars..." She is crowned, but not with kingly authority, for she is not seated upon the throne. Her child is caught up unto God, and to His throne. The woman has not reached the highest pinnacle in the Spirit, for her child, as soon as it is born, is caught up into a realm above her. Her crown is the stephanos crown of the overcomer, yet it is unique, for instead of being formed of laurel branches as were

the stephanos placed upon the head of the victors at the Greek games, it is composed of stars. It is neither a true stephanos nor is it the golden crown of a king! It is a crown of twelve stars. Here it is the number that is most significant. Twelve is the number in the numerology of God that denotes all, absolutely all or the end. And the end of God's plan is sonship! You see, we have sixty seconds in a minute, sixty minutes in an hour, twenty-four hours in a day, seven days in a week, four weeks in a month, and twelve months in a year. But when you come to twelve you come to the end of time as we know it, for in the twelve months the earth's circuit around the sun is complete. In twelve you come to the highest denomination of time as we know it; you can start over with two years, three years, a thousand years, or a trillion years, but you've come to the end.

Twelve is also in scripture the number of divine government. The ruling order of God is revealed in the fact that there were twelve patriarchs from Seth to Noah before the flood; also twelve after the flood from Shem to Jacob. There were the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve princes of those tribes. And in the New Testament we find the twelve apostles of the Lamb, the twelve foundations in the New Jerusalem, the twelve gates, the twelve pearls, and the twelve angels (messengers). All the measurements of the city involve the number twelve. There are twelve stones in the high priest's breastplate. Twelve persons are recorded as being specially anointed for government, five as priests and seven as kings. All this speaks of Divine Government!

The sun-clad woman is crowned with divine government, yet, again, it is not government on the level of the throne. The divine government she is under is the order of God in a particular realm. Each realm in God has its own order! There was an order of God for the patriarchs, another order of God for Israel under Moses, a different order of God for Israel under Joshua, a further order of God for Israel under the judges, and another order of God for Israel under the kings. Each was God's order, His divine order, but the rule of God over His people took different forms. Today there is a divine order of God for the church and only a few saints in the whole world have submitted themselves to God's divine order. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13).

Nearly all churches operate and function under man-made, man-controlled systems, that bear little resemblance to the order of God! The Babylon religious system is not the "order" of the Spirit nor is it in any way "divine"! Its origin is from the carnal concepts and inventions of man! The true divine church order, however, beautiful and wonderful as it is, still is NOT THE DIVINE ORDER FOR THE SONS OF GOD! The woman is crowned with a crown of twelve stars, the divine order of church government; but the manchild is caught up to the highest realm in God to sit as Christ upon His throne! That is the difference. The woman has an authority, but it is not the authority of the throne!

## **THE VIRGIN CHURCH**

In this study we are going to share with you one of the greatest mysteries in the word of God; a mystery that it is absolutely necessary for every member of God's elect to clearly understand in order to truly apprehend the calling of sonship with power in this great day of the Lord. Now in order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in John's vision of the sun-clad woman who brings forth the manchild, you need to

understand that this woman is the virgin church. Now, who was the original virgin that brought forth a manchild? The prophet Isaiah prophesies of that first virgin and that first manchild. "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). Every Christian knows that this prophecy was fulfilled when the Virgin Mary gave birth to her firstborn son, Jesus.

We must not make the mistake of thinking that this sun-clad woman represents the mother of Jesus, or that at least she represents the fleshly Israel. Many commentators, reading and understanding with carnal minds, have supposed that this woman is Mary and the manchild is Jesus. The great Spanish artist, Murillo, has given us painting after painting of this scene. It was one of his favorite subjects. Magnificent canvasses they are, showing the Virgin Mary, in her traditional robes of blue and white, her body great with child, most modestly portrayed, with the glory of the sun about her and the crescent moon under her feet, and the coronet of stars upon her head. All who have looked upon one of those great paintings have been awed by the gifts and powers of the artist — BUT THIS IS NOT A VISION OF THE VIRGIN MARY! There is a religious order in the world today which elevates Mary, the mother of our Lord, to the level of veneration. We cannot deny that of all the women who have graced this earth from the dawn of history until now, Mary can be said to have been the greatest and most precious. The angel Gabriel appeared to her and called her "the blessed of the Lord." She was to become the mother of Jesus who would save His people from their sins.

In the Old Testament there are many instances in which barren mothers cried out to God for a son. Samuel's mother, Samson's mother, Moses' mother, all cried out to God for the removal of their barrenness. Every Hebrew mother hoped, and cherished the thought, that she might become the mother of the promised Christ — the Messiah. God had promised that some woman of Israel would bear a son who would be the Anointed, the Messiah, who would deliver His people and bring to pass in the earth the kingdom of God. Therefore, among all the mothers of Israel, there was none so blessed as was Mary. Mary was indeed chosen of God for a specific and wonderful purpose. However, it was not Mary who introduced the new dispensation! She was selected to be the vessel, the channel through whom God would give a Son, Jesus, and it was the Son who was destined to bring in the new age. Mary took her place with one hundred and nineteen other believers on the day of Pentecost as the glory revealed in her Son, who promised to share it with them, became a glorious reality in her. Now the mother could rejoice in the glory of her Son!

In the vision before us is a picture of the greatest mother ever placed by God upon the earth! Precious as she was, the Virgin Mary is not the greatest mother. John beheld in spirit a woman of surpassing glory, the greatest mother ordained of God to make her appearance in history. She is not the Virgin Mary — she is the Virgin Church! Throughout the New Testament, the woman is used as a metaphor to describe the church. She is never referred to as "man" or "son." And it is the Virgin Church which is chosen by our heavenly Father to bring forth a many-membered son — the perfect man, the manifest sons of God! The greatest mother ever placed upon the earth by God is this Virgin Church, the bride of Christ. She is a woman adorned for her Bridegroom.

Contrary to the fables taught by the church systems, the purpose of the bride's existence in the earth is not merely that she be adorned and prepared, bejeweled with gifts of the Spirit and ready to become the wife of the Bridegroom. Her transcendent mission in the

earth is to be a mother! She was never ordained to bring in that greater age to come or to establish the kingdom of God over the nations. From the beginning God purposed that just as Mary brought forth the firstborn Son of God, so the greater, many-membered woman, the Virgin Church, would give birth to a many-membered manchild, the manifest sons of God, who would introduce the new dispensation and bring the kingdom of God to pass in all the earth. God has placed this church in the earth not merely to become the wife and the bride of the Bridegroom, glorified in heaven some day, but to give birth right here on earth to the offspring who should rise up in such power, in such authority, and such kingship, that all the principalities and powers in all heavenly and earthly realms shall not equal him in glory!

The “many sons brought to glory” shall be born of a chaste, Virgin Church, without contradiction the greatest mother that God has planted on the face of the earth, the Jerusalem which is above, in the heavenly realms of the Spirit. This church is not going out with a whimper or a limp, nor shall it be “evacuated” to escape the evil and horrors of an antichrist and a great tribulation. It shall conclude this age victorious, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and riding a river of peace and blessing and life and power. It shall arise in freedom from all bondage and limitation, and the Lamb’s wife shall be holy, strong, anointed, transformed, and glorious. Oh, yes, she shall endure the pain of travail in bringing forth her son, but then shall rejoice with exceeding great joy and victory at the sight of her newborn manchild! Yes — she will be a GREAT WONDER IN HEAVEN!

John was not shown things that had already happened and were now history. The revelation of Jesus Christ is not a history book! It is the unfolding of the spirit, life, and glory of Christ, and that glory is not revealed in either Mary or Israel, but in the saints, in the body of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, John the Revelator was being shown things which “must be hereafter,” and not things which had already taken place. Mary was history when John saw this sun-clad woman, Jesus had already been born, lived, died, resurrected, and ascended several decades before John saw this manchild being birthed! The Revelation is written and sent to the church and its message concerns the church. Here, the bride of Christ is portrayed as a symbolic woman. This is the woman of whom Paul spoke when he told the saints in Corinth, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (II Cor. 11:2). And again the apostle speaks of this woman, the bride of Christ, saying, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. THIS IS A GREAT MYSTERY: BUT I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH” (Eph. 5:31-32).

The great mystery that the Holy Spirit is unfolding to us in the revelation given to John on Patmos is the truth that Jesus is the Pattern Son, the firstborn among many brethren, and the proto-type of all the manifest sons of God! Just as Jesus, the first Son, was born of a virgin, so shall every manifest son of God be born of a virgin. The first Son was only one man, so He was born of a single woman, Mary, the virgin of Nazareth. But the manifest sons of God, Christ’s many brethren, are a corporate body of sons like unto the first Son, and they are therefore born of a many-membered virgin, the Virgin Church.

“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man...and Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the

mother of all living” (Gen. 2:21-23; 3:20). One reason there is this uncanny attraction of the woman to the male, and the man to the female, is that the feminine quality was taken out of man. While the King James Bible says that Eve was made from a “rib,” the Hebrew word is much broader than that. It means a “chamber” and was used even for rooms or chambers of the temple in Jerusalem. Eve was more than a rib, God took a chamber, a side, an aspect of Adam’s personality and substance, and of this he built a woman. The feminine nature had been an integral part of Adam’s makeup until the Lord separated it and formed it into an individual personality — Eve. What the woman is, is uniquely what the man is, and that is why everybody pairs off. So just as Eve is the mother of all the sons of men, so the Virgin Church is the mother of all the sons of God!

It is an unfathomable mystery, but there is a divine quality in God that is feminine, and has birthed all life after the spirit. And it is the same divine feminine quality of God formed in a people, the Virgin Church, that is birthing us into the realm of sonship! Someone says, “I don’t believe it.” Then I must ask, “How can the manchild be born without a mother?” The birth of Jesus is the pattern! “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman...” (Gal. 4:4). Almost two millenniums ago God manifested His first Son. He is the first-born of all the sons of God and He was not formed or birthed without a mother! The Son of God was born into this world from a woman. He didn’t fall out of the sky directly from the Father in heaven. The very fact that Jesus is the first-born among many brethren tells us that all the manifest sons of God must be born. Ah, my beloved, I’m intrigued with the glory of motherhood! The woman’s body functions to bring forth life. How could there be anything more blessed, more powerful, more wonderful, more glorious? There is nothing more miraculous or awe-inspiring than this! The invisible, unknowable, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God of the universe saw fit to use a woman to manifest His own Son! She was, in some deep and mysterious way, able to conceive the Word of God within herself and bring it forth for men to behold and handle as the word of life sent from heaven! This transcends by far anything we can conceive of!

Some years ago Brenda Hoskins shared this testimony. “When God was leading me out of the ‘religious’ system, I started having gatherings in my apartment. During one of those meetings, I had a vision in which I saw a woman giving birth and there were several women (midwives) standing shoulder to shoulder, forming a circle around her as the child was born. It was a boy and as I looked at this scene, I saw the child grow from an infant to a youngster as quickly as he was raised up through the air. It was like he floated up and he grew up right before my eyes, and all the while there were hands trying to touch him. The hands were reaching through the midwives, but no hands could touch him as the midwives were his protection. The vision focused on the child and the midwives more than the woman. His development took only minutes. Later, Jesus told me that He was going to take me back to a ‘virgin’ state. Just before the Lord told me this I was told about the necessity of the ‘virgin’ birth and the holy child had to be conceived and delivered through a vessel never touched by human hands. He said that in my previous state I was too contaminated with other lovers and had too much flesh of the ‘religious’ man’s ways. I understood that when I was ready, cleansed spiritually, then I would conceive and bring forth ‘a great thing.’ This was about ten years ago. At the time I knew nothing of the manchild in Revelation or the bride.”

The next thing you need to understand in order to grasp this great mystery is that the Virgin Church is just that — a virgin. I do not mean that every person who makes up this virgin church company is naturally and physically a virgin, one who has never had sexual relations in the flesh. The Spirit is not talking here about natural things, but He is teaching

us of spiritual realities! Can we not see by this that the beautiful sun-clad woman is spiritually a virgin, she is virgin in her relationship to the Lord, reserved for Him and for Him alone. We have known what it is to be conformed to the course of THIS WORLD. Then we have known what it is to trust Christ as Saviour and seek to serve Him while remaining entangled in all the defilement of a corrupt Babylonish religious system. But God is calling forth a glorious body of Christ who, because of the word of the Lord and the quickening of the Holy Spirit, is desiring to be VIRGIN — separated only unto her glorious Bridegroom. How lightly we sometimes take the purposes of God in us! It is one thing to be washed in the blood, freed from all our past sins, and quite another thing to truly be virgin in our desires to keep ourselves only unto the Lord — no other loves. Separation is coming from everything of the flesh, the world, the devil, and from every vestige of entanglement with the false church systems of man which we have made our Head in place of the living Christ.

The next mystery that we need to understand, in order to comprehend what the Holy Spirit is really saying to us, is that not only does this virgin church company keep itself wholly unto the Lord, but while she is truly espoused unto the Lord the marriage of the Lamb has not yet been consummated. She has not been joined in marriage union with the Lord, else she would not be a virgin. When we speak of the “virgin church” we must understand that we speak of the bride of Christ who is espoused to Jesus Christ as His wife. We often entertain very faulty ideas concerning this beautiful truth because many of our western customs are so different from the eastern customs. Many people think that the true church is not yet the bride of Christ and will only become the bride of Christ at the time of the “marriage of the Lamb” revealed in chapter nineteen of the Revelation. But such is not the case! Let me explain the eastern custom of betrothal and marriage, the traditions from which the analogy of marriage in scripture is drawn.

The apostle Paul referred to this great mystery when he wrote, “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (II Cor. 11:2). The meaning put on “espousal” is vital. The Basic Bible reads, “You have been married by me to one husband.” Wuest says, “I gave you in marriage...” Both show the marriage as a past event. In Bible days, prior to the actual marriage consummation, there was what was known as the betrothal or the espousal. This was somewhat like our modern engagement, except that it was much more binding and obligatory. It was more than a mere promise between two individuals to eventually “get married,” for it was in fact the marriage. At the time of the espousal the families of the man and woman were involved in the negotiation of a contract between the two parties. It was a notable occasion! The payment of a suitable dowry was usually a feature of the contract. The groom or his father had to pay a price to the girl’s father for the bride. When the contract was signed and sealed in the presence of witnesses, the contract meant that the couple were legally married — they were husband and wife. Matthew makes this plain when he records, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away (divorce her) privately” (Mat. 1:18-19).

This period of engagement or betrothal was taken so seriously that any violation of the engagement was adultery and any break-up of the espousal required a legal procedure — a bill of divorcement. This reveals the seriousness of the situation when Joseph learned that Mary was with child. The news did more than stun him! It forced him to make a decision; either to expose Mary publicly or to break off the relationship privately. In either

case, Mary would have been dishonored by her family and friends, degraded by the Jewish community. Even worse, her son would have been born an outcast with no rights or citizenship, and prohibited from worship in the temple. Under these circumstances, Joseph chose to be as gracious and kind as Jewish law permitted; he decided to put her away privately. But then the angel brought the message to Joseph and he took Mary home as his wife and became the father of Jesus. What explains his change of heart? Just this, his belief in God's message that Mary's child was a special creation, conceived of the Holy Spirit, to bring salvation into our world.

Now let us return to the marriage customs. After the espousal, at a later time, the second step in the wedding took place. During the interval, the two were not joined physically in intimacy. The bride remained a virgin. The girl continued to live in her own home, and the man in his. The groom begins to prepare a home for them to live in. This period also gave the bride a chance to "prepare herself" and "make herself ready" for the coming union. She learns many needful things and beautifies herself in every way. She wants to be perfect for her lover. One of the most important parts of her beautification was her gown. The white wedding dress was then chosen and knit together into a beautiful garment for her to wear when the groom comes for her. The wedding dress symbolized her pure and chaste life.

On the appointed day the groom came with his friends to take the bride back to his home, and then a seven-day wedding feast took place. They often celebrated these feasts twice a day during those seven days. The feast was the part of the "marriage" that Jesus attended in Cana of Galilee when He turned water into wine. And this is also the scene at the "marriage of the Lamb" in the book of Revelation! It is called the "marriage supper" or marriage feast of the Lamb. This is not the espousal, but the time of union. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb..." (Rev. 19:7-9).

And now, let us reveal unto you a secret: In the unfolding revelation of Jesus Christ through the book of Revelation the marriage feast of the Lamb takes place toward the end of the book in chapter nineteen; however, the sun-clad woman bears the manchild, the manifest sons of God, in chapter twelve. Therefore, we see that the great truth that Jesus has revealed to us here is that just as the firstborn Son of God was conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of Mary before she and Joseph came together, so the manchild company of His many brethren is conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the many-membered Virgin Church before the Virgin Church has entered into her ultimate union and intimacy with Christ. This might astound you, nevertheless it is true! The Virgin Church will be found impregnated with the seed of sonship by the Holy Ghost to bring forth the manchild from among those who make up the true church of the living God, which is clothed with the glory of Christ, has the moon of religion under her feet, and is crowned with the illumination of the mind of Christ. She is espoused to Christ, but will become the bride of Christ at the marriage of the Lamb after the days of her purification are ended in the wilderness place where she makes herself ready.

There are two companies — the second company is found in the spiritual womb of the first company, and is spiritually birthed out of that company. And the company of the manifest sons of God which is birthed out from the Virgin Church is greater in nature, glory, and

power than the Virgin Church, just as our Lord Jesus Christ was greater in nature, glory, and power than His mother, the Virgin Mary. Furthermore, the birth of the manifest sons of God has nothing to do with God's people coming out of Babylon, for the sons do not come out of Babylon, although they may have previously come out of Babylon to become the Virgin Church, but that is not their birth into sonship. For, you see, the sons are not born of a harlot — the sons are born of the seed of God which is raised up within them in the womb of the Virgin Church! Oh, the mystery of it! Many symbols are used in the book of Revelation to describe the progressively unfolding revelation of Jesus Christ in the earth, and these things are not myth, folklore, fables, or fairy tales. They are living reality of which we have touched, handled, and tasted and they are happening right here on this earth in flesh and blood people! Out of this glorious church there comes forth a conquering army of sons to rule all nations and put all enemies under the feet of the Christ of God! Isn't it wonderful!

As John beheld and pondered this divine mystery, soon thereafter he beheld another wonder altogether as startling as the first. "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that setteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy...and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:1-5).

A little later the same angel came to John again and spoke with him, saying, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem..." (Rev. 21:9-10).

"Come hither; I will show unto thee..." These words take on new depth of meaning when we understand that in the book of Revelation the word "come" always signifies AN INVITATION TO REVELATION. The whore and the sun-clad woman are two women; the invitation goes forth to come and see by the spirit what they mean; and I do not hesitate to tell you that it requires a REVELATION FROM GOD to see either! The church of Christ is called a mystery. She is presented as a virgin. She is called a bride. Finally, she is presented as a city, the New Jerusalem, the city of peace, righteousness, glory, and divine order. This scarlet-clad woman is called a mystery. She is not a virgin, she is an harlot. She is not an espoused wife, she is the paramour and mistress of the kings of the earth. Finally, she is that great city which is called Babylon, the city of confusion, filthiness, and fleshly disorder. As to Babylon, John adds, "When I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I WILL TELL THEE THE MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN...the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman setteth. The waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues...and the woman which thou sawest is that great city (a corporate people), which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:7).

These prophecies present two broadly contrasted WOMEN, identified with two broadly contrasted CITIES, one reality being in each case, doubly represented, as a WOMAN, and as a CITY; the harlot and Babylon are one; the glorious sun-clad woman and the heavenly

Jerusalem are one. May the Spirit of the living God enlighten the eyes of all who read and give understanding, giving abundantly of the spirit of wisdom and revelation that each may be able to discern and easily differentiate between that VIRGIN CHURCH without spot or wrinkle, and that filthy HARLOT SYSTEM, full of names of blasphemy, with her multiplied sects and denominations, with her abominable false doctrines and idolatrous practices, who seduces the inhabitants of the world with the unspeakable lie that she is, herself, the bride of Christ. One would certainly think that God's people would respond to the invitation to revelation whereby the Spirit says, "COME HITHER, and I will show you," and that they would look with anointed eyes and readily see the difference between the virgin and the harlot, but such is not the case. Would God that all men could see the hidden mystery of Christ and the church! Would God that all men could see the hidden mystery of the sun-clad woman who delivers the manchild! Would God that all men could see that this hidden mystery has nothing to do with that tradition-ridden system which all men everywhere believe to be THE CHURCH!

Now there are three companies. The Scarlet-Clad Woman (harlot church system), the Sun-Clad Woman (virgin church), and the Manchild (manifest sons of God). Some precious people, because they have separated from some Babylonish denomination and come out of the church systems of man, suppose that this was the "mother church" birthing them into sonship. This, my beloved, is wrong! The "mother" of the manchild is not the harlot church system but that virgin church composed exclusively of a people clothed with the glory of Christ, crowned with the stars of God's divine order, and having the cold, imitative, reflective light of ceremony, ritual, tradition, and doctrine put under foot. When the Spirit calls, "Come out of her, my people," this is not His call to sons. This is His call urging a people to come out of the defilements of Babylon and be cleansed — that they might by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost become a virgin unto Christ. It is here in this virgin state that the seed of sonship is planted in her womb!

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk. 1:32-35).

It must be remembered that the manner in which Mary conceived Christ is one thing and the fact that she really conceived Him is another. The absence of a human father, or any kind of sexual union, in the conception of Christ accounts for her virginity remaining intact, but the reality of her maternal role in conceiving Him was not thereby affected. The angel proclaimed great and glorious things of the son who would be born of her, but this did not trouble Mary. She simply believed and accepted them as the design of God. Her concern was not can this be done, but "How shall this happen, since I do not know man?" More is contained in this question of the first mother of a son of God than meets the eye! She was espoused to Joseph and her espousal meant that she was his wife. And yet she was to become pregnant before she and Joseph came together! What a dilemma! HOW can this be fulfilled without sexual intercourse with a man? What man? The angel overcame this difficulty by explaining at once that the conception of Jesus would take place not through intercourse with man, but by the power of God! As a virgin, and with her virginity intact, she would conceive and become a mother! When she responded to the angel,

saying, "Let it be done to me according to thy word," the son of God took flesh in her womb.

I think that every saint of God who has been granted the revelation of sonship has joined his or her voice in unison with that of the virgin of Nazareth, "HOW SHALL THIS BE, SEEING I KNOW NOT A MAN?" How can we have this great deliverance, this maturity, this victory over sin, sickness, and death, this change and transformation, this mighty ministry of life and power, this dominion over the nations, if we don't do something? If we don't become involved in some man's program, if we don't join in some great outreach, if we don't become associated with some great system that has the clout, the connections, the money, the organization, the network to impact the world and its leaders and governments — how shall this be? My beloved, we are all yearning for that SPIRIT MOVE WHICH IS WROUGHT APART FROM MAN, that which God Himself shall do! The answer to our heart's cry in this hour is the same answer the angel gave to the blessed virgin of Nazareth, "THE HOLY GHOST SHALL COME UPON THEE AND THE POWER OF THE HIGHEST SHALL OVERSHADOW THEE: THEREFORE ALSO THAT HOLY THING WHICH SHALL BE BORN OF THEE SHALL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD!" Oh, yes! The manchild is not a generative work of man. It is God's generation in us, to bring forth after His kind. It is begun by the Holy Spirit, it is carried on by the Holy Spirit, and it is finished by the Holy Spirit. The creature (not even the woman, the mother) starts nothing, continues nothing, and finishes nothing.

It is very important that no member of God's elect shall know any man in this hour of God's calling. Paul said, "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Neither must we go by our own opinions, for the flesh of our carnal "man" is no more spiritual than that of any man! Many people consult their own intelligence, others are always looking to find some preacher, some prophet, some apostle, bishop, teacher, fellowship, church, or movement which they can submit to, be mentored by, and support, which they imagine can carry them into sonship. God does not want any man to be involved in what He is doing! God uses men, but it is one thing for God to use a man, it is quite another thing to think that by some kind of spiritual union with that man we can raise up the seed of Christ within ourselves!

Again Paul said, "I am an apostle neither by man nor of man, but by Jesus Christ." Man had nothing to do with Paul's apostleship! It was not conferred on him in Jerusalem by Peter, John, James, or any of the other apostles of the Lord. It was the sovereign work of God! The Holy Ghost came upon him, the power of the Highest overshadowed him, and the seed of Christ was raised up in him! Yes, God used the church, just as He used the angel Gabriel to deliver the message to Mary that she would have a son and how this would come to be. But Gabriel had no part in bringing it to pass! God used the ministries of the church to confirm, establish, and send forth Paul and many others in their ministries in the early church, yet it was not of man, nor was it by man. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers...as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said: Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had prayed and fasted and laid hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed" (Acts 13:1-3). Yes, God used men, but it was GOD who called them, it was GOD who made them apostles, and it was GOD who sent them! God does use men by the power of the Holy Ghost to impart truth to us, and minister many other wonderful things to us, but there is a difference between this and seeking by some kind of spiritual union with man to bring forth

the manchild. The former is by the sovereign moving of God, the latter is by the instigation and manipulation of man!

In closing, Carl Schwing has shared this precious word of confirmation: "In the dawning of the past age, a virgin, without 'knowing man' conceived by the overshadowing of the Father's Spirit. Three men followed a star and just a few shepherds heard the message and the song of redeeming grace. As the world continued on its merry way, the people of God argued over the coming of the Messiah...glorious and wonderful works of the Lord were transpiring...a new age was dawning, and the Holy Child was growing in great wisdom and obedience. Today, the people of the world are diligently searching for the 'right men' to govern their countries...there are no right men. The people of God are running to and fro looking for the 'right men' to feed their hungry souls...there are no right men. The many-membered Christ man is rising with life, righteousness, and equality in His wings. The Father has given to him (them) the words of the life-giving gospel. It will be by the many-voiced Christ that the message of freedom and restoration will be proclaimed."

# *Chapter 136*

## *The Woman And The Manchild*

### *continued*

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun...and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered” (Rev. 12:1-2).

We have pointed out that the temple and the two witnesses are figures of a progressive unfolding of the Lord in and through His people. The ministry of the two witnesses issues forth out of the temple, and the two witnesses are caught up to heaven, into a high realm in the Spirit, following which they are seen as the “temple of God in heaven.” The temple of God is then opened in the heavens of the Spirit and the ark of the covenant (Christ in you) is seen in God’s temple. Immediately John sees a “great wonder” in heaven — a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, a crown of twelve stars upon her head, travailing in birth to be delivered of a manchild. The two-witness-temple-ark people are now seen under yet another figure, that of the woman bearing the manchild! Now, can you not see that the “ark” that was seen “in the temple of God” when the temple was “opened” answers to the manchild that is obvious in the belly of the travailing woman, ready to come forth into manifestation!

The deep mystery the Holy Spirit would make real to us here is that it is the union of the two witnesses — the spirit and the word within us — that conceives the manchild within us, making us the woman ready to be delivered of the manchild. In nature every child is conceived through union of male and female, of sperm and ovum. If there be no union, no joining of two, there will be no conception of life. God has revealed this profound mystery of union bringing forth life within His very own nature!

In the increasing light with which God is filling the hearts of His elect, this scripture, “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is ONE Lord,” bears a depth of meaning greater far and deeper than the surface truth that there is only one true person of God. That this passage may become clearer to our minds, scintillating in heaven’s light like the ray which is broken into many prismatic hues, consider now the glorious things concealed in this mighty word of the Lord. A clear understanding of this truth will bring us back to the significance of the conception and birth of the manchild. The Lord our God is ONE. One, in the numerology of scripture, means UNITY, UNITED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. One is the primary number, denoting beginning or source. Unity being indivisible, and not made up of other numbers, is therefore independent of all others, and is the source of all others. “One,” excludes all difference, for there is no second with which it can either harmonize or conflict. One means unity and unity comes from the word “unit.”

In reference to His substance, God is SPIRIT. In reference to His state of being, God is ONE. That which is ONE is that which is UNITED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. Oneness speaks of unity, harmony, singleness, concord, solidarity. God is ONE! The fact that there is one God must not be confused with the truth that God is one. Surely HE

alone is God! But this one God, furthermore, IS ONE WITHIN HIMSELF. In all the facets of His being He is united, undivided, and unfragmented. His nature, state of being, mind, will, and purpose cannot in any way be influenced, affected, persuaded, moved, frustrated, changed, altered, damaged, destroyed, made discordant, or set at variance in any way. The character of God is eternal, changeless, unaffected. The love, joy, peace, righteousness, wisdom, justice, power, and will of God do not rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. Matters not what happens nor what men or devils say or do, the love of God, the purpose of God, the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, unaffected, without fluctuation. He is Yahweh, the SELF-EXISTENT ONE. He is ONE. No power in the universe can cause any deviation whatsoever in God's nature, will, or action.

There can be no doubt that each aspect of God's being moves in perfect harmony with every other part of His being. Here in the physical world there are contradictions in our value system because there are contradictions in moral philosophy, limited by finite and faltering human nature and reason. What is the ultimate contradiction in moral philosophy? In moral philosophy, the ultimate contradiction is between justice and mercy. The judge, if he is a good judge, will be just. He will not let somebody get off, without paying their dues. Moral justice demands that evil be punished. Because if evil goes unpunished, then the judge is a participant in the crime, by letting it go unchecked. Justice is one side of the coin. The other side, the other value is mercy. Mercy says, "I want to forgive you, when you don't deserve it. And the more undeserving you are, the deeper my mercy runs." This is a contradiction! How can you possibly combine these two creatively?

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

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

sins, He is faithful and JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I Jn. 1:9). The justice of God demands that He forgive us! Thus, He is a just God and a Saviour! Isn't it wonderful!

Yes, He will correct us, and by this very correction make the necessary changes in us, and then He will bring us into the fullness of salvation. In Him “mercy and truth are met together; righteousness (justice) and peace have kissed each other” (Ps. 85:10). These are never to be viewed as opponents to each other, they are gloriously working together to fulfill God's redemption in us. Where mercy alone cannot produce the needed change, God applies His judgment. And when judgment has accomplished its full work, “in wrath He remembers mercy” (Hab. 3:2). His wrath and His mercy thus cooperate one with the other, both designed to play their role in bringing man to the one expected end: reconciliation to God and deliverance from sin and death! There is no conflict between the two — the objective of each is redemptive, not vindictive. If we have a concept where the judgment of God is pitted against His mercy, or where the justice of God becomes greater than His love, or where wrath triumphs over grace, then we have a distorted concept of God. We have not yet learned this one simple but sublime truth: THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE!

None of us has stood perfectly in that unfragmented nature of God. We have in our emotions, nature, and experience been fragmented, at times swinging to one side and again going to the opposite extreme. We have known turmoil, agitation, confusion, and warfare within ourselves. The flesh has warred against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. We have had within us conflict between good and evil, between law and grace, between the letter of the word and the spirit of the word, between mercy and judgment. Some people are grace people who condemn no one for anything, while others are law people who damn to hell everyone who doesn't measure up to their standard of righteousness. Everything has been out of balance! But in God there is unity. In the nature of God every attribute is harmonized and balanced. That's why the kingdom of God is Paradise! In Paradise there is beauty, harmony, peace, love, glory, and power, for in God's Paradise the wolf lies down with the lamb and the lion eats straw with the ox.

Few people have understood the great truth that every natural thing is a picture and parable of spiritual realities. The scriptures abound with these analogies. Paul the apostle tells us that as the human body has many members, yet is only one body, so also is Christ. The human body is therefore a figure of the spiritual organism of the body of Christ. When we consider our bodies we see a picture of another body that is not natural or earthly at all! We understand that. Furthermore, every organ and part of our body portrays the deep mysteries of God in the spiritual operation of His life within us. I could write many pages setting forth what the word of God has to say about the heart, the mind, the kidneys (reins), the blood, the ears, the eyes, and so on.

In his little epistle the apostle James makes this meaningful observation, “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8). Let us look for a moment at the mysterious structure and function of the human brain — the seat of human mind. For many years it has been known that the brain has two parts called “hemispheres” — a left and a right. A picture of the brain reveals that there are indeed two “halves” of the brain joined together by a bundle of fibers known as the corpus callosum. In his book *The Magnificent Mind* Gary Collins points out that once split brain surgery had been successively done with humans, scientists were able to investigate something that had been suspected for decades: that the two halves of the brain are not duplicates of each other as had once

been assumed. In hundreds of clinical cases, it had been found that injury to the left side of the brain produced symptoms that were different from those that appeared when the right side was damaged. With the split brain people it was possible to see that there really are differences between the two brain sides.

**The left brain.** The research has shown that the left side of the brain tends to handle logical thought, language, abstract thinking, analysis of details, and one's ability to do mathematics. The left hemisphere controls the ability to speak and write — so much so that people with left brain damage often are unable to use language. More recent research has suggested that the left side is associated with happiness, positive feelings, and even the ability to spell.

**The right brain.** In contrast to the left side of the brain, the right brain deals with the ability of people to appreciate and produce art, to be oriented in terms of space, to be creative, to be coordinated in sports or mechanical abilities, and to be able to appreciate anything visual. The right side has been called the “sad hemisphere” because some depressed people tend to have abnormal brain waves on the right side and when people are deep in reflection or unhappiness they tend to gaze left as the right side of the brain is stimulated.

People differ in their styles of thought, outlook, and personality, depending on which half of the brain is dominant. The great danger lies in that abnormal condition where one side of the brain becomes too dominant — producing, for instance, either deep depression or unnatural, unbridled euphoria. Healthy brain function is when the two sides of the brain interact, counter-balancing one another, each complementing the other by contributing something to every action a person takes. Can you not see the spiritual picture here of the Lord our God who is ONE?

Some of us are creatures of intuition (right side) while others of us are creatures of logic (left side). A very intuitive person tends to not be very logical about many of his or her conclusions, whereas a very logically-minded person is rarely guided by any sense of intuition. They just want the facts, Ma'am! How vastly different these people can be in their understanding of and approach to life! And this fact mirrors for us a great truth in the realm of the spirit! Some of the Lord's people are “word” (spiritual left side) people, whereas others are “spirit” (spiritual right side) people. Some delve into the scriptures to gain a systematic, intellectual, and theological understanding of the truth of God. These major in doctrine, history, and background. Other folks can't explain any truth of God in a systematic way, and often are unable to tell you what chapter or verse any particular statement of scripture is found in. And yet they have a clear, uncanny perception of the spirit of the word!

This latter class is one of the things that has given me blessed assurance and divine confidence that the word we are hearing from God in these days is the sure word of the Lord! Let me tell you something that may come as a shock to some who read these lines. I have a high school diploma. That is the extent of my formal education (though I have read and studied extensively my whole lifetime) except for the fact that some of my high school education was at the academy of a theological seminary where I was required to attend two hours of Bible classes daily. My high school diploma is the most prestigious certificate I possess to adorn a wall! Yet, a friend took some of my writings and ran them through a computer program to determine what academic level they are written on and the analysis defined them as college level material — the work of a scholar!

Let me tell you something else. There are many precious saints across this great land and around the world that can't write me a letter and spell a dozen words correctly, yet they perfectly understand everything I write and knew it before I wrote it! So you have a man with a high school diploma writing on college level things that are already understood by precious little old ladies (and men) who can't tell you the difference between a noun and an adjective! They have little education in the learning of this world, and certainly don't know Greek or Hebrew, yet they have plumbed the depths of God by the spirit, they comprehend the deepest mysteries of God, they have explored the celestial heights of the eternal purposes of the Lord, they have tapped into the infinite wisdom of the Father, they are possessed of the mind of Christ, and their hearts and mouths are filled with the living word of God. Oh, the wonder of it!

How do these dear saints gain knowledge of such high and holy things? They know them by spiritual intuition! We all know these truths by revelation, yet I know them also on the hermeneutical and theological level where I can exegete them to those who require scriptural proof. Through many years I have met vast multitudes of God's sons and daughters who know nothing of such high-sounding terms, yet receive marvelous revelation by the Spirit of God into the deep things of God far beyond anything I can conceive of. Everywhere I have traveled through the years I have heard such profound truths from the anointed lips of the most humble and unlearned of men and women. This is how the mind of the Lord works in His Spirit-led people! Truly, it is the mind of the Lord!

I do not believe you will be able to understand this phenomenon apart from the sacred knowledge that the mind of the Lord works on two levels — that of the spirit and the word. Just as the human brain has two sides which function by intuition and logic, so the mind of the Lord has two dimensions, two spiritual hemispheres, which function on the level of the spirit and the word. As you come to know the mind of the Lord you will know His mind in these two areas of the spirit and the word. These are the only two realms in which the mind of the Lord may be accessed!

One person may say, "I know the word. I have studied the Bible and God has spoken to me out of the scriptures, and I can teach that word." Another may not have that vast knowledge of the scriptures, but is one of those who receive truth by the spirit. We might conclude that the first person is moving out of the left side of the mind of God, while the second person is functioning out of the right side of the mind of God. And that is certainly how it has been many times! But I now earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit will give each of us the understanding that the Lord our God is ONE LORD, in Him all attributes are harmonized, united, and unfragmented, so that nothing in God stands alone, independent of all the opposites. Judgment and mercy kiss each other! In wrath He remembers mercy! He is a just God and a Saviour! Can we not see by this that there can be no division between the spirit and the word; the two must be brought together in perfect balance, harmony, and unity, so that there is no fragmentation of the mind of the Lord. How wonderful it is that these tremendous and almost incredible principles are vehicles of the demonstration of the true nature and full revelation of the glory of God! Now consider how important is the balance and harmony between the two sides of the mind of Christ. You have probably noticed that the spirit without the word in men's experience often leads to fanaticism, just as the word apart from the spirit quickly becomes error and often leads to legalism and bondage. The spirit and the word must not only agree, they must find UNION, becoming ONE within us! The spirit and the word must be made one in me, the spirit and the word must become one in you, and in the experience of each of God's elect. The reason I write this with such conviction and feel so deeply about this point is because

it is the key, the secret, yea, the mystery of the bringing forth of the manchild, the birthing of the fullness of Christ out of our lives. Can you not see the mystery? It is union that produces a child!

When you have the spirit without the word, or the word apart from the spirit, you are moving in an incomplete, unfulfilled, and unbalanced dimension — it is like having a man without a woman, or a woman with no husband. In the natural I can do many things a woman usually does. I was raised in a home with three brothers and no sisters. So I learned how to cook. I know how to wash dishes. I know how to clean a house. I could do a pretty good job of all those things before I was twelve years old! On the other hand, my wife is more mechanically inclined than I, and at times does things that the man normally would do. Lorain might say, “Well, I can do all those things a woman does as well as the things a man can do — I am a complete person within myself, I have no need of a man!” Would that make her life complete? Not at all! Yet — the Lord our God is ONE, united, in union within Himself. Anytime people try to live in only one side of their reality — they may fake it, they may endeavor to raise up the façade that they don’t need the other side, they are self-sufficient within themselves — I can assure you that somewhere down the road their incompleteness will be manifest. It may show up in their children in abnormal personality traits and issues resulting from being raised without a father or without a mother, or in some other way, but the incontrovertible truth is that the image of God in mankind is male and female in union!

The great truth the Holy Spirit would make real to His called and chosen elect in this significant hour is the truth that the spirit and the word in union within ourselves IS THE SECRET MYSTERY OF LIFE! Only through union is love known in its profoundest depths, and only by union are children conceived. In that long ago beginning the Word spoke and the Spirit moved (vibrated) so that out of that union creation was brought forth (Gen. 1:1-3). “God said, Let there be...” “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep...” God said and the Spirit moved! These two can never be separated. If God would have spoken apart from the Spirit moving there would have been no creation. Should the Spirit have moved apart from the Word of God commanding, nothing would have appeared. God spoke, the Spirit moved, and there was. This is the divine law of creation!

The life of God within each of us is both spirit and word, for we have been born again of the Spirit (Jn. 3:5-6) and by the incorruptible Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever (I Pet. 1:23). The Lord is now bringing the spirit and the word into union within each of us, so that we do not walk in the word apart from the spirit, nor in the spirit apart from the word. When these two truly are united within us we become that glorious sun-clad woman of Revelation twelve bearing within ourselves the seed of Christ, the manchild who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron! If, on the one hand, we seek to be a “word” person apart from the spirit, we will not conceive within our womb the manchild, the fullness of Christ. If, on the other hand, we pride ourself in being a “spirit” person, walking in the spirit with no “counter-balance” from the word, we likewise can never bring forth the manchild. One can walk in the spirit without the word, but he will not produce any life. When the word (ovum) within us is so quickened by the spirit (sperm), so energized by the spirit that it becomes a LIVING WORD, there will be the issue of life!

I meet many people who have received revelation and it is revelation as a word without spirit. It is mere head-knowledge, intellectual understanding, information, doctrine. They can mouth all the right terminology and expound to you all the correct concepts of the

kingdom of God, reconciliation, and sonship, yet there is not one ounce of spirit-life in it! There is no anointing. There has been no inworking of the truth. It has not in one iota changed them or transformed them. They have the doctrine of reconciliation, but no spirit of reconciliation. They know the truth of sonship, but have not the spirit of the Son. They are high-minded, opinionated, critical, carnal, and often offensive and sometimes abusive. They understand truth with their minds, but it has never been fertilized by the spirit, becoming a living reality within. It is impossible for them to bring forth the manchild in that state!

The sun-clad woman finds herself pregnant in this heavenly or spiritual realm. The great truth is that the revelation of Christ will plant a seed in you that will produce something! In these days there is a fresh overshadowing of the Holy Spirit over the elect of the Lord that has caused it to receive seed. Lynn Hiles once said that the reason we have been going through such spiritual mood swings, and the reason we sometimes have such a voracious spiritual appetite so that we want to eat every revelation that comes our way, while in the next moment we're vomiting up everything we were taught before, is because we have symptoms of being pregnant! Those who have received the call to sonship are about to give birth to something greater than the church or the world has ever witnessed!

### **CHRIST FORMED IN US**

The firstborn Son of God came in a woman. Hidden but growing, He came. So today the seed of Christ has come in a people. He is hidden in them as He was hidden in Mary. He is growing in them as He grew in Mary. He is taking form in them as He took form in Mary. As He came forth out of Mary, so is He now coming forth out of our flesh to be visibly seen, manifested right here on the earth! He will be revealed coming out of the womb of the Virgin Church, a people in whom Christ has been formed! When you begin to see by the spirit of revelation and know, not only, that Christ was conceived in the womb of a virgin, but that you are now that virgin, and that He is more truly, spiritually, conceived in your heart, so that you feel the babe beginning to move and kick within you; when you feel Jesus Christ alive in your womb, and stirring to be born, and brought forth within you; when you begin to sense and see and feel all those mighty, powerful, and wonderful actions done in you, which you read He did in the flesh, then you know of a certainty that you are a virgin and that Christ, that same Christ, the Son of God with power, that was then upon the earth, is now spiritually conceived in us, growing and increasing, until He comes forth in us in the fullness of His sonship, speaking the same words, doing the same works, and performing the same miracles within us. Ah, my beloved, here is a Christ indeed, that will save you! Here is a Christ, a real Christ, that will raise up His victory in you with authority over all things and power over sin, sickness, sorrow, and death! This is the Christ of the Father's sending, which indeed alone and only will qualify you as a manifest son of God!

Brother Bob Torango once expressed the truth in this way: "I ministered recently to a group that the butterfly was always inside the genetics of the caterpillar, waiting for his day of revealing. He waited along with the worm the time of limitation, crawling on the ground, imprisoned to the earth until an appointed time of release and together they went into the cocoon, the worm and the butterfly, and through metamorphosis the butterfly released not just himself, but the worm also. Together they crawled into the cocoon, and together they soared away from the cocoon, only this time the worm was hid in the butterfly. Christ in us the HOPE of glory; us swallowed up into Christ the EXPRESS glory!" Some have questioned, "Is sonship the manifestation of the sons of God or is it the manifestation of God in His sons?" The answer is that it is both! "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God,

and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also GLORIFIED TOGETHER. 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. 8:17-19).

I am always blessed by the deep spiritual insights expressed in the writings of brother Carl Schwing. Some years ago he wrote the following. “We have all heard stories of the ‘near death experience,’ of the tunnel of light, the mist, the fog, the clouds, the steps of gold, the long journey upward. The stories were beautiful, and quite detailed with the religious teachings of the old order. Our Father is loving and gracious; He only gives to one according to their understanding...according to what they have been taught. Obviously, those who have had the ‘near death experience’ believed that heaven is a far-off place located somewhere in the back of beyond. It is interesting how well their stories were received by the people of the world, and by the church-goers.

“Remember when we found Jesus and gave our hearts to Him and the joy we experienced? Remember when we were baptized with the Spirit and the anointing we experienced? Remember in ‘48’ when the fire of the Spirit fell upon the saints and the mighty signs and wonders that followed? Remember when the Lord called us out of the church systems and drew us unto Himself? Remember the first time you entered your ‘closet of prayer’ and had spirit converse with the Father? Remember the first time you were seated with Christ in the heavenly places? Remember when you started your journey into the depths of Jesus Christ? My dearly beloved, these are just some of our profound and sacred experiences in Christ...they were, so to speak, our ‘NEAR LIFE EXPERIENCES.’ And, they will become richer and fuller as we are drawn closer to the life we had with our Father, and His Christ, in the Beginning. The people of the world say we are crazy. The church-goers would say we are backsliders and heretics. But, hallelujah, the Father would say: ‘These are my beloved sons in whom I am well pleased!’

“There is infinitely more to the kingdom of God than pen could write, or learned men could teach, or pious prophets could foretell. Only the Spirit of the living God can roll back, like a scroll, the heavens of our heart and reveal the full revelation of the kingdom of God. Only the Spirit of the living God can manifest the wonder of it all! It all began when the Spirit took a small seed of the Kingdom and planted it in the rich soil of our longing hearts. There it rested as the warm light of the Spirit brought forth the first tender blade. And our heart rejoiced for its first glimpse of the kingdom of God within. And it continued to grow regardless of the many obstacles that life, the flesh, and religion placed in its way. It continues to grow in the peaceful environment of the garden of our heart...slowly, gently, and lovingly taking possession of our inner most being. Every day our Beloved walks through our garden...pruning, trimming, and feeding the precious blades that shall one day cover the earth with the glorious kingdom of God. And, my beloved, we are the sons of our Father’s kingdom!

“There is nothing and no one that can stop the birthing process that is taking place today. The power and might of the heavenlies are moving in the perfect timing of the Spirit. The Father is receiving His sons unto Himself. Their minds are being renewed and their lips are being opened, and the first words of the Everlasting Gospel are being spoken. A glory of transcendent magnitude is falling as a holy anointing upon them. The things that were ‘unlawful to speak of’ are being revealed to those who have taken refuge in the depths of the Father’s greatness. The Day of the Lord is hastening on as the fullness of the Father

expands into His vast family of sons filling them with unfading light, ageless truth, and undying love.

“The creation is on tiptoe, waiting and longing, perhaps even sensing, that the time is at hand for the Manifestation of the Sons of God. The world and its people are crying out for freedom; proclaiming the dawn of a new age...yet, how little they know of what THE DAWN shall bring! Far greater is the rising of the sons than the sunrise of the morning. They bring with them the fulfillment of all that the creation has moaned for: Justice, Peace, Equality, and the Liberty of the sons of God. When they appear the long night will be over...the ways of man will be gone forever, and the dead in Christ shall live again. They are the City of our God, the place where the sun never sets...where light began, where truth was born, where love and mercy met...and grace came forth. They are the many-membered Christ. The kingdom is rightfully theirs, the rule of the universe and of the ages is theirs...and the souls of all mankind. This is the covenant the Father made and sealed with the Lamb’s Blood..” — end quote.

A fellow-traveler in the kingdom of God has written: “For some years many of us have preached that the manchild in the womb of the virgin has been growing and developing. But for many of us who have been walking in the move of the Spirit of God, our rejoicing is no longer that the woman is with child, but for us the hour of the birthing is at hand! Therefore the word and the anointing He is bringing forth from within us is not just truth to confirm that the woman is with child. But we are beginning to see those truths and those dealings which are going to bring forth this manchild and make him manifest. A young woman, when she first discovers she is with child in her womb, particularly when it is her first, her rejoicing is that she is with child, and she cannot refrain from gladly sharing the news with all her friends. Usually she dons her maternity dress before it is really necessary that all might know the secret that she joyfully carries within her own breast, that she is with a manchild in her womb. But after many months of carrying that child, her first joy of knowing she is pregnant begins to fade. And her rejoicing is now that the hour of birthing is at hand! And so it is with many of us who have for long years been rejoicing in the great truth that a manchild is in the womb. But now as we feel that new life within us, swelling the spiritual womb and beginning to manifest itself, our rejoicing is no more in the truth that a manchild is in the womb, for we are eagerly looking forward to the hour of the birthing. And the anointing within us is reaching out for those truths and those dealings that shall bring this manchild forth and make him manifest!” — end quote.

## **THE TRAVAIL OF THE WOMAN**

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun...and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered” (Rev. 12:1-2).

Those who in this hour yearn for the promised manifestation of the sons of God feel spiritually much like the expectant woman whose due date for “delivery” of her baby has come and gone. All the evidence is there that there is a baby — the tummy is swollen so tight it looks like it will burst; the baby is kicking; contractions are experienced; the water may have even broken — yet, it is not time for the birth. At such a time, the expectant mother may wonder if things could go on like that indefinitely. It seems almost unreal; the waiting grows unbearable, the nights long, and the emotions become heightened or depressed. Still, all signs give assurance that the hoped for event will take place. And those in attendance to her can but wait and watch for the final sign that the baby is about to be delivered.

The baby in our text is a very special and unusual child. There is something coming out of the woman that is going to do what the woman could not do. The woman is beautiful, she is glorious, she is faithful and crowned with victory and God is pleased with her, and she has been the yielded handmaid of Christ. She has done all she has been called and equipped to do. She dwells in a heavenly place, but she has not greatly impacted the world for she has never sat upon the throne nor has she ruled the nations with a rod of iron. The woman has been able to do what women do best — she has been able to nurture, to heal wounds, to encourage, wash, feed, and care for the children of God. But her ministry has not gone far beyond the nurturing of her own little family and protecting the seed growing in her womb. She has not done more than that because her authority has not extended further than that and she has not had great strength or power. But that holy thing that shall be born of her shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest and he shall ascend the throne of his Father and shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. He shall bring a new order, a greater authority, an all-conquering power, and surpassing glory into the midst of humanity and a new day shall dawn for the whole earth from pole to pole and from sea to sea. The coming to birth of the sons of God is the one, great spiritual event the whole creation is waiting for.

The woman is in great travail and excruciating pain to deliver this manchild into the earth. It is the picture of old-fashioned childbirth, not the modern means and methods. There is no C-section, no ether, no spinal injection, no pain relief, and no numbing from this birth process. There is weeping, tears, sweat, groaning, agony, and screaming as the new order of the sons of God is birthed out of the birthing canal of the virgin church. It is not a soothing, pleasant experience, but it will be effective! The Greek word for travail here is *odino* which indicates a special kind of pain, the pain of a woman giving birth. John says that because of this pain she cried, signifying to cry out, to cry aloud. We have all been going through pressures, experiences, and deep dealings which make us cry out, and at times we cry aloud — groaning, weeping, writhing, as it were, in distress as well as those times of deep inner travail with groanings which cannot be uttered. Truly, these are birth pangs!

There is a vast company of saints today that is caught up in the travail of this birthing experience! These have been doing everything they know to do to bring this manchild to birth and his head hasn't crowned yet, but the struggle tells them clearly that he is on his way! It is always painful to birth a new order in God! Ask Moses, ask Joshua, ask David, ask Jesus, ask the apostles, ask Martin Luther, ask John Knox and George Fox, ask the early Pentecostals — yet none of them ever knew the pain of birthing a full-grown male child — a man in the full stature of Jesus Christ! Oh, how painful it is! We're going to give birth to this son, my beloved, and that secret knowledge, that which we have pondered in our hearts, that which we have cherished as a hope, that which we have dreamed of, fantasized about, preached about, prophesied of, and anxiously awaited is about to be birthed in reality into our midst! Everything will change in heaven and in earth when this takes place!

The following testimony by Elaine Cook is both inspiring and instructive to all who cherish the beautiful hope of sonship. "In the early sixties, after a miraculous healing from leukemia, my husband and I and our two children went to the mission field in Canada's northland. I had a zeal for God, but very little knowledge of spiritual matters. Fluent prophecies had poured forth from my lips in the assembly of the saints, but I knew not how to hear my Lord's voice speaking within saying: This is the way: walk ye in it. It wasn't long before I realized that I MUST know the leading and guidance of His Spirit within or I would

have to leave His service. Without discernment and the Lord's leading, we were easy prey to idolatrous, witchcraft spirits in that place. We began to call upon the Lord in every decision and forsook the wisdom of the carnal mind. It was hard, but oh, so very necessary.

"After several years, the Lord spoke to one of the other missionaries that He would soon be bringing me into something 'new.' When it came, it was the fulfillment of Proverbs 20:12: 'The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.' I began to 'see' things, as it were, in my mind's eye, and to 'hear' the understanding of it in my spirit. It was quite a shock at first. It is with rejoicing that we see the younger generation — the eleventh hour believers — enter into this realm very quickly, as they are taught by the revelation of the Spirit. One of the first revelations given me was the fact that we would not be 'raptured' away, for the Lord purposed to bring His children unto perfection and to use them to bring forth a righteous kingdom on this earth. It was not hard for me to embrace this, for the 'rapture theory' had never been real to me, and my spirit had never embraced it as truth.

"During the first few weeks on the mission field, we had a most remarkable experience and the Lord has been reminding me of it recently as if to say, Now is the time of the fulfillment of every vision — this is that. As we were sharing the evening prayer time with the other missionary couple, the Spirit spoke to us, Consider not your pillows, but seek Me all this night. We were quite surprised at this request, but we all complied and sought Him obediently. In the back of our minds we all thought we'd have a rest on the following day. No such luck! Combined, we had seven children to care for, Indians coming to the house throughout the day, and all labor was done by hand as we had no electricity. It seemed not one of us had time to catch a wink of sleep. In our evening prayers the next night, the Spirit spoke to us again the same words as the previous night. Again we sought Him (whom our soul loveth!) all through the long night. And again, we were unable to find opportunity to rest through the day. Yet, it seemed no hardship. We found we were no more tired than if we had slept each night!

"Once again, for the third time, He required us to seek Him all the night. He gave us no special burden of intercession. He spoke not at all to us for those two nights. As the dawn approached of our third day of prayer without sleep, we felt the presence of the Lord strongly in the room. Each of us took off his shoes, and one brother turned down the coal-oil lamp. His presence was AWESOME. Then, the missionary's wife had a vision of a woman in travail, bringing forth a manchild. The Lord showed her that this manchild would come forth at the dawning of the third day and that we would experience His resurrection life such as we had never before known. He told us He had given us a foretaste of that resurrection life by keeping us awake for three days and nights in which time we never felt weary nor faint. Each morning when I looked in the mirror I expected to see a haggard-looking image reflected there, but I looked the same as usual. We were fresh for our work each day and ready to pray again at night. The Lord reminded me of that time as if to say, The reality of what you experienced is very near" — end quote.

We can know of a certainty that none of the popular churches are the sun-clad woman of Revelation twelve — that they are not is evidenced by the fact that they are not travailing in pain to bring forth the manchild! Oh, they are travailing alright; some of them travail for souls to be saved, they travail for prayers to be answered, they travail for needs to be met, they travail for healing, they travail for gifts and ministries, they travail for the baptism in the

Holy Spirit, many travail for finances, various ones travail for revival...but not one of them is in travail to bring forth the manchild! Therefore they are not the sun-clad woman.

Ray Prinzing wrote, "The forming of 'a body' within the corporate body of Christ, is a sovereign work of God. Man cannot gender this son company, nor take this position unto himself. God places within the hearts of individuals a desire for His fullness, the call to 'come up higher,' and it burns within like a fire, consuming the dross. It strips away self-will, it separates them from their brethren as being different, peculiar, alone unto God. The church in general cannot understand them, they are a burden to her. Often she is ashamed of them, for when everything is running smoothly, suddenly one of these 'odd ones' becomes moved on to go deeper into God, and it upsets the whole program as these hungry hearts cry out for more of Him. They express their dis-satisfaction with the present realm, and the church feels condemned, as if she wasn't able to provide enough to meet the need. Why must they always cry out for more?"

"While others are enjoying the general fellowship of the meeting, these strange ones seem withdrawn, groaning and seeking for a further dimension of His grace and holiness, travailing for a move of the Spirit that would bring them into more of the reality of His life. While the church stands with upraised hands to praise the Lord for present blessings, these same non-conformists are weeping. Why? Why can't they be more content with what God is doing all around them? So it is 'in part' — can't they be thankful for what they have? NO! God Himself has placed a call within that cannot be satisfied with anything less than His fullness! Oftentimes when local groups and gatherings cannot tolerate them anymore, the Spirit simply draws these 'apprehended ones' from the fellowship and religious activity, and they walk alone, separated unto God. They are not backslidden, they have not lost out with God, they are only cut off from their brethren for the time being — it is part of the travail, caught in the throes of being birthed into higher dimensions" — end quote.

Our Father has conceived within His wife, those who love and obey Him above all others, the son. The firstborn Son was brought forth as a pattern. He is the first-born among many brethren! When a woman is carrying in her womb a son, though she has great joy at the prospect of becoming a mother, she also anticipates with some trepidation the birth process. While there are some helpful suggestions, there is actually no book that can truly teach one how to give birth! This fact teaches us the great truth that we are not going to bring forth the mature Son of God out of our lives on the basis of the amount of revelation we have or as a result of how much we know. You could go to Bible School, you could learn everything they could teach you about Christ, and it will not enable you to bring forth the Son of God! Oh, no! The formation and birth of the manchild comes only as a result of intimate relationship, and by the growth and development of His life within. When Christ is fully formed in us the birth pangs lay hold upon us and by travail we are brought to the hour of birthing. Have you not felt the pressure, the contractions, the urgency, the constraint, the force, the compulsion to bring forth the nature, power, glory, wisdom, and dominion of the Son of God?

When a woman is pregnant and ready to deliver — just ask any woman who has given birth — when she is ready to be delivered she wants that child out of there! When the time has come for the seed of Christ in us to be birthed out of the woman we have all been a part of, birthed into the full glory of sonship, we want that inner son to come forth! And it's not just because of the pain and travail, that leads to the birth, but because of the surpassing glory of losing our identity in the woman and rising up into our identity as the

manchild — the son of God! “A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world” (Jn. 16:21). Every one of us has been the woman, the betrothed bride of Christ. The hour is fastly approaching for the son to come, and when it is time for the birth, there is nothing we can do but yield ourselves to the birthing process.

Don't get ahead of God! You're not ready yet to unveil to the world the fullness of wisdom, glory, divine nature and power. Do you suppose, my dearly beloved brethren, that you can reveal the fullness of God to creation in your present state and condition? Do you think God is going to send you to the world as you are right now with His word in you? Do you imagine that you are ready to represent God to this earth simply because you have had goose bumps and spoken a little bit of tongues? Simply because you know a little Greek, understand a few mysteries, have seen some visions, and you've got yourself a little tape ministry, and a little newsletter going, and you're on the internet, and people invite you to come preach in churches — do you believe you are now qualified to speak to the rulers and great ones of the earth and go forth to set creation free from the bondage of corruption?

Just as Jesus instructed His disciples two thousand years ago to not depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there until they should receive the promise of the Father and be endued with power from on High, so the word of the Lord today instructs every son of God to wait in the Jerusalem Virgin Church until the manchild is fully formed into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Not one of us is a manifest son of God at this point in time. And you cannot make yourself a manifest son! Yet, this you can do — you can wait for the time appointed of the Father. Keep on doing what you're doing, keep on walking in the Spirit, keep on following hard after the Lord, keep on panting after Him as the hart pants after the water brooks, keep on growing in the knowledge of God's Christ, keep on beholding the glory of the Lord, keep on being changed into His image from glory to glory! Tarry there in the womb of the virgin until the travail of the woman brings you to the moment of birth! Oh, yes!

I feel to close this message with these anointed words from the pen of Carl Schwing: “We all have an immense desire for the hour when all eyes will see what the eyes of our spirit have seen. The hour when all ears will hear what the ears of our spirit have heard. The hour when all hearts will know what our heart has always known. And that hour will surely come in our Father's tomorrow. His tomorrow is not measured in minutes or hours, or days or years...that is why He alone knows the day and the hour we are waiting for. There are no clocks or calendars in the realm of the Eternal One. All things happen at His command. He who had no beginning...He who has no end, fills all the spaciousness and timelessness of eternities within Himself. All things remain in Him until He calls them forth. At present we live in, and are part of, our Father's today. Therefore, let us be most sensitive to everything that is happening around us...to every hand that reaches out to us...to every voice that is crying out...to the whole creation that is moaning. Rest in the knowledge that all things will be fulfilled in our Father's perfect will and order.

“As the sun rises above the hills, one can see the mist drifting mystically through the hollow...mist, rising from the creek like the whispered prayers of beloved saints. And rays of sunlight, like golden trumpets, announce the birth of a new day. At that moment we wonder if perchance this will be the day when our Beloved will break through the sky of our hearts to be seen and known by all mankind. Alas, the day passes and the sounds of the

moaning creation, and the moaning of our spirits, continue. Yet, we of all men are most blessed...for though the Beloved tarries, and we yearn immensely for that day, we find strength in the knowledge that our Father doeth all things well. And we rejoice in knowing that we are a day closer to the appointed Day of days. As the sun sets, we give thanks to our Father...knowing that every day is the Lord's day. Every day the Father works wonders, seen or unseen...known or unknown. Each moment of each day serves a purpose in His marvelous plan.

“As I was still, and my spirit was yearning for the manifestation of the sons of God, this vision came to me: It was sunrise...standing in the brilliance of the sun was a messenger of the Lord. His hair was the color of a field of goldenrod in the autumn. His eyes were as blue as the cloudless sky. His garments were as white as freshly fallen snow which sparkled like diamonds in the sunlight. Upon his head was a crown of cedar. With his right hand waving toward the heavens, and his left hand moving across the earth, he beckoned God's vast family of sons to gather. In a quickening silence they gathered...the voice of the messenger broke the silence as he proclaimed: ‘Lift up your head and rejoice, sing for your waiting is over; the time of your silence has ended. The door of your hiding place has been opened. You have been clothed with the garments of Divine Life. You are now ready for your manifestation! Go and proclaim the good news of reconciliation to all the inhabitants of the earth, setting the creation free.’ The messenger of the Lord walked into the rays of the sun...flowers, like falling rain, fell from the cloudless sky. Heavenly music filled the land...as the glory of the Lord covered the earth” — end quote.

# Chapter 137

## *The Woman And The Manchild*

### *continued*

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; 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...*” (Rev. 12:1-2,5).

What does it mean for this sun-clad woman to be with child? It means that a child is in the mother's womb, and the child and the mother are united in one body. When the mother eats, the child is nourished. What the mother eats, good or bad, is transferred to the child. The condition of the mother is the condition of the child. On the other hand, this child is different from the mother; it is another being. If you say that they are one, it is the truth, for the child receives its life from the mother. Yet, as far as his future is concerned, he is different. His future is entirely distinct from that of his mother. Immediately after he is delivered, he is caught up to the throne of God, while his mother flees into the wilderness for testing and proving, as was Job who was declared by God to be a *perfect man*, yet was untried and unproven. While the woman is with child, all that can be seen is the mother; the child is hidden. Outwardly, it appears that there is only the mother. The child assuredly does exist, but he is hidden with the mother; he is included in the mother. People only recognize and address the mother, although they may have been told she is with child.

While the individual application of this truth is precious, pointing to the Christ-life conceived within each of us, concealed within the womb of the soul, ultimately to come forth in power and glory to reign over the soul and all inward powers, yet it is to the *corporate truth* that I would now draw your reverent attention. For many years the body of Christ has been in a process of special preparation. There is a people that has come to the kingdom for such a time as this! And hidden within this body is a group of people among them. This group is a portion of the whole, a part of the many chosen for this hour. This is the manchild to be brought forth by the woman! This means that the manchild is not a single individual, but a composition of many saints. In comparison with the mother, this manchild appears to be small. When this group is compared with the whole, their number is in the minority. But God's plan is fulfilled in them and His purpose rests upon them. As the mother is the final glory of the church age, the manchild is the *firstfruit* — the glory and power of the greater and more glorious age to come! The woman gathers within her the harvest of this age at the end of the age, whereas the sons of God inaugurate and establish the new order of the kingdom of God for the coming age.

This is the revelation of Jesus Christ — that God be manifested in the totality of His divine nature, wisdom, and power in a company of sons born from this Virgin Church, into the measure of the stature of the *fullness* of Christ. The church will come to perfection in its realm. God will see to it that the Holy Spirit brings her to perfection. There is approaching the day when she comes into her glory and fulfills her perfect work, but she will never be the sonship company nor do his work. In spite of the fact that she will finally be brought to perfection, she is not God's final revelation of Jesus Christ. She is His bride! A sonship company must be born out of this bride-church. Then in the union of the masculine and feminine nature of God shall be seen the full revelation of Godhood. Great is the mystery!

This woman, the Virgin Church, dwells in heaven, in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus! Not everything that calls itself a church is spiritually a virgin. Nor do they dwell in heaven! The vast majority of “churches” function on a very low *earthly realm of carnality*. Not everyone who calls himself a Christian is an overcomer. But this woman is an overcoming woman! She is a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, and she is clothed with the sun of righteousness, the moon of religion is under her feet, and she is crowned with the illumination of the mind of Christ in God’s divine order. The purpose of this woman is not to draw a crowd, not even to save the world. Nor is her purpose to bless people with superficial benefits, profit, and favors, nor even to birth millions of more little babies in Christ. The great purpose of God in this woman is to develop something mature within herself and give birth to something that has never been birthed before in the history of the world.

This child, as we have previously pointed out, is a full-grown male — a **man!** He represents an order we have not experienced before! This order has not been seen yet, but she’s been carrying it for the symbolical nine months and speaking to her family about it. She says, “I have a new order in me; I don’t know much about it, but the glory of the Lord and the power of the Highest that has come upon me has impregnated me with it. I have had this revelation in me for many, many years and it has been growing and increasing within me until I am pained to be delivered. I can’t tell you much about it, but it feels powerful!” This manchild is not an apostle, he is not a bishop, he is not a prophet, he is not an evangelist, nor is he a pastor or a teacher. All of those ministries have been given to the woman to assist her in nurturing this manchild unto the event of his birthing.

Many who read these lines have been apprehended of God to sonship. Still, we all know that though the sonship life is growing up in us, we have not yet been “birthed” into *manifest sonship*. That is why we have not now been given *throne-ship authority and power!* We have not been able to go forth and do the “greater works” Jesus promised! We ourselves, as our mother, are waiting for the birthing! A man’s birth is the most important event in his life. It is only by his birth that he comes into the possession of his own separate being. It is only by his birth that he begins to enter upon his proper life. A fetus has no birth certificate and therefore no legal standing. The fetus has no recorded name, no legal identity, no social security number, no right of inheritance. Under the law of Moses if a man attacked a pregnant woman and caused her to miscarry, he was made to pay a fine to both husband and judge. But if the aborted child was old enough to survive and he then killed the child after it came forth from the womb, he was charged with murder and paid with his life (Ex. 21:22-23). All through the scriptures great importance was attached to *birth* and nearly all things were determined and established from the time of birth.

Hence the birth of this manchild must needs be the chief event of all history — the event on which his separate and proper existence as well as everything in his future destiny depends. Without this birth he comes to nothing, and his entire purpose miscarries. It is the point to which everything of the church age points, and from which the age that follows dates its beginning. Of what kind is this birth? It is *not literal* birth, for the woman is not a literal woman, but a corporate body and a city. It is not *spiritual birth*, or regeneration, for the persons constituting this child are already born of the Spirit. It is *symbolic* birth, yet the symbol stands for a glorious reality! It is a birth, a resurrection into a new and higher order of relationship, life, calling, and ministry in the kingdom of God. In a word, this great and glorious *birth* is the entrance of the sons of God into incorruption and immortality! The ministry of the church is to “build up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-16). The ministry of the sons of God is to *deliver creation from the bondage of corruption — from sin, sickness, sorrow, and death in all its forms* (Rom. 8:19-23). The manchild is truly begotten, generated, quickened by the Holy Ghost, and full of prophetic yearning for what is beyond; but he is not yet *born*. These sons of God are still invisible, hidden, enclosed, and restrained. They do not yet know fully what they shall be. They pulsate with a heavenly and divine life, but it remains for them to be set free, to themselves be “brought forth,” to be “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.” *“For we know that the*

*whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even now we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption (Greek: son placing), to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY*" (Rom. 8:22-23). That is the mystery.

A birth is a manifestation, a bringing to light, the making visible of what was before invisible. It is the presentation to mankind of the fullness of divine, incorruptible, and immortal life! It is the manifestation of the sons of God! It is Christ, Head and body, coming to light, the many sons brought to glory revealed in all the majesty of their glorious Head, in the power of His resurrection! Here, then, is a most momentous birth! It is the greatest birth of all time. It is a birth experienced only by one Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the *firstborn from the dead!* But it is a birth to be experienced by all who have received the call to sonship!

No saint ever trod where we are treading. Millions trod in their appointed paths, did their work, triumphed gloriously, and entered heaven. But, although the same spirit, the same faith, and the same love animates and sustains us, as it did them, our road into the kingdom purposes of God for this day is a very different one to their road in the first and all succeeding centuries of the church. They never stood in the hour we stand in. They never had the vision we have seen in God. They never had the work to do that we have. No man has ever walked in this place before! There are no precedents for the dealings of God and our response to them in this generation!

There are many across the land today who call themselves "the manifested sons of God" and make much of their exalted position in the kingdom. Of course we must take their word for it, for in many I fail to detect either the holiness of character or the awesome authority and power that attend such a high calling. How sickening it is to hear men who have nothing boasting that they possess all things! Sons do not become sons merely by asserting that they are sons. A great evil among those who would be sons today is that they proclaim their own sonship. How often are they merely self-styled and self-appointed sons! The model Son did not proclaim His own sonship. "If I bear witness of myself," He said, "my witness is not true. The Father Himself, which hath sent me, HE HATH BORNE WITNESS OF ME" (Jn. 5:31,37).

The apostle Peter tells us in words freighted with wonder how the disciples were convinced of Christ's sonship. "*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and manifest presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For HE RECEIVED FROM GOD THE FATHER HONOR AND GLORY, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice WHICH CAME FROM HEAVEN WE HEARD, when we were with Him in the holy mount*" (II Pet. 1:16-18). When a person does actually come to the manifestation of sonship he will never need to declare his sonship, for it is the Father who both sends and announces the sons. There is no need for a manifest son to stand up and tell the people that he is a son of God, or that he is reigning with Christ, or that he will never die, or that he is infallible, or that he is in some mystical way reconciling creation, for the Father Himself will declare him, if indeed he is a son of God; and from that blessed moment forward his word will be with such authority and his actions will speak with such power that there will be no need for him to utter a word concerning himself. Those who gather about will cry, "Truly, this is a son of God!"

What this first Son, Jesus, spoke came to pass. It was impossible for Him to speak a falsehood or to say anything that would not come to pass. He made it very plain that what He was saying to the people was not His own word. But whatever He did speak to them, they could know and understand that it was the word of the Father — THE SOURCE. It was the Father speaking through the Son. Jesus made it plain that He did not come to do His own will, but the will of the Father. He did not speak of Himself or out of his own

imagination, desire, or will. It was entirely the will and word and work of the Father! THEREFORE THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY THAT IT COULD BE WRONG, and therefore the winds and the waves, the diseases and the devils, the elements and all things OBEYED HIS COMMANDS!

Jesus spoke of other sons who would stand in the same position before the world and before the Father in which He Himself stood. They would enjoy the same privileges He enjoyed, but they would also share the same responsibility that He bore from the Father. They would speak the same word of authority and do the same works and show forth their glory in the times when His body would grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. When Jesus said, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," this most emphatically was not a reference by Jesus to the so-called second coming or to some golden-streeted city in the sky. Jesus is here telling the apostles, and telling us through them, that they, and we, will stand before humanity and before God in exactly the same position in which He Himself stood and stands. Jesus most definitely spake not of going back to heaven, getting a construction crew together, and proceeding to build a lot of mansions. He was telling them, and us, that He is preparing a place in the kingdom of God, a palace in divine sonship, a place in the throne of the universe — a place there *for us!*

Truly we are pregnant with the manchild! However, we must also know that we are not destined to live forever in the womb of expectancy. There is a time for the baby to be born! A woman can conceive; but she will not remain pregnant forever. In due time she must bring forth that which was conceived in her. In due time we must also bring forth that which is conceived in us. "Timing is everything!" How often have I heard that expression applied to almost every area of life! Timing, for example, is important when it comes to a marriage proposal. You cannot "pop the question" too soon, in case it might overwhelm the other person. But you can't wait too long either! Timing is also important when you are trying to find a job that fits your training and ability. Having your resume in at just the right time and place can make all the difference in getting a great job or missing out. Timing is also important when it comes to finding and fighting disease. Early treatment can mean the difference between life and death. Often the difference between failure and success is related to timing. By the time Jesus was finally born, God had prepared all the nations and had brought them to the point where they could hear of Him, believe on Him, and receive Him. The world was united under one empire with roads, communication, and commerce unto its farthest extremities, by which the apostles traveled and the gospel spread to the ends of the earth. The conception of Jesus in Mary's womb was one small part of the plan. But the timing was perfect! "***When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son...***" (Gal. 4:4). God has a *time* for His manchild to come forth and stand up in the earth!

This truth is graphically illustrated by the testimony of a dear brother, Douglas Clark. He writes, "On Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> I drove to Battle Creek Michigan to meet some friends at Don Pablo's for dinner at 5 p.m. I estimated it would take me one hour and forty-five minutes to get there. Unfortunately I left ten minutes late, plus I had to get gas, take an alternate route due to construction, and to top it off, I got behind a slow moving farm vehicle for about five miles. As I reached my destination I pulled into the parking lot, found a parking space and turned off the ignition. I glanced at my watch to see the time and it was **five p.m. to the second!** In a thousand attempts I could not have made that happen. There were so many variables, yet I managed to arrive at the appointed time.

"This is what the Lord is doing with each of us individually. We are often filled with stress thinking we are running late, taking an alternate route, or dealing with some obstacle in our way, yet God's plan will be accomplished right on schedule. He has taken all the variables into consideration! It is happening with all of us individually, but the sweet surprise that awaits us is that our individual experiences will supernaturally fit together in such a way that will display a corporate picture of the body of Christ for the entire world to see at God's

appointed time. This will be in contrast to what man is doing through his hierarchical and horizontal control. No matter how hard we try, WE CAN'T MAKE GOD'S THING HAPPEN. There is a divine order that has been preordained and nothing we can do will hasten it or prevent it. God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would be so many in number that they would be uncountable, like the dust of the earth, was a promise that Abraham could not bring about by his self-effort. The same is true for us. **We must wait on God to do what He says He will do.**

"Isaac, the promised son, was the seed of Abraham, but he was conceived by divine intervention. Like Abraham, this is where we get confused. We each feel the heartbeat of the Holy Spirit and the inner knowledge that God wants to manifest Himself in and through His people. It is the waiting for the **appointed time** that challenges us, and exposes the 'self' life that refuses to be still. Notice that God's timing always happens in a way that is impossible for man to fulfill. *'Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son'* (Gen. 18:14, NIV). Sarah didn't conceive until it was well beyond her time to bear children. The best we can do in our attempt to help God fulfill His purposes is to conceive an Ishmael!

"Two opposing moves are unfolding in the earth today, and yet each of these manifestations will fulfill His purposes. One will reveal the futility of man's efforts as it seeks to tighten its grip upon God's people, refusing to let God's people go! The other move will manifest the nature and life of God in His people independently, completely orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. The move of futility that even now is revealing itself is very much like what happened to Saul. He was told to wait in Gilgal seven days until the appointed time when Samuel would join him. He did wait the seven days, but just when he was so close to being obedient he rushed ahead, deciding to offer up a burnt offering to God. Then just as he finishes Samuel shows up! He was so close but he failed to wait for the **appointed time**. (That's when Samuel rebuked Saul, saying, Obedience is better than sacrifice!). The appointed time is not just about the appointed day, but the appointed moment! You won't find a clearer picture of what is happening today than Saul's example. Just when we are so close to experiencing the manifestation of the kingdom of God in the earth many have surmised the situation and have decided it is up to us to make things ready. The judgment of those who are like Saul will be severe. Yet when their plans come crashing down the Holy Spirit will come to them in reconciliation and they will be saved through the flames of fire!" — end quote.

With these thoughts filling our hearts let us approach the heavenly wonder John saw that day when he was caught up in the spirit and witnessed the birth of God's manchild. We use the term "manchild" because we are all familiar with it from the King James Bible; of the many key phrases of scripture, however, that fall short of expressing the original thought, this one is notable. Neither *man* nor *child* is correct! Of the three Greek words translated "man", this one has the least claim to it, for English has an exact equivalent, and that word is *male*. Though all men are of the male gender, yet the meaning is not precisely the same. John was simply identifying this one birthed as a male in contrast with a female. Then the word "child" is defective and misleading, for the Greek word *huios* meaning "a mature son" shows that, though newly born, this was not a helpless infant by any means!

Nearly all who read these lines are aware that in the scriptures there is a vast distinction between "childhood" and "sonship," which is practically obliterated by most Bible translations. Sonship involves a maturity, a dignity, a position, and responsibility which is not the case with childhood. All who believe are the children of God! All have God for their Father. In a broader sense God is the Father of the spirits of all men. But it is only in the measure that we express the Father in the *maturity* of His nature, character, mind, will, wisdom, love, glory, and power that we are *sons*. If you see a sign on a business that reads BROWN AND SON HARDWARE you certainly would not expect to walk into that store and find Mr. Brown with his one-year old male child nearby in a play-pen! BROWN AND SON

indicates a father and his grown, mature, son who shares the ownership and responsibility of the business. That is the scriptural concept of *sonship*!

There is blessing and satisfaction for us in the certainly that we are God's children. But there is glory and honor, authority and power, manifest through us when we become mature sons! This is what is involved in the expression used here. The way the Greek text actually reads is, *"And she brought forth a son — a male!"* Is not every son a male? Of course, but in the Greek this is a very unusual phrase. Perhaps we shall still better get into the spirit of it if we borrow a slang phrase from the street, and translate it: *"a son — a he-man!"* It is vehement, almost a fierce assertion of the virility of this one born of the woman, as if John means to say that here comes a regular two-fisted fighter, a mighty one, an invincible one, who shall conquer and triumph over all! And he is born that way! God is in the business of making men — "sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). "Son of" is a Semitic idiom used throughout both the Old and New Testaments meaning "like." Hence, "sons of God" signifies "men like God" — men like Himself in nature, character, knowledge, wisdom, truth, love, glory, and power. And how is this handiwork accomplished? By what "master stroke" does He bring such "sons" into being? By fashioning them in the womb of the "woman" and birthing them into the world of mankind!

The mysterious types, shadows, parables, and allegories of the Bible have always been a source of joy and amazement to me. One of the most remarkable is the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah in which we find a beautiful type of the birth of the manchild in this our day. *"For the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Therefore it is of faith...as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before Him who he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promised of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness"* (Rom. 4:13, 16-22).

Abraham was fully persuaded that what God had promised He was fully able to perform. The reason I speak into God's people in this hour the word of manifest sonship is because I firmly believe that what God has promised He is fully able to perform and **shall do so**. I believe God's word to us is sufficient to bring this manchild to birth. That's faith! Faith is simply *trust* in the promise of God! When Abraham believed that God was able to perform His word to him, to give a son, he himself was an old man, as good as dead. His body was probably still producing sperm, but his delivery system was no longer working and there was no Viagra in those days! His wife was an old woman, her womb was dead, in the terminology of that time, and obviously she was no longer ovulating. There was no possible way in the natural that she could have conceived a child, but he didn't let those circumstances speak louder than God's word to him. He was fully persuaded that what God had spoken, regardless of his physical condition, regardless of Sarah's physical condition, God was able to perform. When Sarah heard that she was going to birth a baby, she laughed! She thought God was making a joke! And God spoke to Abraham and said, "Where is Sarah? I heard her laugh!" Then Sarah was embarrassed — "He heard me laugh!"

When God speaks His blessed, wonderful promise into our hearts we find it difficult to believe that such a thing can really come to pass. That Christ will be birthed out of us as a full-grown Christ — how impossible that seems! That we will be the manifest sons of God and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption — surely that is too high for us! That God is impregnating us with the salvation of the world — who can believe such a thing!

Beloved brethren, God is impregnating our soul with the seed of Christ and that holy thing which shall be born of us shall be called the Son of God! I'm not ashamed to tell you that the Christ-child is being formed in my soul! I say that in spite of my weaknesses, for I have within me the same flaws and limitations of my humanity which are common to all men; sometimes I do things I don't want to do, and I don't want you to do them either, but this one thing I will *not do* — I will not stagger in unbelief, I will not deny the work of God in me, I will not contradict the promise of God to me, I will not refute the word that is gone out of His mouth, and I will not depart from being fully persuaded that the beautiful promise and the bright hope of sonship to God that He has conceived within me — HE IS FULLY ABLE TO PERFORM IT! Oh, the wonder of it!

My father in the flesh was a Pentecostal minister, and by God's design, he was stuck in Pentecost. The Lord moved my wife and me on into a deeper move of the Spirit, into a further word, and I remember I used to talk with my dad, and of course, I wanted him to see the glorious things we were seeing in the Spirit. I wanted him to have an ear to hear, but he never could hear. So usually our discussions would end up in an argument. One day the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, and the Lord said, "Leave him alone! He is in the realm that I have appointed him to, and he will not be in another." And you know, that brought me a great peace, because now I was able to fellowship with him on the level that he could fellowship with me, without strain or condemnation, realizing that he was in the place that God ordained for him, and I was in the place that God had ordained for me.

My father died almost fifty years ago, and he passed away in the Pentecostal realm, just as the Lord had said. Shortly after he passed away, the Lord gave me a dream. In this dream I was in the living room of our home and all of my family was there, my father and mother, my brothers, my wife and our kids were all there sitting in chairs and sofas around the walls. My dad was sitting on the end of a sofa and looked exactly the way he did just before he died. Nobody was saying anything, we were just there. Suddenly my dad looked up, gazed intently across the room into my eyes, and said, "**P-r-e-a-c-h t-h-e MANCHILD!**" Immediately I awoke out of that dream and in that very instant I knew two things by the Spirit. I knew that now my dad knew something that he did not know here in the flesh. But I also knew that he *represented* a cry that comes from the very realm of death itself, the cry of the groaning creation, that is groaning for the manifestation of His Life. It is the cry of creation for the manifestation of the sons of God who shall deliver creation from the *bondage of corruption!*

Would you like to meet Jesus — hear Him speaking, see Him in action, know His personality? Don't just depend of a religious system or on what other people say. Come and see for yourself! Go to a house where Jesus is having dinner. Hop into a boat with Jesus and His disciples. Sit on a grassy hillside and listen to Jesus tell stories. Walk with Him down the dusty roads and see how He relates to people. Notice who likes Him, and why. Notice who hates Him, and why. Come and see! How can you do that? Do you need a time machine to take you? No, you just need to come into the presence of those in whom Christ is being formed! When you see the life of one truly called to sonship you will behold Jesus in whatever measure He is developed in that life. Oh, how creation groans, and how we groan within ourselves to SEE JESUS IN ALL HIS GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL FULLNESS REVEALED IN THE SONS OF GOD!

That is what the Transfiguration showed, that within the body of that carpenter was the fullness of the glory of God. On that mountain it shone out through Him until His face became brighter than the noonday sun. The glory of God radiated everything! That is what we are coming to: The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shining in our hearts and radiating out to enlighten and transform all mankind. On that mountain the glory was so bright that you could not see the physical man. After it was all over "they saw no man but Jesus only," but in that hour all that could be manifested was the glory of the Father, the

radiance of His life and power, and the Father witnessed of the One through whom the glory shone, "This is my beloved SON, hear ye HIM!"

We are moving into the hour when the glory of Christ shall so fill the sons of God that no longer will we be living by the works of the Lord, but we live only by the Father Himself dwelling in us. In this state we will no longer rejoice in what God has done for us and is doing for us, but there is a rejoicing in the Father Himself, for He is the total reality of our being. The hour will come when we will not ask the Lord to do anything more for us, for the Father will be manifested, expressed, revealed in all His fullness in His sons. A son of God is not a spiritual baby that has to ask and beg for things, be cared for, watched over, provided for and corrected. *"The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father"* (Gal. 4:1-2). When you become of age no tutor can tell you, "Get down there and do your homework." No governor can tell you, "It's time to go to bed." From now on, what Christ is, becomes the expression. If at this hour we still need God to "do" for us rather than for Christ to "become" in us, then we are not ready for any revelation or unveiling. When God sends His sons forth, He sends them forth as those in whom Christ is so fully formed that it is not a matter of needing God to do anything more, for Christ has "become" in us!

Does there need to be more light? Yes, but no longer light coming to us, but more light radiating out from us. Does there need to be a greater expression of grace? Of course, for "wherever sin abounds, grace shall much more abound." God is raising up sons in whom Grace Himself will be fully manifest. Does there need to be love? "God Himself will be with them, and be their God" and God within will be love. It will be love in expression rather than love in reception. The love of God shall be shed abroad, no longer will we get something out of it. In the sons everything is turned around! Sonship is the unveiling and expression of the Father so that when there is more grace needed, or more love, or more life, or more wisdom, or more strength, or more power, it will be there — not coming to us, but flowing out from us. *"Out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water."* When Christ is truly formed in us it is no longer a matter of what we are getting, but of what is flowing out of our innermost being!

This is what our heavenly Father is bringing us to! May Christ be so revealed in all of us is my prayer and my deepest desire. May there no longer be the cry in our heart, "Oh God, do something more for me," for that leaves me with myself on my hands. The secret of Jesus was that for three and a half years He did not need to be more consecrated, He did not have to be more dedicated, He did not have to learn any more lessons, He did not need any more re-fillings, He did not have to be more victorious, all He had to do was let the Father live out through Him. Ah, let it be so in us! May Christ be so fully formed in us that the work He is doing in us will finally come to an end, and Christ will be all-in-all! This will mean the *birth* of the manchild!

NOW HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! When God's *spiritual work* in the mind, heart, nature, and character is finished in each of His sons, the **sign** that the hour for the manifestation of the sons of God has arrived will be given throughout the whole earth. On a day much like today, those who have been fully awakened within and transformed into His likeness in spirit and soul, will step into another dimension. Suddenly, instantaneously, and simultaneously **every sickness and disease in each and every body of all the sons of God will be totally and permanently healed.** This will be the most astounding **mass miracle** of the ages! A shattering will run through their bodies. In an instant these sons will burst into the resplendence of the shimmering glory of God brighter than the noonday sun! Incorruptible life will surge forth from within, quickening their mortal bodies with vibrant, self-perpetuating life! It will be as it was in the garden tomb on that heaven-blest morning when the Lord Jesus suddenly came back to life, shook off the shackles of mortality, and arose triumphant from the realm of death! Their minds will at the same time be expanded with

divine wisdom, understanding, and discernment! All things will become open and known! It will be as though God “downloaded” *His* mind into *their* mind! The secrets of the universe will become as clear as the letters of the alphabet! Creative power will flow from their mouths and their hands! The secrets of men’s hearts will be revealed and they will know all that is within man; but they will not be permitted to speak these things except in private; for God sends not His sons into the world to *condemn* the world, but that the world through them may be *saved!* Only mercy, grace, omnipotent love, and redeeming power will flow forth to mankind! No man on earth — rulers, educators, economists, psychologists, scientists, doctors, military generals, or any other will be able to gainsay their words, and should any try to capture them they will simply vanish before their eyes, and to kill them will be an impossibility! But the **very first sign** that the hour of manifestation has arrived will be the sudden, instantaneous, and simultaneous HEALING OF EVERY SICKNESS AND DISEASE IN THE BODY OF EVERY SON! You can watch for **that sign** that the day of full redemption and manifestation **is here!** Some will not receive this word, but it does not matter. The sign **will** be fulfilled, and glorious shall be the Day unto those who are appointed unto it!

### **THIS IS THE BIRTH OF THE MANCHILD!**

On Tuesday morning, January 28, 1986, at 8:30 in the morning, the Challenger exploded. America was galvanized in a shock that brought us together unlike anything since the assassination of President Kennedy, and surpassed only by the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York City on September 11, 2001. I’m sure I could ask each of you who are of sufficient age to remember where you were and what you were doing when you heard the news of any of these three events, and you would be able to tell me! I remember! I first heard the news of President Kennedy’s assassination at the airport in La Paz, Baja California, Mexico. I had just attended a Convention near La Paz, and was flying back to our mission work on the mainland of Mexico. We were told that the President had been killed, Vice President Johnson had died of heart attack when the tragedy struck, and we flew back to the Mexican mainland believing that was the case! When the Challenger exploded I was working on Kingdom Bible Studies in my office in the converted garage of our house in Crystal River, Florida. When the news broke Lorain called me and I moved into the living room to watch the story on television. I will never forget it! And when the Towers fell we were on a brief vacation on South Padre Island, Texas. We saw the story unfold in the news before our first morning swim in the Gulf of Mexico. I repeat all this to point out that you, I, and the whole world will *remember forever* where we were and what we were doing on the day and at the time when **the sons of God are manifested!** Oh, yes!

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

In Luke 2:13, of the birth of Jesus, we read, “...and *suddenly* there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host.” The annunciation of the Incarnation was a divine intervention. Here’s a great one: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And *suddenly* there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all

filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4). There in that upper room, united in their faith in Christ and in their holy mood of expectancy, these humble disciples received their marching orders and were empowered to carry them out. They had had a long period of teaching and preparation; they had spent many hours in prayer and holy waiting. The great day came for them on Pentecost, and they were ready to march. March they did, right into the heart of the pagan world! The Holy Spirit guided them step by step. He told them where to go, what to say, what to do. He walked in them and worked with them, confirming their word with mighty signs, wonders, and miracles. Armed with the word of God, the love of God, and the power of God, they were unconquerable and turned the world upside down and changed the course of history!

Then there was poor Saul of Tarsus, who ran headlong into a blinding *suddenly*: “It came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh to Damascus about noon, *suddenly* there shone from heaven a great light about me” (Acts 22:6). In Malachi 3:1 we read of another intervention of God — one reserved for our day: “And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall *suddenly* come to His temple...” This is a divine intervention — when God suddenly comes to His elect in a manner different from, and infinitely more powerful and glorious than His normal workings throughout the past age. Glorious as the ministry of the early apostles and disciples was, and great as were the signs and wonders that accompanied it, it was *not the manifestation of the sons of God to set creation free from the bondage of corruption*. Oh, no! The apostles all died. They established the church, the body of Christ, in the earth...but most of the world continued on much as before and all the blessed saints grew old, sick, and passed on. The great apostle Paul, in spite of the power of his ministry, said that he and all the saints along with the whole of the created universe was groaning and travailing in pain waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. The object of this groaning is that the entire creation itself *shall be set free from the tyranny of sin, sickness, sorrow, limitation, corruption, and death!* Aren't you glad!

We stand in an hour not unlike the days preceding the day of Pentecost. The next great feast, the feast of Tabernacles, is about to “fully come.” The Christ is among us in a fresh manifestation of His presence, there is a new message going forth, a declaration concerning the next step and phase of the kingdom of God, there is a unique dealing of God, and a manifestation of ministry. The greater glory to come, the manifest sons of God upon the heavenly mount Zion, the City foursquare coming down from God out of heaven, the tabernacle of God among men, the new order for the new age, will be birthed *suddenly* and *sovereignly* from the womb of the Virgin Church, and it will be the work of GOD HIMSELF when the fullness of time has arrived.

Let no man deceive you! Manifest sonship is not yet a reality in the earth! The revelation of it has come, the hope has been conceived in our hearts, the preparations are in progress. But most of those who currently proclaim sonship are still walking in the old order of Pentecost with their church meetings, praise service, preaching, gifts of the Spirit, etc. Others who have been separated by the Lord even from this are alone with the Lord *waiting*...but they have not been *birthed* into the new order, either. A new *revelation* has come to God's called and chosen saints, but not a new *order*. Nor even a new *state of being*. You may not agree with me, my brother, my sister, but nevertheless I tell you the truth. The Lord of glory will *suddenly appear* in His greater temple in the manifestation of incorruptible life and nature, and immortal power and glory — with no carnal efforts or soulish works to produce it. In the fullness of time God will send forth His *sons* and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed before the face of all nations, tongues, tribes, and peoples — by a sudden, powerful, divine, incorruptible, sovereign move of God!

**THIS IS THE BIRTH OF THE MANCHILD!**

# *Chapter 138*

## *The Woman And The Manchild*

### *continued*

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. 12:5).

As we read these words of truth, surely we must realize that the woman never handles this manchild. She doesn't wash him, wrap him in swaddling clothes, or lay him in a manger. She doesn't breast-feed him, train him, teach him, nurture him, protect him, raise him, or contribute anything further to his life. She doesn't instruct him in her understanding of truth, nor does she train him in her order of ministry. In fact, the manchild doesn't even know his mother, for as soon as he is born, immediately he is caught up unto God, and to His throne! He goes to the Father Himself! His testimony is, "I speak only what I hear of my Father; I do only those things which I see my Father do." He is of the woman, not separate from the woman, but his destiny is altogether different from that of the woman. He comes from the virgin church, but the church can't handle him! He has something to offer the woman, but the woman has nothing more to add to him.

No matter what we encounter in life — work, science, medicine, economics — everyone deals with these things at some level. For example, economics — you have to pay your bills. You have to earn money. That's economics. Big corporations and the government do it on a much higher level, but you do it on a daily level. You don't use complex economic formulas to figure out your economic structures, because you don't work with that level of the knowledge. What about science? You know enough about science to know that if you take a plug and stick it into the receptacle in the wall, there will be electricity there; but you don't necessarily know all the science that was necessary to bring that current there. Why? Because you're not working with that science at a high level, you are dealing with that science at its lowest level of daily application — you just plug it in! But someone else works that science at a higher level and creates the systems that generate the electricity and bring it to the plug-in.

What about medicine? Have you ever taken an aspirin? You take an aspirin based upon a certain level of medical knowledge. You know that if you take that medicine — according to what you've been told by a higher authority — it will relieve your headache. And you know enough about medicine to do that. You wouldn't go and purchase many drugs that are on the market without gaining a higher knowledge of them, nor would you try to perform surgery on someone. So you see — you can work with knowledge at many levels. The church world today is working with the knowledge of God at the "plug" level and the "aspirin" level! They know enough to take the plug and plug it into the receptacle on the wall and get a little bit of power. They know enough to take the word of God and relieve some of the pains of daily living. But God is raising up a people that is not content to work at the plug level or the aspirin level — they are motivated by the Holy Spirit to work

with the knowledge of God at higher levels, even at the governmental level and at the creative level!

God is calling a people to know and experience Him in higher dimensions, to enter into the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and into the heights of divine wisdom, knowledge, and power. This is what it means for the manchild to be “caught up unto God, and to His throne.” It means to access, identify with, and act out of that sphere of the FULLNESS OF HIS OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPOTENCE! The exaltation and enthronement of the sons of God is a holy and awesome thing! My soul trembles at the very thought that the Father would place the power over His kingdom in all realms of heaven above and earth beneath, over creation, over the powers and principles of sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, death, and hell, into the hands of once earth-bound men, yet the Spirit lifts my spirit into the heavenlies in Christ Jesus where He sits at the right hand of God, and a still small voice whispers, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21).

Jesus was the first son to be made in the likeness of God, to be perfected in the image of God, then to ascend, to be lifted up and exalted to sit on the throne of God, and given dominion, as a man, over all the works of His hands. It was not God who was so exalted; it was the man Christ Jesus! God has highly exalted Him, placed Him at His own right hand, and put all things under His feet. He has been given the dominion God made man to have! In Him, through Him, and by Him we shall all ascend until we are also seated on the throne and receive the dominion God’s “man” has been created for. Jesus has led the way! On that blessed resurrection morning Jesus was transformed from mortal to immortal, from physical to spiritual, and it was done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Is it too incredible to believe that the very Spirit of God who has quickened and transformed us in our souls will also, at His appointed time, change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His body of glory? And now He has ascended, He is seated on the throne of God: and because He is there, it is our blessed assurance that we also will be there, for did He not pray, “Father, I would that they be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory...and the glory Thou hast given me I have given unto them, that they may be one in us.”

Paul went out and conquered Asia without the aid of one modern convenience or technology. What did he have? What do we have that we think is better than what he had — and we can’t do half the job he did! We have satellite television, we have Christianity being beamed into the homes of America twenty-four hours a day — and this country is as godless, immoral, and wicked as any on the face of the earth. Oh, it’s not blatantly godless, it’s subliminally godless. It’s worse — it’s hypocrisy! Because a country as blessed and favored as we are shouldn’t have any wickedness in it at all. And yet it is filled with wickedness. It is filled with murder, incest, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, drug abuse, divorce, domestic violence, dysfunctional homes, child neglect, child molestation, rape, assault, robbery, pride, arrogance, bigotry, deceitfulness, cheating, lying, filthy language, and godlessness of every sort. Tell me it isn’t so — even among believers and preachers! And much of it doesn’t offend us! It doesn’t offend us because we’re all lost. We’re lost in our own little world where we’re not stirred by what is really happening around us. Kids are being run down on the streets, shot and stabbed on the streets, kids are carrying guns and blowing one another away, young girls are picked up in one place and left stabbed to death in another. And yet, the whole world is like this, and always has been! And we sit here wondering, “What can we do?” Let me assure you, precious friend of mine, the answer is not with laws, politics, law enforcement, or the

government. The government, law enforcement, and the judicial system are often more godless, corrupt, and immoral than the people! What is the answer? The power of God! The power of God unto salvation! The power of God unto salvation is God's Christ! God Himself is the answer. God Himself in and through a people! The answer lies in a people laying hold upon the kingdom of God and the dominion that was purposed for man! And so the creation groans and travails together in pain until now, and we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God!

Sonship is the hope of creation! Rather than getting all involved in superficial, carnal, worldly methods of trying to solve the world's problems, let us cry out mightily to God to work His mighty work in us! Now since such awesome responsibility and power are in store for the sons of God, can any man longer question why our all-wise heavenly Father should take such pains to bring His sons to perfection? None knows better than He exactly what is needed to transform His sons from corrupt and carnal creatures of the dust to beings of divine understanding and heavenly glory and dominion. I have often said that I have strong confidence in the ability of my heavenly Father to bring me to perfection and maturity as a son of God. My Father is a great son-raiser. He was a phenomenal success with His firstborn! Anyone who can raise a son like Jesus knows exactly what he is doing and can surely handle you and me, my precious brother and sister. "...we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings...wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Heb. 2:9-10; Phil. 2:9-10).

Beholding the glory of Jesus Christ we can understand why the Lord takes such infinite care to bring all His sons to perfection. Would you dare to imagine that any of the presidents, prime ministers, senators, or parliamentarians of this present world system would be found fit candidates to straighten out the mess this world is in, bringing an end to crime, poverty, ignorance, immorality, fear, deceit, greed, war, broken homes and hearts, sickness, pain, and death, restoring all into the purity and love of God again? Ah — the ages to come will be given into the hands of God's choicest sons — saints fully developed, perfected through suffering, matured through trial, proven through testing, transformed in mind, heart, and nature, far beyond the reach of corruption and decay, far above the realm of greed and selfishness, or any such thing.

The manchild is caught up unto God, and to His throne. God is not a limited physical being that can sit on a tangible throne in one restricted locality out beyond the blue. God is spirit and God is everywhere and thus His throne is a spiritual throne and is everywhere! The one great truth that all theologians agree on is that God is omnipresent spirit who not only created, but upholds and fills the whole universe and all things! You cannot put a God who is that great and everywhere present and bottle Him up on a physical throne in one confined spot. Oh, no! He is everywhere and His throne is everywhere. The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent spirit is not a material one but bespeaks the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AND UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ, the firstborn son of God, has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The throne of God is a sphere of power and authority, a position of eminence, a condition and state of being. The reign of God's Christ is the assumption of

the almighty power and universal dominion of the Father. It is the dispensing of HIS POSITIVE ENERGY FORCE into His creation in specific ways.

If heaven were a “place” out beyond the galaxies somewhere, can you imagine how long it would take for God to hear a prayer, how long it would take to get to heaven were we to travel there, how long it would have taken Jesus to get from heaven to earth when He descended to dwell among us? Why, bless your heart, after two thousand years Jesus would still be on His way up to the throne even if He traveled at the speed of light! And He would need billions of more years to get there! The angel Gabriel was dispatched from heaven while Daniel was praying and was able to reach the prophet Daniel while he was yet in his prayer (Dan. 9:20-23). Real distance is measured not in miles or light years, but rather in time required to reach a destination. Heaven, therefore, is not far away!

Furthermore, Christ is now seated on the right hand of God — He is seated there on that right hand right there where you are, yea, even in the deepest depth of your being, so that the throne of God is nearer to you than the air that you breathe! Christ is seated at the right hand of power, that is, in the position where God acts, does, works, and creates, so that all God does He does in and by and through the Son of God. And He does it right there where you are! Can we not see by this how simple yet profound is the knowledge that we have been raised up and made to sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus! The spiritual dimension of God’s abilities in Christ are being awakened and quickened within us, our Spirit joined to His Spirit, so that we sit in that spiritual dimension by spiritual consciousness, and we haven’t moved one inch to get there! Somehow I understand that today and it makes the reality clear to my own dull human way of thinking.

There is no need to go anywhere physically to relate to God’s throne. The journey is a spiritual one! The throne is all around you, within you, and present equally everywhere within the realm of Spirit in which God exists and dwells. You can either experience or ascend that throne within yourself through union with Christ and the release of His power. “All authority in heaven and in earth is given unto me,” Jesus said. The ascension of Jesus was the supreme event of world history. He ascended not to a place, but disappeared into the spirit realm that is all about us and was caught up into an office in and by the Spirit. He departed from the arena of humiliation and limitation to enter into His glory. He, in one instant, vaulted from the status of despised Galilean teacher to the cosmic King of the universe, rising over the heads of Pilate, Herod, and Caesar Augustus. The ascension catapulted Jesus to the right hand of God where He was enthroned as King of kings and Lord of lords. The implication of this event for every son of God and for the world is staggering. He has invited us to share that throne! He has beckoned all who have received the call to sonship to ascend in Him to that place in the Spirit where all authority and power are accessed. That is the destiny of every manifest son of God! That authority is present everywhere by His Spirit! But it must become appropriated, embodied, and expressed through a people who attain to the FULLNESS OF CHRIST!

The Greek word *thronos* means “the place and seat of authority” and refers to all executive authority that is committed into the hands of God’s Christ, Head and body. Understand that the throne is here now; here is infinity; here is eternity; here is omnipotence, waiting for you to enter into your heritage in God! Again and again in the Psalms and in the Prophets David and others make this beautiful and significant assertion: “The Lord reigneth...” The Lord reigneth over the heathen, the Lord reigneth over the nations, the Lord reigneth in Zion, the Lord reigneth in the midst of His people! It is always present tense. The Lord reigns now! That doesn’t mean that He has purposed to deal with

everything and everybody now, but He has assumed the dominion of the world and all things, and all is safe in His care and all will experience His sovereign purpose in His timing and according to His program and will. And His program and will is just this — HE WILL DEAL WITH EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY THROUGH HIS MANY SONS BROUGHT TO GLORY! How can we know this? Because the whole creation is groaning and in a kind of universal travail waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! That is the mystery.

The Hebrew word translated “reigneth” is *malak* and means to reign, that is, to ascend the throne, to induct into royalty. Thus, when we are called to share His throne, we are called to ascend the throne and be inducted into the royal power of that throne! Therefore, as the elect hear His voice and hasten to His call, we are ascending to the very throne of Christ in a greater relationship with Him and in Him. We are being inducted into the royalty of the throne of Christ — into His reigning realm! Through the experiences we encounter in this earthly life, with all their testings, trials, and provings, we are becoming overcomers and thereby learning to reign over all things by His royal mind, will, and life!

What does it mean when the manchild is “caught up unto God, and to His throne”? The fact that a people is raised up to His throne signifies an expanded manifestation and administration of His dominion. God is ready to deal in a brand new way with things not dealt with before! It indicates an increase in spiritual activity in the earth. It indicates a time of the greater dominion of the Lord as King in the earth. He calls the manchild up to the throne to reveal the great truth that He will now rule in and through him in a greater way, that the sons of God may now bring His salvation to all, correct all that is wrong, break every fetter, loose every prisoner, set creation free, and then reign over the New Day He is birthing in the earth!

Oh, how blessed the prospect! Truly we have come to that time! May the Holy Spirit reveal to all His elect the power and authority of His kingdom that is now to be revealed through the sons of God! May all God’s called ones understand that God now determines to change things in the earth! As we hear His call to come up into the throne zone, we know that He is coming to reign in our lives to redeem us fully and completely in spirit, soul, and body. And He shall reign in us until His throne is fully established in us, and then we shall subdue all things unto Him until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea! Hallelujah!

Jesus has promised us to sit down with Him in His throne. Not another little throne beside His throne! Just as there are saints who are stones in the wall of the heavenly temple, or pillars in the temple, so there are those who become a throne people. As we ascend in spirit to that heavenly realm of throneship we then realize this is where we really belong. The yearning deep within our hearts by the Holy Spirit, to bless the world, right the wrongs, heal the wounds, assuage the suffering, abolish evil, and set creation free from its long night of bondage to sin, sorrow, limitation, and death, is the divine indication that we are destined for throneship. Others are praying for revival, or hoping to get whisked away to a mansion in the sky. But not the sons! Everything in the realm of the Spirit makes us feel at home with God and His Christ. As we consciously ascend higher and higher into the realm of the Spirit we see that One who is all glorious, arrayed in the Light that no Adamic man can approach unto, surrounded by a vast multitude of others who are arrayed as He is, and seated there upon the throne of the heavens. Truly it is a glorious scene of heavenly illumination and splendor to those who have been blessed of their Father to see as He sees!

## SHEPHERDING THE NATIONS

“And she brought forth a man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5).

In a mystery novel the author leaves clues for the careful observer. These clues allow a pattern to emerge, and the reader begins to catch on to the meaning of what has happened in the story and often can predict the outcome. In a somewhat similar way, God announced certain clues which were to be indicators of the arrival of Jesus, the Promised One. Some indicated the place where these events would occur, others the kinds of persons to be involved, and still other clues told of persons who must appear prior to the coming of the promised Messiah. The Gospels reveal how all these clues identified Jesus as that One who was to come!

In like manner the Lord has given us clues as to the identity of the manchild! Not least among these clues is the fact that this manchild ascends up to sit upon the throne of the Lord. Now we know that Jesus Christ sits upon the throne. Yet — Jesus is the Head of the body of Christ, of which we are members in particular. Would you not agree that where the Head is, there the body must be also? Is not this exactly the first clue given us in the Revelation concerning the identity of the manchild? “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). Of whom does the Lord Jesus speak when He says, “He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:26-27). Ah, the overcomer out of the church realm “rules all nations with a rod of iron,” and so does the manchild! The overcomer sits with Christ upon His throne, and so does the manchild! These “clues” provide the evidence that those out of the church age who are called “overcomers” are indeed the manchild!

The prophet Daniel has provided us with another clue concerning the identity of this manchild who is caught up to the throne of God. “And I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE (OUT OF) THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him. Hitherto is the end of the matter...” (Dan. 7:13-14, 21-22, 27-28). Pay close attention to the wording of the latter part of the above passage and you will see that it is a people out of a people that is given the kingdom and the dominion. It is not given to all saints, but to “the people of the saints,” that is, a company out of the saints of the most High. **TRULY THIS IS THE MANCHILD BIRTHED OUT OF THE WOMAN!** The clues are there if you can read them!

The entire scene of the book of Revelation through chapter twelve concerns the work of God within His elect. It is all an internal work designed ultimately to consummate with the birth of the manchild. This manchild is caught up unto God, and to His throne, and rules all

nations with a rod of iron! Every word of God is freighted with significance. I would draw your attention to the term “all nations.” From this point forward the work of God is no longer restricted to His internal deliverance and transformation of His elect, but now the earth and the nations without begin to be dealt with by the sons. God first reigns in us that He may in turn reign through us! Many brethren try to make every scripture in the Bible apply only to God’s internal work within us. That is a grievous error! The ministry of the sons of God is to subdue and restore all things and deliver the whole of creation from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God!

These “nations” are not limited to the nations of unregenerate people represented at the United Nation Organization in New York City, for the book of Revelation is a spiritual book of symbols, employing code-words which signify spiritual and symbolical entities. These also include “nations” of bodies of religiosity, vast systems and organizations of millions of souls ruled over by the religious mind-set of the great red dragon. John is beholding a great spiritual event unfold before him. These “nations” are also within each of us! Whatever power religious or worldly ideas, concepts, doctrines, or traditions still hold in our lives is the individualization of the nations of religiosity and worldliness!

Long millenniums ago the anointed Psalmist penned these prophetic words: “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion...ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt BREAK them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Ps. 2:6-9). This particular verse is quoted three times in the New Testament, and all three are in the book of Revelation! Of the overcomer it says, “And he shall RULE them (the nations) with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father” (Rev. 2:27). And of the manchild it is written, “And she brought forth a man child, who was to RULE all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5). Then, finally, “And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 19:15).

Dispensational premillennialists understand this to mean that in the future world power kingdom of Jewish supremacy after the “second coming” of Jesus, He, (that is, Jesus) will personally and physically rule over the Gentile nations for one thousand literal years from an earthly and international throne in His world capitol in Jerusalem, Israel. It is contended that at the end of the millennium these very nations, many of whom will have rendered but feigned obedience, will rise up under the inspired leadership of Satan in the greatest rebellion of all human history. The dispensationalist says, This rod of iron rule by Christ is necessary to prove that fallen man placed under the most favorable external circumstances is still a rebel at heart, and is so incorrigible that nothing but a rod of iron can keep him in line.

Words are helpless, hopeless, and inadequate when we are drawn to explain the deep truths of God in the Spirit. What is this “breaking” of the nations by the “rod of iron rule” of the sons of God? The word “break” in Psalm 2:9 is translated by the word “rule.” Christ and the disciples used the Septuagint translation as their common text; hence, the word is translated “rule” in all three Revelation passages quoted above. This particular word in the Greek is found eleven times in the New Testament. Seven of the eleven times it is translated by the word “feed.” In Matthew 2:6 where the King James Bible uses the term “shall rule,” a number of modern translations render it, “...shall be SHEPHERD OF.” That leaves only the three “rod of iron” passages in the book of Revelation where this Greek word (poimaino) is translated “rule.”

One would ask the question, Why not translate this Greek word “feed” in these three Revelation passages, since that is its meaning and it is so translated elsewhere in the New Testament? The answer is that it would not make sense to translate it “feed them with a rod of iron,” so the translators reached the conclusion that the word “rule” would serve the purpose. Thayer’s Lexicon gives the meaning of this particular Greek word “to feed, to tend a flock, to keep sheep.” W. E. Vine, a militant dispensationalist in his volume Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, gives the meaning of this word: “to act as a shepherd, tend flock.” Jamison, Fausset and Brown Commentary, a dispensationalist commentary, translates the three passages in the Revelation thus: “to rule as a shepherd” (Rev. 2:27); and in both Revelation 12:5 and 19:15, “tend as a Shepherd.” Hence, the true meaning of the word “break” in Psalm 2:9 in the light of the three New Testament passages is “TO ACT THE PART OF A SHEPHERD.”

“He shall SHEPHERD the nations” — what a wonderful and sublime thought!

The following words by brother Paul Mueller clearly express this same beautiful truth. “What does it mean to rule and reign with Christ? The Greek word *poimaino* is translated ‘rule’ in some New Testament passages, and means ‘to tend as a shepherd.’ This agrees with the prophecy of Isaiah, ‘See! The Lord is coming with might, His own arm having won Him the kingdom; See! His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. Like a shepherd He tends His flock, with His arm He gathers them; the lambs He carries in His bosom, and gently leads those who give suck’ (Isa. 40:10-11, Smith-Goodspeed). ‘Like a shepherd He tends His flock,’ this is the manner of the Lord’s dealings with mankind. He cares for each one, observing them and supplying their individual needs. He gathers them with His arm so that not one is lost (Mat. 18:12). Some He carries and still others He leads, but all will be gathered into His kingdom, for ‘the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein’ (Ps. 24:1); and He is a faithful Shepherd!

“What does it mean to rule and to reign in the kingdom? All who are called to this high calling will shepherd the people into the kingdom of God! Each one of them will be like a hiding-place from the wind, and a shelter from the storm. They will cover and protect their subjects, sheltering them until they are firmly rooted in the life of the kingdom. They are like streams of water in a dry place, and like the shade of a great rock in a wearisome land. Their new Life, which is the very Life of Christ, flows from them like streams of water in the desert. They are that mighty Rock which has smitten the image of the nations, causing them all to fall (Dan 2:34), but which now gives forth shelter and protection. They are entrusted with the ring of kingdom authority, the best robe of kingdom righteousness and life, and the royal scepter of the kingdom of God. Indeed, when one rules over men as a righteous one, when one rules in the fear of God, then it is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning cloudless and clear, after rain upon the tender grass” — end quote. This is the nature of the rule of the manchild, the manifest sons of God! No beating the people over the head with our rod of iron, no compulsion, no coercion, no threats, no intimidation, no bullying! Our rod of iron is a shepherd’s staff, but it is strong in the Lord and in the power of His might! It is the strength of divine love and divine purpose. What blessed hope for the nations!

Vermont television produced a popular video a number of years ago. It was about an ordinary farmer named Fred Tuttle who went to Washington, D.C., to spread a little wisdom around the capital just as he’d been spreading a little manure over his fields for fifty years. The fictional story was so popular that in the next election, the actor who played Fred received write-in votes for Senator! There’s something attractive about

ordinary people bringing wisdom to the great places of the world. But can that happen? It depends on the nature of the wisdom! The sons of God embody the wisdom of God. In shepherding the nations the wisdom of God in His sons will be communicated and imparted to all mankind, to every people, tongue, tribe, and nation!

The nature and power of this “shepherd’s rod” is uniquely revealed in the experience of Moses at the burning bush. Moses was hesitant and anxious about going to Egypt to lead the people of Israel out of bondage. As he communed with the Lord there, the Lord said unto him, “What is that in thine hand?” And Moses said, “A rod.” Then the Lord commanded, “Cast it on the ground.” And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from before it. It is my conviction that the rod or shepherd’s crook, which Moses had with him, for he was tending sheep at the back side of the desert, was selected by the Lord as an emblem of His word, by which miracles and mighty wonders were to be wrought. The history of this rod in connection with the ten plagues, the dividing of the Red Sea, the coming together again of the waters, and the smiting of the rock in the wilderness, is familiar to all. From this time on in the history of the Hebrew people, the rod was a type of the word of God; it was in allusion to this that David said, “Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.” While the rod was in the hand of Moses, it was a lifeless stick; but, when, in obedience to God he cast it on the ground, it became a living thing. In like manner, the revelation of God as mere head knowledge or doctrine, held in the grasp of human reasoning, is lifeless; but when under a divine commission we cast it forth upon the earth of human hearts, it becomes a living truth, “quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Interesting, too, that Moses’ rod became a serpent when it was cast upon the earth. When Moses came before Pharaoh his serpent-rod ate up all the serpent-rods of the magicians of Egypt! In all ancient religions, and in the Bible as well, the serpent is a symbol of wisdom. Moses’ serpent-rod speaks to us of the wisdom of God, yea, of the mighty authority in the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God always consumes the wisdom of this world! By the power of that truth the “rod of iron” rule of the sons of God will smite the nations! Isn’t it wonderful!

In 1775 the United States Marine Corps was founded and their recruiting slogan stated that they “were looking for a few good men.” Approximately 1898 B.C. God called out a man named Abram, and later He also called his sons, Isaac, and grandson Jacob, saying essentially the same thing, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Ever since then GOD HAS BEEN CALLING OUT A FEW GOOD MEN! The manchild represents God’s ultimate company of a “few good men.” This band of God’s sons is the body of our precious Saviour. Therefore, they are one and all “saviours” just as is their glorious Head! “And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau (flesh); and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s” (Ob. 21). Hallelujah!

It is our heavenly Father who selects the “few good men” of that elect company. “You have not chosen me, I have chosen you, and ordained you. ”I didn’t pick my father. I didn’t pick my mother. I didn’t pick my country. I didn’t pick my community where I was raised. I didn’t pick my classmates. I didn’t pick my teacher. I didn’t even choose my wife! God gave her to me. I noticed her. I loved her. I asked her to marry me. But the whole arrangement was supernaturally orchestrated and was the ordering of the Lord! You say, “Why would God choose me?” God’s word to you today is the same word that it is to me, “I’ve chosen

you. I picked you.” It is not an accident that the word of the kingdom came to you! It’s not an accident that God brought precious brethren across your path! It’s not even an accident that you are reading this very message! There is a destiny. There came a time when God looked down on this spinning planet with its sea of sin, crime, corruption, hate, sickness, sorrow, and death and He said, “Enough is enough! I shall redeem the world! I will raise up a light for all mankind! I will reveal my love! I will deliver creation and set it free! To do this I will choose a ‘few good men’ to rule as saviours from the heavenly mount Zion, to shepherd the nations into the kingdom of God!”

Robert Schuler told the story of the Chinese Emperor. He was a very insecure man. Insecure people will almost always develop a superiority complex, or become very narcissistic. In this case, he did both. He had a meditation gazebo in the garden. He hung a mirror. Every day he would rise in the morning, go to the gazebo, look in the mirror, primp and admire himself, and tell himself how handsome he was. He said, I don’t want anybody to disturb me with bad news.” Unscrupulous, duplicitous colleagues took advantage of the weak ruler and robbed the treasury. They stopped giving the food to the poor and they plundered the country. One loyal subject felt this could not go on. One night, the loyal subject took the mirror out of the frame and replaced it with clear glass. The next morning the Emperor got up and went through his usual narcissistic ritual. He approached the mirror to primp and admire himself. This time, however, when he looked out, instead of seeing himself, he saw the people in the streets — huddled masses, hungry, famine-starved. He was distraught. He called his colleague and said, “What is happening to my people?” The colleague told him. The Emperor righted the matter and became a saviour to his people.

I do not hesitate to tell you that there are no armchair sons standing upon mount Zion! There are no Country Club elite sons of God! There are no playboy sons! There are no honorary sons! There are no theoretical, self-styled sons! We have not been called to glory in our selection as members of the manchild company, to exult in how great and beautiful and select and special we are! We have not been chosen to flit about polishing our halos and adjusting our crowns; we are called and chosen and ordained to be saviours unto all mankind! Sonship is compassion. Sonship is sacrifice. Sonship is blessing. Sonship is love, divine love. Sonship is reconciliation. Sonship is healing. Sonship is restoration. Sonship is tenderness, sympathy, concern, and the power of HIS LIFE to change things!

Have you seen the cartoon? As I recall it, two citizens of the heavenly kingdom are standing atop a cloud, harps slung over their shoulders, newly won “angel wings” hanging at the ready. But the two seem bored. As they peer off into the limitless beyond that stretches before them, one complains to the other, “I wish I had brought a magazine!” Really bad theology in a lot of ways, but peeking through the silliness of that cartoon is a popular notion that deserves to be dispelled: the notion that “heaven” or the “kingdom of God” will be a state of perpetual indolence. Of this we may be sure: We who are called and chosen have entered a progressive institution, a kingdom in which stagnation will never enter! We will ever go on “from glory to glory,” for, “of the increase of His government...THERE SHALL BE NO END!” We will never come to the place where we can sit down with folded hands and say, “This is the end; our job is over.” The end of one creation, of one order, of one plan of the ages, will only bring us to the next! We who have been born into the heavenly realm, have entered a stage of action, we have become active agents in the greatest development program ever conceived. A whole universe awaits our touch and guiding hand! “He that overcometh shall INHERIT ALL THINGS; and

I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev. 21:7). Sonship does not only entitle one to residence in God’s limitless and eternal domain, but to the ownership and rule of that domain! Ah, the sons of God are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ their Lord, who is the heir of all things! Oh, that it were possible to lift men up above the shadows and give them just a glimpse of something higher! Mortal minds are so entirely inadequate; human eyes so dim; human ears so dull! Sonship includes kingship and priesthood over God’s eternal and infinite domain. It is dominion and power and influence far above that which carnal minds can contemplate or even imagine.

God is preparing a new order and it won’t be any order that we have been through. It won’t be the order of Passover and it won’t be the order of Pentecost. It won’t be the order of the outer court and it won’t be the order of the holy place. Many years ago, at the middle of the twentieth century, the Lord came to us as the rain, as the Latter Rain upon the earth. It was a glorious outpouring of Himself! The ascended Christ came to us in power and gave gifts unto men, gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Spiritual gifts were imparted to the saints by prophecy with the laying on of hands. Men were filled with the Holy Ghost through the word of faith and the laying on of hands. The secrets of men’s hearts were revealed and great glory overshadowed the people of God. Signs, wonders, and miracles that defy description were a constant reality of our lives. Prophetic ministry and revelation truth flowed and thundered like a mighty Niagara as the Spirit of the Lord unfolded the deep, marvelous truths of the kingdom of God, sonship, reconciliation of all to God, and many other precious quickenings of the divine will, plan, and purpose. What glorious days those were! They brought us to where we are, to this great day of the Lord!

I do not hesitate to tell you that God is preparing a new order and it won’t be the order we have known and cherished. It won’t be any order we have ever heard of, witnessed, or experienced. Oh, no! It won’t be the New Testament order of the Former Rain, nor will it be the new order of the Latter Rain. There is coming a manifestation of God that will be both sovereign and spontaneous. This will be the order of the MANCHILD! It will be the expression, power, and glory of the kingdom of God through many sons brought to glory. It will not be a church oriented ministry. It will not be centered in meetings, gatherings, seminars, conferences, crusades, miracle revivals, or the promotion of personalities. There will be no need to rent halls or build buildings, no need to announce services, advertise meetings, or organize any kind of activities. The manifestation of God through His sons will be both spontaneous and personal and will manifest itself in every place, at all times, in every circumstance and condition. This ministry will flow forth in the highways and byways, in the restaurants, in the business establishments, on the streets, on trains and buses, high in the sky on airplanes, in the schools, in the fields, in the homes, in the churches — in every place, at any time, without plans, appointments, permission, permits, or announcements. Wherever a son of God is led by the Spirit, there will be the expression of the fullness of the wisdom, glory, and power of the mighty God! The authority of God will take control of every situation and the word of God will be irresistible!

In the former revival there were great gatherings of many thousands of people who came to witness the miracles of God. In other countries large stadiums were rented and were filled with 50,000, 100,000, even 200,000 souls who responded to the advertising and the news of miraculous things taking place. But these meetings were all planned, advertised, promoted, organized, and structured. A date was set. The crusade started on a particular day in a prepared place and at a certain hour, and ended at an appointed time. All that God was doing was confined to the manipulation of man and man’s system of doing

things. The date passed, the man of God left; the church, the auditorium, or the stadium became empty and silent again — it was all over!

Today I tell you by the word of the Lord that the thing God is after in the manifestation of sons is to raise up in the midst of the earth a sonship ministry that is not subject to clocks, calendars, campaign managers, finance committees, organization, tents, trucks, musicians, sound equipment, plans or promotions of any kind. God is teaching us the ways of His kingdom and is preparing our hearts for true sonship ministry. Ah, my beloved, you can forget meetings as we have known them! The order of the kingdom of God is not an order of meetings but an order of life, glory, and power! Jesus is the prototype of this order of sonship. The firstborn Son of God did indeed have meetings. He had meetings by the seaside. He had meetings in the desert places. He had meetings in the mountains. He had meetings in the temple. Jesus had meetings everywhere! But have you ever considered that every one of His meetings were held impromptu — they were never announced to begin at ten o'clock on Sunday morning. And don't you know that Peter didn't strut across the rostrum and open the meeting with three peppy choruses! And don't you know that after the three choruses John didn't stand up and prophesy! And don't you know that Judas didn't explain the "needs" of the ministry and take the offering! And don't you know that Jesus didn't preach for forty-five minutes and then begin to work his "gift" and minister to the sick, sorrowful, and needy! And don't you know that at twelve o'clock James didn't rise and pray the benediction!

With Jesus, when the meeting broke up, He just walked on down the street and the meeting followed Him! He entered into a home and a meeting started. He stepped into the courts of the temple and a meeting was generated. That's kingdom meetings! And that is the spontaneous, unstructured, sovereign, divine order of the kingdom of God! When that order breaks upon us, dear ones, we will forever abandon every previous order and any order we are presently walking in. My pen will be laid down! The lesser will be swallowed up into the greater! Don't worry about meetings passing away. There will be meetings and greater meetings than the world has ever witnessed! As the sons of God march forth and spread out over the length and breadth of the earth, clothed with the splendor and omnipotence of the King of glory, the whole world will become one gigantic crusade until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ! It is indeed wonderful!

As the firstborn Son ministered, so will His many brethren. Only this manifestation of sonship will be even greater, marked by the "greater works" Jesus promised, because of the power of His resurrection. Walking down the street, entering a home, flying on a plane, sitting in a restaurant, walking into a store, a factory, a church, a school, or passing undetected into the chambers of congress, the office of a president, prime minister, government official, or a business tycoon — any place at any time, unannounced — the mighty works of God will be manifest! The secrets of men's hearts will be revealed. When the glorified sons of God appear even to one individual, be that individual a bag lady, street drunk, store clerk, drug lord, college professor, corporate CEO, or the president or prime minister of a nation, as the word is spoken to men — individually or collectively — the power of God will come upon the people with irresistible glory. In the presence of Him whose countenance is as the sun, a shudder will pass through their body, they will tremble uncontrollably, become instantly and completely broken in the light of His glory, they will weep and cry out to God in repentance and thanksgiving. They will be quickened, cleansed, and changed by the power of God, and the veil will be removed from off their mind and heart. There will be no need for a worship service, no need for a sermon or any

platform ministry, no necessity to “bring them to a decision,” for the power of God shall illuminate them, “down loading” as it were, a new mind, a new heart, a new nature into the very fabric and core of their being.

I am thoroughly convinced in my spirit, and I believe I have the Spirit of God, that just as God saved Saul of Tarsus in a moment of time, by the sovereign revelation of the Lord, so shall He reveal Himself to all men causing them to be born again! Their eyes will be opened to the glories of His kingdom just as they were once open in lovely Eden. Jesus came to bring life to the world! This is the life that will flow through the sons of God! Oh, think what it means! God gave this life for the redeeming of Adam’s race and man’s transformation into the image and glory of God. Creation is waiting, waiting, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! The old order methods of the church systems can never deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption, never, I say, in a million years! After two thousand years of church ministry more people are dying without the living reality of Christ than ever in the history of the world! There must be a change, a drastic change, a radical change, a new ministry, a greater glory, something unprecedented and transcendental — the power of the kingdom of God!

Mighty signs and wonders will be wrought, sick healed, quadriplegics walk, limbs grow out, blind see, deaf hear, dead raised — even the dead in their caskets who have been embalmed at the mortuary will arise and walk and be seen by the multitudes. Lives will be spontaneously, sovereignly, and irreversibly transformed. The kingdom of God will come to mankind in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost through manifest sons upon whom rests the seven-fold fullness of the Spirit of the Lord! I tell you today that God is speaking to me about these things, He is dealing with me about this sonship ministry. It is not the church age ministry. It is not even the ministry Jesus brought in Galilee two thousand years ago. It is the ministry of many sons brought to glory IN THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION! Oh, yes! It is greater than all!

There are no precedents for the thing God is doing in this day. It is God’s new thing, God’s new day of His kingdom smiting the image of human government and filling the whole earth. It is the MANCHILD upon the throne! All the “isms” will be smashed and demolished by the overflow of God’s invincible, omnipotent word, wisdom, and power. The imams of Islam will not be able to gainsay or stand before the might of God’s glory in the sons of God. Islam will be absolutely destroyed, not by a war on terror, but by the redeeming power of the Lord. Catholicism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodoxy will all crumble and collapse before the surpassing glory of God. Communism will be shattered to pieces and cast upon the ash heap of history. Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shinto, New Age philosophies, secret lodges, false religious systems of every sort; humanistic educational systems, human governments, and godless institutions of every brand will disappear like the setting sun before the overpowering majesty of God in His sons. Oh, the wonder of it!

The sons of God will not minister out of talent, natural ability, personality, charisma, nor out of theological training or organizational skills, but out of the power of resurrection life. This sonship ministry will begin in the Spirit and it will end in the Spirit. It will not parade across a stage with theatrics and showmanship. Flesh can have no part in this Day! I say to you by the word of the Lord — it’s coming, and it’s going to be powerful! There shall be a glorious showdown, this sonship ministry will show forth the glory of the living, exalted Christ in the face of every power on earth. The sons of God will actually accomplish more

for the kingdom of God in one year than the church systems have been able to do in all these hundreds of years of history. Hallelujah!

The manifestation of the sons of God will break suddenly and rapidly upon the scene. It will begin to happen everywhere at the same time, spontaneously and supernaturally. The glory of God will arise upon a people, an unknown people, an unheralded people, prepared in the isolation of solitude and in the crucible of the furnace of affliction. There won't be time for anybody to come along and educate people or explain what has happened, how it is happening, where it originated, or who is in charge. The spontaneity and power of it will blow men's minds away and defy everything we have ever learned or known about evangelism or ministry of any kind. The wisdom and power of God will pour forth like mighty torrents of living water, the righteous will have divine information from God, the omniscience and omnipotence of God will be revealed through His people, revelation knowledge will abound in the lives of the elect, and this Word will be spoken to all men great and small, without respect of persons, from the beggar on the street to kings, presidents, prime ministers, and men in all positions of authority, power, and responsibility will recognize that there is a God in heaven and that the sons of God have arisen in the earth!

Ah, my brother, my sister, do not sell creation short! Do not settle for less than God's best! All creation is standing on tiptoe, waiting and counting on you. If you love Israel; if you love the Chinese; if you love the Africans; if you love the Muslims; if you love all the nations and kindreds of the earth who know nothing of the Saviour; if you love the sad, the tormented, the impoverished, the deceived, the sick and the dying; if you love the multitudes held captive in the blindness and stupidity of religious systems; if you love the burdened brute creation; if you love the mountains, the trees, the rivers, and the oceans so mindlessly being destroyed under the hand of greed — you will joyfully welcome the hope of the manifestation of God in His sons; for it is the hope that shall bring to the groaning creation emancipation from this whole dreadful realm of darkness, bondage, and death. Aren't you glad!

**THIS IS THE MANCHILD UPON THE THRONE!**

# *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).