

# ***KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES***

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

*e-book*

*Echoes From Eden*

*Book Three*

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# Chapter 31

## THE SERPENT

“Now the *SERPENT* was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made... and the *SERPENT* said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die... and the Lord God said unto the *SERPENT*, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:1,4,14-15).

The subject on which I now write is one of both peculiar difficulty and solemnity. Of difficulty on more accounts than one, but more particularly in view of the false, and, indeed, heathenish ideas that have been bequeathed to us from times of spiritual darkness and superstition, and the acceptance of which can only be due to a lack on the part of the Lord’s people of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. To sweep away the dust, and cob-webs of mere tradition, or popular folly that have buried this truth, and given us a merely ridiculous parody on this subject will incur the misunderstanding and wrath of not a few sincere people.

The book of Genesis is probably the most important book ever written. The word “genesis” of course means “origin” or “beginning,” and the book of Genesis gives the only true and reliable account of the basic entities and conditions of the universe and of life. Genesis yields vital information concerning the *origin* of ALL THINGS – and therefore the *meaning* of ALL THINGS!

When God speaks of “the beginning” He is speaking of the originating point of the subject in question. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Away back yonder, before the dim and distant ages that are gone, our heavenly Father purposed and planned and commanded; and lo, the worlds came into being! Out of invisibility came forth the visible; where previously there had been but empty space, now matter appeared and took form: a kingdom was in the making. It all began in “the beginning.” All these things had their origin in Him, and they were His workmanship from the beginning of their creation. It is interesting to note that in the Hebrew text this word “beginning” is in the plural number – “beginnings.” There were many things begun all at the same time, as the manifold wisdom of God found expression in innumerable ways to bring forth into the realm of visibility the majestic purposes of God. There is neither time nor space to enumerate all that is included within the scope of the “beginnings” in Gen. 1:1, but surely it can be summed up in just two words: ALL THINGS. “For by Him were ALL THINGS created, that are in *heaven*, and that are in *earth*, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: ALL THINGS were created *by Him* and *for Him*: and He is before all things” (Col. 1:16-17).

The truth to which the Spirit of God would now draw our attention is this: When God speaks of “the beginning” He is speaking of the ORIGINATING POINT of the subject in question. It is written of Jesus when He had turned water into wine, “THIS BEGINNING of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him” (Jn. 2:11). This means, simply, that the miraculous aspect of the ministry of Jesus Christ had as its originating point this miracle of the water turned into wine. He had performed no miracles before this time, but from this day forth many more were to follow. This, so far as His miracles were

concerned, was “the beginning.” Thus we may clearly see that if something is manifested in a certain form “from the beginning” that means that from the time it was first formed, established, and came into being it has been in that condition.

Webster defines “beginning” as (1) a start (2) the *time or place of starting or coming into being*; origin; source. It should not be difficult for anyone who has a working knowledge of the English language to understand the meaning of “in the beginning” or “from the beginning.” The beginning of anything is simply THE TIME OR PLACE OF ITS STARTING OR COMING INTO BEING.

Yet, the whole teaching of the church system has perpetrated a crude notion which collides head-on with this plain and unmistakable truth of God’s Word! Despite the fact that “from the beginning” obviously means from the start, origin, or coming into being of a thing, men have taught a doctrine for long centuries which blatantly contradicts this simple statement of divine fact. I speak of that which is taught concerning Satan – the Devil.

Orthodoxy has long taught that Satan was, in the beginning, a high and beautiful archangel in heaven. The theologians and preachers recite over and over how Satan was originally “the anointed cherub that covereth... the most beautiful and wise of all God’s creation!” This being was, so they say, the ruler and leader of the angelic beings and apparently led them in their praise of God and shouts of joy... the greatest being God ever created, one who had unequalled strength, wisdom, beauty, privilege, and authority, and was the next form to God Himself. This blameless, perfect one, named Lucifer, was created without any form of evil and with the greatest intelligence of any created being. Then, we are told, (oh the wonder of it!) this Lucifer, suddenly realizing how beautiful and intelligent he was, became inflated with power and pride and his heart was lifted up in rebellion against God. According to the story, Lucifer gathered one-third of the heavenly angels to his cause, mustering an army with which he planned to knock God off His throne and supplant himself as king and god of the universe – and there was war in heaven! Luckily, God won, cast Lucifer out of heaven and he became, instead of an holy angel, the Devil that he is today.

It is nothing short of amazing that such a doctrine could have enjoyed such widespread acceptance in the light of the plain teachings of the scriptures on this subject. Any man who fails to discern between facts and fables, and who opposes or rebels against facts, is a fool. Fools manifest their true state by resisting and ignoring facts. Please remember, there is a world of difference between facts, beliefs, and fantasies. I believe the core of our natural earth is hot, perhaps molten. But no man knows anything about the true conditions down there. There is no possible way of ascertaining or demonstrating the truth or falsity of my belief. So it remains merely a belief: it may be true, or it may be false. On the other hand, if I thought our natural sun were made of red paint, that would be a fantasy, just a highly improbable or irrational idea of my own. But facts are altogether different. They are actualities, realities, whether they can be demonstrated as such or not. Ice is cold. That is a fact which can be demonstrated. The earth is round. That fact has through recent centuries been conclusively demonstrated. It is neither a belief or a fantasy. Fire burns; one must have air to breathe; these are facts, and, only fools will oppose or resist them. And now we are going to state some facts. Let us contrast what MEN say and believe with what GOD says!

MAN says that Satan IN THE BEGINNING was holy, but later fell from that estate. JESUS said of Satan, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a MURDERER (not an angel) *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). In these studies on the Garden of Eden we are searching out the BEGINNING, probing into the very mists of the past, the times before this age and past ages, that we might understand the grand and glorious purposes of our omnipotent and omniscient heavenly Father which He hath purposed from the beginning of the world. How authoritatively the Lord Jesus reveals that way back there, in THE BEGINNING, in even HIS beginning, Satan WAS A MURDERER!

The verse we have just quoted states that Satan “abode not” in the truth. In the Greek text this verb is the imperfect tense of, *I keep my standing*, or simply *I stand*, and the form is meaning that even before the fall or as far back as this person existed HE WAS NOT TRUE. Dr. Robert Young, in his Literal translation of the Bible, renders this verse: “He was a manslayer from the beginning, and in the truth HE HATH NOT STOOD, because there is no truth in him.” The Rotherham version reads: “He was a murderer *from the beginning*, and IN THE TRUTH HE STOOD NOT; because the truth is not in him.” J.B. Phillips gives the plainest and most accurate translation: “He ALWAYS WAS a MURDERER, and has NEVER DEALT WITH THE TRUTH, since the truth will have nothing to do with him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks in character, for he is liar and the father of lies.”

MAN says that Satan IN THE BEGINNING was perfect and sinless. But the apostle John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, penned these words in regard to Satan’s origin: “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil SINNETH FROM THE BEGINNING” (I Jn. 3:8). This could not be rightly said of Adam. According to Genesis 2 and 3, it was not until *after* Adam was created in spirit essence, *after* he was lowered into the realm of flesh, *after* he was placed in the Garden, *after* he named all the animals, *after* the woman was taken from his side, *after* she listened to the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit – it was AFTER ALL THESE THINGS that Adam sinned. Adam was not a sinner from the beginning. But the Devil, according to I Jn. 3:8 W-A-S A SINNER F-R-O-M T-H-E B-E-G-I-N-N-I-N-G! Now, if we are to believe the Bible means what it says – and I believe it does – we must believe that from his very beginning SATAN WAS EVIL.

## **WHO MADE THE DEVIL?**

Yes, my friend, there is a Devil – but the Devil of orthodox Christianity is but an invention of the imagination of man. What people say about the Devil and the testimony of scripture about him are two altogether different things. Well did the apostle warn, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (I Tim. 4:1). “Doctrines of devils” does not mean necessarily doctrines spawned by devils, rather, doctrines about devils. The theologians and saints of the middle ages spent aching hours working out the shapes, sizes and special responsibilities of the various demons that Satan commanded. There was even a demon called Ukobach, who was credited with the invention of fried food! Many of the contemporary teachings on demonology are straight out this Dark Ages superstition. The whole system of demonology which came to us from medieval times had its origin in the idea of animism which influenced the thinking of the pagans in early history. They believed that all nature was commanded and controlled by invisible spirits upon whose capricious whims all events relied. Life in those ancient times was a constant struggle with the elements over which men had no control. The unpredictable behavior of the sea, periods of drought or storm, the appearance of volcanoes and the titanic upheaval of earthquakes were all viewed with awe and fear. All these phenomena, benevolent or destructive in turn, were gradually seen to be under the control of spirits, they did not “just happen”! The reason some have held the view that Satan was originally an angel is because it seems to relieve God of the responsibility for evil and sin in the world. When they are asked whether a

good God created a bad Devil, they can reply: “No, He did not create the Devil; He created a beautiful and powerful angel who later became the Devil!” This sounds good on the surface, but when the searchlight of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God shines in our hearts, this line of reasoning is seen to be but shallow inductions of the natural mind.

How COULD an all-wise and holy God create an evil Devil? Our reply to that is another question: If God, all-wise and all-knowing, created a being and designed within this being the inherent ability and potential to become evil – a will capable of rebelling against Him – and if in His omniscience He knew beforehand that this creature would become evil, is God then any LESS responsible for the Devil? If, on the other hand, we say that God created a holy being and did not know he would become evil, then God is not omniscient and the Devil got a step ahead of God! If the Devil could do something back there that was outside of God’s plan, which God did not know he would do, then HOW CAN WE BE SURE HE MIGHT NOT PULL A FAST ONE ON GOD AGAIN! Ah, beloved, such carnal reasoning is an affront to the majesty of the Most High God! Is it any less thinkable that God would create an evil one than to suppose that He would create a holy one with the God-given ability to become evil? In either case, there is absolutely no way to absolve GOD from the responsibility for the existence of the Devil!

That “all things are of God” is declared again and again in the Bible. Did not the Lord say to Pharaoh, that man of rebellion against all that was of God, “Even for this same purpose have I RAISED THEE UP, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth.” (Rom. 9:17). The infinite wisdom of God’s mind cannot be searched out by these puny little heads of ours. We must discard our childish theology and bring our minds into harmony with the mind of Christ. We must begin to peer through the mighty telescope of God’s wisdom as it looks through the vast universe of good and evil until heavenly light bursts with blazing brilliance upon our inquiring spirits and we see with crystal clear vision that God is in all things, and is responsible for all things, including the so-called evil things as well as the good things. Is it not a fearful thing to say that evil is of God? There is nothing fearful about this view unless the TRUTH be fearful! I would not be surprised if some of the compatriots of the prophet Amos may have thought he was speaking blasphemy when by the Holy Spirit he said, “Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and THE LORD HATH NOT DONE IT?” (Amos 3:6). There are untold millions of Christians who do not like to believe that A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S A-R-E O-F G-O-D – including evil. They much prefer to believe, as the harlot system has taught them, that in the beginning God made everything “perfect,” then one of the “perfect” angels made himself into the Devil, and proceeded to wreck the works of God’s hands, so degrading God’s beautiful and perfect creation until the Lord Almighty Himself was hard put to the test to discover some way to restore the creation from the clutches of the Devil. And after six long and tortuous milleniums of conflict and struggle, contest and effort, the battle still rages on year after year and generation after generation, the Devil out-foxing God at times, and God getting the upper hand eventually. Childish prattle! Vain imaginations! Carnal-minded stupidity!

Why, oh why can men not believe the simple, unvarnished Word of God.” Ah – we have God’s own Word for it – His positive statement that HE CREATES EVIL. “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that THERE IS NONE BESIDE ME. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I THE LORD DO ALL OF THESE THINGS” (Isa. 45:7). God creates evil! It cannot be! But here it is in the Word. What will you do with it, beloved? “We must explain it somehow,” the fundamentalist says, “surely it doesn’t mean that God creates evil, sin, sinners, devils, or wrongdoing – it must mean that He creates physical evil – famines, pestilences, hurricanes, tornadoes, forest fires, floods, calamities, judgments, etc. which God sends upon mankind as punishment for their

wickedness.” Not so! The word here for evil is the Hebrew word RA which is used throughout the Old Testament to denote wickedness, sin and wrongdoing. In some five hundred passages it is so used!

For example, in Gen. 6:5 we read, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil (ra) continually.” Again, “And the Lord’s anger was kindled against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil (ra) in the sight of the Lord, was consumed” (Num. 32:13). In Ps. 34:13-15 we admonished, “Keep thy tongue from evil (ra), and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil (ra), and do good... the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry.” The very same word in the original is also rendered “wicked” and “wickedness” more than a hundred times. So God declares, “I form the *light*, and create *darkness*: I make *peace*, and create *evil*. *I the Lord do all these things!*” Why should puny man attempt to shield the Almighty from the responsibility He Himself has taken? If He says He creates peace, then believe Him. If He says He creates evil, then believe that, too. Do you remember how they brought the blind man to Jesus, and as the poor fellow stood there, the disciples said to Jesus, “Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?” Jesus replied, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: BUT THAT THE WORKS OF GOD SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST IN HIM” (Jn. 9:2-3). So through the evil of blindness the glory of God was manifested in the end!

As soon as this significant truth dawns upon your enlightened consciousness, the knowledge of WHENCE CAME THE SERPENT will speedily follow. The Word of God is certain and unmistakable. The record is clear and unequivocal. The Holy Spirit emphatically declares, “Now the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which THE LORD GOD HAD MADE” (Gen. 3:1). Two things are here revealed: the nature of the Serpent is a beastly nature – and GOD MADE HIM! Suppose that instead of trying to explain this passage in harmony with some cut-and-dried creed, we let all creeds go and wait upon the Spirit of the Lord to give understanding of what the passage really means. Then, if the creed does not harmonize with the light the Spirit brings, throw the creed away. At any rate, here is the statement in the Word and we will be brave enough to receive it as truth and trust the same One who spoke it to explain it. “The Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which THE LORD GOD HAD MADE.” These words deserve volumes of explanation, but can you not see that they are filled with the spirit of revelation? God made the Serpent, God made him with a beastly nature, God made him subtle, God made him the Devil and Satan. God made him a murderer and a liar from the beginning! It is completely impossible for any man to truly know and love God until his spirit has been taught that before all things, through all things, in all things, and after all things is God, omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, eternal, purposeful, and filled with righteousness, love, kindness, forgiveness and truth. He was before all things and BY HIM ALL THINGS CONSIST. There is no angel, principality, or power anywhere in all the endless vastnesses of infinity that does not hold his authority by direct appointment of God. In Him all men and angels and creatures live and move and have their being, for He fills all things. By Him and for Him and to Him are all things. From Him everything comes, by Him everything exists, and in Him everything ends, bringing glory to God forever and ever, Amen.

Hardly had the human race been called into existence, than we find a strange enemy making his attack upon it under the guise of a *serpent*. Although the writer of this account gives no name to this creature, except “the serpent,” other scriptures leave us no doubt as to who it was. Mere serpent, mere animal, it could not possibly be; for *speech* is the distinctive characteristic of intelligent mind, and that this Serpent obsessed the faculty of both speech and reason was and is enough to prove that someone of a higher kingdom and order than that of beasts and reptiles

was acting. The preachers are always telling us that the Serpent in the garden was one of these long, slender reptiles that have backbones and ribs and scales on the outside of their bodies. Numerous pictures have been sketched of the snake dangling from a tree limb, conversing with Eve. But the inspired Word of the omniscient Creator contradicts the uninspired word of the tradition-ridden theologians! John the Revelator stood transfixed in the visions of God on Patmos and beheld in spirit the splendor of the scene which unfolded before his wondering eyes as “the great dragon was cast out, *that old serpent*, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, *that old serpent*, which IS THE DEVIL, AND SATAN, and bound him a thousand years” (Rev. 12:9; 20:1-2).

Here Satan is called “that old Serpent.” The word “old” is from the Greek ARCHAIOS which means “original” or “primeval”. “Primeval” means FROM THE FIRST AGE OR AGES. Phillip’s translation reads, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key of the pit and a huge chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, the SERPENT OF ANCIENT DAYS, who IS both the Devil and Satan...” Another version states, “And he seized the dragon, the ORIGINAL SERPENT, WHO IS the Devil and Satan.” The Amplified Bible renders, “And he gripped and overpowered the dragon, that OLD SERPENT OF PRIMEVAL TIMES, WHO IS the Devil and Satan.” *Man* says that a fallen angel, Lucifer, somehow got into the serpent and spoke through its mouth; but the almighty Father declares that *that original Serpent* I-S T-H-E D-E-V-I-L A-N-D S-A-T-A-N!

Phillip’s translation reads, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key of the pit and a huge chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, the SERPENT OF ANCIENT DAYS, who IS both the Devil and Satan...” Another version states, “And he seized the dragon, the ORIGINAL SERPENT, WHO IS the Devil and Satan...” The Amplified Bible says, “And he gripped and overpowered the dragon, that OLD SERPENT OF PRIMEVAL TIMES, WHO IS the Devil and Satan...” It is a common fault among us to repeat what the theologians and preachers of Babylon say instead of saying what GOD SAYS, but it is a very great blessing to us when once we comprehend the utter simplicity of the truth of God and simply believe it. Practically all sermons preached today are merely the philosophy of the preacher, and practically all the philosophy of the preacher is the tradition of men handed down from one generation to the next. These philosophies and traditions of the church become the established doctrines of the sect, and the graduates from the Seminaries become so zealous in propounding them that they never once think to seek HIS face, come to know HIS will, or be partakers of HIS glorious mind. Thus through a lifetime men go on preaching, contending, and arguing their time-honored traditions until they become like the Pharisees of old, making the WORD OF GOD OF NO EFFECT through their traditions. They become thoroughly robbed of their vital association with Him, and lost to them is the grand and glorious TRUTH as it is IN JESUS.

MAN, on the one hand, says that a fallen angel, Satan, *used* the serpent in Eden. GOD, on the other hand, says that that original serpent IS THE DEVIL and Satan. I once read a book which explained how Satan was the greatest ventriloquist of all time, he threw his voice into the serpent so that the serpent only appeared to speak – it was really the Devil! GOD SAYS that THE SERPENT HIMSELF WAS MORE SUBTIL than any beast of the field, that the SERPENT SPOKE, and that the serpent IS THE DEVIL AND SATAN! MAN says that the Devil somehow got into the serpent and spoke through its mouth, whereas GOD declares that THAT ORIGINAL SERPENT I-S THE DEVIL!

Children in school learn what we call definitions. A definition is an explanatory statement which tells us just exactly what a certain thing is, as “an island is a tract of land completely surrounded

by water.” God also gives us definitions in His Word. He tells us exactly what certain things are. And in the Scripture just quoted He has told us exactly what the serpent is: “That original serpent, WHICH IS the Devil and Satan.” Now let us make this a little plainer. Definitions of men can be given backward. For instance, the definition, “An island is a tract of land completely surrounded by water,” can be given thus: “A tract of land completely surrounded by water is an island.” This is but another way of stating the same fact. It does not, in any way, change the meaning. Now let us try this on the definition of the serpent. “That original serpent IS the Devil” – “Satan IS that original serpent.” That, dear reader, is GOD’S OWN DEFINITION of the serpent in Eden!

The imagination that a thing can have its beginning in God, and then *become* something other than what God foresaw, purposed, intended, or planned for it is a vain imagination that comes from the distorted mind and the wild imagination of man and not a truth that comes from the omniscient mind of our heavenly Father, for OF HIM AND THROUGH HIM AND TO HIM, are all things; to HIM be glory forever and ever! Amen! (Rom. 11:36). Even more enlightening is the translation from Goodspeed which says, “For FROM HIM EVERYTHING COMES: THROUGH HIM EVERYTHING EXISTS; AND IN HIM EVERYTHING ENDS. GLORY TO HIM FOREVER! AMEN.” Or as the Amplified Bible bluntly and beautifully words it, “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. – For all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to consummate and to end in Him. To Him be glory forever! Amen – so be it.”

The words of this precious portion of Scripture cast a ray of divine illumination across the gloomy pages of human tradition that for centuries has confused men’s minds and attributed to Satan the power to *be* and to *do* apart from, and in rebellion against God, causing men’s faith in the omniscience, immutability, and omnipotence of the Lord to falter and die. There came a blessed day in my life when my Father in heaven let me hear a secret from His own heart, a secret that few have understood throughout all generations of the Church. When He breathed into my listening ear it well nigh stunned me because of my own tradition and unbelief, yet I could not doubt the truth He taught me when He said, “For by Him were ALL THINGS created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and INVISIBLE, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or PRINCIPALITIES, or POWERS: ALL THINGS were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). “ALL THINGS were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made” (Jn. 1:3). I was as one shocked by a lightning bolt out of the sky by these words because for years all my teachers had instilled the very opposite into my mind. “God,” they told me, “made a beautiful, glorious angel, but *the Devil made himself!*” But when I heard the voice of the all-wise Lord, speaking from the throne of His all-powerful majesty, taking upon HIMSELF all the responsibility for THE ENTIRE CREATION, my heart was amazed in His presence and for the first time in my life the “*purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will,*” began to unfold in my deepest heart.

God is THE CAUSE of all that is. It all exists with the one purpose of showing forth His glory. Every object in nature, and every creature in the universe has its only reason of existence in this – that the wondrous goodness and wisdom and power of God may shine out through it. God is the end and aim of all things, because He is their beginning and origin. All must fulfill His will because all came from Him and exist only through Him.

Most of the Lord’s people have an *image* of Jesus. They think they know just what the Lord looks like. But the image invariably corresponds to the idea of what He was when He was here in the flesh. But there isn’t a single person in all the world today who can know just what Jesus

might look like. Until they get rid of that *image*, they are going to have a very limited conception of the Christ. When the image goes and people begin to see Him as He *really is*, then our conception of Him will be enlarged beyond anything we can imagine. Now, just as most of God's people entertain an image of Jesus, SO THEY HAVE ONE OF SATAN. This image, too, must go before any of us can see things correctly. When all of the seventy came back to Jesus with the report that even the demons were subject unto them in the name of Jesus, He counseled them not to rejoice in that fact, but to rejoice in the fact that their names were written in heaven. Then the Lord announced, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Lk. 10:18). The preachers tell us that this refers to the time, away back before the foundation of the world, when Lucifer was cast out of heaven.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is not this the MAN that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa. 14:12-17). It should be clear to every enlightened student of God's Word that all truth has applications on different levels. It is my conviction that the inspired statements in the afore quoted passage may be applied on the historical level, the prophetic level, the spiritual level, and the personal level. In its first and historical application the one called "Lucifer" refers to the literal king of the Kingdom of Babylon in the days of Isaiah who – although mighty in political and military power and the most exalted ruler among nations – would fall just like other rulers of the past. The prophetic application points to the king of *Mystery Babylon*, the chief antichrist of the world's apostate church system, who is not recognized for what he is, but is lauded as the greatest religious leader in the world, by whom untold millions of those who name the name of Christ are deceived, as it is written, "And the whole world wondered after the beast." The spiritual application is found in the fall of man from his original position of glory, eminence and dominion. The message is clear – the subject of Isaiah's prophecy is a MAN – not an angelic spirit-being! "They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this THE M-A-N that made the earth to tremble...that made the earth as a wilderness: that opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa. 14:16-17).

"Lucifer," instead of being the name of an angel who became the Devil, was THE NAME THE ANCIENT'S GAVE TO THE MORNING STAR. Pliny, a noted historian of antiquity, says, "Before the sun revolves, a very large star...when in advance and rising before dawn receives the name Lucifer, being another sun and bringing the dawn..." Lucifer, the light-bringer, is the Latin equivalent of the Greek word PHOSPHOROS, which is used as a title for Christ in II Pet.1:19. Peter had been discussing the glorious experience that he, along with James and John, had had with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. Speaking of the voice that spoke to them there, he said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well to take heed... until the day dawn and the DAY STAR (Greek: phosphoros; Latin: lucifer) arise in your hearts." I do not have the ability to make this truth any plainer than Jesus Himself made it when He called Himself the PHOSPHOROS or the LUCIFER in Rev. 22:16, saying, "I AM... the BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR." In the messages of Christ to the seven churches in the book of Revelation a special promise was always given to *him that overcometh*, but to the church at Thyatira He gave a promise that is worthy to fill every page of this article. May our Lord give us the spirit of revelation to understand what He said: "And he that overcometh... I will give him THE MORNING STAR" (Rev. 2:26, 28). Just think of that! My beloved, ponder if you will – whether

we call it “Day Star”, “Morning Star”, or “Lucifer” – it is all the same. This “rising of the Day Star” in our hearts is the out-raying of the Christ within, for, you see, HE IS the Day Star! It should be obvious to every spiritual mind that what is *recovered* through the redemption of Jesus Christ is WHAT ADAM HAD IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. Adam in the image and likeness of God was so indwelt by light, so a partaker of the Christ Life, that he was himself a DAY STAR – the shining one of creation!

Truly, *Adam* is the *man* who made the earth to tremble, who shook kingdoms, and made the earth a wilderness, for it was to him and him alone that these terrible words were spoken, “Cursed is the ground (earth realm) for thy sake” (Gen. 3:17). As we meditate upon these sobering words of judgment, we cannot imagine words that more exactly describe the tragic picture of the fall of man from his exalted position in God. Driven from the garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth; the whole earth realm (cursed) with sorrow, sin and death for his sake; no more could Adam hear the voice of God walking in the cool of the day – he no longer possessed spiritual ears. No more could Adam eat of the blessed fruit of the tree of life – he no longer possessed a spiritual mind. No more could Adam behold the glories of that heavenly realm – he no longer possessed spiritual eyes. He who had never known anything but the rest of God was to labor and toil in the earth. The heavens were closed, the communion with the spirit was broken, and Adam found himself stripped of the life and light and dominion that had been his – he no longer possessed a spiritual nature. What a loss! What unspeakable loss!

In its personal application the king of Babylon – Lucifer – is you and me and everyman by our first birth – the identity of old Adam. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! When Adam fell, the loss was both his and upon every descendant of his – all were cast into a wilderness of spiritual desolation and shut up in the prison, house of sin, suffering, limitation and death. As one has written, “Now poor, sin-laden mankind darkened in mind and impoverished in spirit, is forever spending money for that which is not bread and laboring that which satisfieth not. Vainly they imagine that their thirst can be slaked by partaking of the stagnant waters of earth’s fleshly cisterns. Like lost sheep they wander through the wilderness of life seeking satisfaction and finding none. Place after place they roam in their pitiful search for the fountain that satisfies, but find it they never can until at last they come to Christ. They fill the bars and nightclubs to buy wine and strong drink that can do no more than dull their senses, unleashing their passions and rage. They throng the places of pleasure in their unending longing to satisfy the thirst that is within them. They fill their lives with the vanity of things and more things, only to find that all they have attained rises to mock them in the end.” Ah – how art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

When the Lord Jesus told his disciples that He beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven, He was saying that he had seen Satan FALL OUT OF HIS (JESUS) HEAVEN, or actually Jesus had seen Satan FALL BEFORE HIM, and become subservient to Him in the realm of the Spirit. So far as Jesus was concerned Satan was no longer in possession of any authority whatsoever. Jesus spake not of an historical event, but a living reality that He had seen occur within His own consciousness, life and ministry. THIS WE ALL MUST SEE AND KNOW if we are to have any sense of victory in our lives, if we are to truly walk as the sons of God. We must realize that if Satan has fallen he is not the almost-almighty head of a kingdom, but he has been stripped and his kingdom has been broken. This must be embraced as a wonderful reality within ourselves. When we realize that Satan has fallen before THE CHRIST WITHIN US, then we really will be set free! When this truly happens we are on our way – not to a *rapture* – but to that high and holy position that God has created for us and determined to bring us to.

To those who have Satan yet in their consciousness elevated to a position of power and who carry in their thinking an image of him, HE HAS NOT AS YET FALLEN. Such people have made a god of him, but in your life, precious one, He is to be cast down, and you are to know once and for all that THERE IS ONLY GOD WHO RULES ALL. If God is controlling a part of this world and Satan is running another part, *may God indeed help us!* We would be under two governments and our lives would be a hell. But to some of us, at least, SATAN HAS FALLEN and has ceased to be a king in our domain. When this truth is revealed in power and glory within your deepest heart, for you, at last, THERE WILL BE NO DEVIL ANYMORE!

In closing this message I would share a beautiful and significant vision received by a sister in Argentina to whom the Lord has given abundance of revelations. I do not feel to comment, but leave it for the Holy Spirit to interpret this to your own heart. She relates...

“Rapping me in His love, He carried me away in spirit into the world of harmonic life and light. There, after His usual welcome of love and taking away my fears, He took me to look. When I did so, I saw what seemed to be dark, evil-looking teeth which were sharp, pointed, long and ugly. Coming out from these teeth was something very repugnant which He named ‘poison’. Then God took something that was a part of His very own being and gave it to those ugly, hollow teeth that looked like great serpent fangs which were pouring out poison. This poison from the fangs flowed into that part of Himself which God had given to them, and in this way were fully satisfied. Flowing into the part which God had given, the poison was fully satiated. This part – which had come forth from Him and was a part of His own being – completely absorbed all the poison that these great Fangs poured forth” – end quote. What a Word!

## **WHY THE DEVIL?**

Over the years many books have been written, many songs have been sung, many sermons have been preached, and many things have been said about and blamed on the Devil. Sad to say, but the vast majority of Christians fear the Devil more than they do God! Satan has been blamed for everything from the car breaking down to ingrown toenails. People have painted him as a huge, ugly, impish personage with horns, bedecked with a red suit, having a long pointed tail and carrying a pitchfork. The Word of God, however, has somewhat to say about who and what Satan is and WHY HE IS WHAT HE IS.

Jesus declared of Satan, “The thief cometh not, but for the steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10). Out of God’s own mouth proceeds the assertion, “I have created the waster to destroy” (Isa. 54:16). We gather from this passage that Satan is a created entity with a definite purpose. That purpose is revealed in the opening words of the above quoted verse: “ I have created the smith (the Devil) that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that BRINGETH FORTH AN INSTRUMENT for his work.” The “smith” that “bloweth upon the fire” is also the one who heats the furnace seven times hotter! “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery Mat which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you” (I Pet. 4:12). Our trials and testings are associated in the Word of God with the ministry of Satan. You never thought of Satan having a ministry? “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted (tested) of the Devil. And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread” (Mat. 4:1-3). “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, *that ye may be tried...* be thou faithful... and I will give thee a crown of life” Rev. 2:10). “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, *that he may sift you as wheat*: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Lk. 22:31-32). “Be sober, be vigilant,

because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, *seeking whom he may devour*. whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same *afflictions* are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (I Pet. 5:8-9).

We flounder a bit in our understanding of these things, but as time passes by and the Holy Spirit takes the things of God and reveals them unto us, we begin to understand that in all the universe a thing is a thing ONLY BECAUSE IT HAS AN OPPOSITE. Few will teach you this principle, but I declare it to you today. Good without the knowledge of evil can scarcely be called good at all. Who could possibly speak of the *day* if *night* had never been known? There was no *first light* if there was no darkness. What could we know of *life* if there were no *death*? What would we know of *health* if there were no *sickness*? What could we know of *wealth* if *poverty* had not spread its spectre upon the earth? No man can be trusted until he has been EXPOSED TO THE OPPOSITES, until he has been tempted. No man can be declared strong until he has been tested for weakness. No man can be proven honest until he has been presented with the opportunity to steal or cheat. No man can be declared virtuous until faced with opportunities with women other than his wife. No man can be an overcomer until he has faced the dreadful foe. Those who are worthy to slay their Goliaths must first have slain their lion and their bear. No man can be an overcoming son of God until he has encountered THE SERPENT IN THE WILDERNESS and come forth victorious! Everything has its right and wrong, its truth and error, its good and bad, its proper use and its misuse, and the one must overcome the other. Sweet must overcome and swallow up bitter, smooth rough, soft hard. Life swallows up death, said Paul in II Cor. 5:4; and it gets its strength from HAVING AN OPPOSITE WHICH IT HAS SWALLOWED UP. You cannot say a certain yes in a decision, until you have first canvassed the alternatives and said an equally certain no to each of them. The strength of the yes is swallowing up the no's! Not in having no no's, not in ignoring their existence, but in facing them and replacing them by the final yes. And here we have God's perfect wisdom in the formation of the human race and in bringing forth a convenient opposite, the wrong one, the evil one, THROUGH WHOM HE WOULD BRING HIS VAST FAMILY OF SONS TO MATURITY. “Though He were a Son, yet learned He OBEDIENCE by the things which He suffered” (Heb. 5:8). “For it became Him... in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation PERFECT through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10).

As one has written, “God is constructing a temple, made of living stones, through which to manifest Himself throughout the ages to come, hallelujah, and Satan was created (a sinner from the beginning) as a chisel and hammer to be used in the construction of this building. The living stones that are even now being placed in this temple have been chosen, says the Lord, in the “furnace of affliction” (Isa. 48:10). God, however, is mercy; God is love; God is compassion. He is a healer, not a destroyer. It was, nonetheless, necessary that an oven be heated in which to purify the gold – a furnace in which the wood, hay, and stubble were to be burned – but God, in His nature of love, could not perform the necessary affliction. It was for this reason that He created AN INSTRUMENT that was capable of performing this essential action in the lives of men, for in Satan God literally created a *chastening rod*.

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

The Hebrew word for “satan” is used two ways, with the definite article, the satan, and without the article, the word “satan” simply means “adversary.” There is no thought of monstrosity or evilness, but simply opposition. Thus the scriptures speak of “adversary,” “an adversary,” and “the adversary.” It is that which is ADVERSE to ones well being, desires, plans, hopes, goals or causes, whether good or bad, real or imagined. Jesus told His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Peter immediately rebuked Him and opposed His going to Jerusalem, saying, “Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.” Jesus then turned and said to Peter, “Get thee behind Me, Satan.-thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Mat. 16:21-23). Jesus knew from the law and the prophets what He must suffer. Peter unwittingly was trying to get Him to fail in fulfilling the prophecies and plan of God. Peter was opposing Him in His determination to carry out the mission the Father had given Him, and hence Peter was a Satan (adversary, opposition) to the Lord. From the beginning there has been that which has stood in opposition to the life of the spirit in man, and has fully earned its reputation as the most adroit of adversaries. Paul describes it as the flesh warring against the spirit, the carnal mind that is enmity against God. It is the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience (offspring of old Adam). As a man once said, “We have met the enemy, and he IS US.” Elwin Roach penned the following helpful explanation: “When the definite article ‘the’ is used with the word satan, this is not stating the devil’s name but is saying this adversary is the chief adversary to whomever it is an adversary to. This is no doubt why the government of Iran calls the United States of America “THE GREAT SATAN”; for indeed, we are THE GREATEST ADVERSARY they have. We stand in the way of their desires, their goals and aspirations of tyranny. The United States of America is like the angel of the Lord, with a flaming sword in hand, who is adversely hindering their evil progress. Therefore, they can rightly say we are their Great Satan, but we are not the Satan that is fixed in the average Christian’s mind” – end quote.

If there are those who feel that in these messages on The Serpent the picture I have painted exhibits the prevalence of the darker hues, I am so glad now to literally splash the canvas with flaming colors. And then in the light that the Spirit brings we will discern the true meaning of the momentary process, and the glory that follows. As one has written, “God is constructing a temple, made of living stones, through which to manifest Himself throughout the ages to come, and Satan was created as a chisel and hammer to be used in the construction of this building. The living stones that are even now being placed in this temple have been chosen, says the Lord, in the ‘furnace of affliction’ (Isa. 48:10). God, however, is mercy; God is love; God is compassion. He ‘is a healer, not a destroyer. It was, nonetheless, necessary that an oven be heated in which to purify the gold – a furnace in which the wood, hay, and stubble were to be burned – but God, in His nature of love, could not perform the necessary affliction. It was for this reason that He created an instrument that was capable of performing this essential action in the lives of men, for in Satan God literally created a chastening rod. If we can realize that behind the acts of Satan is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes’ (Ps. 119:7). Praise God! When we begin to see the good that comes from the assaults of Satan on our lives, we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and the depth of the wisdom of His great mind. He is truly a God of might and power, and all things are in His hand – even this adversary whom we call the Devil” – Connie Asbill.

Ah, my beloved, there is *purpose* in affliction. There is *purpose* in trial. There is *purpose* in temptation. There is *purpose* in suffering. There is *purpose* in sorrow. There is *purpose* in pain. There is *purpose* in trouble. There is *purpose* in infirmity. There is *purpose* in light and darkness.

There is *purpose* in good, and there is *purpose* in evil. There is *purpose* in adversity and in the adversary who brings it. Yes, my brother, my sister, there is *purpose* in the existence and work of Satan! Without this understanding all the work of God in all ages becomes a hit and miss, trial and error affair unworthy of our mighty God of whom it is written, "The Most High... liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and HE doeth ACCORDING TO THE WILL in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and NONE CAN STAY HIS HAND, or say, What doest Thou?"

One of the fundamental laws of creation is that an OPPOSING FORCE is necessary for growth, and to produce strength, stamina, and endurance. Any living thing that grows up without any opposition is weak and powerless. God's NEW CREATION must be strong and powerful, and anything that desires to be strong, or anyone, must wrestle with a force that is contrary to them. Any man who wants to develop muscular power to be strong, must spend weeks and months and years in vigorous training doing heavy exercises, lifting heavy weights, using the *opposing force* of gravity to *develop his strength*. A man who wants to be a great wrestler, doesn't just wrestle when he is in the ring. At his training center he has his wrestling partners with whom he wrestles by the hour. If he didn't do this he would be weak and powerless in the ring. A boxer has his punching bags and sparring partners, with whom he spends hours every day. Those *opposing forces* are indispensable to develop strength and technique. A plant that grows in a greenhouse sheltered from the winds and rains, pampered day after day, may grow large, but it is inherently weak, and if suddenly exposed to the elements will wither and die. But a plant that is constantly exposed to the fierce winds and pounding rains, burning heat and chilling cold, is strong and not so easily destroyed.

So it is with us as human beings. One who grows up in a sheltered environment, who is pampered all his life, everything provided on a silver platter, grows up a weak, helpless, spineless individual. ADVERSITY builds strength of character. If we were never exposed to trials and tribulation, we would grow up weak indeed! The more we are exposed to ADVERSE circumstances, the more we have to wrestle with our environment, the more we are CHALLENGED by the world around us, the stronger we become. Saints, IF WE WOULD BE THE SONS OF THE MOST HIGH we must be STRONG in the Lord and in the power of HIS might! Our Father wants us to be strong, so He has wisely given us wrestling partners to wrestle with, so we will become strong. These are opposing forces – THANK GOD FOR THEM! Is *innocence* synonymous with virtue? The Father of spirits did not look forward to a distant day, at the time of His begetting, expecting that some day a multitude of innocent ninnies and dummies would stand before Him. How many of those who read these lines want their children to grow up 100%*innocent*? Never having experienced the slightest temptation or adversity in any form? This is precisely why God placed the *Serpent* in Eden with the tree of the *knowledge of good and evil* – that man through the experience of the opposites might in the experience be led to OVERCOME all things and to stand before the Son of man in the strength of character, perception of mind, and quality of life of God Himself. It is all part of our Father's wise and magnificent plan!

"Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above," Jesus told Pilate. What Satan wrought against Job was ordained by the Lord who carefully marked the bounds of the adversary's activity. Job was no baby saint, for no one less than God Himself had given testimony that Job was a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. God had blessed this man with great wealth and a large family. He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses. His household was very great with many hired servants so

that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. The thing we want to note is that although Job was wealthy in temporal things, rich in spiritual things, and proclaimed perfect by the Lord Himself, he had not been “tried by fire” as sons of God must be – he was as yet UNTRIED, UNTESTED, and UNPROVEN. In the midst of Job’s ordeal of affliction and suffering the spirit of prophecy came upon him and he opened his mouth and spake concerning the purpose of God in it all, declaring, “But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). Never do I cease to be amazed at how the preachers and teachers, apparently without exception, join their voices in unison with those of Job’s contemptible comforters, indicting and blaming poor old Job, charging that God brought all these calamities upon him because he had sin in his life, or because he was self-righteous, or because of some other appalling fault in Job. The only reliable testimony we have of Job’s true state of being is that spoken by the Lord Himself, and HE declared that Job was A PERFECT MAN! Perfect, yes; but untried! His perfection remained to be tested, proven and demonstrated. Now, what does God do but deliberately hand over this perfect and upright man into the hands of Satan to do his worst upon him, only that he should not touch his life. It was because that God desired to test Job that He brought forth “the smith to blow upon the fire.” Please note that it was not Satan’s idea to persecute poor old Job! Oh, no! It was God Himself who brought, up the subject! There Satan was, presenting himself before the Lord, appearing for duty, and God asked, “Where have you been?” Satan replied, “Walking up and down in the earth” (no mention of Job at all). “Well, Satan,” the Lord asked, “have you considered My servant Job? Have you noticed that he eschews evil and fears God? Have you noticed that, Satan?” You can be assured, dear ones, that Satan had noticed Job, but he wasn’t doing anything to him.

One of the most glorious testimonies of the preservation of the saints of God is given here in this passage by Satan himself. “Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast Thou not made a hedge around him and about his house and about all that he hath on every side?” Praise the Lord! Yes, there truly is a hedge around the people of God, and that hedge is Jesus Christ Himself. The Psalmist recognized and rejoiced in this fact when he said, “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” (Ps. 91:1-2). “You’ve put a hedge around him,” Satan said, “and I can’t get to him!” Then he went on to say, “You must put forth THINE HAND and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.” But the Lord, who searcheth the reins and the heart, who knoweth them that are His, knows who can be trusted with affliction, and will not allow any to be tested beyond what they are able to bear. He therefore said to Satan, “Behold, all that he hath is in thy power – in thy hand – only upon himself put not forth thine hand.” One can only know God by vital relationship to Him. Job KNEW God! Job knew in his deepest heart that God is good, loving, true, righteous, omnipotent, omniscient, immutable and faithful in all His way. At one point in his trial he exclaimed, “I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth. ...and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,” and again, “ I KNOW that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee” (Job 19:25-26; 42:2). Being a perfect man Job understood the nature of God, he knew what God is like – how He is. Armed with this knowledge he was unshakable and unmovable as the hand of Satan moved against him. With lightning swiftness the misfortunes fell as tribulation and affliction smote this man of God. All hell broke loose upon him. His possessions were gone. His servants were gone. His cattle, his family, and his dwelling place were as though they had never been. And now he was desperately ill, tormented with pain, and without even a bed to sleep on he lies down in the ashes of what was once his beautiful home to listen to the relentless arguments of his friends, monotonously attempting by lengthy speeches to make a fool of him and prove that his present despair was the result of his own sin and disfavor with God. I do not know how many days their debate continued, but such miserable comforters as these are always at hand, ready to attest that those who have entered

the furnace of affliction have been bad examples as Christians, unbelieving, unfaithful, or that they harbor secret sins and so are deserving of punishment. Unless the Lord Himself has convicted them of sin, or lack of faith, or of lack of understanding and applying the Laws of Life, sufferers should pay no attention whatever to them. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence before God" (1 Jn. 3:21).

In one tragic day all Job's earthly wealth and glory had vanished as a mist before the rising sun. But did Job curse God for all this calamity? Did he even curse the Devil? Was he a fair weather saint without spiritual understanding? No, indeed! He rent his mantle, shaved his head, and falling upon the ground, he **WORSHIPPED GOD** with the unmistakable words of reverence, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: **THE LORD GAVE, AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD!**" (Job 1:22). You see, beloved, all external evidence shouted aloud that God did not love Job, that God had forsaken him, that God did not see him, that God wasn't concerned about what happened to him, and that God wasn't just. It seemed that God had now revealed Himself to be the opposite of all Job had experienced and known of Him. But, praise God! Job knew God! He therefore knew that in spite of all the external evidence, in spite of how terrible and hopeless things appeared, God had not forsaken him, God did love him, God did see him, God was concerned about what happened to him, God was in control of everything, and God was just. Ah, this is faith – trusting God's goodness, wisdom and faithfulness in the knowledge that HE has everything in control, that ALL is according to HIS purpose, **IN SPITE OF ALL EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY!** Faith declares with Job, "Though God slay me, yet will I trust Him," – and then after being slain – **TRUSTS HIM!** Job, stripped of all, tried by fire, tested in the furnace of affliction, found that the key to life is not some creed or doctrinal statement of what we believe about God, but that which we **KNOW OF HIM** by virtue of intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Him. "The trial of your faith is much more precious than gold that perisheth" (1 Pet. 1:7).

Surely this is the lesson learned by Job, and this is the lesson being learned by us as we see our earthly dependencies passing away and withering as grass before our eyes. How could we have a more perfect illustration of how God uses **EVIL** and how God uses **SATAN** as an instrument for our good? Although Job suffered intensely, yet in the end **HE WAS GREATLY BLESSED BY HIS HARD AND BITTER EXPERIENCE.** If God thus uses Satan, the embodiment of evil, as a minister for good in the case of one individual, is it hard to believe that **ALL EVIL** is utilized by God for good in all cases?

It all fits into the Divine economy, not in the sense that God wills evil, but in the sense that He appoints it for a purpose and unto a greater end and overrules it in the great disciplinary and instructive processes of redemption. He "turns the tables" on the Devil – the wrath of men, as the Psalmist puts it, is made to praise God. The flesh, the world, and the Devil for the final vindication of God's government have to be permitted to run their course. Most diseases do. Meanwhile the suffering caused and the immeasurable tragedies are designed to serve God's purposes. We see this, too, in the trials of Joseph carried into Egypt, yea in the passion and death of our Lord Himself. The buffetings of the adversary forge a soul into one, to use the words of a French soldier to his mother. The adversary has put me through some things which a thousand deaths could not approximate. But strange as it may seem, in a large measure the things I most prize, the value of which can only be measured in terms of eternity, all go back to the grueling of the adversary. That the likeness of Christ may be formed in us as we must be hammered into shape on the anvil of affliction. It is Satan who does the hammering. Paul made no mistake when he advised the Corinthians to turn a certain man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh life.

A story is told about a new immigrant who got a job as a gardener. Next door was another gardener, a local man who did not like immigrants. He did all he could to provoke the new man. The family employing the new immigrant asked their gardener what he thought of the troublesome gardener next door. "He is my very good friend," he replied. Surprised, they asked, "How can he be your friend when he does such unkind things to you?" "He is my very good friend," was the answer, "because he shows me what not to do." There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God, and a great work our Father has for us to do in the ages to come, and He is preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us. Can we not see that ALL OPPOSING FORCES WE NOW ENCOUNTER are working together for our good – to develop the strength, character, wisdom and power we must acquire? Why the Devil? After every battle I may say, "Thank you, Mr. Devil! for helping to make me a son of God." Surely this is the lesson learned by Job, and this is the lesson being learned by us as we see our earthly dependencies withering as grass before our eyes and passing away. The emphasis of many today in the "Sonship Message" is on life – gaining immortality for the body. That is indeed a glorious aspect of our inheritance as sons of God. But I do not hesitate to tell you that it is not enough! In fact, that message by itself is truth out of balance. It is not mere length of life we seek, but a quality of life – the nature of God! Should I today bypass the grave and carry with me into immortality the inherent weaknesses, faults, idiosyncrasies, passions, lusts, and flaws of character which have dogged my steps throughout my earthly sojourn I would still not be fit to reign as an overcomer over the nations and all things. Not only must we have life, we must have the nature of that life fully developed in us producing the image of God. And we will never reign until we have been thoroughly tested, tried and proven!

The New Testament abounds with this same truth. Did you notice how strangely Matthew and Mark speak of Christ's temptation? "And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." What a strange statement! The Holy Spirit of God drives the sinless Son of God into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, the arch enemy of all righteousness, a murderer from the beginning, and the father of lies! Ah, but it was necessary for the Son to be PROVEN, to be STRONG, to demonstrate His ability to OVERCOME in these realms before entering into His glorious ministry and the death of the cross. Truly God creates evil and uses it, too, for His glory! The apostle fully understood this great truth and practiced it himself. He instructed the Corinthian believers to "deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (i.e., the flesh life), that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," and he declares in his letter to Timothy that he himself has delivered certain brethren unto Satan "that they may learn not to blaspheme." But the apostle had experienced something of this kind of discipline also, for he says, "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, THE MESSENGER OF SATAN TO BUFFET ME, lest I should be exalted above measure." All this dearly shows that Satan is a force created by God for a specific work, and even that work shall result in blessing for God's children and redound to the glory of God!

Since Jesus is the Pattern Son, all that happened to Him is the example for our lives. Jesus was being prepared to launch His ministry which was to declare that the Kingdom of God is at hand. But true Kingdom ministry requires that all His sons be proven before the authority and power of the Kingdom is trusted into their hands. We must know Who the Source of our life is, and Who is the King of the Kingdom of God. That with which Jesus was tempted in the first temptation in the wilderness was to turn the stones into bread. To turn stones into bread might have been a good idea. Jesus had fasted for forty days and was hungry. Bread was His immediate need. That in itself was not an evil desire – for He had no sooner come up out of the wilderness when He performed a miracle, his first miracle, of the very same nature. Instead of stones, it was water – and instead of bread it was wine – but, pray tell, what is the difference between turning stones

into bread and turning water into wine? ABSOLUTELY NOTHING? The difference did not lie in the act: it lay in the motivation! The Father had not instructed Jesus to turn stones into bread. If Jesus had, therefore, yielded to the desire to do so, He would have set a dangerous precedent – He would have acted with a power entrusted Him by God to be used for God – but it would have been apart from the word of God because it would have come “by the will of man” rather than by the motivation of the Spirit of God. It was not a wrong desire – it was the wrong VOICE! The Father gave instruction for the miracle at Cana of Galilee, for Jesus said at another time that He never did anything unless His Father gave it to Him to do. Sons of God do nothing based on needs. If the directive comes from the wrong source, the whole act of meeting a need is wrong and will prove a futile effort at best. Man’s religion is saturated with such good work! Many ministries have been launched, attempting to turn stones into bread, but the vast majority of them have heard from the wrong voice. Good works coming from the wrong source bring forth a carnal thing without life. However, good works that originate from the mind of Christ will indeed be good, and will redound to the glory of God. Thus Jesus demonstrated a vital truth we all need to learn: THE SPIRIT MUST BE THE ONLY SOURCE OF OUR ACTIONS; HIS WILL MUST BECOME OUR WILL!

“For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil” (Heb. 2:14). The word “destroy” does not mean to kill or annihilate, for we know God did not kill the Devil or annihilate him! Destroy, in the original, means “to bring to naught; render powerless; make of no effect” So – through death – the Lord Jesus BROUGHT SATAN TO NOUGHT, RENDERED HIM POWERLESS AND MADE HIM OF NO EFFECT. The Lord came and put upon Himself “the flesh,” “the body of sin,” the “body of death,” the “dust realm,” the “man of earth,” and BROUGHT IT TO THE CROSS that “through death (of the man of dust) He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.” When the flesh is crucified, when the dust of the carnal mind, the man of the earth is put to death on the cross SATAN’S GROUND IS DESTROYED BENEATH HIM, his sphere of activity is removed, his base of operation is closed, he is rendered completely powerless and ineffective. Thus, it is by this death on the cross that Christ destroyed the Devil! When the Son of God came into the world, when He had been tested on every point and had overcome the adversary in all things, He uttered these significant words: “I will not talk with you much more, for the prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me – he has nothing in common with Me, THERE IS NOTHING IN ME THAT BELONGS TO HIM, he has no power over Me.” (Jn. 14:30, Amplified). Ah, this is the glory of sonship – nothing in common with Satan! There was nothing in Jesus that corresponded to him and nothing that responded to him! None of the nature of Adam that pertains to Satan. So mighty was the indwelling life of the Father within Jesus that Satan had no power over Him, no place within Him. And, precious friend of mine, when you have died completely to that Adamic life, when there is none of the dust of Adam in you, SATAN WILL HAVE NO POWER OVER YOU, NO PLACE IN YOU. Satan’s base of operation will have been destroyed, his sphere of activity removed. God destroys Satan by destroying (rendering inactive) YOUR FLESH.

Dear saints of God, don’t believe for one moment that anything in all God’s great universe is out of control! God IS GOD. There is NO OTHER GOD. Satan is NO GOD in his own right. Our God IS in full control of every sphere of activity, and the Serpent himself operates directly under the province of God. May the Holy Spirit illumine our minds to perceive the truth that Satan has no power at all except that which God delegates to him. Do you really believe that Satan could cause all the trouble in the world UNLESS GOD HAD ORDAINED IT? My friend, if you believe Satan is a problem to Almighty God, then your God is entirely too small! Satan is no thorn in God’s side who made him in the first place, who binds his hands daily, who sets his boundaries

and limits his power and marks his path. Oh, yes, those who would be sons of God must OVERCOME HIM. Beloved, when that purpose is accomplished, Satan will have completed his course as an instrument in the hand of God who has everything under control! Hallelujah!

There is only ONE GOD – not two. Yes, Satan is indeed “the god of this world,” but those born from above are not of this world even as our Lord is not of this world. Satan enthroned in the temple of the carnal man is “a” god – not THE GOD. There is no power apart from God. Omnipotence has ALL POWER, and our Lord Jesus Christ has ALL POWER in heaven and in earth, and to acknowledge any other power is to dishonor God. Here me now and believe me now or later – G-O-D HAS N-O ADVERSARY! Satan is not the adversary of God! That is a preposterous misconception of popular religion. God created the adversary for our perfection and testing – he is man’s adversary, not GOD’S! The truth is so simple, so plain, a child of ten can understand a principle so apparent, while the learned doctors of theology step right over it and never see it. In relation to God there are no antagonistic powers, nor laws, spiritual or material. Either there is no omnipotence, or omnipotence is the only power. Jesus Christ is OMNIPOTENT! He said so Himself. He that is in you IS GREATER than he that is in the world. He IS! Then if Jesus our Lord is Sovereign, and He is, He can do anything He pleases. He doesn’t have a Devil that opposes His every move and binds everything He does. He doesn’t have a Devil that is trying to take over His whole world that He has created as most people imagine. HE IS SOVEREIGN! HE IS OMNIPOTENT! “ALL POWER is given unto Me,” He said All power is OMNIPOTENCE! He creates His own evil when evil is needed to form and fashion a subject or people or nation He is working on. God does have a NEGATIVE FORCE at work in His creation, a negative dimension of SPIRIT, the adversary of those being conformed into his image, the fiery furnace of refining, the rod of chastening, the sparring partner, the violent storm bending the tree to make it strong. Glory to God! The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth!

There is a great and magnificent future ahead for the sons of God, and a great work our Father has for us to do in the ages to come, and He is preparing us and making us ready for the high and holy place He has for us. Can we not see that ALL THE OPPOSING FORCES WE NOW ENCOUNTER are working together for our good – to develop the strength, character, wisdom, and power we must acquire? Why the Devil? After every battle we may say, “Thank you, Mr. Devil! For helping to make me a son of God.” In due time the saints are going to take the place of the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, and instead of them ruling over us, we shall rule over them. This is even now reality to the degree that we have met them in battle – and conquered. This is God’s plan for us!

# Chapter 32

## THE SERPENT

*(continued)*

“Now the SERPENT was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made... and the SERPENT said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die... and the Lord God said unto the SERPENT, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:1,4,14-15).

More and more we are becoming aware of the wonderful fact that the book of Genesis deals largely in typical representations; that is, figures of spiritual realities, brought forth in the language and form of the physical world, but pointing to that which is higher and grander, the verities of the spiritual world. One cannot read Paul’s epistles under the illuminating light of the Spirit without perceiving that he saw far more in Genesis than the mere letter. The creation with him is the figure of another work, which God accomplishes in every man who experiences the redeeming, transforming power of Christ. Says Paul, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, HATH SHINED IN OUR HEARTS, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. 4:6). And again, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATION: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Cor. 5:17).

Adam, in the image and likeness of God, ruling all creatures and all things, is the type of man in Christ, as God makes him. Man in Christ, man in God’s image given power and dominion, is God’s government in the Kingdom of God. Was not this magnificent purpose burning in the heart of the Most High when on the sixth creative day He proclaimed the wonderful decree: “Let us make man in our image... and LET THEM HAVE DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every *creeping thing that creepeth* upon the earth” (Gen. 1:26). In this shadowy type we behold a vivid portrait of God’s purpose for man, that when man comes fully into GOD’S IMAGE he shall be, first, the ruler of things *beneath*, the lowest realms of the bottomless, typified by the fish swarming in the depths of the seas, and the creeping things; next, the things upon the *earth*, typified by the cattle, and all the earth; and lastly, the things of the *heavens also*, typified by the fowl of the air. One may find it difficult to embrace so great a truth from so small and insignificant a type, but it was upon this very Edenic type, as reiterated by the prophet David in the eight Psalm, that the writer of the book of Hebrews enlarged when by the Spirit he wrote, “For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What IS man, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him (man) a little lower (Gr: for a little while lower) than the angels; Thou CROWNEST HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, and didst set him OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS: Thou hast put A-L-L

T-H-I-N-G-S in subjection under his feet. For in that He put A-L-L in subjection under him, He left N-O-T-H-I-N-G that is NOT put under him!” (Heb. 2:5-8).

Genesis, like all the other books of the Bible, has its own unique purpose in the revealing of God’s plan. Its first and foremost object is to show us GOD’S ORIGINAL THOUGHT AND PURPOSE in creation. In the *letter* we show a physical man given dominion over the physical earth. In the *Spirit* we see a spiritual man given dominion over the spiritual world. And so it is written: “Who (Christ) is the image of the invisible God... by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers... and ye are complete IN HIM WHICH IS THE HEAD OF A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER” (Col. 1:15-17; 2:9-10). All who come to God’s image in Christ are destined to share that awesome dominion, seated together WITH HIM, far above all principality and power. But – “We see *not yet* all things put under him (man). *But we see Jesus... CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR*” (Heb. 2:8-9). Verse ten shows that Jesus is the Captain, the Leader, the One who goes before leading the way – bringing many sons to the very same glory that God has crowned Him with!

Can it not be seen by this that in the beginning God committed to Adam the wisdom, power, and responsibility to *RULE* over the kingdoms around him? Before him lay the whole earth, the seas, the heavens, all filled and swarming with creatures, myriad life forms, each declaring by type and shadow that man was to exercise dominion over every realm BENEATH AND ABOVE that God had created, and as creation bowed to his godly mind, and the dominion in his spirit, that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image of God was but a prefiguring of the day when a whole FIRSTFRUIT COMPANY OF SONS IN GOD’S IMAGE would reign over THE REGIONS BENEATH, and over ALL THE EARTH, and over THE HEAVENS ABOVE until everything everywhere, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, would be in submission to their godly minds and wills.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion...” (Gen. 1:26). That man would bear the image of God and have dominion over all things is the first announcement of God’s intention regarding man and the first announcement of His purpose; and locked up in that wonderful declaration is a universe of meaning that does not reach the eye and that the mind has never understood. Furthermore, after God announced that man should have dominion over all realms, He then commanded the man, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply (reproduce the image of God), and replenish the earth and SUBDUE it” (Gen. 1:28).

The word “subdue” here is the Hebrew word KABASH meaning “to tread down; conquer; subjugate; bring into bondage.” Allow me to stir up your pure minds to think for a moment – what was there in the earth that needed to be TREADED DOWN, CONQUERED, SUBJUGATED, and BROUGHT INTO BONDAGE to Adam? When the Lord gave Adam this command to TREAD DOWN and CONQUER, *sin* had not yet entered into man’s experience, nor any of sin’s results. There was no sin, sickness, trouble, sorrow nor limitation. There was no death. What, then, was there for Adam to conquer? Now, notice further the responsibility laid upon Adam in Gen. 2:15: “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” The word “keep” here is the Hebrew word SHAMAR which means “to guard,” as you can see in chapter 3:24 where this same word is used of the Cherubim which God placed at the east of the Garden to *guard* it from man’s presumptuous entrance after he sinned. “So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to KEEP (or guard) the way of the tree of life.”

It seems to me that if Adam was to guard the Garden against something, there surely must have been things that were not in harmony with man in God's image! Would not divine sense, or human sense, or common sense indicate that if Adam was to tread down and conquer and subjugate things upon earth, there were things that were overtly hostile to him. It should be crystal clear that we have had a false notion if we have been among those who assume that in the beginning EVERYTHING WAS HARMONIOUS in God's creation. How could they have been when we read of one, that ancient Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, who was already in the earth *in the beginning*, of whom it is written, "The devil sinneth *from the beginning*... he was a murderer *from the beginning*, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a falsehood, he speaks what is natural to him; for he is a liar *and the father of lies* (Jn. 3:8; Jn. 8:44, Amplified Bible).

I must confess that I used to believe, as many folks do, that in the beginning Adam walked upon earth surrounded by the beasts of the field – the lions, tigers, dinosaurs, cattle, dogs, snakes, scorpions, and creeping things – and that these were so naturally peaceful and docile that Adam was able to romp and tussle playfully with them all, without hostility or fear. Not so! These are but typical representations, figures of spiritual things, but the principles in the earthly things must correspond in nature to the spiritual things, Adam was told to *subdue the* animal kingdom, to conquer and *subjugate the* fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and everything that moves upon the earth! If the tigers just naturally ambled up to Adam, wagging their friendly tails, affectionately licking his face, what need would there have been to subdue them? If the serpents were not poisonous nor the scorpions dangerous, why would it have been necessary for Adam to guard against them or tread them down? If the lions were not wild or ravenous, how could Adam conquer and tame them? If the dogs were not ferocious, why the command to subjugate them?

And beyond all this, it is evident that in nature all creatures are not savage by nature. But even the domestic animals must be trained and guided. Proofs abound on every hand that God's creation needs rule, like "the horse, or the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee" (Ps. 32:9). Good as the ox is to labor, he needs a lord; man, therefore, is given to subdue and guide him. Dogs, tame and friendly as they may be, need a leash and the restraining hand and command of man. Have weak children never been knocked down and injured by friendly dogs? Can it not be seen by this that God committed to Adam the wisdom, power, and responsibility to RULE over the kingdoms around him? Before him lay the whole earth, the seas, the heavens, all swarming with creatures, myriad life forms, each declaring by type and shadow that man was to exercise dominion over every realm BENEATH AND ABOVE that God had created, and as creation bowed in obedience to his godly mind, and the dominion in his spirit, that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a Son in the image of God was but a prefiguring of the day when a whole FIRST-FRUIT COMPANY OF SONS IN GOD'S IMAGE would reign over THE REGIONS BENEATH, and over ALL THE EARTH, and over THE HEAVENS ABOVE until everything everywhere, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, would be in submission to their godly minds and omnipotent wills.

Ah! let us meditate deeply upon the power and authority that God has given to the body of Christ. I make no apology for declaring to you the truth that each and every creature of earth typifies a reality in the realm of SPIRIT – good or bad, positive or negative. This can be seen dearly in the words of Jesus when He says in Lk. 10:17-19, 'And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give you power to TREAD ON SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS, and over *all the* power of the enemy.'

Spake He of the serpents and scorpions of the fields? Nay, my brother, He spake rather of SPIRITS possessing the nature typified by serpents and scorpions, hidden and cunning, slithering about in the lowest realms of man's earthiness, in the thoughts and desires and ambitions of the carnal mind, full of deadly venom. There is a revelation in all nature, in light and darkness, summer and winter, rain and drought, in fruits and harvest, in storms and sunshine. There is a revelation in the lives of men, yea, even in beasts and birds and creeping things, each saying something *to us*, and *of us*. Every law and wonder of nature speaks to our souls of other higher things, and as the growth of seeds was to the spiritual eye of Paul a witness of the development of the CHRIST LIFE WITHIN US, so the serpents and scorpions and beasts and birds of earth and heaven above witnessed of higher things to Jesus, all figuring some of the countless forms of NATURES.

The dove is the well known figure of meekness, purity, perception, love and constancy, and so was a fit symbol for the HOLY SPIRIT who at Christ's baptism came 'like a dove' and abode upon Him. The other fowls of heaven, as the law of Moses shows us, clean and unclean, each bespeak a kind or quality of nature, expressing those characteristics that originate in the spirit realm. Hence, in scripture unclean birds are a type of evil natures, as John the Revelator shows in Rev. 18:2, 'And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of DEVILS, and the hold of every FOUL SPIRIT, and a cage of every UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD.' I know the Lamb, the meek and sacrificial nature of the Son of God, which is oppressed and afflicted, and yet openeth not its mouth; but I have known also the nature of the beast, wild and ravenous, that spirit, so obvious in the world, which stomps and rends and breaks in pieces and devours, of whom Peter warns us, saying, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8).

Man was created for the Holy Spirit to indwell, to bear the image of God, but not all spirit is *holy spirit*, and all these *unclean spirits--the* spirit of the Devil, and the myriad spirits which characterize the kingdom of darkness find expression in man as he FAILS TO EXERCISE DOMINION OVER THEM. There is one more thought that should be mentioned here. The *birds of heaven* represent those spirits which have to do with the UNDERSTANDING, the mind of man. 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world *hath blinded the minds of them* which believe not...' (II Cor. 4:3-4). The beasts of the earth are those spirits affecting the WILL of man. Serpents, scorpions, and the *creeping things of earth* represent those spirits connected with the EMOTIONS of man. 'And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name they shall cast out devils... they shall take up serpents' (Mk. 16:21-23). Then follows the lowest realm of all – the dragons, fish, and *sea creatures*, those spirits finding lodging and expression in the BODIES of men.

All these, hostile to the image of God in man, Adam was commanded to SUBDUE, TREAD DOWN, CONQUER AND SUBJUGATE! The Spirit today is teaching us that when the Bible speaks of something being 'under our feet,' this is a symbolic phrase meaning that the thing had been put in subjection to us, we rule over it, it does not rule over us. We find that there have been so many attitudes and dispositions which have ruled within us – and as His Kingdom takes its rightful place in our lives, these are subdued and brought to naught in the soul-realm we have the dominant spirit of self-will, impulses of evil which rise up out of the heart, emotions of fear, anger, hostility, bitterness, hurt, pride, etc. which usurp unlawful sway over our lives. In the body realm we have the fleshly appetites and desires, carnal passions. And then there are those religious spirits of ironclad dogmas and creeds, traditions, sectarianism, and commandments of men.

“Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Lk. 10:19). The promise belongs to YOU and to ME, for it is the Kingdom of God that the Lord has given authority and power over the power of Satan’s kingdom. It is a wonderful day for the believer when he becomes conscious that God NOW GIVES HIM DOMINION in Jesus Christ, that he may become an overcomer over ALL!

I pointed out in a previous article on this subject that the original serpent in Eden *was the Devil and Satan*. The preachers are always telling us that the serpent in the Garden was one of these long, slender reptiles that have backbones and ribs and scale on the outside of their bodies. Numerous pictures have been sketched of the snake dangling from a tree limb, conversing with Eve. But the inspired Word of the omniscient Creator contradicts the uninspired word of the tradition-ridden theologians! John the Revelator stood transfixed in the visions of God on Patmos and beheld by the splendor of the scene which unfolded before his wondering eyes as “the great dragon was cast out, *that old serpent*, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, *that old serpent*, WHICH IS THE DEVIL, AND SATAN, and bound him a thousand years” (Rev. 12:9; 20:1-2).

Here Satan is called “that old serpent.” The word “old,” as we have noted, is from the Greek word *archaios* which means ORIGINAL or PRIMEVAL. “Primeval” means FROM THE FIRST AGE OR AGES. Phillip’s translation reads, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key of the pit and huge chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, the SERPENT OF ANCIENT DAYS, who IS both the Devil and Satan...” Another version states, “And he seized the dragon, the ORIGINAL SERPENT, WHO IS the Devil and Satan.” The Amplified Bible says, “And he gripped and overpowered the dragon, that OLD SERPENT OF PRIMEVAL TIMES, WHO IS the Devil and Satan.” MAN says that a fallen angel, Satan, somehow got into the serpent and spoken through its mouth, but GOD declares that THAT ORIGINAL SERPENT I-S T-H-E D-E-V-I-L A-N-D S-A-T-A-N!

## **THE SERPENT’S MEAT**

The ancient Serpent, having beguiled Eve, became the recipient of the *first curse* in history. Most students of the Word know that man was cursed, the woman was cursed, the ground was cursed, the earth was cursed, but few remember that before all this the Serpent was cursed. The curse is first mentioned in Gen. 3:14. “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, THOU ART CURSED above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.”

It will prove most instructive to note God’s order of speaking, and then the judgment, or sentence passed. The Lord called unto the man, inquiring, “Where are thou?” And Adam answered that they had hidden themselves, because of their shame as they realized they were naked. Then God said to the woman, “What is this that thou hast done?” And Eve replied that the serpent had beguiled her, and she did eat of the forbidden fruit. Then God spoke to the serpent, and said at once, “Because thou hast done this, THOU ART CURSED. Most of us have thought that he was cursed long before this! In the passing of the judgment-sentence, God began with the serpent, then to the woman, and ended with the man, reversing the order from when He first spoke to them. In the curse to the serpent, He said, “Upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” The serpent, being called before the tribunal of the Almighty, received a two-fold curse, recorded here in strong figures of speech which sternly emphasize the power of the judgment: UPON YOUR BELLY SHALL YOU GO and DUST YOU SHALL EAT.

Science will tell you that snakes which crawl upon the ground do not eat dust. They eat frogs, insects, rats, birds, rabbits, fish and eggs. When God inspired Moses to write Genesis the latter certainly knew that snakes do not eat dust. These terms are symbolic and spiritual. This is not speaking of a literal snake dangling from a tree limb in some ancient paradise. The serpent in Eden had not only the faculty of speech, but reasoned upon matters relating to God and man; he speaks of good and evil as though possessed of a thorough knowledge of the laws of the Kingdom of God; he argues against the divine prohibition; steals upon the woman with the most alluring subterfuge, and finally persuades her to disobey the commandment of the Lord. No mere animal, it is evident, could be capable of what is here attributed to the serpent! Furthermore, loss of speech was not part of the curse; if the serpent in Eden were a literal snake his descendants crawling around on this planet today should be able to talk!

This is a symbol and the Deceiver, Satan, that old Serpent, the Devil, has to eat dust! What is the dust? Not the dirt of the ground. Not even the dust of the frogs, rabbits, field mice, etc. In the passing of the judgment-sentence, God began with the Serpent and said, "DUST shalt thou eat." Then to the man, God said, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for DUST THOU ART, and UNTO DUST shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). So that first Adam, fleshly, sinning, and cursed is declared by the counsel of the Lord God to BE DUST. Said the wise man, "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that *we are dust*" (Ps. 103:14). That we are DUST! Not very flattering, not very complimentary, is it? This great gob of mud called man, strutting his superior know-it-all attitude even in the face of the Almighty! Dust! Our FRAME! DUST! What for value is a frame of dust? HE remembers that *we are dust* whether we do or not.

Words are helpless, hopeless, and inadequate when necessity demands that we explain the things pertaining to the spiritual realm. Only in spirit can we understand the incomprehensible. The spirit of wisdom and revelation from God must enlighten the eyes of our understanding. Here we have a word picture describing the relationship which exists between "that old Serpent the Devil" and the realm of death. Just as "dust" speaks of a waterless soil, so the realm of the Serpent is separated from the realm of the Holy Spirit. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground, of the physical, carnal, earthly sense-realm, and as such, became the rightful food for the Serpent. This means that the Serpent – the negative spirit realm – now finds its base of operation and fulfillment of its nature, desires, and purposes in and through mankind. By the very nature of things, when the Serpent eats, he seeks to SATISFY HIS APPETITE and GRATIFY HIS DESIRES. Originally he found pleasure and purpose in higher things and had access to higher realms (of spirit), but the curse of "eating dust" limits the object of his devouring. Today, the sphere of Satan's activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of the earth. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). As the creatures of the forest are constantly alert lest some other animal of prey catch them unawares and devour them, so are we admonished to be sober and vigilant – for as sure as the snake swallows the rabbit, so certain is it that Satan seeks to DEVOUR YOU! Your dust, your earthiness, your flesh, your carnal Adam-man-nature is the Serpent's meat! By feeding upon the dust-man who loves earthly things, Satan devours him – makes him part of himself It means your whole being swallowed up into the negative spirit-realm, captive to and expressing the negative energy of that realm. This gives fresh and dear meaning to the statement of the apostle, "The whole world lieth *in the Wicked One*" (I Jn. 5:19). The whole world has been consumed – is captive to and living out of the NEGATIVE REALM! Who can deny it?

The message is clear Adam and those belonging to him are of the earth, earthy. The Holy Spirit bears witness: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam

was made a quickening spirit The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that they are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (I Cor. 15:45-49). The Amplified Bible reads, ‘The first man was from out of the earth, made of dust earth-minded; the second man is the Lord from out of heaven. Now those who are made of the dust are like him who was first made of the dust – earth-minded; and as is the Man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven – heaven-minded. And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, so shall we and so *let us* bear also the image of the Man of heaven.’

Ray Prinzing has aptly written: “The curse was on the serpent, for deceiving, and the seed of the serpent still carries that curse, and the nature of the deception that caused it. There are two seeds which are spoken of, the woman’s seed, and the serpent’s seed. One bespeaks of the positive realm, the other bespeaks of the negative. However, it is to be pointed out that if the woman’s seed has a literal fulfillment, personified in a man, and a people, so also the serpent’s seed has to be literally fulfilled in a man, and a people. A seed line that is evidenced in those ‘after his own kind.’ That the serpent’s seed was also expressed through people is evident when we read that Cain ‘was of that wicked one’ (I Jn. 3:12). This is more explicit in the Greek text, where the word ‘of’ is ‘ek’, literally OUT OF the wicked one. Then Jesus spoke of some, saying, ‘Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do’ (Jn. 8:44). If they are of the same spirit, then they will do the lusts of that spirit realm. Obviously Cain, who was OUT OF the wicked one, received the curse reaffirmed on him, for he slew the truth and propagated a false system. Righteous Abel fell victim to the cursed one, for a time, but there is One, whose blood now speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, and through Him victory comes.

“It is not the *creature*, but the *negative spirit force* motivating the creature, against whom we take dominion. When the ‘spirit of the world’ is now energizing to disobedience, there is an immediate conflict between that spirit, and the Spirit of God dwelling within us. In some this is but a small thing, and the ‘contrary spirit’ is held in control by their normal, congenial disposition. But in *others, this serpent spirit is so aggressive*, that when you walk into their presence, or they come into yours, there is an immediate clash without either one saying a word. Our warfare is not with the various races on earth today, nor yet with men of our own lineage, but we do contest the spirit of the deceiver that motivates them. It is not the man or woman – but there are natures, spirits, curses that remain in the earth today, that the CALLED-OUT-OF-THE-LORD are facing in this conflict of the ages. That is why we need to be filled with the Spirit of God, lest we become carnal and start fighting flesh on a carnal realm” – end quote.

Whenever we live in the earthly life of Adam, we are earthly and also on earth and fall into the sphere of Satan’s activity, becoming the object of his devouring, drawn deeper and deeper into that negative realm. Dear saints, you wonder why Satan tempts you, pressures you, torments you, and you have constant battles with that realm? It is because you are still bearing at least a portion of that image of the first Adam, the man of dust. And dust is the Serpent’s meat. He has the power to eat on you as long as you have that nature of Adam in you. On the other hand, whenever we live in the heavenly life of Christ, the identity of the image of God, we are heavenly and in heaven. Thus, we TRANSCEND SATAN’S SPHERE of activity and are no longer subject to his devouring. This is the *son realm* where no dragon abides, for he is cast out of this heaven where the manchild reigns! Would you, dear reader, like to starve that old Serpent, the Devil? Then get rid of the dust! Stop bearing the image of Adam, renounce that mistaken identity, and as Paul exhorts, “Let us bear the image of the Man of heaven.” When you have been completely transformed into the image of Jesus Christ, then you will have nothing in you for Satan to feed upon, nothing to satisfy his appetite or gratify his desires. And it is there that *death* will be

conquered! As a brother once wrote: “I can tell you, beloved, that already Satan is finding short rations and skimpy meals in some of God’s sons that are pressing on to the High Calling. Victory after victory they are gaining, because they are crucifying that earthy nature. They are letting the Christ come forth in His fullness in their lives, and beginning to bear more and more of His blessed image. They have no fear of Satan or of his weapons. They could walk through the midst of hell itself, and no devil could touch them. Thieves, murderers, drunkards, gamblers, and harlots cannot contaminate them. Filthy lucre cannot tempt them, apostate religion cannot attract them, nor fleshly methods or soulish ministry ensnare them. They are Overcomers, witnessing to the world of the image and power of the Living Christ! This is the purpose of God for His sons! It is for you, beloved... believe, and enter in!” – end quote.

Can we not see that the more *we live and walk in the Spirit*, the less we are disturbed by the agitations of the soulish realm, or the shenanigans of the flesh? Caught in the lowlands of the flesh, one is an easy prey for the serpents and scorpions and creeping things which inhabit that low realm. Rising up to walk in the Holy Spirit a new perspective is found, flesh is both seen and recognized for what it is, and left behind, while the horizons of the Spirit beckon onward, and upward, in the realm of the heavenly where no dragon dwells. So many of God’s precious people dwell in the dust realm, and, as someone has said, there is no need to describe at length the “dust storms.” We have all faced them far too often – the jealousies, the envyings, the back-bitings, gossipings, anger, agitations, lusts, fears, bitterness, strivings, and all the other expressions of the carnal nature, the realm where the Serpent dwells and eats to the full!

### **UPON YOUR BELLY YOU SHALL GO...**

It’s not news to any of us that we are in the midst of a war between two kingdoms: the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Neither is it news to us that WE are the battleground! More particularly, the major focal point of the battle is our mind. There the battle rages at its greatest intensity, because the war is a struggle for our hearts and loyalties – the very souls and lives and beings of men. This fact is highly relevant to the subject I am dealing with in this message – the Serpent that dwells within us. It is that force within us that opposes the ways of God in our lives and tries to keep us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

This brings us back to the curse laid upon the Serpent in the beginning: “Upon your belly shall you go.” This judgment speaks of infinitely more than a literal snake slithering along upon his literal belly, just as the word “heel” speaks of infinitely more than a location on the foot, and the word “head” speaks of something greater far than a mere physical head in the words of the next verse: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy HEAD, and thou shall bruise His HEEL” (Gen. 3:15). So, “upon your belly you shall go,” paints for the eyes of our understanding the picture of the Serpent crawling in humiliation, prostration, limitation, and subjection upon the ground. The Psalmist uses a similar expression in Ps. 44:25, “For our soul is bowed down *to the dust our belly cleaveth unto the earth.*” Such denotes a prolonged prostration and a depth of subjection as could never be conveyed or expressed in normal terms.

The very fact that God states that the Serpent was now to crawl upon his belly, which obviously he had not done before, reveals that there was a *descending* from one realm to another, from a greater to a lesser, from a higher to a lower. Moving on his belly limits the sphere of the Serpent’s activity, now he can only creep along the ground. Previously he had access to loftier realms, his sphere of activity extended to higher domains – exalted realms of pure spirit expression – but he is now lowered into the dust-realm, into the world of man, and confined to

the earthy, restricted to action upon and expression through THE MAN OF THE DUST How truly this accounts for the words of the apostle in Eph. 2:2, "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, THE S-P-I-R-I-T THAT N-O-W WORKETH I-N THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE."

Ah, yes, this evil *spirit* is IN MAN! When the serpent was lowered into the dust realm, man became the base of operation for his activity. I do not hesitate to declare to you, my beloved, that you will find Satan operative in NO OTHER REALM in the whole universe! You do not meet the Devil in rocks, trees, fish, mountains, rivers, clouds, birds, nor on far-away planets, in distant galaxies, in flying saucers, nor in any other object or location outside of man. You don't have to worry about the Devil stealing the keys to your car and driving off with it! But you may have to worry about *the devil in men* doing so! You need not fear the Devil walking into your living room with a shot gun and blowing your brains out, but *the devil in men* has done so tens of thousands of times! The Devil as an invisible spirit, or a hideous creature in a funny red suit will never try to seduce your wife, but *the devil in some man* may surely attempt it. I must tell you frankly that I have not had any problem with that Devil out there someplace, but I have had a great deal of difficulty with that Devil whose countenance I behold when I look in the mirror!

Can we not see that under the curse God *limited Satan to the dust of the earth*, to the realm of the First Adam – the man of dust? Many have seen the connection between Satan and the carnal mind and, not understanding by revelation the *origins* of these things, have assumed that the carnal mind is Satan. The truth, however, runs deeper than that – it goes to the *spirit* of the mind. Through the curse Satan became one with man, the energy force of human nature, the spirit of the carnal mind, slithering about in the lowest realms of man's earthiness, in the crooked thoughts, selfish desires, distorted emotions, in the illusions and delusions of the sense-realm of the world of appearances, and in all the corrupt motions of the flesh. May God graciously give us enlightenment to see that included with Satan is the kingdom of Satan; therefore, since Satan is in man, the kingdom of Satan is also in man. Satan is the prince of this world, so the world too is included in the kingdom of Satan and is also in man. *Man* is the very center of the OLD CREATION in every aspect. If one would meet Satan, there is no need for him to go to any special place – by going to man he will meet Satan. If he desires to find the kingdom of Satan, there is no need to go to some distant planet, nor to some far-away hell by going to man he will encounter the kingdom of Satan. It is the same with the world. Within man there is world, sin, Satan, death, flesh, the carnal mind – all that pertains to the negative realm, the kingdom of darkness. The first Adam is not a small man! On the contrary, he is a big, all-inclusive man! The whole vast realm of reality, positive *and* negative, is CENTRALIZED AND PERSONIFIED IN MAN.

The reason why so many fail when it comes to the wiles of the Devil is that they don't really want to *resist* him. You see, Satan never appears as a monster with horns and a forked tail, carrying a pitchfork. HE COMES IN YOUR THOUGHTS! HE APPEARS IN YOUR DESIRES! HE COMES IN YOUR IMAGINATIONS AND REASONINGS! Some people are always saying, "I hate the Devil." Well, you may as well say, "I hate myself." One day I asked God, "God, why don't you just kill the Devil and let it be over with?" You will never guess the answer I received. The Lord said, "If I kill the Devil, YOU WILL DIE? And verily I say unto you, Except a man hate his own life, and will count all things but loss, and reckon himself indeed to be crucified with Christ, he will never know victory over the Wicked One."

You will find men and women who claim to hate the Devil and all he stands for, but no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. In so doing he gives place to the Devil. It

is the flesh that lusts against the Spirit! The flesh unceasingly wars against the King and His Kingdom that is within you. Just as the religious leaders of the Jews cried, 'We will not have this man to rule over us,' so the flesh, your flesh, and my flesh, desperately striving to perpetuate the corrupt nature of Adam within, would push Christ from the throne of the heart and reign in his stead. The energy force and motivating power of the flesh is the ancient Serpent of Eden. Multitudes do not understand this mystery, and few will proclaim this truth. The sacred mysteries of God are revealed only by the Holy Spirit of Truth. This is one of those mysteries which I unfold before you today. It is never our striving against the evils of the world, the flesh and the Devil that gains any victory at all; the almighty Christ within us would destroy them all in one smashing defeat; but we have the wretched habit of refusing to yield our hearts to the King. Christ alone can put the adversary under foot and forever bruise his head! Our responsibility is to resist the Devil and **YIELD OURSELVES UNTO GOD THAT HE MAY REIGN.**

Praise God! The heavens declare that God has a man – ORPHIUCHUS the serpent crusher HERCULES the strong man, the mighty man, the valiant champion who slays the three-headed monster and crushes the head of the dragon. It is a glorious thing to see that in the unchanging stars of the heavens and the shining Signs placed by God in the night sky, we have a gallery of divine truth, a portrait of God's TRIUMPHANT CORPORATE MAN, THE CHRIST OF GOD. Ah, He's a wonder – this CHRIST WITHIN! Just as surely as Satan is incarnated in mankind, so is the living Christ of God enthroned within the saints! The greater, grander, transcendent truth is, beloved, that THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU! The Christ that we preach is nigh at hand. 'He is not far from every one of us,' the apostle Paul says. 'Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it: The Word (Christ is NIGH THEE, EVEN IN THY MOUTH, AND IN THY HEART' (Rom. 10:6-8). 'Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, today, and for ever.' Unless we are sure that He is unchanged and unchangeable, that He is right here WITHIN US in every turn of life as really as He was in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, unless we live daily in the power of this, our life will never be pure, we will never see His works, we will never know His quickening, we will never conquer sin and death, and he brought to the Father. Therefore, why strain your eyes to pierce the clouds? The cloud that hides Christ from us is in ourselves, in our love of self, in our blind adherence to traditions, in our devotion to the outer world of appearances. Let us ask God to send the living wind of His Spirit from the innermost part of our being, that bloweth where it listeth, to sweep it aside, and then we will see Christ *as our life* at every step of the journey. You can never overcome your seducing enemy by your own wisdom or strength. Christ alone can put him under foot and forever braise his head. **AND CHRIST IS YOUR LIFE!** Arise, O ye mighty ones, and conquer – for the MIGHTY ONE I-S W-I-T-H-I-N Y-O-U!

In Genesis 3:1 we read, "Now the *serpent* was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The word serpent in our language comes from the Latin *serpo* meaning "to creep," but the Hebrew term has no relation to the form or motion of any external attribute of a serpent. The word used here for serpent is the Hebrew word NACHASH which is a primitive root meaning "to hiss or whisper." It, furthermore, means "to search or scrutinize closely, to find out by experiment, to practice divination, augury, incantation or enchantment." According to Webster incantation means "the chanting of special words or a formula in magic spells or rites," Incantation may speak in addition of hypnotism. The Serpent, then, is a HISSER, a WHISPERER, a DIVINER, an EXPERIMENTER, an ENCHANTER, a MAGICIAN, and a HYPNOTIST! And, I might add, so is the carnal mind!

In Isaiah 8:19 the Holy Spirit has recorded for our learning a most significant exhortation. “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead?” The same inspired prophet penned a prophecy concerning Jerusalem under the prophetic term “Ariel,” saying, “Thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out *of the ground*, and thy speech shall *blow out of the dust*, and thy voice shall be... out *of the ground*, and thy speech shall *whisper out of the dust*” (Isa. 29:4). Here we read of spirits that “peep and mutter,” which speak “out of the ground” and “whisper out of the dust.” Is this not reminiscent of the Serpent in Eden, the hisser and whisperer, calling to Eve and speaking hypnotically from the dust realm?

Whisperings out of the dust – there is something sinister in the thought, but beyond the evil that is suggested, there is also the thought of subtle *suggestion* – a *whispered* temptation – something so subtle one could wonder from whence it comes, a word so low and so whispered as to be almost imperceptible —or is it a *thought*, a desire, a command from an *inner nature*? These whisperings ARISE FROM THE DUST OF THE CARNAL MIND, OUT OF THE GROUND OF THE ADAM NATURE where lies the Serpent! It is significant to note that “the serpent was more subtle than any beast *of the field* which the Lord God had made” (Gen. 3:1). The contrast is drawn between the *Garden* and the field. Adam lived and walked in the Garden, and his responsibility was to “dress and keep it.” *Garden* is from the Hebrew GAN, meaning a fenced or protected area. It was, furthermore, cultivated and tended. Field is from the Hebrew SADEH, indicating that which is spread out; flat land; wild farm or wilderness. The field where the Serpent dwelt was an unfenced and uncultivated area. This field bespeaks of the mind of the flesh – the unbroken, unharnessed, unbridled, untended, unplowed, unprocessed, undisciplined, unprotected sphere from whence the Serpent “whispered out of the dust” – the subtle voice whispering enticingly from the unexplored wild lands of the FLESH! This whisper, this tantalizing hiss is communicated through the thoughts, reasoning, desires, passions, plans, hopes, fantasies and cravings of the CARNAL MIND! In the first age of Adam’s creation, God used the Serpent to reveal what lay dormant, undiscovered and uncultivated within man’s innermost being – a CUNNING NATURE – EGO – SELFHOOD independent of God. If by the grace of God you can see the truth of this, you will then plainly discern in all the propensities of the carnal mind the CREEPING, SLITHERING, WHISPERING, DIVINING, ENCHANTING, HYPNOTIZING SERPENT OF EDEN!

Before pursuing this thought, we do well to consider also the word translated “subtle” in this passage. “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field.” The Hebrew word for “naked” in Gen. 2:25 is AROM. The English word that describes the Serpent’s nature in Gen. 3:1 is “subtel,” and the Hebrew word here is ARUM. Both AROM and ARUM are derived from ARAM which means “to be *bare*, to be *cunning*” Hebrew scholars say that originally these three words were the same word – ARAM. Now, why should the expression “naked” and the term “cunning” be the same word? What is the connection? We can answer with only one word: SEDUCTIVE. By way of illustration, a naked woman may be a *seductive* woman. There is a close connection between the two. The ideas of naked and *cunning* come together in the word SEDUCTIVE or SEDUCE. Can we not see by this that the Serpent was actually more *seductive* than anything in the bestial realm? Ah! the mind of the flesh is, in truth, the most *seductive* thing in the world!

In this connection a friend has written, “There was a tree set in the midst of the garden called the Tree of Life. God had given man the right to eat of that tree and in eating of it, man would enter into eternal life. The tragedy that we have seen is, however, that man did *indeed* eat of that tree – for if one will read carefully he will find that the Tree of Knowledge of which man ate was also in the midst of the garden, which can only mean that the Tree of Life and the Tree of

Knowledge are ONE AND THE SELFSAME TREE. The Tree of Life, however, is the essence of the truth and the Tree of Knowledge is the form of truth!" Here is the key – form vs. *essence*. It is just the difference between the letter of the Word and the *spirit* of the Word; between *law* and grace, between *ritual* and *reality*, between *doctrine* and *life*, between *shadow* and *substance*, between *facts* and truth. And vast multitudes of Adam's descendants today have not learned the difference between these two trees, or between the voice of the Lord God in the Garden and the hissing of the Serpent from the field. So many of the Lord's people have not to this day discerned between flesh and spirit, between the letter that killeth and the spirit that giveth life, between the external ritual and the internal reality, between the outward shadow and the inward substance, between facts and truth, or between form and essence. Jesus never said, "Ye shall know the *facts* and the *facts* shall make you free." He stated, rather, "Ye shall know the TRUTH!" And what a difference there is! Facts are merely the FORM OF TRUTH, the husk of the kernel, truth held by the carnal mind in the intellect as dead-letter doctrines, laws, creeds, forms, rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, works, activities, etc. – all figures *representing* or *standing for* truth and reality, but within themselves containing NO LIFE. "The letter *killeth*," the apostle assures us. "The spirit giveth *life*." "The words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit* and they are *life*," saith the Lord. Jesus proclaimed, "I am the *truth*, I am the *life*" The Serpent said, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened!" That was a *fact* – and "ye shall be as GODS, knowing good and evil" was also a *fact*, for after Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree, the Lord God Himself verified the Serpent's statement as being a *fact*. "Behold, the man is become AS ONE OF US to know good and evil," God said (Gen. 3:22).

Again a friend has aptly written, "In *form*, then, the serpent had the truth. He had, in fact, drawn on the very Word of God itself to tempt Eve, for the Lord had said, "I will create man in My own image. ' What the serpent failed to reveal, however, was the *essence* of the form which is that INDEPENDENTLY OF GOD man can *never* be a partaker of the divine nature! This should have been a self-evident truth, but man failed to see it. He was deceived by the very form of truth – taking the Word of God which had promised to make him in the image of God, receiving it as a *doctrine* rather than a revelation, as form rather than life, and was thereby brought to ruin, cheated out of the very thing he sought. Man became a god, alright, in the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – but he became a god in the wrong realm, for at the same time that God acknowledged man's 'deity' He also CAST HIM FROM THE GARDEN – cast him from the heavenly realm – and set him in the earth 'to till the ground' from which he was taken. Musing upon this incident years later, the prophet David wrote, 'What is man that Thou art mindful of him. . . for Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands... ' It was as a god that man had dominion, but a further reading of this passage reveals that the works of the hands of God over which man was given dominion under the first covenant was limited to the *earth realm*. Thus, we find that Adam truly became a 'god' – as the serpent promised and the Lord confirmed – but he was not an heavenly god. He became, rather, the 'god of this world' (1 Cor. 4:4)" – end quote.

The Serpent did not preach truth, he preached facts. Form apart from *essence*. Dead doctrine about *God* instead of participation through union with *God*. Man came into *knowledge*, but he lost his *life*. In fact, man became a partaker of that wisdom possessed by the Serpent, the *wisdom of this world*. It is significant to find that in the contrast of the wisdom of the world, as over against the wisdom of God, James says, "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15). This is always the Serpent's approach to us. EARTHY – that which appeals to the flesh, the natural senses. SENSUAL – literally, soulish, that which appeals to the ego and the mind. DEVILISH – that which touches the human spirit realm to defile with the negative spirit of the world. But, thank God! there is also "the wisdom that is from

above” which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

## THE SEED OF THE SERPENT

“The course of bad men leads through darkness dim; they cannot see what makes them stumble. The course of good men, like a ray of dawn, shines on and on to the full light of day” (Prov. 4:18-19, Moffatt). The burning truth that lies hidden in these words of inspiration is borne home to our hearts with ever increasing power as we see the lengthening shadows falling ominously about us heralding the end of the age. It is not without purpose that the Holy Spirit has been directing our thoughts and bending our inmost nature toward the seeking of those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, an inward drive none can know or understand but those elect saints who have been BORN FROM ABOVE. All about us we see the paths of wicked men leading them into ever increasing darkness while on the other hand the path of the just, shining more and more with the revealing light of truth, inspires our hearts to sing that gladsome song, “The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek Him: your heart shall live forever. *All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee.* For the kingdom is the Lord’s: and He is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship: ALL THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE DUST shall bow before Him. A SEED shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. THEY shall come, and shall DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS unto a people that shall be born” (Ps. 22:26-31).

Several important truths are revealed in these verses of Scripture. The Holy Spirit witnesses that “A-L-L the ends of the world shall remember (their former estate) and turn unto the Lord,” also, “A-L-L they that go down into the DUST shall bow before Him,” and then the means by which this marvelous work shall be brought to pass, “a SEED shall serve Him... and THEY SHALL DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

This thought of “the seed” carries us back to the beginning, when the Lord announced to the fallen man and woman, and to the serpent, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15). “Between thy seed and her seed” – that is between thy posterity and her posterity, for *seed*, as used here, means *children* or *offspring*. There are two seeds spoken of, the woman’s seed, and the serpent’s seed. By the seed of the woman is meant the positive realm, and the seed of the serpent bespeaks the negative. The great soul-gripping truth is that as the woman’s seed has a literal fulfillment personified in a MAN and a PEOPLE, so also the serpent’s seed must be literally fulfilled in a *man* and a *people*. The law has been from the beginning that every living thing reproduces “after his kind.”

In the Bible one can trace a whole line of righteous men from Abel to Christ, and our Lord came into the world of that lineage. That the serpent’s seed was also expressed through people is evident when we read in I Jn. 3:12, “Not as Cain, who *WAS OF* that wicked one, and slew his brother.” This is more explicit in the Greek text, where the word “of” is “ek,” literally *OUT OF* the wicked one. The Spirit has provided abundant evidence of the serpent’s seed in the Word of God. Jesus told a group of self-righteous Pharisees, “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).

In Genesis chapter four we find the story of how Cain, after his offering was rejected by the Lord, said to his brother, "Let us go out to the field." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother, and killed him. And the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground." Cain told his lie because it was his nature to do so, "he speaketh of his own," it came out of himself. No one told him to lie, indeed, no one *TAUGHT* him to lie. No one tricked him so that he would have to tell a lie, "for FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come FROM WITHIN and defile the man" (Mk. 7:21-23), and Cain spoke out of his own state of being which he inherited from the wicked one. Cain *WAS OF* that wicked one. The seed of the serpent was in him, and he manifested after his kind. "In this the children of God are manifest, *and* THE CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL: Whosoever doeth not righteousness IS NOT OF GOD (that is, IS of the Devil), neither he that loveth not his brother" (I Jn. 3:10). Every day we are learning that the natural man has no power to resist evil. Man himself is inherently evil, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, the seed of the serpent lies within.

The story is told of an aged learned minister of the Gospel in a certain town. One morning, while taking his usual walk by the side of a river, a young man who had been far away attending a distant university, where he had become an atheist, who used to sit under this good man's ministry, and knew his habits thought he would have some fun with the "Preacher" as he called him. At the university he had imbibed the teachings of some Ingersoll or some similar child of the devil, and he came back full of his infidelity. Meeting the Preacher, he said, "Good morning, Preacher." "Good morning, son," said the minister. "Preacher I have just had bad news," said the young man. "Well, what is it?" asked the Preacher. "One of your great friends is dead," replied the youth. "Oh, and who is he?" asked the old man. "It is the Devil," and he laughed long and loudly. But there was no laugh on the face of the Preacher. Putting his hands upon the young man's shoulder and looking straight into his face he said, "Poor fatherless child, what will become of you now that your father is dead?"

Ah, there may be a bit of humor in the quick wit of the old Preacher, but the truth is unmistakable. The serpent's seed! The world is full of them. When John the Baptist called the Pharisees and Sadducees a "generation of vipers," he was calling them little serpents issuing out of the belly of the great Serpent – sons of the Devil! Being of the same mother carries its importance, imparts of her traits, etc. But being of the same father brings in the nature of the blood line.

This is what got Jesus in so much trouble with the Jews, when He said, "I and My Father are one" (Jn. 10:30). They realized that if He claimed that God was His Father, then He also had a *DIVINE NATURE*, and *WAS GOD*. For God to bring forth after His own kind would be the begetting of gods! Jesus plainly said, "I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, IF ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (Jn. 8:38-39). He then went on to mention how they sought to kill Him, and this was not the way of Abraham. They were doing the deed of their father – a murderer from the beginning. They then protested, "We have one Father, God," but Jesus again pointed out to them that they were not manifesting the nature of God, but were doing the lusts of their father, the Devil.

"If ye know that HE is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness IS BORN OF HIM" (I Jn. 2:29). Or, "the lusts (desires) of your father ye will do" (Jn. 8:44). Thus, *OUR*

*DESIRES*, and the works that spring forth from our inner being, give a strong indication of *WHO* our father is. When we are “delighting ourselves also in the Lord; then HE SHALL GIVE THEE THE DESIRES OF THINE HEART” (Ps. 37:4). But if we are walking in OUR OWN DESIRES, then we are fulfilling those things planted within by the wicked one. Sons of God! may OUR FATHER ever be the One to GIVE US, IMPLANT WITHIN OUR HEART H-I-S DESIRES so that we do only those things which please the Father, “God working within us both to will (give the desire) and to do (bring to fulfillment) of HIS good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Both potentialities lie within each of us.

Now it was in the midst of the Garden that man first encountered the ancient Serpent. It’s not news to any of us that we are in the midst of a war between two kingdoms: the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Neither is it news to us that WE are the battle ground! More particularly, the major focal point of the battle is *our mind*. There the battle rages at its greatest intensity, because the war is a struggle for our hearts and loyalties – the very souls and lives and beings of men. This fact is highly relevant to the subject I am dealing with in this message – the Serpent that dwells within us. It is that force within us that opposes the ways of God in our lives and tries to keep us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

This brings us back to the curse laid upon the Serpent in the beginning; “Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life” (Gen. 3:14). These terms are symbolic and spiritual. This is not speaking of a literal snake dangling from a tree limb in some historic paradise. This is a symbol and the Deceiver, Satan, that ancient Serpent, the Devil, has to eat dust! He was cursed to this low realm of eating dust because that is exactly what he was doing when he tempted mother Eve. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground and bore the image of the earthy – and as such became the rightful food for the Serpent. The Serpent – the negative spirit realm – now finds its base of operation and the fulfillment of its nature, desires, activities and purposes IN AND THROUGH MANKIND. By the very nature of things, when the Serpent eats, he seeks to SATISFY HIS APPETITE AND GRATIFY HIS DESIRES. Today, as in Eden, the sphere of Satan’s activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of earth – the carnal nature. Whenever we live in the earthly life of Adam, we are earthly and also on earth and fall into the sphere of Satan’s activity, becoming the object of his devouring, drawn deeper and deeper into that negative realm.

The very fact that the Serpent was now to crawl upon his belly reveals that there was a descending from one realm to another, and man, with the Serpent in him, now grovels in the dust, trapped in the humiliating quagmire of trouble, pain, sorrow, sin, sickness, limitation, fear and death. Moving upon his belly limits the sphere of the Serpent’s activity, now he can only creep along the ground, lowered into the dust-realm, confined to the lowlands of the earthy and material, restricted to expression through THE MAN OF DUST. Truly he is “the S-P-I-R-I-T that now worketh *in* the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). Because of this remarkable curse you will find Satan operative in NO OTHER REALM in God’s vast universe! Satan is one with man, the energy force of human nature, the spirit of the carnal mind, slithering about in the lowest realms of man’s earthiness, in the crooked thoughts, perverted desires, depraved emotions, in the illusions and delusions of the outer world of appearances, and in all the corrupt motions of the flesh.

I want to tell you where everything is – everything is right there where you are – WITHIN YOU. *Everything*. On the positive side – God is *in you*, Christ is *in you*, your hope of glory, the Word of Christ dwells *in* your heart by faith, your body is the *temple* of the Holy Ghost which is *in you*, the glory of God has come upon you and is arising upon you from within, the wonderful mind of

Christ is *in* your mind and the Kingdom of God is *within you*. On the negative side – the spirit of antichrist is *in you*, the man of sin sits *in* the temple of God which is your body, the beast rages *in* the ravenous emotions of your soul, the image of the beast is seen *in you* by your outer actions, the nature of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters (peoples) is *in you*, and that ancient Serpent, the Devil, and Satan is *within you*, the spirit that now worketh *IN* the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2).

Men dream of a Devil – a hideous and obscene monster in human form; a short, skinny elf in a red body suit, with impish face, horns, pointed ears, a spade beard, thin mustache, having a long forked tail and a pitchfork in his hand. If you ask one thousand church-going professing Christians to describe for you, the *Devil*, would not all of them describe him in the fashion portrayed above? Or would they describe him to you as a *snake*. Millions of professing Christians suppose they would recognize the Devil *instantly*. But *would they*, really? I do not hesitate to tell you that the Devil of Christianity is a *myth*. The famous preacher, Charles H. Spurgeon, was once correcting the sermons of a class of preacher boys. One young man waxed eloquent on the subject: "Putting on the whole armor of God", and dramatized each piece put on. Then when the armor was on, he cried out: "Now where is the Devil!" Mr. Spurgeon cooped both hands around his mouth, and whispered: "*inside the armor*." Let me illustrate. The following story has been chronicled by another. The year was 1941. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and they began to conquer in Southeast Asia. The British were told, "Be careful. The Japanese are going to conquer Singapore, too." But the British said, "No need to worry. There is absolutely no danger of that happening. Look at all the cannons we have." Singapore, you know, is a nation at the end of the Malaysian peninsula. If you look at your hand and think of your thumb as the Malaysian peninsula, at the top of the digit, where the fingernail is, that would be Singapore. And from the hand to that first little digit, that's jungle. At the top of the thumb, Singapore is cleared of jungle. Civilized. It was well defended with guns pointed out to sea so that no ship could possibly invade. Nobody could ever attack them without running right into the British guns. That's why the British weren't worried on Dec. 7, 1941, as the smoke rose from Pearl Harbor, when they heard that the Japanese would be hitting Singapore next the British only laughed. They felt secure. Then came February. Out of the jungle, from the hand up through the thumb came the Japanese. And when, suddenly, on Feb. 24, 1942, the British heard the crack of rifles, they turned around and saw the Japanese coming from their rear. In only ten days, Singapore fell into the hands of the Japanese. Why? *Because the guns were pointing in the wrong direction*. All of their guns were pointed to the sea. They were defenseless. And let me assure you, precious friend of mine, there are vast multitudes of the Lord's people in this hour, maybe even you, whose guns are pointed in the wrong direction! The guns are pointed on that hideous, monster Devil roaming about that world out there. In our minds he belongs to the Garden of Eden, spoiling life for Adam and Eve; to the plains of the East, wreaking havoc upon poor old Job; to the Judean Wilderness, tempting Jesus; to Berlin during the thirties and early forties, possessing Adolf Hitler; to the prisons and mental hospitals, possessing the criminals and mentally insane; walking up and down the isles of the church building, trying to hinder the meeting; he is always on the *outside* of us or possessing *someone else!*

But go with me now into that long ago when Jesus walked the dusty trails with His disciples. He had asked the twelve disciples who they thought He was. Peter promptly answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" *Then* Jesus said to him, "Peter, flesh and blood did not reveal this unto you, but My Father which is in heaven." In other words, "This understanding didn't come from your fleshly mind. You didn't think this up by yourself. This is not the product of your own nature, or the result of your reasoning and logic; this came to you from My Father." So remarkable was this revelation to Peter that the Lord said to him, "*Blessed art thou*, Simon Bar-

jona!" So here we have an instance of the Father working in Peter, imparting His thoughts and understanding to Peter.

Only minutes later Jesus began to introduce to His disciples the subject of His coming suffering and death on the cross. The possibility of the death of their beloved Lord was a prospect so foreign to the thinking of the disciples that they were hardly able to comprehend His presentation of this unspeakable fate. Was He not the Messiah? Was He not the Son of God? Did He not come to establish a great Kingdom? Were not they, the disciples, to reign with Him in that Kingdom? With these questions in mind, they could hardly endure the dark foreboding which grew in their minds as Christ talked about the future. Then Peter, who had just been pronounced *blessed*, took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee!" Ah, when Jesus mentioned the cross and dying, Peter began to rebuke Him. Where did he find the senseless courage that would *dare* to *rebuke* the Lord? The answer is disturbingly evident – far, far too clear to be a comfort to any of us! The Lord Himself gives us the answer, for. He turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind Me, SATAN! thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not the things that be of *God*, but those that be of *men*." What a shocking way to talk to the great apostle Peter, the one possessing the revelation of the Christ's identity, the one called blessed, the one to whom the Lord had just given the keys to the Kingdom Heaven! Atrocious to say to this man of deep revelation and keen perception, "Thou savourest *not* the things that be of God, but those that be of men!" Indeed, "Get thee behind Me, S-A-T-A-N!" How unthinkable!

Hearing Peter's entreaty to the Lord, which of us would not have said that this was the language of genuine affection, tender solicitude, and loving concern? No doubt we would have chimed in and said, "How kind! How true! How good! Amen!" But Jesus replies, "Get thee behind Me – SATAN!" And our Lord was not merely on a name-calling spree when He uttered these words, either. He never uttered words in vain, without a definite meaning. Jesus did not speak merely to Satan *in* Peter, neither did He say, "Peter." Furthermore, He did not tell Peter that his words *sounded like* the words of Satan. He simply addressed Peter AS SATAN. Peter as Satan – on what basis? That he was demented, insane? That he was a medium, bringing spirits out of the supernatural sphere? No – merely that he SPOKE AS A MAN!!! "Get thee behind Me, Satan, you who think and speak like a *man*!" Is this not also what James was saying when he described the wisdom of man in these words: "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. THIS WISDOM descendeth not from above, but is EARTHLY, SENSUAL and D-E-V-I-L-I-S-H!" (James 3:14-15). Here we see that that which is *earthly* and *sensual* is that which is considered by the Spirit of God, DEVILISH!

On the surface there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with what Peter said. It was a good thought, a kindly thought He didn't want to see His Lord and Master suffer and die, and he said so. What was wrong with that? Wasn't that a good sentiment for him to have? What was wrong with it was that it was the product of Self, it emanated from human sympathy and not from the heart of God. Anything that proceeds from Self, by the very nature of things, is bound to be opposed to the mind and will of God, for if His thoughts, and His ways, are as far from being like ours as the heavens are above the earth, there can be no unity in them at all. Self and Satan despise and hate the cross. They will scamper wildly in any direction to avoid it. They will turn their backs upon it, dig under it, try to go around it or climb over it, but they will never embrace it. The cross is the death knell of Self, and Self is the arch enemy of the cross. The friendly sympathy of Self is the cunning mind of the Serpent

Again in Jn. 6:70 we read, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and *one of you* I-S A D-E-V-I-L?" Here our Lord of course referred to Judas. In the scriptures we have some very plain statements

to the effect that certain men WERE SATAN or DEVILS. Please, let us not forget that we are still studying the fully inspired Word of God, and not some infamous fairy tale. The Devil, about whom we are studying, hates above all else to have his real identity and location made known. *The only way he can carry on his business is to deceive men and women into thinking he is what he is not. As long as we think he is some funny little man with horns and a pitchfork we can never be deceived by him!* I fearlessly declare, beloved that *Satan* and the *carnal mind* are so ONE that you cannot have one without the other! *Satan* and *Self* are so ONE that they are indivisible! *Satan* and *human nature* are so ONE that they cannot be separated! Is it any wonder, then, that the friendly hand of Self, yea, the friendly hand of Satan, was so quickly extended to prevent our Lord from going to the cross? “This shall not be done unto Thee,” exclaimed Peter. “You must not talk that way, Lord. You are the Christ, you can never go to the cross! You must save yourself. Don’t go to Jerusalem. Don’t let them lay their hands on you. We shall fight against it with the sword, if necessary, or you can call twelve legions of angels to save yourself from the cross.” Save yourself, save your-SELF is the eternal cry! Escape the cross! Turn aside! Turn back! Ah, what voice is this? Truly it is the voice of Satan. But never forget for one moment, my beloved, that it is also the voice of the *carnal mind*. Oh yes, there must be a death to Self, that brash, ego-centric devil that would and does usurp the throne of Christ’s Kingdom within. He no more wants *you* to go to the cross than he wanted Jesus to go.

And now we uncover some other startling facts. The Greek word DIABOLOS is the Greek word for “devil” In all the Greek New Testament it is never used for anything or anyone else. But in three appearances of the word in the New Testament, the men who were supposed to translate that original, instead of translating it in harmony with every other use of the word rendered it in such a way as to mystify and hide the truth. When translated in harmony with the rest of the scriptures, here is what I Tim. 3:11 actually says. It is talking about deacons. And it says this, “Even so must their wives be grave, NOT DEVILS (diabolos), sober, faithful in all things.” Just imagine a deacon marrying a funny black thing with horns, a pointed tail and cloven hoofs! In Titus 2:1-3 Paul is giving some instructions concerning the churches and the believers in those churches. And here is what he writes to Titus: “The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, NOT DEVILS (diabolos), not given to much wine, teachers of good things.” In II Tim. 3:1-5 we read this: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For *men* shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, DEVILS (diabolos), incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” What an indictment against human nature, and against modern religion! “In the last days perilous times shall come. For *men* shall be ... DEVILS... having a *form* of godliness, but denying the *power thereof*.”

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

As in Christ’s day, so today, the churches are, indeed, full of *devils*’ And they have no more desire to go to the cross than Peter did. Well does this enemy of God, enthroned in the human

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

Because of the inborn weakness of the flesh, all who cherish the blessed hope of sonship must learn never to trust in themselves or to lean upon the failing arm of flesh, but to find their overcoming power in the omnipotent Spirit. Our constant failures and our proneness to yield to the ever present overpowering lusts of the flesh should be incentive enough to cast off the tattered garments of our self-righteousness and self-confidence that we may make the *INDWELLING LORD* our strength, our righteousness, our shield, and the lifter of our heads. Only Christ, dwelling within, can make us stand. HE is our victory. Our help cometh from the LORD!

## **THE SERPENT DESTROYED**

Man's body as originally created by God was something very good, but it has now become "the flesh." The body was pure, since it was created good, but when the body was corrupted by the serpent, it became flesh. Paul said, "...in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth NO GOOD THING" (Rom. 7:18). Through the fall Satan came to dwell in our members, causing our body to become flesh – i.e., a damaged, ruined body.

Since Satan and man became one through the fall, Satan is no longer outside of man, but *IN* man. But God, shut out from the consciousness of man, declared, "I will also become incarnated. If Satan wrought himself into man, then let Me enter into man and put man upon Myself." Do you see? GOD put on this man through incarnation. When God became incarnated as a man, the kind of man He put on was a man corrupted by Satan. "God, sending His own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*" (Rom. 8:3). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself *took part of the same*... wherefore in all things it behooved Him *to be made like unto His brethren*" (Heb. 2:14,17). After God became a man and put that man with Satan within him upon Himself, HE BROUGHT THAT MAN TO THE CROSS. Satan thought he had succeeded, but he only gave the Lord an easy way to destroy him!

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that THROUGH DEATH He might DESTROY HIM that had the power of death, that is, the Devil" (Heb. 2:14). The word "destroy" does not mean to kill or annihilate, for we know God did not kill the Devil or annihilate him! Destroy, in the original, means "to bring to naught; render powerless; or make of no effect." So – through death – the Lord Jesus BROUGHT SATAN TO NOUGHT, RENDERED HIM POWERLESS AND MADE HIM OF NO EFFECT.

The following illustration, shared by another, beautifully illustrates how this was accomplished. If a mouse is loose in a house, it is rather difficult for the owner to catch it. But if he sets a trap with a little bait, the mouse will then be tempted to catch the bait. The mouse at first will think he has succeeded in getting the bait, but will not realize that in fact he has been trapped by the owner of the house. Then, since he is trapped, it is so easy for the owner of the house to come and put him to death. Similarly, Adam became a trap to catch Satan! When Satan came to possess man, it appeared he was successful, but he did not realize that he fell into a trap. Satan thought man was his home, but did not know that man was a trap. He thought man was his food, but man was only the bait. By taking man, he was caught and imprisoned in man.

Then – in one single act – God pulled the rug out from under Satan! The Lord came and put upon Himself “the flesh,” the “body of sin,” the “body of death,” the “dust realm,” the “man of earth,” and BROUGHT IT TO THE CROSS that “through *DEATH* (of the man of dust) He might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.” When the flesh is crucified, when the dust of the carnal nature, when the man of the earth is put to death on the cross SATAN’S GROUND IS DESTROYED BENEATH HIM, his sphere of activity is removed, his base of operation is cancelled, so that he is rendered completely powerless and ineffective. Thus, it is by this death on the cross that Christ destroyed the Devil!

Jesus Christ was truly “tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.” Though He were a Son, yet “learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.” 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.” And being “made perfect” He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

When the Son of God came into the world, when He had been tested on every point and had overcome the adversary in all things, He uttered these significant words: “I will not walk with you much more, for the prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me – he has nothing in common with Me, THERE IS NOTHING IN ME THAT BELONGS TO HIM, *he has no power over Me!*” (Jn. 14:30, Amplified). Ah, this is the glory of SONSHIP – nothing in common with Satan! None of the nature of Adam that belongs to Satan. So mighty was the indwelling life of the Father within Jesus that Satan had no power over Him. And, beloved, when you have died completely to that Adamic life, when there is none of the dust of Adam in you, SATAN HAS NO POWER OVER YOU. When YOUR FLESH is fully brought to the CROSS, crucified with Christ, Satan’s base of operation has been destroyed, his sphere of activity removed. God destroys Satan by destroying YOUR FLESH.

I can tell you, dear ones, that already Satan is finding very little “ground” to creep upon in many of God’s Sons who are pressing on to the High Calling of God in Christ. The old serpent is finding short rations and skimpy meals in God’s chosen ones who are putting off the dust of the carnal mind and putting on THE MIND OF CHRIST. Victory upon victory they are gaining, for they have taken up THEIR CROSS and the cross has become the giant X that marks out the dust nature forever. These elect sons of God are beginning to walk in newness of life as NEW CREATION BEINGS. For them THE CURSE IS LIFTED, Satan is conquered, and the Christ is arising in glory and splendor in their lives. They are bearing more and more of His blessed image. They have no fear of Satan or his weapons. They could march right through the bastions of hell itself, and in the presence of all its hosts no evil could overtake them. The bestial spirit of this world cannot contaminate them. Filthy lucre cannot tempt them. Fame and power cannot entice them. Lust and sensuality cannot draw them. They are overcomers, even THE SEED that serve the Lord! They shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation, they are an entirely new

ethnic group, the body of the Man from heaven, Sons of the Most High; they shall come, and SHALL DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 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, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. 4:3-4). “But even unto this day... the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away” (II Cor. 3:15-16).

Can we not see by reading these instructive statements that if we can effectively express outwardly the reality of the indwelling Christ, the world will see God. The Christ is unveiled in and through the members of the Christ body. The good news we are proclaiming is *in* each one veiled, waiting to be manifested and displayed. If the good news of the reconciliation of God, if the good news of the glory of God, if the good news of immortality and life in Christ Jesus, if the good news of the Kingdom of God is veiled today, my beloved, it is veiled IN YOU! If you will turn your heart to the Lord, the Spirit, you will see *Him*. As you turn to the life of the Spirit within the veil begins to be rent, the mind begins to open, the mind-set that has been locked in spiritual ignorance and unbelief at once begins to be unlocked. “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are *lost*, IN WHOM the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them.” The word “lost” is from the Greek APOLLUMI meaning to die or perish. The good news is hid or veiled to those who are still dying or perishing. Are you perishing? Is it not because the good news is yet veiled to you – is not living and energetic in your experience? A few verses further on the apostle explains, “But though our *outward man perish*, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (II Cor. 4:16).

It is now time that the prince of this world be cast out, the spirit of blindness in men’s minds, which veils the glory of the Christ within. It is time for the Son of man to be glorified. Turn, O man, and behold the Lord! See the Lord *as He is* in His temple! The god of this age doesn’t want this for any man. The god of this age is old Adam, the outer man, the man of your first birth, the man of flesh, who minds earthly things. It is your manhood, your humanity that does not want to fully see Christ, because for you to really see Christ is to give up all the reasonings, preconceptions, understanding, knowledge, decisions and the pursuits of the flesh to find that life-source which is the antithesis of SELF. The Adamic mind of selfhood will seek to keep you looking away from the tree of life by every means at its disposal. Contrary to what some teach, Self is not the Spirit, for except a man *deny Himself* and take up his cross he cannot be the disciple of the Christ. Self will blind you so that you will not turn to the Lord. Why must the prince of this world be cast out? So that the light of the glory of God, who is the very IMAGE (GK: CHARACTER) of God, may shine to men!” The character is in you, it is in the Christ, in your spirit. When you behold this Christ within the glory of Christ begins to shine and the veil is done away; the character of God is seen by all about.

The one thing that terrifies the forces of darkness is the fear that some day those who believe in Christ will *wake up* to the dynamic potential in the life of the Spirit within them and begin to live fully out of that realm. When this happens, the great problems that plague mankind will disappear. Ignorance will go; sin will go; disease will go; limitation will go; Satan will go; death will go; bondage of every sort will fade away and the Kingdom of God will be demonstrated in men. What a hope! What a day! And the wonder of it all is that this day is even now breaking in the hearts and lives of God’s elect! I proclaim to you that the crisis hour in the history of the world has come, and God’s people must now arise and shine and courageously take hold of life and bring deliverance to the whole world. Truly, we have come to the Kingdom for such a time as this!

Through the triumph of the Christ life within them the whole creation shall be delivered from its bondage to corruption, for the Lord of hosts will destroy the face of the covering (the flesh) cast over all people, and the veil (carnal mind) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, and will be glad and rejoice in His salvation! (Isa. 25:7-9). Hallelujah!

# Chapter 33

## THE SERPENT

### (continued)

“Now the SERPENT was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made... and the SERPENT said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die... and the Lord God said unto the SERPENT, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:1,4,14-15).

The ancient serpent, having beguiled Eve, became the recipient of the FIRST CURSE in history. Most students of the Word know that the woman was cursed, the ground was cursed, and the earth was cursed, but few remember that before all this the serpent was cursed. The curse is first mentioned in Gen. 3:14. “And the Lord God said unto the SERPENT, Because thou hast done this THOU ART CURSED above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” The serpent, called before the tribunal of the Almighty, received a two-fold curse, recorded here in strong figures of speech which sternly emphasize the power of the judgment: UPON YOUR BELLY SHALL YOU GO and DUST YOU SHALL EAT.

This is a symbol and the Deceiver, Satan, that old serpent, has to eat dust! What is the dust? Not the dirt of the ground! In the passing of the judgment-sentence, God began with the serpent and said, “DUST shalt thou eat.” Then to the man, God said, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for *DUST THOU ART*, and *UNTO DUST* shalt thou return.” So that first Adam, sinful, fallen, and sentenced is declared by the counsel of the Lord TO BE DUST. Said the Psalmist, “For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that WE ARE DUST” (Ps. 103:14). That we are DUST! By the very nature of things, when the serpent eats, he seeks to SATISFY HIS APPETITE and GRATIFY HIS DESIRES. Originally he found pleasure in higher things and had access to higher realms, but the curse of “eating dust” limits the object of his devouring. Today, the sphere of Satan’s activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of the earth. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR” (1 Pet. 5:8).

There is also the sentence: “Upon your belly shall you go.” This judgment speaks of infinitely more than a literal snake slithering along upon a literal belly of flesh and blood. The very fact that God states that the serpent was now to crawl upon his belly, which obviously he had not done before, reveals that there was a DESCENDING from one realm to another, from a higher to a lower, from a greater to a lesser. Previously he walked in loftier realms, his sphere of activity extended to higher domains, but he is now lowered into the dust realm, into the sphere of man, confined to the earthy, limited to action upon and expression through THE MAN OF THE DUST. Thus we read in Eph. 2:2, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, THE SPIRIT THAT NOW WORKETH IN THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE.” Ah, yes, this evil spirit is IN MAN!

It is not difficult for us to acknowledge that GOD was manifest in the flesh through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. What we have often failed to perceive is that there has also been AN INCARNATION OF SATAN IN THE FLESH. Just as God was manifested in the flesh through Jesus, the last Adam, and now through His body, so it is becoming knowledge to us that Satan has been manifested in the flesh of the first Adam, and now in his posterity!

### **THE SERPENT – A SPIRIT!**

Oriental imagery is never more graphically displayed in all its eloquence than in the use of the biblical word SERPENT as a figure of Satan, the Devil. This symbol, along with a number of other word pictures, is very expressive of his nature and activity. I make no apology for declaring to you the truth that each and every creature of earth typifies a higher reality in the realm of SPIRIT – good or bad, positive or negative. This can be seen clearly in the words of Jesus when He says in Lk. 10:17-19, “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (the realm of SPIRIT). Behold I give you power to TREAD ON SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS, and over *all* the power of the enemy.” Spake He of the serpents and scorpions of the fields? Nay, my brother, He spake rather of SPIRITS possessing the nature typified by serpents and scorpions, hidden and cunning, slithering about in the lowest realms of man’s earthiness, in the thoughts and desires and ambitions of the carnal mind, full of deadly venom. Even the fowls of heaven, as the law of Moses shows us, clean and unclean, each bespeak of a kind or quality of nature, expressing those characteristics that originate in the spirit realm. Hence, in scripture unclean birds are a type of evil natures, as John the Revelator shows in Rev. 18:2, “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen and is become the habitation of DEVILS, and the hold of every FOUL SPIRIT, and a cage of every UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD.” We know the Lamb, the meek and sacrificial nature of the Christ within, the Son of God, gentle, kind, compassionate, redemptive, blessing all He touches; but have we not known also the nature of the beast, wild and ravenous, that spirit, so obvious in the world, which stomps and rends and breaks in pieces and devours, of whom Peter warns us, saying, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a *roaring lion*, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8).

Some teach that in all the universe there is but ONE SPIRIT – the Holy Spirit of God. I solemnly tell every person who reads these lines that the scriptures are clear, and give us a wonderful understanding of the workings of SPIRIT. SPIRIT, like everything else in nature, has its opposites – positive and negative, good and evil, light and darkness. As was pointed out in our previous message on this subject, spirit is not good – neither is spirit evil. Spirit is just a type *of thing*, just as flesh is a type *of thing*. For that matter, flesh is neither good nor evil. It is just there. Flesh becomes evil when its use is perverted. Flesh is good when it is properly used as the temple of God or when it is used to give visible manifestation to the nature of God. As Paul said, “There is nothing impure of itself.” Jesus displayed the wonder of *glorified flesh* when He appeared to His disciples following His resurrection and said, “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not *flesh and bones*, as ye see Me have” (Lk. 24:3). Spirit, then, like anything else is neither good nor evil until it is expressed through usage. Only then does it take on a holy and righteous or an evil and unrighteous character.

Let us mediate deeply upon this word--SPIRIT. The English word “spirit” is from the Latin SPIRARE, meaning “to breathe,” the words *respiration*, *expiration*, and *inspiration* all being derived from the same source. The word “spirit” in the Old Testament is the translation of the Hebrew word RUWACH, the primary significance or root-meaning of which is WIND. Similarly the New Testament Greek word for “spirit,” PNEUMA, comes from PNEO, meaning “to breathe

or blow,” the primary significance or root-meaning being WIND. The English word “ghost” used in the King James Bible, though now somewhat obsolete and not in general use, is derived from the Greek PNEUMA – meaning a blowing or a wind. But let no one hastily conclude that we are about to attempt to prove that the Holy Spirit is a *holy wind*, for nothing could be farther from our thought. Since one cannot live without air and breathing in the realm of the physical, wind and breath are used symbolically of the Holy Spirit, apart from whom there can be no life in the realm of the divine. The Holy Spirit is God’s breath, God’s out-breathing, God’s ENERGY FORCE by which He accomplishes His purpose and executes His will. Many times we have thought of the Holy Spirit as power, and certainly He has power, but power is basically the *ability* or *capacity* to act or do things and it can be latent, dormant, inactively resident in someone or something. *Force*, on the other hand, more specifically describes energy *projected* and *exerted on* persons and things, and may be defined as “an influence which produces or tends to produce motion, or change of motion.” *Power* might be likened to the stored energy in a battery, it is there, but inactive. *Force*, however, could be compared to the current flowing from the battery, starting the car. *Force*, then, more accurately represents the sense of the Hebrew and Greek terms relating to God’s Spirit, and this is borne out in a consideration of the scriptures.

It will greatly aid our perception of the activity of the Holy Spirit once we understand the simple truth that all spirit is ENERGY. Energy has many forms, but it is not something that you can see or hold in your hand. You can think of energy as something that can make things change. For example, a moving object has energy because it can change things by crashing into them. Heat is another form of energy. Heat energy can change ice by melting it into water, and heat it more, changing it into vapor. It can run the engine of an automobile, jet plane or rocket. There is another kind of energy, called chemical energy. It is in the coal or oil that heats buildings. It is in the food that nourishes your body and keeps you active. There is atomic energy which can be set free from the atoms of some materials. And there is the energy carried by light waves, called electromagnetic energy. It is the electromagnetic energy in sunlight that warms the earth. Light waves, streaming out of the sun, carry energy to us across nearly a hundred million miles of space. When the energy of the light hits the earth, part of it changes to heat. Some of it is stored in plants as chemical energy.

Another kind of energy of which we, the people of God, are aware is SPIRIT ENERGY. In physics energy is known as the capacity for doing work. The Greek noun for energy is ENERGEIO and its verb form is ENERGEIA. These words are used in the Greek New Testament several times. Because of the association between “doing work” and “energy,” the words are generally translated into English as “work” or “working.” Since so much has been learned about energy in recent years it would now be far better to translate the words for just what they mean – energy or *energizing*. Let us look at a few scriptures. “That ye may know... what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the *working* (*energeia*) of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead” (Eph. 1:18-20). Yes, it was energy, God’s energy, which RAISED CHRIST FROM THE DEAD! And the record further states that He was raised up by the SPIRIT of God! And not only did Paul say that it was God’s energy (His invisible power-force) which raised Christ up, but he went on to say in Eph. 3:7 that it was the same energy of God which transformed his own life and made him a minister of Jesus Christ. “Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual *working* (*energeia*) of HIS POWER.’ Then on top of this Paul declares that it is this SPIRIT ENERGY of God which is WORKING WITHIN US to bring us unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ‘From whom (Christ the whole body) joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual *working* (*energeia*) of every part, maketh increase of the body...’ (Eph. 4:16). And furthermore he states that ‘He that is joined unto the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT’ (2 Cor. 6:17). ONE

SPIRIT! ONE ENERGY SOURCE! ONE ENERGY FORCE! YOU AND THE LORD! 'Them is one body, and ONE SPIRIT' (Eph 4:4). You will know a great truth when you understand the simple fact that in the Kingdom of God there is ONLY ONE SPIRIT. In union with the Lord you are that one spirit. All spirit is energy, exerting a force, or influence upon creation. GOD is the supreme source of energy, the highest and purest form of energy, and the wonder of it is beyond comprehension, but in union with God Y-O-U ARE THE ENERGY SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS! All creation stands on tip-toe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God pouring fourth the energy of divine spirit love, joy, peace, righteousness, provision and power! Through this ministration ALL THINGS SHALL BE C-H-A-N-G-E-D! 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev. 21:5).

The Holy Spirit is God's ENERGY FORCE. It is God's energy force *projected* and *exerted* upon creation. It is God's motion, action and influence in one measure or another upon, in, and through man. Yahweh accomplished the creation of the universe by means of His Spirit or ENERGY FORCE. Regarding the planet earth in its early formative stages, the record states that "The Spirit (energy force) of God was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). Psalm 33:6 says, 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (spirit) of His mouth.' Like a powerful breath or living wind, God's Spirit can be sent forth to exert power even though there is no bodily or visible contact with that which is acted upon. Where a human craftsman would use the force of his hands and fingers to produce things, God uses His Spirit. Hence that Spirit is also spoken of as God's 'hand' or 'fingers.' Jesus told the Pharisees, 'If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you' (Mat. 12:28). But Luke, in recording the same event, expresses it thus: "If I with the *finger of God* cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you" (Lk. 11:20). The Spirit of God is the finger of God, the working, the activity of God usward. How great is His working!

There are two basic characteristics of the wind which qualify it to so fittingly serve as the supreme symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wind is first of all a powerful force, and secondly it is Invisible. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the spirit (Jn. 3:8). You cannot see the wind, and yet you are aware of its reality because of its power with the visible effects of that power manifested all around you. In earlier times the wind was used broadly as a source of energy. Man has always known how to use sails on a boat or ship. Later, he learned to use the same principle to construct a windmill, using the force of the wind to turn grindstones, pump water, and do many other kinds of work.

Because the wind is both invisible and powerful; the biblical words RUWACH (Heb.) and PNEUMA (Gr.), meaning wind, gradually took on much wider meanings, and came to represent *any* invisible power or influence, good or bad. And since God's power, within or without, is exercised through channels and by agencies beyond human sight or perception, therefore this word 'spirit' came more and more to be applied to all of the Lord's dealings and operations. The invisible and powerful INWARD ENERGY FORCE which motivates and transforms our lives into the image of God is the HOLY SPIRIT. Only by the Holy Spirit are we guided beyond the outer senses, and beyond the letter of the Word, into the glorious and eternal reality of 'the deep things of God,' even all those things which God has in reservation for them that truly love Him, which the human eye hath not seen, the human ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the human heart to understand and appreciate.

That *spirit* is a proper term for nature, ideas, thoughts, attitudes, desires, mind, will, and all such characteristics is illustrated by a story I read one time. An eider was telling of a young lad in a

certain congregation. This boy was a devotee of baseball. He was a little leaguer. When the world series ran he came to the meeting of the church dressed in a baseball outfit, a glove on one hand and a small transistor radio in the other. His pocket was stretched by a ball. He didn't hear the ministry that came forth in the meeting. His ear was glued to that radio. He refused to miss one word of the announcer's description of the game. Now, that boy was FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT OF BASEBALL. He thought baseball. He talked baseball. He even took his bat to bed. It was all he cared about. He was filled with it. It was his life!

As I am writing, equal rights is still an issue in our land. There are people filled with the *spirit* of equal rights. They don't have time for anything else. They are consumed with a desire to petition, lecture, organize, march. Nothing else matters. They eat, sleep and dream equal rights. Their money, time, talents and energies are exhausted as they pour themselves into the struggle for equality. They are FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT of equal rights for all people. These people are filled with an attitude, a mind, a disposition, a will, a passion, and all these characteristics produce a tremendous INFLUENCE upon the thinking, attitudes and actions of multitudes of citizens. Perhaps now we can understand what it really means to be FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT means to not only be filled with the consciousness of the Person and presence of the Holy Spirit of God, but with all the characteristics within that Spirit: His nature, will, mind, ways, virtues, disposition, purpose, etc. How many believers settle for something far less than this! We are living in an hour when it is popular, the 'in thing,' to be a "Spirit-filled" Christian. But truly I say to you that multitudes have settled for a superficial experience of 'tongues,' or some 'gift,' or 'feeling,' and have never even dreamed of what it means to become *literally filled* with each and every characteristic of the divine nature and power of God! Becoming filled with the Holy Spirit must do far more for us than cause us to repeat some foreign syllables suggestively whispered in our ear, or to become ecstatic in our emotions. To be Filled with the Spirit means to be filled with ALL THE SPIRIT IS. It means that the life and nature and power of the indwelling Spirit must control and swallow up completely soul and body until there is no manifestation but of the Spirit Jesus, that blessed firstborn Son, was so filled, for He possessed the Spirit 'without measure.' And Paul prayed for the saints that they might be 'FILLED WITH A-L-L THE FULLNESS OF GOD' (Eph. 3:19). This measure is reserved for all who will go all the way with God, to be sons even as Jesus was 'the Son of God.' Sonship is the hope of creation, and the SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE is the hope of the sons! It is there that sin, sickness, limitation and death are swallowed up, and the wisdom, nature, life, power and glory of the living God is revealed through His people.

Let us take a closer look at some of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. He is variously defined as – 'The Spirit of God,' 'The Spirit of Christ,' 'The Spirit of Holiness,' 'The Spirit of Truth, and Spirit of a Sound Mind,' 'The Spirit of Liberty,' 'The Spirit of Burning,' 'The Spirit of the Father,' 'The Spirit of the Son,' 'The Spirit of Promise,' 'The Spirit of Meekness,' 'The Spirit of Understanding,' 'The Spirit of Wisdom,' 'The Spirit of Glory,' 'The Spirit of Counsel,' 'The Spirit of Grace,' 'The Spirit of Adoption,' 'The Spirit of Prophecy,' 'The Spirit of the Lord,' etc., etc. These various titles, repeated many times, and used interchangeably, give us a full, proper assurance that they are related to the same HOLY SPIRIT – indeed, frequently the word 'Holy' is added in, combined, as for instance, 'The Holy Spirit of God.' 'The Holy Spirit of Promise,' etc. These various expressions are descriptive of the spirit, nature, disposition, power and glory of one God, the Father; and also the spirit, nature, disposition, power and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, because He is the expression of the Father; and also it is the spirit, nature, disposition, power and glory of all who are truly the Lord's in proportion as they have been made ONE IN HIM. "He that is joined unto the Lord is ONE SPIRIT" (I Cor. 6:17).

Each of these characteristics is a form of the energy of God. This energy is transmitted from the spirit into soul and body to produce its power within us, just as electricity is transmitted from a battery to an engine to make it function in a certain way. When the 'Spirit of Holiness' is transmitted into our lives and consciousness we begin to function in our personality in that characteristic of God's holiness, thus becoming holy. When the 'Spirit of Wisdom' is transmitted into our *consciousness* we cease from our own natural reasoning and commence to act in accordance with the higher wisdom of God. When the 'Spirit of Life' permeates our being even our bodies shall be quickened by His life within until this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Then shall be fulfilled the word which was spoken, "We shall *not all sleep*, but we *shall all be changed*" (I Cor. 15:51).

Our failure to see that the Holy Spirit of God is not the only form of spirit in the world leads us into all manner of error and misunderstanding. There is *another spirit* mentioned frequently throughout the Word of God, and in opposite terms, namely, 'The Spirit of Fear,' 'The Spirit of Bondage,' 'The Spirit of the World,' 'The Spirit of Error,' 'The Spirit of Antichrist,' 'The Spirit of Jealousy,' 'The Spirit of Slumber,' etc., etc. These terms signify the WRONG SPIRIT--the spirit, nature, disposition, power and will which has its chief exemplification in Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, the Adversary; the same spirit manifesting itself in all who walk in and live out of the *carnal* mind. Sin, error, darkness and death are all characteristics of the SPIRIT OF THE NEGATIVE REALM, even as holiness, truth, love, life, etc. are all characteristics of the one Holy Spirit.

As mentioned previously, there are brethren who are convinced that all spirit is the same spirit and that there is only one spirit in the world, which is the spirit of God in every man. But we are constrained to take heed to the testimony of the Holy Spirit wherein He says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but TRY THE SPIRITS WHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jn. 4:1). Both the HOLY and the UNHOLY spirit bear the characteristics of personality, both alike are invisible, both are powerful, both are spirit, both are energy!

It is true – for the child of God there is only ONE SPIRIT, and that is GOD in every man born of the Spirit, for 'he that is joined unto the Lord I-S ONE SPIRIT.' It should be equally obvious and self-evident that the man who is not joined unto the Lord is N-O-T OF THE ONE SPIRIT. Why else would the apostle differentiate between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God saying. '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. 2:11). Even for the redeemed, before they are brought to that full union with God, there is the distinction between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, where by we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit; that we are the children of God' (Rom. 8:14-16). It is only when OUR SPIRIT is quickened by HIS SPIRIT and brought unto UNION WITH GOD that you have the ONE SPIRIT.

I would draw your reverent attention to some of the characteristics of the unregenerated spirit of man. Duet 2:30 speaks of a certain Sihon, king of Heshbon, of whom it was said, "The Lord thy God hardened his spirit (RUWACH) and made his heart obstinate." Dan. 2:1 shows Nebuchadnezzar dreaming dreams 'wherewith his spirit (RUWACH) was troubled and his sleep brake from him.' David had this to say: "Blessed is the man unto whom *the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit is no guile.*" The latter statement would indicate that there are those in whose spirits there is guile. That is why Paul had to say, 'Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the spirit.' (II Cor 7:1) If the spirit were always a holy thing, it would not be at all in

keeping with the truth for Paul to exhort us to be cleansed in our spirits. That there is filthiness in the spirit of man is testified by Job who said, 'My breath is corrupt.' The word "breath" is misleading, for it is the Hebrew word RUWACH – spirit 'My spirit is corrupt' would be a more literal translation. That is why David also said, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and *renew a right spirit within me*" (Ps. 51:10). The very fact of the need for renewal speaks of a WRONG SPIRIT that needs to be set right Who can deny that the spirit of man has been contaminated?

"The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Ps. 34:18). On the other hand, "pride goeth before destruction and a *haughty spirit before a fall*" (Prov. 16:18). There is a generation with whom the Lord is not pleased, as this is His testimony against it. "They set not their heart aright and whose spirit was not steadfast with God" (Ps.78:8). Another contrast is drawn in Eccl. 7:8 where the Holy Spirit says, "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit." It is all SPIRIT – but one is separated unto God, as seen in the fruit it bears, and the other is not. How awesome this indictment by the Lord, "Thus saith the Lord God: Woe unto the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit and have seen nothing" (Eze. 13:13). Malachi warns, "Take heed to your spirit that ye deal not treacherously" (Mal. 2:15). And to cap it all off (though scripture could be piled upon scripture), James says, "The spirit (pneuma) that dwelleth in us LUSTETH TO ENVY" (James 4:5). That cannot in any way be the spirit of the New Creation, nor can it be of the spirit of the image of God in every man. It is in this passage that James goes on to say, 'RESIST the devil,' and the method whereby we resist that 'spirit within that lusteth to envy' is shown in the following verse: 'Draw nigh unto (be separated unto, enter into union with) God... purify your hearts... ye DOUBLE MINDED!' (James 4:5-8).

Well did Jesus know the limitation of the spirit of man apart from the Holy Spirit. Well did He know that our understanding could not possibly ascend beyond the things of man. He did not leave us thus comfortless and confined, but promised in words that cannot fail, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." And yet again, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" (Jn. 15:26). And not only is there the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, there is also a spirit *in the children* of the Devil, "the prince of the power of the air, the SPIRIT that now worketh IN the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). How significant and full of meaning are these words of the apostle John: "Ye are of God, little children... because greater is HE that is IN YOU, than HE that is IN THE WORLD" (I Jn. 4:4). Then two verses later John dearly identifies these two spirits which are in the people of God and the people of the world: 'We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the S-P-I-R-I-T OF TRUTH and the S-P-I-R-I-T OF ERROR.' Paul adds to this his testimony: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of GOD" (Cor. 2:12).

In words fraught with eternal significance the inspired apostle exhorts, "Be renewed in the S-P-I-R-I-T OF YOUR MIND" (Eph. 4:23). One has so aptly written, commenting on this verse: "Note that it reads: in the SPIRIT of our mind, for this is far more than just mental gymnastics of our own self-efforts. It is the energizing of His Spirit upon our human spirit which in turn takes dominion over our mind and brings our mind into subjection to the Spirit of truth. There is beneficial results in the power of positive thinking, even on natural realms. But true transformation comes when it is in THE S-P-I-R-I-T OF YOUR MIND. Oh, it may become the norm of our life to just be thinking HIS thoughts, because of the enlargement of His Spirit force within us." It is more than merely a renewing of the mind – it is the renewing of SPIRIT – the *spirit of the mind*. It is an absolute must to receive from a realm higher than Adam can give in order to have our minds renewed. The change comes from the Lord from heaven, out of the

spirit realm of God, uniting with our spirit. It is the heavenly Jesus dwelling in our hearts, making us ONE IN HIM.

Elwin Roach has shared this illuminating thought concerning the transformation of the mind: – the word, renewing, is adequately rendered in Rom. 12:2; however, to be a little more accurate, the word could be translated RENOVATION (see Strong's Exhaustive Concordance). We are then transformed by the renewing of our minds. There is only a slight difference in the two words, but when renovation is used, we get the thought of a complete house rearing, house cleaning, and then a total refurbishing. Everything old is removed and replaced with all new furnishings. God, however, does something differently in His renovation. He does it just the opposite. He does not clear out the old things and leave our minds a total void and then start filling them with new thoughts. He starts bringing in the new thoughts first, and with this the old passes away and gives place to the new – and all this is of God. Think about it!"

The activity of the mind is primarily in the realm of THOUGHTS. Thoughts are very real and alive. Thoughts are SPIRITUAL REALITIES, transmitted energy, coming upon your person via the gate of your mind. This energy (thoughts) is transmitted into your conscious mind from the unconscious to cause you to act and react in a certain way. Thoughts do not originate in mortal brain. Thoughts are invisible and powerful entities which have their origin in the dimension of SPIRIT. Thoughts do *have* an objective! You should know and become *aware of the objectives* of the thoughts that enter your mind. Every decision you have ever made or ever will make has its origin, intent and power in the INVISIBLE REALM the realm of *spirit*. You will never understand the mystery of life until you thoroughly know that there is a negative and a positive spirit force. The negative leads to death; the positive to life. The mind is the gateway, the channel through which these energy forces affect our lives. The thoughts that come to us bear the characteristics of the spirit force operating in us. Let us list some of the characteristics of the negative realm: "...unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, debate, deceit, malignity, whispers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" (Rom. 1:29-31). What a list. Search your mind... stop and think! Are some of your thoughts carrying these characteristics? They carry within them the power of death!

Now let us list some of the characteristics of the spirits (thoughts) which come from God. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23). Thoughts carrying these characteristics come from God, the author of *life*. Each of these characteristics will cause you to take on and express the very NATURE OF GOD, for they are the energy producing the very power of God's nature in the life. What frame of mind do you find yourself living in much of the time? Think now! Is it creative, holy, virtuous, joyful, confident, loving, life-giving, humble, temperate, peaceful? Or is it depressed, discouraged, uncertain, frustrated, angry, fearful, hateful, proud, self-centered, intolerant. You *are* what you *are* because of what you have been THINKING! We are constantly entertaining and being influenced and shaped by thoughts which have an origin. They are *spirit*. They are like the wind – they just "blow" into your mind. They are energy: motivating, directing, compelling your actions. They are POWERFUL, INVISIBLE FORCES that shape your destiny!

Prov. 23:7 says, "For as a man *thinketh* in his heart, so is he." Well did the prophet assert: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose MIND is *stayed* on Thee" (Isa. 26:3). To which is added the inspired testimony of the apostle Paul: "If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections (thoughts) on things above (spiritual, heavenly), not on things on the earth (natural, carnal)" (Col. 3:1-2). And

again, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK on these things!” (Phil. 4:8). This we can do, praise His name, for “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS (thoughts), and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity EVERY THOUGHT to the obedience of Christ” (I Cor. 10:4-5).

Beyond the effect of spirit upon us and the energizing of spirit within us, there is that ability to MINISTER SPIRIT. Every child of God should seek that God would open his eyes to show him this wonderful *ministry* of the Spirit. Paul spoke of it in these inspired words, “Who also hath made us *able ministers* of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the SPIRIT: for the letter killeth, but the SPIRIT giveth life... if the ministration of death... was glorious... how shall not the MINISTRATION OF THE S-P-I-R-I-T be rather glorious” (II Cor. 3:6-9).

This passage contains two significant phrases: “Who hath made us *able ministers of the New Testament*... OF THE SPIRIT and the ministration of... SPIRIT.” The New Testament is not the black, leather covered, book called the *Bible*. This book is what Paul calls “the letter.” It is the law, the record, the history, the form which tells us many things about the historical man called Jesus. The twenty-seven books called the New Testament are merely the guide given to point us to the TRUE NEW TESTAMENT, Jesus, the Christ of God! “Search the scriptures,” said Jesus, “for in them ye *think* ye have eternal life: and they are they which TESTIFY OF M-E” (Jn. 5:39). Our scripture says that God has made us *able ministers* of the New Testament! To minister the New Testament does not mean to *minister* sermons, doctrines, laws, commandments, or facts about Jesus Christ. To minister the New Testament is to minister the very life of God which is CHRIST IN OUR SPIRIT. “He hath made us able ministers of... the SPIRIT.” The word minister implies the thought: to serve, impart, give out or wait on. As a member of the New Creation you have been called to be an able minister of the New Testament – a minister of the SPIRIT!

You may say, “Who, me? Me a minister of the SPIRIT? Why, I can’t even testify without stuttering and my knees knocking!” How can we minister *spirit*. We know how to minister tangible things: our hands minister food to our mouths, they wash our bodies, clothe our bodies, minister ointments and medicines to diseased or painful members, and serve others in a multitude of ways. This is not hard to understand but how can a person minister SPIRIT? We minister spirit when we minister WHAT THE SPIRIT IS within us! As we walk in the attitude and will of God, speak the words of God, act in the wisdom of God, express the character of God, manifest the nature of God, there is transmission of *spirit energy* to the people, events, and circumstances about us.

How can we describe that Holy Spirit which is within us? We can describe the fruit of the apple tree in terms of the characteristics of the apple, i.e., peeling, meat, stem, core, seeds, texture, flavor, etc. The characteristics make up the description of what an apple is, what it is like. Similarly, we may describe the Holy Spirit in terms of the virtues or attributes of the Spirit called “the fruit of the Spirit.” Now the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Gal. 5:22-23). This is the image of God, what God the Spirit is like! And the new man of our spirit is created in the image and likeness of God (Eph. 4:23-24). Here are nine individual realities which are not visible to the natural eye, yet we know they exist, for like the wind we have observed their influence and effect. They are Spirit, YOUR SPIRIT, and you can minister out *of that realm!*

What kind of fruit does a natural tree bear? You will answer, "Natural fruit, of course." That is right. In nature everything produces "after its kind." Apples produce apples, oranges produce oranges, vegetables produce vegetables, etc. If natural trees produce natural fruit, what kind of fruit should we expect from SPIRIT? The answer is simple: SPIRIT FRUIT! The fruit is of the same nature and substance as that which produced it. If God is Spirit, Holy Spirit, then it follows that the fruit of the Spirit is likewise Spirit. To minister Spirit, therefore, means nothing more nor less than to minister the virtues of the fruit of the Spirit to another person. It does not mean to minister the letter of the Word, or pronouncements of judgment, to preach sermons, or convince people through argument of a doctrine, or show people where they are wrong, ungodly, or under condemnation. NO! That is all the ministry of the letter *which killeth!* We are called to minister the SPIRIT WHICH PRODUCES LIFE!

God is not complicated. Spirit is not complicated. God is Spirit, and God is love. Love is not complicated. Love has no problems communicating, influencing, ministering. When those around us are discouraged or distraught, we can minister encouragement to them by our word, attitude and action. When people are sad and sorrowful, as ministers of Spirit, we will minister joy and faith unto them. In the presence of fear we will exude and speak peace. When our enemies hate us we will love them in return. When men curse us we will do good to them, when they revile us we will bless them. When our friends are depressed, uncertain, and frustrated, we will manifest such calmness and confidence that will lift them from the shrouding gloom of despair into faith and victory.

It is a significant fact that all the virtues and characteristics of the Holy Spirit *are spirit*, and therefore ARE ENERGY – POWER! In the area of will, attitude, nature, mind, disposition, etc., there is always a *transmission of energy*. Haven't you noticed how one person's attitude will "rub off" on to another person? One can begin complaining and soon everyone is complaining. One begins to be argumentative and before you know it everyone in the room is in a heated argument. Or a whole group of people may feel frustrated and hopeless in a situation, and just one person can enter the room with a cheery smile, radiating the aura of confidence and assurance, speaking a positive word of encouragement and victory, and soon the whole atmosphere changes, becoming charged with this new expectation, the spirit of the whole group being raised up into hope and anticipation. What is this? It is the work of spirit invisible, intangible energy – POWER! Invisible, but very real. And very powerful! There is constantly, in this world, the definite transference of *spirit energy* from person to person, negative or positive. The rise and success of false religions, ideologies like nazism and communism, rock music, immorality, etc., are the direct result of negative spirit influence transmitted to the masses through faithful ministers of unrighteousness who have become FILLED WITH THE UN-HOLY SPIRIT, and consequently transmitters of the same.

Think not, dear friend, that in order to minister the Holy Spirit you must speak idle words, put on a front, or exert some self-effort to impress someone. We are not subscribing to Dale Carnegie's concepts of HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. Such methods are soulish pretense and carnal hypocrisy. But you do have a right to know that since your spirit has been quickened by HIS Spirit all the virtues and abilities of the Holy Spirit actually are inherent within your nature. By recognizing the reservoir of life, ability, power and nature within (our true identity) we are enabled at any and all times to appropriate it for ourselves and minister its realities to all whom we contact. And this is P-O-W-E-R – the very POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD!

One thing must be very clear. There are three dimensions of spirit energy which daily touch our lives: God, the satanic, and the human. Every thought, word and action of mankind emanates

from one of these three invisible but powerful sources. As sons and daughters of the Most High we are called to the high calling of being transmitters of the life-giving energy of God here upon this earth! Yes, you can minister SPIRIT – HOLY SPIRIT! Hallelujah!

### **GET THEE BEHIND ME – SATAN!**

While earthly races vary in stature, physical features, and color, the nature of man is unvariable and universal. For the carnal nature there are no national boundaries, no aspects peculiar to a certain tribe, no ethnic group or national entity has any monopoly on the serpent that lies in the heart of man. All men of every country and every tongue and every race are possessed of the very same thoughts, impulses, desires, emotions, and state of being, for all are partakers of the collective nature of Adam. The mind of Satan is the mind that worketh in all the children of disobedience. This is the mind that inspires the ever increasing evil and confusion that today is running rampant among all nations. This is also the mastermind that dominates the religious confusion of this dark hour.

From the day of the fall in Eden even unto this hour man has borne the imprint of the satanic mind, the mark of the serpent, the *mark of the beast*. That mark *in his mind* has been manifested in everything he has set *his hand* to do. Politically he has filled the world with wars and rumors of wars, greed, hatred, bloodshed, and oppression. Socially he has rocked the world with every imaginable devilish perversion, and religiously he has displaced the mind of Christ with the carnal mind to bring about a form of godliness devoid of power or reality, but filled with a confusion of human ideas that would stagger the imagination.

We need not be surprised to learn that the serpent lurks in the corruption of the mind and heart of man. Can there be found in all the universe a more possessive, blinding, or deceiving devil than the devil of SELF? Over and over again in the Word of God we find this terrible truth reiterated.

Do you believe, precious friend of mine, that Satan can work in someone right there where you are, and in someone in New York City, in someone in London, in someone in Moscow, in someone in Hong Kong and in someone in Nairobi *all at the same time*? It is true – but *how*? Can he travel at the speed of light and be in that many people around the world at the same instant? Is he *omnipresent*? Absolutely not! He dwells IN MAN – he is right there in every man’s mind and heart and nature.

We see this principle fulfilled in the story of Job. “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them” (Job 1:6). May I reverently add that *every time* the *sons of God* present themselves before the Lord – Satan comes *also among them*! It bespeaks of a condition within these sons – *our* minds vs. *His* mind, *our* will vs. *His* will, *our* ways vs. *His* ways. It is a heavenly place within the sons of God wherein we must be tested to show whether we be sons indeed. This impudent Devil of self-will is in every man, and even our Lord Himself surrendered His own will to the Father’s, saying, “Father, if Thou be willing remove this cup from Me: nevertheless, not *My will*, but *Thine*, be done” (Lk. 22:42). Until every son has been completely perfected and thoroughly tested it is not possible for the sons of God to come and present themselves before the Lord without Satan coming *also* among them. Does he not walk in the natural mind of every man? It is written, “And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence cometh thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro *in the earth*, and from walking up and down *in it* (Job 1:7). Now the Lord’s questions are never for His own enlightenment. He knew well whence Satan came. Oh, yes, Satan had been walking to and fro throughout the earth – God knew this – for he walks in *our earth*, even that

earth which *we are*, from the east to the west, from the north to the south, from sea to sea and from pole to pole he walks in the earthly planes of our souls, in the secret chambers of our minds, in the fleshly motions of our bodies; he travels up and down in us from the heights of our heavens to the depths of our hells. There is not a day that he leaves us! Dust is his habitation.

All the way to glorification this inner antagonist is present. This is why every revival God has ever sent through the ages ended in apostasy. Satan – not the Devil with horns and pitchfork – but that inward Devil of fleshly wisdom, sense-knowledge and carnal zeal – has a subtle way of identifying himself with every move of the Spirit of God, so as to corrupt it from within. Many years ago F. J. Huegel wrote: “Students of the great Welsh Revival (1900-1903) say that the wonderful stream of Divine Life little by little lost its saving efficacy, as another stream from a very different source, naturally very filthy, began to mingle with the River of Water of Life proceeding from the Throne and from the Lamb. ‘Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them’ (Job 2:1). Beware of false fire. Beware of the counterfeit glow. When the *soulish* takes the place of a pure working of the Holy Spirit, you have a ‘revival’ whose fires, though they purport to be from Heaven are more likely to be from Hell. There are any number of ‘doors’ through which Satan may enter to get control of revival. An undue stressing of the emotional; excitement which grieves and suffocates the Holy Spirit who works quietly; a glorying in the evangelist rather than in the Saviour he preaches; dap-trap methods; *self* whatever the form in the ministry itself, obstructing Christ, veiling His cross and His glory; these are some of Satan’s keys” – end quote.

The same sad story has been chronicled for us in our generation by George Hawtin in his excellent booklet, MYSTERY BABYLON. Speaking of the events that surrounded the great *Latter Rain* outpouring of the Spirit in 1948, he says, “The spirit of Babylon goes much deeper than sects and denominations. It is a mystery the spirit of which seems to be deep-rooted in the heart of man. It is like an octopus with many arms reaching in all directions. If it cannot catch you with one of its arms, it will enfold you with another. It is like a demon which, being cast out, will return with seven other demons more powerful and cunning than itself. You do not have to look for the spirit of Babylon in some great and powerful denomination: you will find it in your own heart if you look close enough. Mystery Babylon is in the forehead.

“Perhaps it was a miracle. I do not think it was chance. I learned that men could be baptized with the Holy Spirit. So I sought and found this blessed new experience in God, and joys flowed like a river as the Comforter came in. But here again the arms of another daughter of Babylon began to enfold me. Was I going to join their church? Was I going to preach for them? Was I going to take out papers and credentials? This time I was persuaded, and I did, and for seventeen years thereafter I was a faithful slave of the organization, speaking its language and building its visible tower. But I was never fully satisfied, though I loved the work, I loved the people, and I loved the students of my old Bible School. Many dozens of them went out to minister far and wide and many found their way to distant and foreign lands. I am sure their rewards will be many, indeed. All the while there was a longing for a freedom which I did not know, a relationship with God that I did not have. Many times I taught the people that some day God would send a revelation of truth, but the very denomination we had so faithfully built would not be able to receive it. When finally that revelation did come, they were not able to receive it, and those of us who did receive were vomited like Jonah from the belly of the denominational whale, thrown up upon dry land, for we had sickened his stomach.

“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 classroom as we waited on God that glorious 13th of

February, 1948, when God began to do a new thing that was destined for a time to shake the church all over America. How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs on earth went sweeping up the sky steeples 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 over yet. As I look sadly in retrospect now, I can see with great 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. The old Babylonish garment was well hidden deep beneath the earth of the tent, but it was there nonetheless, and the whole move was becoming more and more enfolded by another tentacle of the great octopus. Stricter and more rigid became the teaching and the discipline. There was to be no fellowship with anybody who was not within the confines of our ever narrowing circle. We were the true church. We were the elect. We stood on the foundation and all other men stood on sinking sand. No man must cast out a devil unless he followed us. No teaching was worth the time it took to tell it unless it originated with us. We were the most spiritual people in the world. We were going to reign in the kingdom and even now we were beginning to reign. We had the gifts of the Spirit, and we were going to ‘call the shots’ in the tribulation. The elders were no longer fathers, but men who were to carry out the will of those who were lords over the heritage of God. Everything was cut and dried and firmly enfolded in the arms of another of the harlot daughters of the Babylonian system. We boasted of the gifts of the Spirit, but what had become of them? Where were the healings? Where were the miracles? Where was the faith, the gift of languages, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge? The only thing that was left was prophecy and it became a weariness to the flesh, flowing continually from the mind of man and scarcely ever having any fulfillment. Prophecy that has no fulfillment comes from one of two sources: from the mind of Satan or from the mind of man, but never from the mind of God. How often I have listened to people fumble for words as they prophesied thus giving the lie to their words having been inspired of God. How is the faithful city become a harlot!” – end quote. To this faithful testimony I would add – again the sons of God came and presented themselves before the Lord, and how clearer can it be that SATAN CAME ALSO AMONG THEM!

The entire religious world is today walking in fleshly wisdom which seems so logical to the carnal mind. Fleshly wisdom always seems to “make more sense” than does the wisdom of God! Satan causes carnal wisdom to prosper because it is denial of the life of the Spirit, so that many times Christians and churches operate contrary to the Spirit with the argument, “It works!” Their method of evangelism is contrary to the ways of the Spirit, but since *it works* they continue in it. The “program” of the church is contrary to true spirituality, and is built generally around flesh-appeal activities of ceremonies, concerts, social activities, sports, Sunday School contests, puppet shows, movies, special speakers, sensationalism and other carnal tactics and techniques, but the organizations continue in it because “it works” and causes the “church” to prosper in numbers and in finances, while their spirits remain dwarfed and hideously shriveled and stunted, if indeed they have been quickened at all! It must be remembered that if anyone or anything prospers on principles other than *the life of the Son of God*, that person or thing is being prospered by the Devil and not by God!

Turn with me to two verses of scripture in Gal. 3:3 and Phil. 3:3-4. “Are ye so foolish? Having begun in *the Spirit*, are ye now made perfect by *the flesh*?” “We are the circumcision, who worship God in *the Spirit*... and have no confidence in *the flesh*” The flesh is the name by which the Word designates our fallen condition – Satan in man. Well did William Law write these words of keen insight: In this antagonism of the flesh to the Spirit the flesh has TWO DISTINCT STRATEGIES. On the one hand, the flesh lusts against the Spirit in its committing sin and transgressing God’s commands. This is the *evil* of the flesh. On the other hand, its hostility to the Spirit is no less manifested in its seeking to serve God and do His work! This is the *good* of the flesh. In yielding to the flesh, the soul sought itself instead of the God into whom the Spirit could have raised it. Self-effort and self-development prevailed over God’s life. And now, so subtle and mighty is this spirit of self, that the flesh, not only in sinning against God, but even when the soul learns to serve God, still asserts its power, refuses to let the SPIRIT ALONE LEAD, and in its effort to be religious, wants to serve God independent of the Spirit and is still the great enemy that ever hinders and quenches the Spirit. It is because of this cunning deceitfulness of the flesh that there often takes place what Paul speaks of to the Galatians; “Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Unless the soul is brought into absolute submission to the Spirit, the surrender to the Spirit being very entire, and the holy waiting on Him be kept up in great dependence and humility, what has begun in the Spirit, very early and very speedily passes over into confidence in the flesh.

Just where the flesh seeks to serve God, there it becomes the strength of sin. Do we not know how the Pharisees, with their self-righteousness and carnal religion, fell into pride and selfishness, and became the servants of sin and the children of the Devil? Satan has no more crafty device for keeping men out of life than inciting them to a religion, even a serving of God, *in the flesh*. He knows that the power of the flesh can never conquer sin nor please God, that in the flesh and the serving of the flesh no one will ever become a *son of God*, for those who become sons not only defeat the Devil in the wilderness of temptation, but also deny their own souls, wills, plans, abilities, desires, ambitions, hopes and dreams to declare: “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And He that sent me is with me; for I do always those things that please Him. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things so ever He doeth, these also doeth the Son. The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works” (Jn. 8:28-29; 5:19; 14:10).

If there is one lesson a son of God needs to learn it is this: If I am to *deny self* in my relationships with others, to conquer selfishness, anger, and lack of love, I MUST FIRST LEARN TO DENY SELF IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD! *There* the soul, the seat of Self, must learn to bow to the Spirit, where God dwells. Listen, my brother, my sister, to the voice of the blessed Spirit of God. It is confidence in the flesh that motivates men to busily and craftily *work for God* rather than seeking the Lord until *He works*. It is Self doing what the Spirit alone can do; it is the Soul taking the lead, in the hopes that the Spirit will second its efforts, instead of trusting the Holy Spirit to lead and to do all, and then waiting on Him. Oh, brethren! How we need to watch this! All that is not of life, of the Spirit, is merely the good of man – soulish. How much of our religious exercises have been soulish! I can tell you of a truth that most of the “power” in the modern “revival meeting” is nothing at all but soul power. Have you not noticed yourself that in many church services, revival meetings and crusades a kind of atmosphere is first created psychologically to make the people feel warm and excited? A chorus is repeated again and again to warm up the audience. The people are feverishly urged to “get into the spirit” of the meeting. Some stirring stories are told. Special music is sung. *The* people are instructed to stand up, sit down, say “Amen!” and “Praise the Lord!” When the atmosphere is thoroughly heated up, the preacher will then stand up and preach. If he does his job skillfully he can

anticipate a large “altar call.” These are methods and tactics, but they are not the power of the Holy Spirit! Many preachers today think they have power (even many so-called sons of God); but they are merely employing psychological soul power to influence people and manipulate congregations. Many have become self-made experts in manipulating people and crowds. The Bible Schools of Babylon’s religions offer a course for ministerial students called *homiletics*. Homiletics is the art of writing and preaching sermons. The sad truth is that the vast majority of religious activities is just that – an *art*. You can go to school and LEARN HOW TO DO IT! How to prepare sermons. How to speak persuasively. How to use gestures. How to tell jokes. How to preach. How to stir people by the skillful use of sentimental stories about death, repentance, hell, heaven, needs, miracles, etc. This all seems so desirable, so *good!* But I say to you that you can learn these very same psychological techniques, apply them in the business world, and sell vacuum cleaners! The fact is, most all salesmen employ these same *proven procedures* of presentation, sentimentalism and pressure to sell insurance, automobiles, real estate, and thousands of other items daily! They don’t need any Holy Spirit to do that! All that is necessary is some good human personality mixed with some proven techniques and one can persuade people to buy almost anything! These are means and methods, but they are not the power nor work of the Holy Spirit. They are no more spiritual when used religiously than they are when employed commercially. In the Kingdom of God they are *flesh!* To which our Lord says today, as He did to Peter in that long ago, “Get thee behind Me – SATAN!”

There is *no life* in methods, techniques, or formulas. How much better it would be if the Lord’s servants would expend their energies, like Mary of old, at His feet, learning to *know Him* and to *know His ways*. How much better it would be were the time spent on our knees, low and humbled before God, that He might place within a *deep distrust of the flesh*. How I pray that God would truly reveal to all those apprehended to sonship that the one great hindrance to the life of sonship is the power of the flesh and the efforts of the self-life. Open our eyes, we pray Thee, to this snare of Satan. May we all see how secret and how subtle is the temptation to have confidence in the flesh, how easily we are led to try and perfect in the flesh what has been begun in the Spirit. May we learn to trust Thee to work in us by Thy Holy Spirit, both to will and to do *only those things* which THOU ART DOING! Today, after hearing the Father’s call to sonship, after partaking of the deep and vital dealings of the Spirit of God, I have had to totally *repudiate* all such soulish wisdom of the carnal mind, all such fleshly tactics of Babylon’s kingdom to bend low before the disciplines of the Father of sons, to travail mightily that God would bend me, break me, bind my soul power, bridle my Self, and block all that would proceed from my carnal mind. If I have learned anything of the ways of the Father I have learned this one thing: He who would be a son of God must be able to discern what is done from his soul power and what is done by the Spirit of God; further, he must confess and utterly forsake all that pertains to his own soul power, nailing it to the cross of Christ, that ultimately his own faith, as well as that of his hearers, may be found to stand solely in the power of God and not in the wisdom of the flesh. This is the only route, my dear brother and sister, into the glorious reality of sonship to God. All the good works of the soulish realm can never, in a billion years, deliver the creation from its bondage to the tyranny of corruption. Only the mighty working of THE LIFE OF THE SON OF GOD can accomplish this. It is the *Spirit* that QUICKENETH; the *flesh* PROFITETH NOTHING. Therefore – “Get thee behind me, SATAN!”

Can you not see now how it is, my beloved, that when the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, Satan comes also among them? This very same experience happened to none other than our blessed Lord Jesus – the Pattern Son. Did you notice how strangely Matthew and Mark speak of Christ’s temptation? “And immediately the Spirit *drove Him* into the wilderness *to be tempted of the Devil*” (Mk. 1:12; Mat. 4:1). What a strange statement! The Holy Spirit of God *drives* the sinless Son of God into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, the arch enemy of all

righteousness, a murderer from the beginning, and the father of lies! Ah, but it was necessary for the Son to be PROVEN, to be made STRONG, to OVERCOME in these realms before proceeding on into His glorious ministry and the agony and death of the cross.

Do you suppose the Devil came to Jesus there as a weird-looking figure, with little, evil-looking horns protruding from his temples, and a pointed tail? How often with our childish and distorted understanding, have we pictured Jesus confronted by that legendary figure in the red suit, with a pitchfork in his hands! This is naught but foolishness, for Satan is spirit, and spirit is INVISIBLE ENERGY! How many times have you been tempted by the Devil? Can you count the times? How often has he spoken to you, enticing, suggesting, compelling? Have you ever seen him? Have you ever heard his *audible* voice? Certainly not! And yet – you HAVE sensed his presence, you HAVE heard his voice, you HAVE felt his power! It was all in your MIND, in your EMOTIONS. And does not our Lord, the Spirit of Truth, speak to us in the same way? That still small voice, the inner urging, the inward knowing, the spiritual consciousness – all from a dimension beyond the natural senses. Because it is all in our *mind* and *heart* does not mean that it is imagination or hallucination! In the depths of my spirit I am absolutely certain that there was not some hideous spirit-being *materializing* before the eyes of Jesus in that Judean wilderness. Remember – Jesus was not only the Son of God, He was the Son of man. And being both He was capable not only of hearing from God, but hearing those things that be of man. So when we speak of that ancient Serpent which is the Devil and Satan, we are not talking about some mighty fallen angel, but that *mind* which savors the things of man – the carnal mind. The apostle James put it this way: “But *every man* is tempted, when he is drawn away of *his own lust*, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14-15). The Moffat Translation reads, “*Everyone* is tempted as he is beguiled and allured by his *own desire*, the Desire conceives and breeds sin, while Sin matures and gives birth to death.” Everyone has desires of one kind or another, and that really can be quite natural. When we see the word “lust”, most Christians think it is used exclusively in a negative, sensual, or sexual context. The word simply means *desire*, and a person’s desires are not always evil. The Greek word EPITHUMIA is translated primarily as “lust” in the King James Bible, but the same word is also translated “desire” in Lk. 22:15 where our Lord Himself told His disciples how much He longed (desired, lusted) to eat the Passover with them. A related Greek word, EPITHUMEO, is often translated as “desire” and is used in several places in a positive context, as in desiring to know the things of God (Mat 13:17). Even in the things of the Spirit one must keenly discern between his *own desire* and the *desire of the Spirit*.

The record states that after fasting for forty days, Jesus hungered. When you’re hungry, what kind of desire do you have? You want to eat! In that crucial moment the Tempter came to Him. He began to feel the physiological pangs of hunger, and then the *thought* occurred to Him. Jesus dropped down from the high and holy thought of God, into the reasoning of the human mind. He descended in consciousness from the Son of God to the Son of man. He said, “I know who I am; I *can* turn these stones into bread.” And in His natural mind the voice cunningly suggested, “If you are the Son of God, go ahead and do it! Use your sonship to fill your belly! Use it to satisfy your own needs and desires!” But Jesus quickly discerned that wily Devil and knew how to nip that idea in the bud before it had time to blossom. He got to it before it could conceive, before it could start making a baby of sin. Jesus answered out of the depths of His spirit, “It is written – man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mat.4:4). And that ended that temptation! *The* battle lay not with some mythical personage outside of Himself. The conflict was *within*. The voice was an *inner voice*. *The* suggestion was in His *mind*, its power in His *emotions* and *will*. God speaks to us in our mind and spirit. Satan also speaks in our mind and heart. There is no monster without. There are

three things in this vast world, and only three – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; briefly, appetite, avarice, and ambition. I do not think you will be able to avoid the conclusion that all the inventions, creations, and contrivances of man are in existence to cater to these three things. It was with these three things that Eve was tempted. She saw the tree was good for food (the lust of the eyes), a tree to be *desired* (the lust of the flesh), a tree to *make one wise* (the pride of life), and the temptation was not from without but from within. How remarkably the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness parallel these three! Every temptation of the Devil comes to us through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. There are no others. Not for Adam and Eve, not for Jesus, and not for us.

Humankind has an enemy – a wily Nemesis, an adversary, described in God’s Word as desperately *wicked, deceitful* above all things. This enemy has adversely affected every generation of humankind from the Garden of Eden to the present. Just who, or *what*, is this inimical deceiver? The prophet Jeremiah unmasked this enemy in these words of inspiration, “The HEART is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,” and he went on to ask the searching question, “who can know *it*?” To the enlightened mind of this prophet, the depth of iniquity of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of any man to comprehend. How many times have you heard it? Someone perpetrates an unbelievably ghastly crime; like the axe murders of an entire family by a young lad barely in his teens, or the brutal murder of a father and a mother by a teenager a few years ago, who buried them in a shallow grave, and then repeatedly drove a tractor over the site, in an attempt to cover the crime – and yet relatives, close friends and near neighbors all said, in a state of bewilderment and shock, “But he was such a nice, quiet, decent boy!”

A motion picture some years ago portrayed the dual lives led by a *judge*, who had *two families*, some distance apart! He had “married” two different women, was actually *living* with each for a certain number of days each week; would then disappear, as if he had some important responsibilities in a distant town, when in actuality he was going to spend the remainder of that week with a *second family*. Obviously, each wife thought she *knew* this man, *thoroughly!* After all, just how well do you *know* your own spouse? Interesting, isn’t it? We feel we truly *know* our husbands, wives, children; our closest and dearest friends. But according to the word of God we don’t even *know ourselves*. We, perhaps above all people, are most often deceived by our *own hearts!* There is a *deeper* part to all of us – a part that *only God knows!* As a friend has so aptly written: “We should not find this so amazing a passage of scripture if it were not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, The heart is deceitful above all things, *except the Devil.*” He merely stated that the heart is deceitful above all things, PERIOD! Since Jeremiah spoke by the Spirit of God, this could not possibly have been a slip of the tongue or something uttered before it was thought through. If the heart is deceitful above all things, it naturally follows that there is nothing more deceitful. The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE WORLD!

“There is no doubt whatever in my mind that Jesus had this very scripture in mind when He spoke the words recorded in Mk. 7:15-23.” There is *nothing,*” He said, “from *without a man* that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man. ‘ Having said that, He uttered the statement that so often followed His teachings when there was contained in them a *mystery*, ‘IF any man has ears to hear, let him hear.’ If we will be honest with ourselves, we will have to admit that we have fostered and taught for generations a concept that directly contradicts the words of Jesus Christ, for we have, indeed, declared that there IS something from without a man that can enter into him and defile him. We have called him Satan (an adversary), and so he is! We have called him a murderer and a liar, and so he is! We have had much truth about him – but the one thing we have NOT known about him is his

LOCATION! We have said that he was without – Jesus said that he is within! If there is *nothing* from without a man (and in the Greek that reads: *not one thing*) that entering into him can defile him, then we must conclude the Satan’s activity is not without, but within.

“As we continue to read this passage, we hear Jesus say, ‘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 things come *from within* and defile the man.’ Every sin category imaginable is contained in this discourse. Everything that a man could ever think or do that is evil is said by Jesus to come – not from outside of man but from within! In our consideration of this passage, there is one all-important phrase that we must be careful to note, for it is the key to the true nature of Satan and the heart of man. Jesus said, ‘For from within out of *the heart of men...*’ It is imperative that we notice the grammatical number of the two words here. The word ‘heart’ is singular being in the Greek in the genitive *singular* case. The word ‘men’ however is plural being in the genitive *plural* case. We have, then, ONE HEART but many men!” – end quote. This heart is the heart of the Self, the inward nature of man, one great nature shared by all the inhabitants of the world, the very heart of Adam shared with his many-membered body!

The natural mind is the mind channeling the condition of the human heart. It is not the same mind that understands how to drive your car, or lusts after someone of the opposite sex, that also understands the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. Not at all! The promise is sure: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean... a *new heart* also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony (spiritually unresponsive) heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a (soft, pliable, responsive) heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them” (Eze. 36:25-27). This new creation of which the Spirit speaks is blest not only with a *new heart* and a *new spirit* but with a NEW MIND as well. For, Paul says, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord.” But WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST” (I Cor. 2:16). There is by regeneration within ourselves, beyond the realm of our conscious knowledge, a divine life, the child of God’s Spirit, ever unwearied, ever growing and maturing, to gain control of our whole being, and transform us into the image of God.

## **THE DRAGON IN THE SEA**

“And the great DRAGON was cast out, that OLD SERPENT, called the DEVIL, and SATAN, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth... and I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the DRAGON, that OLD SERPENT, which is the DEVIL and SATAN, and bound him a thousand years” (Rev. 12:9; 20:1-2).

Large sections of scripture, in fact a preponderance of the prophetic books, are couched in symbolic terms, hiding much of the “mysteries” of God in *figurative* language. This is done quite purposely by the Lord that the unspiritual while “seeing” actually *see not* and “hearing” actually *hear not* (Mat. 13:10-17). The careful study of the key Semitic symbols, in which so much of the Word of God is given, is vitally important to the one who would “rightly divide the word of truth.” Since the book of Revelation is a “sign-i-fied” or “sign-language” book (Rev. 1:1), we should not be surprised to find that it abounds in Semitic symbols which convey the truth in *figurative* language.

Just as the title “serpent” in Genesis describes the Devil as wily, seductive, poisonous, and deadly, so the term “dragon” is descriptive of his great power, magnitude, and terrifying monster

qualities. Hear what the scriptures say about the Serpent and the Dragon, and it will be very clear that these are one and the same. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven: and behold a great RED DRAGON, having seven heads and ten horns...and the great DRAGON was cast out, that ANCIENT SERPENT, called the DEVIL, and SATAN, which deceiveth the whole world...and they worshipped the DRAGON which gave power unto the beast... and an angel came down and laid hold on the DRAGON, that ancient SERPENT, WHICH IS THE DEVIL AND SATAN, and bound him..." (Rev. 12:9 13:4; 20:1-2). The Dragon is a fabulous mythical creature that never really existed except in the imaginations of men. They were supposed to be enormous in size, up to forty feet long. They had wings like a bird's, scales like a reptile's, claws like an eagle's, and long tails like an alligator's. They breathed fire. The Dragon always stood as a symbol of wrath and destruction. In Africa and Asia people still worship images of monsters and dragons.

As the subtle Serpent came with stealth into the Garden of Eden defiling with *selfhood* the hearts of the parents of the human race, making a murderer of Adam's first son, so has he developed in mankind from that small and unimposing beginning to become a monster of gigantic dimensions filling the whole world with religious delusion and fleshly corruption. In Genesis Satan entered Eden as a cunning little Serpent, but in Revelation he has grown into a monstrous fire-belching Dragon in the earth and in the sea. In Genesis Satan is an enchanting Serpent indwelling a mere handful of people, whereas in Revelation he is a "great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns," a composite of peoples, nations, and governmental authorities. So now the network that he runs is huge and powerful and intimidating and dominates the world and the so-called church as well. He is no longer the inconspicuous little reptile of Eden. He is the horn of worldly strength that Jesus claims makes him "the prince of this world." How is it that Satan began as a little Serpent in Eden and ends as a great Dragon in the book of Revelation? Because he dwells in the minds of men and men have so built him up in their minds and attributed to him such power and authority that the little Serpent has been transformed into a great red Dragon! He is not some sinister creature from outer space, nor a powerful, omnipresent spirit. No. He exists in the mind of man – he's *in your mind* if you allow him to be! That's why the scripture admonishes: "...neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27). How do you *give place* to the Devil? With your own thoughts!

When Adam and Eve departed from Eden the Serpent was in their hearts, their minds, and in their bodies. It should not be difficult for any man to see that all the unrestrained evils that are running rampant in the world today are but the out-croppings, the fruitage, the increase, yea, the manifestation of the Dragon that is now full-grown from the little Serpent in Eden. This monster dwells within each one of us. It could be explained as the accumulated genetic legacy and cosmic consciousness from hundreds of our ancestors who have lived out of and cultivated the beastly nature. After Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden it was but a short space until the Serpent in Cain slew one righteous man, whereas the Dragon that stalks the earth today in a vast multitude of billions of Adam's posterity has slain millions on the blood-stained battlefields of every continent and nation on the face of the earth, not to mention the untold millions more who have been the victims of crime and violence of every kind, and the saints of all ages who have been viciously persecuted to death. Ah, yes, the little Serpent has become a giant Dragon, stalking and stomping about in the dust of Adam's race!

We need not be surprised at the increase of this satanic power at the end of the age. Can we not see that in every age the degree of wickedness in the earth is proportionate to the INCREASE OF MANKIND? Of a dim and distant age it is written, "And it came to pass, when *men began to multiply* on the face of the earth...God saw that the *wickedness of man was great* in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:1,6). And

of our own age it is declared, “This know also that in the *last days* perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, devils, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (2 Tim. 3:1-4). Two millenniums ago the apostle Paul accurately prophesied, “But the evil men and seducers shall wax *worse and worse*, deceiving, and being deceived” (II Tim. 3:13). May the Spirit of the Lord open wide the eyes of our understanding to see the simple and evident truth that as MEN increase in the earth – THE DEVIL INCREASES! In making this statement, I am fully aware that such a thought runs contrary to long-established views of theology, but we are *not* in the least concerned with the views of Babylon’s theology, for so-called theology is not really the truth of God but the *ideas of men*. I am concerned only with the truth of God as it is revealed in His Word in the light of inspiration and revelation.

Now we come to an amazing promise which may be hard for the natural mind to interpret, but when men seek the face of the Lord He sends His Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness of the carnal mind that He may reveal to our broken and contrite hearts the things that pertain to the eternal purposes of God. The promise is stated: “In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish *leviathan the piercing serpent* even *leviathan that crooked serpent*; and HE SHALL SLAY THE DRAGON THAT IS IN THE SEA” (Isa. 27:1). The word “leviathan” means literally “a beast dwelling in the sea.” In the Hebrew the chief word for dragon is TANNIN and in meaning is synonymous with LEVIATHAN. The translators of the Greek Septuagint used the word DRAKON to render both words. DRAKON is derived from another Greek word, DERKOMAI, which means “sea serpent, serpent of the abyss.” Leviathan, the sea-serpent, and the Dragon are thus different aspects of the same being, for note, “In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish LEVIATHAN the piercing SERPENT, even LEVIATHAN that crooked SERPENT; and He shall slay the DRAGON that is in the sea.” The prophetic type for the victory described in this passage is found in one of the Psalms of David. Speaking of the mighty deliverance of Israel from the troops of Pharaoh, when the Lord divided the waters to provide a passageway for His people, David sings: “Thou didst divide the sea by Thy strength! Thou didst break the *heads of the serpents* in the waters! Thou didst break the *heads of leviathan* in pieces” (Ps. 74:13-14). Here the “serpents” plural and the “heads” of leviathan plural speak symbolically of the Egyptians who were energized by the spirit of their carnal minds to persecute and pursue the people of God. Truly, this is the SAME SERPENT THAT DWELLS WITHIN US, the DEVIL and SATAN, the BESTIAL NATURE WITHIN THE OUTER NATURE OF ADAM, that inner force which opposes the Spirit and tries always to bind us to earthly things, keeping us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. My soul rejoices with joy unspeakable in the blessed knowledge that God has promised deliverance for all mankind as this SEA DWELLING BEAST is slain with the mighty, strong sword of the Lord – the WORD (TRUTH) OF GOD!

Before we speak further of this, I would like to point out that throughout the scriptures the sea is a type of the raging, restless, surging masses of unregenerate humanity, tossed to and fro by the inner storms of the turbulent nature of fallen man. The prophet Isaiah penned these inspired words, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isa. 57:20-21). Jude also described the carnal man when he said, “These are *raging waves of the sea*, foaming out their own shame” (Jude 13). The beloved John, banished on the Isle of Patmos, had a vision of a great whore sitting on *many waters*. The angel revealed the meaning of the many waters, saying, “The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are PEOPLES, and MULTITUDES, and NATIONS, and TONGUES” (Rev. 17:5). John also saw a vision of a beast *rising out of the sea*, a beast coming up out of the midst of the multitudes of raging, restless, seething humanity, the

sea of man. The natural sea is a great deep, an abyss (Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2; Deut 8:7; 33:13). The Psalmist wrote of this abyss of fleshly men, "They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent *search*: both the *inward thought* of every one of them, and the *heart* is DEEP (an abyss)" (Ps. 64:6). To the enlightened mind of David the depth of iniquity of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of man to comprehend. The heart of man is an UNFATHOMABLE DEPTH, or, as Jeremiah observed, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: *who can know it*" (Jer. 17:9). While John the Revelator saw the beast (outward manifestation) rising out of the sea (abyss, depth) of humanity (the carnal mind), Jesus expressed the same truth thus, "For from WITHIN, O-U-T O-F THE HEART OF MEN, proceed *all these evil things!*"

But God, blessed be His wonderful name! Has a remedy for this sea-dwelling beast, Leviathan the crooked Serpent, the Dragon in the sea, for His plan of redemption is directed toward removing this beast with His strong and mighty sword – the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word (truth) of God! The Word of the Lord declares, "*thou rulest the RAGING OF THE SEA: when the waves thereof arise, THOU STILLEST THEM*" (Ps. 89:9). Many centuries ago the Spirit of God inspired these beautiful words of promise, "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high IS MIGHTIER THAN THE NOISE OF MANY WATERS, yea, than the MIGHTY WAVES OF THE SEA" (Ps. 93:3-4). Praise God! HE rules the *inner raging of the sea* and He stills *all its tempests!* That unstable nature within, so quickly moved by the storms created by the carnal mind, the torrents of passion, the streams of vain imaginations, the waves of frustration and fear, the winds of doubt and unbelief, the turbulent emotions of body and soul – all are quieted by the Lord, the Spirit, who arises within in peace, confidence, truth and faith to RULE THE RAGING OF THE SEA. And then follows the calm, the state described by Paul, –"that we be no more tossed to and fro with every wind... but may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15). The Spirit of God within is great peace, overflowing joy, unflinching love, unwavering righteousness and omnipotent power. It is only necessary then to gain the *conscious awareness* of the presence and life of God as the essence of our being, and to know that this life is the law and substance of our reality. When your consciousness is imbued with the Spirit of Truth – not merely the letter of truth, but the Spirit of Truth – all inner and outer tempests are stilled, the sea is calmed, and the Dragon out of the sea vanishes over the horizon.

When John beheld in vision the unveiling of Christ – Christ the Head and Christ the body – he also saw "a throne set in heaven" with Christ upon the throne. "And *before* the throne there was a SEA OF GLASS like unto crystal..." (Rev. 4:16). As surely as the raging sea represents multitudes of restless, clamoring, surging, sinning humanity, so does the exquisite sea of glass before the throne of God represent an assembled throng of quickened and transformed saints IN WHOSE HEARTS THE PEACE OF GOD RULES. This great SEA OF REDEEMED MEN is calm and serene, tranquil and quiet, transformed "even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The *sea-dwelling beast* has been dealt with. The inner nature of man has been transformed, Satan has been bound, and the sea is now calm.

The "Sword of the Lord" is the Word of God, the living and energetic Word, the almighty Word by means of which He slays the DRAGON IN THE SEA. When the *bestial nature* which once brought forth *raging waves of the sea* is conquered the *sea of man* is peaceful and serene, expressing the peace of the Kingdom of God. In the earth today there are two companies of "sea people" – those of the TROUBLED SEA and the SEA OF GLASS PEOPLE. Thank God, amidst all the trouble, distress, sorrow, problems and pressures of this world system there is a SEA OF GLASS, a people abiding in the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! These are

“before the throne” – willing subjects of the Lordship of the indwelling Spirit. The apostle Paul greeted the Ephesian believers with this fervent prayer: “Grace to you, and *peace* from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:2). Peace! One of the beautiful titles of our Lord Jesus Christ is “Prince of Peace.” The first mark of the Kingdom of God is: Christ as King. If Christ is the Prince or King of Peace, then peace is a dimension of the Kingdom of God. There are many wonderful truths to embrace, endless revelations to inspire and thrill and transform the hearts of God’s sons, but none more meaningful or sublime than that transmitted by Paul to the Romans, “For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). The Kingdom of God is... PEACE!

The mark of what a kingdom is, is to be seen in the King. Christ now reigns on the throne of the Father, and that throne is individualized as the power of His presence in the heart of every saint. There is an *embodiment*, a *manifestation* of the Kingdom; its power is seen in the lives of those in whom it rules. The Christ lives and dwells and rules in our hearts! The blessed firstborn Son proclaimed to those called to be His *many brethren*: “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” Jn. 14:27. As you acquire peace in your heart from God by the spirit of sonship, I have good news for you! You have received a dispensation of the Kingdom of God, for that is what the Kingdom is. As the peace of God reigns in your heart, in the midst of all the problems and pressures, in a world of turmoil and fear, the Prince of Peace has ascended His throne and reigns. Peace is spirit. The Kingdom of God is spiritual because God is spirit, and, never forget, my beloved – *spirit* is REAL! *Peace* is REAL! The Kingdom of God is a spiritual dimension available to men upon this earth. It is within you as the righteous, peace, and joy of the Spirit-rule in and through you. Even now God is bringing “many sons” to walk in the conscious awareness of the Kingdom and minister its glorious and eternal reality to all mankind now and in the age and ages to come.

How the world needs this peace! Men’s hearts are failing them today for fear in looking after those things which are coming upon the earth. The land is filled with violence, moral breakdown, broken homes, corruption and evil men in government, gang warfare, rebellion, sorrow and death. The world continually sinks deeper and deeper into sin and ever-increasing degradation, reveling in drunkenness, promiscuity, sodomy, blowing its minds with drugs, deafened and demented in body and soul by the raucous racket called “music”, cheating, lying, stealing, raping, murdering, until it has become a seething mass of godlessness and immorality. Ah– the TROUBLED SEA! How often the raging waves of that sea beat with fury within our own breasts in the form of doubts, fears, frustrations, anxieties, sorrows and confusion. Thank God, there is another sea, the sea of glass, the power of the Lord’s Spirit to minister the peace of God in the midst of tempest – a strong and mighty Word of the Lord with which to slay the Dragon in the sea. This is the message Jesus intended to convey when in the midst of the storm on the sea of Galilee He commanded, “Peace! Be still!” He had the peace *within Himself* or He never could have imparted it to the winds and the waves. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy, is *within you*, precious friend of mine, and is becoming individualized and personified within a people for such a time as this.

As we consider these thoughts, may God almighty grant that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. When John beheld the Lord coming upon a white horse, followed by the armies from heaven, he saw a *sharp sword* going out of His *mouth* “that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 19:15). In the midst of all the confusion and darkness of this hour the Spirit of God is calling out a people for His name. He is training them in the school of obedience and refining them in the furnace of affliction. He is stripping them of self-interest, draining them of self-will, plucking from their hearts all the deceptive ways of Babylon, causing them to abhor the vain efforts of the flesh.

These are putting on the whole armor of God, these are dwelling in heavenly places, seated with Christ; these are the *army from heaven* that follows the Word of God into battle. From within, out of the innermost being, is arising a strong and mighty Word, the *absolute truth about God and all things*, by which every enemy shall be silenced. “He cast out the spirits WITH HIS WORD” (Mat. 8:16). This sin-weary world shall yet be governed by a glorious company of sons of God, every one in the image of Christ, every one a brother of Jesus Christ, every one infused with His life and invested with His authority, every one a son given “power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy” (Lk. 10:19). The whole earth, as Eden was, shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

These sons shall be able to raise their voices in mighty declarations of authority. This authority is rooted in their own experience. By the understanding of the Almighty they shall have conquered the Dragon of sin and limitation and death in their own lives. Then shall be fulfilled on the grandest scale ever the word spoken by the Lord, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; in My name they shall *cast out devils*; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mk. 16:17-18). Some people have thought this meant to be able to handle poisonous snakes without being bitten. Others have supposed it meant that IF you accidentally took up a serpent, as Paul did on the island of Melita, there would be no harm. But beyond all this, let me point out to you one of the meanings of the term “take up” in this passage. Not only does the Greek word AIRO mean to “take up”, it also means to “take away.” It may just as well be translated, “They shall TAKE AWAY serpents,” not take up and handle them. The ENTIRE SERPENT KINGDOM SHALL BE REMOVED, TAKEN AWAY by these mighty believers; yea, they shall slay the Dragon that is in the sea! And it begins now, on the personal level, in our own consciousness.

Thank God, this wonderful victory is even now being established in the experience of a people apprehended of God. How we long for such a day as this for all people and nations! Today we hear much of “deliverance ministries” and many go about “casting out devils” in lengthy sessions of exorcism attended by manifestations such as coughing, vomiting, etc. Some are told they have legions of devils and they are given names like “lazy devil,” “false doctrine devil,” “lust devil,” “gossip devil,” etc., etc. We praise God for all who are delivered in any measure from bondages of any kind, but often it is like a man at the mouth of the mighty Mississippi trying to bail out the river with a bucket – there seems to be no end to the masses of spirits, bondages, problems, and works of the flesh with which people contend. We find, however, that the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is not merely that which deals with the branches of the tree, but is that which essentially must “lay the axe to the root of the tree.” That is, it is that which must take action against the Adamic mind, against the Adamic nature that exists in the very root of men’s lives. That is why Paul said, “for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the *rulers* of the darkness of this world, against *spiritual wickedness* in high places” (Eph. 6:12). It is interesting to note that the word “principalities” is from the Greek ARCHE meaning *commencement, beginning, origin*. This bespeaks not of the branches of the tree, but the root – the commencement, beginning, origin or *SOURCE* of the problem– not flesh and blood, but the SPIRIT which now worketh in the sons of disobedience! This is the Serpent, Satan, the Devil enthroned in the human nature!

The ultimate warfare lies in that *deep inner realm* where the *source* of all things is found. As long as we content ourselves to deal with individual “demons,” or to treat “social ills,” or to wage war “against sin,” or to struggle with the “lusts of the flesh,” all of which exist in the external realm of the *tentacles*, we shall find ourselves ever defeated in even these things. Do not try to reform the outer world of appearances. When you meet with thievery, drunkenness, adultery,

pride, cursing, false religion, worldliness, or any form of degradation, do not look at it, but through it. Do not look with the eyes, with the natural understanding or perception – look with the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Look through the individual, beholding by the spirit the root and source of the issue – and there will flow grace to help. We do not deal with people in their outer form or with manifest problems – we deal with spirit. We are not called upon to heal a person; we are not called upon to reform a person; we are not called upon to heal some terrible disease; we are not called upon to change the outer activity of a human body. We are called upon to minister the living Presence, to impart mercy, love, grace and power. Then the hearts of men will respond! “The grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men.” That is what we are called to do. Redemption lays the axe to the root of the tree, deals with the strongman who sits enthroned in the nature, pierces the head of the octopus, automatically destroying the power of the tentacles! Speaking of the hour when the sons of God would rise to that place of authority in Jesus Christ, John the Revelator wrote, “And there was war in heaven and the dragon fought and his angels, and *prevailed not*” (Rev. 12:7-8). Men must rise to that place of understanding, consciousness, and authority in the Spirit wherein the axe is laid to the root – not to some individual manifestation, some outer expression, some external action, some pesky little “demon” – but to the ROOT ITSELF: the ADAMIC NATURE. WHERE SATAN’S SEAT IS! In dealing with the root, the tentacles will take care of themselves. This goes far beyond merely “casting out” the negative, it involves such a complete TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND BEING until the negative HAS NO GROUND TO STAND UPON, NO PLACE TO DWELL.

### **THE BOTTOMLESS PIT**

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key to the BOTTOMLESS PIT and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, and cast him into the BOTTOMLESS PIT, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him...” (Rev. 20:1-3).

The “bottomless pit” is certainly not a hole in the ground; it is, rather, a Semitic symbol which signifies a state or condition wherein there is no bottom, thus NO GROUND TO STAND UPON. Satan was given “ground” in man’s life when the Almighty declared to him, “Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat...” (Gen. 3:14). Praise God, when our adversary, the Devil, is cast into the bottomless pit, it means that he is circumvented to a realm where he has no ground to stand upon, no base for his activity, and no foundation upon which he can build his work. God is “pulling the rug out from under the Devil” as He renews our minds and transforms our nature, that there be no basis upon which the forces of evil can operate. This indicates such a transformation of being that not only are the works of the Devil destroyed in us, but also it is impossible for him to corrupt us again. Thus conformed to the image of the Son we can say with Jesus, “The prince of this world cometh, and HATH NOTHING (no place) IN ME!”

In those blessed sons of God, joined in Christ as one body, God is raising up a house in which He can dwell and manifest His glory without interference or conflict. When the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, he revealed a truth which lies in contrast to the picture of Satan in the bottomless pit. “...that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Tim. 3:15). There are three aspects of the church mentioned in this wonderful passage: the “house of God,” the “church of the living God,” and the “pillar and ground of the truth.” What does this term “the house of God” mean? When you refer to “your house,” you mean the place where you dwell, where you live, where you work out your life, where you are comfortable and at home; and that is just the meaning of the house of God. It is not an empty cliché, it is not a light or loose term.

The “house of God” is the place where God dwells, where He lives, where He works out His life, where He is comfortable and at home without any strain or struggle. This house is none other than the church of the living God. Notice that the term here is not merely *God*, but the *living God*. He is *living*! He now dwells in the church, lives in the church, moves in the church, and works out His life, not in some superstitious religious way, but naturally and comfortably in the church. When we say that the church is the house of God, we must have a very deep realization that God DWELLS, LIVES, AND WALKS OUT HIS LIFE in this house!

The true church is not only the house of God, but it is also THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH. The question follows – What is truth? Do not think that truth means doctrine! Truth is not what you believe about a thing, the truth is the very fact of the thing itself. The word truth means REALITY. Nothing is real in the whole universe, nothing is truth; everything is but a shadow. Nothing is what it appears to be. All of us could look at the same object, and every one of us might see it differently. Many who read these lines have traveled and seen in the distance a mountain having a certain form, perhaps a likeness to some other object. But as you got closer and drove around the mountain it took on altogether different shapes and the original appearance was not found there at all. Each of us interprets all things according to the finite sense of human mind, in the light of the education, environment, and background of our individual experience and knowledge. To understand that what we see represents only our concept of that which is actually there is important. Everything that can be seen, everything that can be touched, everything that can be possessed and enjoyed is not real – for creation is but the shadow of God. Only the Son is His image, His out-lying, His manifestation – all else is but His shadow. The correct understanding of the book of Hebrews makes this very clear. Whatever exists in this universe is but a shadow, not the real thing! What is the *real thing*? It is CHRIST – HE is the reality of everything! The food you eat is not the real food, but only the shadow of the real food. The real food is Christ! The physical life you live is not real life, but only a shadow of the real life. The real life is Christ! “I AM THE LIFE,” saith the Lord. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 Jn. 5:12). If a friend has a photograph of himself, you will say, “This is so and so. But in truth that is not so and so. It is only a picture, an image, and a false image at that. In fact, all images that are not the projection of life itself are false, for living realities are not found in images. Most of what we call images are but shadows, for a shadow is an image. All the types, all the figures, in the Old Testament, as well as creation itself are but shadows of the REALITY WHICH IS CHRIST HIMSELF. Christ is the truth, Christ is the reality of the whole universe. If you just have a doctrine about Christ, you do not have the reality of Christ. And if *your spirit has not been quickened* by His Spirit, you still do not have either life or reality, for the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, howbeit an *unlit* candle which gives no light! Christ Himself is the reality, and His Spirit is the SPIRIT OF REALITY.

The *people* in whom this living God dwells, lives, and moves, is the PILLAR AND GROUND upon which the reality stands. It bears the reality. *Within* this people the living God dwells, and *upon* this people the truth, the reality stands. Ah, as the nature of God’s people is changed by the Spirit of God Satan finds himself shut out, excluded from their lives, no ground to stand upon, no base for his activity, indeed, HE IS IN A BOTTOMLESS PIT! As new creation people our lives BECOME THE PILLAR AND GROUND of this universal reality, which is the Lord Jesus Christ! In the church God dwells, because the church is the house of God. And upon this people is BUILT THE REALITY OF CHRIST. Redeemed by His precious blood, justified by His grace, quickened by His Spirit, transformed by His Word, we become the *base*, the *sure foundation* upon which all the glory of God can be displayed. And on this holy ground is where the saint of God discovers that Satan is bound, securely chained, and a great seal set upon him. This is not a future event – it is an eternal reality to those who walk in the Spirit. In the story of the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, you will remember that “Christian” was approaching a narrow passage as he traveled

toward Porter's Lodge for the night. In the narrow passage he saw two lions but did not know that the lions were chained. Then he was afraid and considered going back, for he thought that nothing but death was before him. But the Porter at the lodge, whose name was "Watchful," perceiving that "Christian" was about to turn back, cried with a loud voice not to fear the lions for they were chained and could do him no harm. So "Christian" warily walked into the narrow passage, trembling for fear of the lions. He heard the lions roar. He felt their hot breath on his flesh, but they did him no harm for they were, indeed, on a chain. "Christian" then clapped his hands for joy and boldly went on through the narrow passage and arrived safely at the other side. Satan, the roaring lion, is chained, my friend! Not going to be – he IS. Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the messenger of the everlasting covenant, has chained him and set the seal upon him. And this Jesus lives and dwells and moves in you and me! Sometimes it seems as if the world is full of lions crouched for a spring – as if there are lots of terrifying things about to happen from formidable adversaries all about. But when we discover the power of the indwelling Christ, we find out that, as terrifying as those things seem to be, they are already chained by God. Springing doesn't get them anywhere.

Hear it! All the reality of the universe is established upon the lives of God's saints! If anyone wants to know what life is, he will see and touch it in God's people. If someone would like to know what love is, what joy is, what peace is, what truth, faithfulness, righteousness, power, glory, wisdom or knowledge is, he will see it and touch it upon and within this people. "And the government shall be *upon His shoulder*" (Isa. 9:6). "Upon the shoulder" means that THE WHOLE BODY BEARS THE WEIGHT OF IT. Jesus Christ is the Head, the mind, the leader, but the power and glory of the Kingdom rests upon *His body*, the PILLAR and GROUND of the TRUTH. What a day, *when all nations* become a bottomless pit for Satan, and he has no more ground in the nature of the human family! I can tell you, dear ones, that already Satan is finding very little "ground" to creep upon in those elect sons apprehended as the firstfruits of God's redemption. Victory upon victory they are gaining as they are changed from men of the *dust* to men of the *Spirit*, from the image of the earthy to the image of the heavenly. The reality of His divine life is being built up in their inner man, and even now THEY ARE THE GROUND, THE BASE, THE FOUNDATION OF THE TRUTH, even Mount Zion of which it is written, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth (this) shall not make haste (be anxious)" (Isa. 28:16). Zion is composed of those sons in whom the Christ has been established as a sure foundation; no matter what comes, how hard the winds of adversity blow. How fierce the storm. How overwhelming the waves, how severe the pressures, these REMAIN UNSHAKABLE, FIRM, STEADY, RESOLUTE, UNDISTURBED, CONSTANT, AND IMMOVABLE, rooted in and living out of the Spirit. Upon such a people the government, the authority of God's Kingdom rests! Through the ministry of such a people, praise God, the day shall come when throughout all the earth, in every nation and people and kindred and tribe and tongue THE DRAGON THAT IS IN THE SEA SHALL BE SLAIN BY THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, and God shall in the consciousness of every man be A-L-L I-N A-L-L. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them (the sons of God); and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: IN THE HABITATION OF DRAGONS, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. The BEAST OF THE FIELD SHALL HONOR ME, the DRAGONS AND THE OWLS... because I give drink to My people, My chosen" (Isa. 35:1,7; 43:20).

Is there a Devil, a real being with personality? If so, who created him, and why does an all-powerful God of righteousness and love permit such a being to exist? Many answers have been given. On the one hand, there is the view that the Devil is a hideous looking creature in a funny red suit, with cloven hoofs and a forked tail, whose chief business is to tempt and endeavor by

all devious means to destroy Christians – and to preside over the alleged tortures of the departed damned. On the other hand, some say the Devil never existed; that he is a fiction of the imagination; a crude myth or superstition. Others tell us that the Devil is dead.

“And so they’ve voted the Devil out,  
And of course, the Devil’s gone;  
But simple folk would like to know  
Who carries his business on!”

Oriental imagery is never more graphically displayed in all its eloquence than in the use of the biblical word SERPENT as a figure of Satan, the Devil. This symbol, along with a number of other word pictures, is very expressive of his nature and activity. Let us remember that there is much language in the scripture that is figurative and much that is allegorical. When our Lord Jesus said, “Ye are the salt of the earth,” He was speaking quite evidently in figurative language. He did not mean that Christians were to be put into a gigantic salt shaker and shaken over the globe. Nobody would be so ridiculous as to believe that. And when Christ said, “I am the light of the world,” He did not mean He had to be lit like a candle and put up somewhere where He would shine! There are figures of speech in the Bible. In our everyday conversations we make numerous referrals to the nature, character or personality of creatures or things, such as: “That guy is a real turkey,” “He is a snake in the grass,” “She can swim like a fish,” “He is sharp as a tack,” “She is neat as a pin.” These are all figures of speech designed to express an image we are seeking to convey. All of us are accustomed to using symbolic language to communicate an analogous idea on a different plane of understanding. When Satan is spoken of as a *serpent* it no more means a literal snake than when Dan is so called in Genesis 49:17. “Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a *serpent* by the way, an *adder* in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.” When Satan is called a *serpent* it no more means that he is a snake, or appeared in the form of a snake, or incarnated himself in the body of a snake, than that the Emperor Nero was a LION (II Tim. 4:17), or king Herod a FOX (Lk. 13:32), or Judah a LION’S WHELP (Gen. 49:9). It is the same figurative use of words when “doctrine” is called “leaven” (Mat. 16:6). When a figure of speech is thus employed it is for the purpose of expressing truth on a higher plane, and is intended to be a figure of something BEYOND THE LETTER OF THE WORD.

Let all who read these lines thoroughly understand that when we discuss the Garden of Eden, the Serpent in the Garden, and the fall of man, it is not with any idea of drawing an historical sketch. The past is meaningless unless it relates to the present. It is because we see repeated all around us, day after day, generation after generation, the same carnal, fleshly attitudes and activities that brought about the original fall, and in the repetition of these attitudes and activities there is the tragic and dreadful departure from REALITY and the LIFE of the Spirit of God, even among the Lord’s own people who dwell in the Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. So obvious and incontrovertible is this fact that I do not hesitate to say the Garden of Eden is not so much a past event as a present and continuing event. It is a crisis leading to a process – a continuing unfoldment. This is the tragic effect of man’s first departure from God. It happened back there in the past... but it continues to happen because the *spirit of Adam* is within us all! It is, then, for our own instruction and learning that we draw on the lessons brought to us by that past event, which though it occurred long millenniums ago, still finds a place of relevancy not only in our modern society but among all who name the name of Christ and, sadder to say, within those who have received the call to sonship and have gone “without the Camp,” as well.

## THE ACCUSER

The various names for the Serpent are most instructive. In the word “serpent” there is the idea of cunning, of slyness, “the *wiles* of the devil.” It is not the thought of monstrosity showing itself in a public way, but diplomacy working under cover and carrying its point underhandedly. In the word “satan” we have the thought of the adversary merely. There is no thought of evilness, but simply *opposition*. From the beginning there has been that which has stood in opposition to the life of the Spirit in man, and has fully earned its reputation as the most adroit of adversaries. Paul describes it as the flesh warring against the Spirit, and the carnal mind that is enmity against God. The flesh and the carnal mind are neither inanimate objects, but living, energizing realities, truly the spirit that now worketh *in* the sons of disobedience (offspring of old Adam). The word “devil” means an adversary who *slanders*, or an “accuser.” This title is used throughout scripture, where he is revealed as the slanderer of God and the accuser of man. In that long-ago Eden he slandered God – “Yea, hath God said! God doth know...” – and accused man – “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked... and the Lord God said, *Who told thee* that thou wast naked?” (Gen. 3:1,7,11). The Serpent’s chatter on down through the centuries has followed exactly the same line – he has not deviated one iota from his first method of approach. More christians are defeated by *accusation and condemnation* than anything else. We will be the victim of a double deception if we cannot recognize either the *liar* or his *lies!*

The scriptures draw a wonderful contrast between the *intercession* of Christ, on the one hand, and the *accusation* of the Devil, on the other hand. As I have studied the Word of God and been taught by the precious spirit of Truth many things have become evident, one of which is that while intercession may be Godward, the scriptures reveal that the primary thrust of the intercession of the Christ is not Godward at all, but manward, an intercession that is to *us-ward*, to bring us to God, to draw us to the Father, to work mightily in us, that we might yield ourselves unto Him, to live out the revelation of the Spirit in our lives. The real truth about the intercession of the Christ has been clouded by the corrupted theology of man. I am sure that you, as I, have heard preachers try to describe His ministry of intercession. It goes something like this. Satan, our enemy and the accuser of the brethren, stands before the Father up in heaven accusing us day and night. Satan tells God about all our failings; he enumerates to God every sin we commit in thought, word, or deed. He is constantly, unceasingly, relentlessly and unmercifully accusing us of every shortcoming and weakness. The Father, on the other hand, is portrayed as greatly offended and incensed by our sins, and exceedingly wroth with sinners; a vindictive punisher, somehow obligated by His superior sense of justice to be the avenger of every little thing we do wrong. Many parents have unwittingly darkened the hearts of their little children with threats of the certain vengeance of this God who is a constant terror over the life. “Now don’t you do that because GOD will punish you!” And even much stronger things are told to little children. God becomes a mean, harsh, vindictive old man up in the sky with beady little piercing eyes possessing wonderful X-ray vision which can penetrate into the deepest recesses of mind and heart, and the thickest darkness of night, scrutinizing every thought and action. This God, moreover, is waiting, lurking about everywhere, with a punishing whip of large dimensions!

Enter the Son. You know as well as I do that the church system has always taught that this God of exacting justice and undiminished wrath must be appeased, soothed, turned aside from His furious vengeance, and that this feat can only be accomplished by the bold and insistent intercession of the compassionate SON, our wonderful Lord and elder brother, standing opposite Satan, before the judgment-throne of the Father, as our Advocate, our Lawyer, pleading our cause, beseeching God to be kind to us for His sake, to commute our sentence, and begging for our lives on the ground that He paid the price for the forgiveness of our sins. According to this hypothesis the anger of God can only be appeased by looking upon the bloody sweat and cruel, ugly death of His Son, as He stands there interceding for us. I do not hesitate

to tell you that such a teaching is utter rubbish and the brashest sort of nonsense. It springs from the Romish tradition that likens God the Father to a fearful and offended despot, spoiling for the blood of the offenders, and it makes Christ to be the One who pleads with God on behalf of the victim until the Father is consoled and placated. And if it weren't for our Advocate, Jesus, God would listen to the Devil's accusations and really lay it on to us. We could even lose our salvation because of Satan's accusations, if it weren't that the merciful Jesus is there to prevent God from casting us into hell, by presenting His blood on our behalf. Such is a gross caricature of the truth. More than that, it is a stupid absurdity and a horrible blasphemy. Praise God, the Spirit is unfolding Truth in ever-increasing dimensions of glory which magnifies God's glorious nature of love and mercy, His wisdom and power, His goodness and the prudence of all His plans and purposes.

It is my conviction that not even Satan is senseless enough to believe that he could approach OUR FATHER and convince Him to condemn us because of our failures. Nowhere does the scripture state that Satan accuses the saints to God. What it does say is that "the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which ACCUSED T-H-E-M B-E-F-O-R-E OUR GOD day and night" (Rev. 12:10). It is one thing to be accused *before*, that is, in the presence of, or in front of another person, and another thing altogether for the accuser to accuse you TO the other one. It should be abundantly evident that Satan does not accuse us *to* God, he merely accuses us *before* God. It is not the almighty and omniscient God, my brother, my sister, whom Satan wishes to convince of your unworthiness – it is YOU! Satan has no misconceptions about his ability to persuade God of your weakness and worthlessness, but if he can influence YOU to believe that you are unworthy, that you are a failure, that you are hopeless, that it is impossible for you to attain to the High Calling of God in Christ, that it is beyond the realm of possibility for you to lay hold upon life and immortality; or that God does not love you, leaving you condemned and helpless – he is thereby able to rob you of all your hope, faith, confidence, joy, peace and victory!

Don't think for one moment, my beloved, that this scene is set in some far-off heaven somewhere! Satan is not standing in a red devil suit before the great white throne somewhere beyond the milky way – ah, he lurks, rather, in the corruption and unbelief of our own carnal minds, in the unrelenting voice of our own distorted conscience, in the perverted reasoning and logic of our silly superstitions about God, slithering about in the lowest realms of man's earthiness. The reason why so many saints fail when it comes to the temptations and condemnations of the Devil is that they don't really want to resist Satan. We have been taught in the past to flee from the Serpent, that old dragon that appears as a roaring lion, and this we have been doing all along; but on this Day, this glorious Day of illumination and truth, all of us who walk in the light of this Day will discover that it has been the very Serpent that has been BRUISING YOUR HEELS all these years in *your house*, causing you to err, to sin and stumble day and night! And it is the very Dragon that has been ACCUSING YOU DAY AND NIGHT BEFORE GOD IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD WHICH YOU ARE! You see, Satan never comes as some hideous monster with horns, a forked tail and a pitchfork. He doesn't blare at you through a loudspeaker. HE COMES IN YOUR OWN DESIRES! HE SPEAKS IN YOUR OWN THOUGHTS! HE TORTURES THROUGH YOUR OWN FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS! The battle rages in the MIND, whisperings out of the dust realm, accusations that shout at you from within. And God is there, too! The indwelling Spirit of God likewise speaks from within, out of the spiritual mind, the voice of inspiration, the spirit of revelation, words of grace and wisdom drop from His tongue, the still small Voice of the Father from within His temple of clay, graciously assuring, "I love you, My beloved son; you are My very own son, and I will be a Father to you; I will strengthen you, I will uphold you, for I am the Faithful One and will complete the good work I have begun in you and present you faultless before My throne." And there, before God in His

temple – within – rises the other voice, the voice of the carnal mind, the voice of the flesh – the Accuser! It is there in the imaginations of the mind, in the heavens of that universe which you are, that Satan the Accuser must be cast down, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God within.

The Devil may accuse us, but God will never condemn. Is God for us, or against us? Is He on our side, or isn't He? "What shall we say to all this? If God be for us, who can be *against us*? Who can be our foe, if God is on our side? He who did not withhold or spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect when it is God who justifies? Who shall come forward and *accuse* or *impeach* those whom God has chosen? Will God, who acquits us? Who is there to condemn us?" (Rom. 8:31-34, Amplified). That wonderful Father! That gracious Redeemer! The most loving and faithful of all beings! He turned my heart back again and restored me into His life. God, the Father, sent Jesus -- the very fullness of His own heart -- sent Him into the world to die on Calvary's cross. God so *loved* the world that He gave! We did not choose Him, He chose us and ordained us! We love Him, because He first loved us! Who is he that condemns? Not God! What can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? The answer is sure -- there is not one created thing in all the vast universe that can separate us from God's love -- certainly not the accusation of the Devil!

What does it mean, that Jesus makes intercession for us? Jesus is our mediator, our intercessor and our advocate; He stands between God and us, but just what is He doing when He does this? Is He pleading with the Father to be merciful to us and forgive us? No, a *thousand times no!* The Greek word is ENTUCHANO meaning "to meet with, to converse with, to entreat." The question is just this: With whom does the Christ meet, with whom does He converse, and whom does He entreat? God, or man? God so loved the world that He gave His Son for us. God so *loved!* God gave the Son! Does the Father of love have to be entreated to be kind and merciful and gracious unto us? Listen! "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM... now then we are ambassadors FOR CHRIST, as though GOD DID B-E-S-E-E-C-H Y-O-U by us: we *pray* (Greek: beg, petition, beseech, intercede) you in Christ's stead, BE YE reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:19-20). Therefore, we find that HIS INTERCESSION IS TO US-WARD, to meet with us, to converse with us, to entreat us, to petition us, to intercede with us, to reveal the Father's heart to us, to bring us back to Father, that we might be reconciled to God; working in us that we might know Him in all His glorious and eternal reality. All this attention of Christ is directed toward us. God does not have to be interceded with for us, it was the invisible and unknowable God who sent the Christ to us, to meet with us, to woo us, to draw us that we and the Father might be one again.

## **THE GOD OF THIS WORLD**

In his first epistle, the apostle John informs us that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1Jn. 5:19). "This present evil world" (Gal. 1:4) is now governed by those who obey the carnal nature, the Serpent within them. Satan, "the god of this world," rules through carnal individuals (old Adam), thus filling this world with the wickedness and corruption so evident everywhere. The result of the Serpent's work, through the carnal nature in mankind, is the conglomerate world system -- economic, political and religious -- prophetically called Babylon. The most outstanding characteristic of the Serpent is his ability to deceive. From the very opening chapters of the Bible, he is depicted as a liar and a deceiver. "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat," was Eve's cry, and in the closing chapters of the Bible, the fact of his deceiving nature is further emphasized in the inspired words penned by the Revelator wherein he says that he is "that old serpent *called* the devil and Satan, which DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD" (Rev. 12:9).

To properly understand the “wisdom of this world” which is “foolishness with God” we must first understand what is meant by the “world.” The Greek word for world is KOSMOS, which means system, arrangement, or organization. There are two things which have captured our attention, having been quickened for our consideration by the Spirit of God. These two are sin and the *world*. Because both are contrary to the Spirit of God, they must be dealt with and purged from all who would walk in sonship to God. However, the defilement of these two aspects differs. The contamination of sin is savage, hurtful and ugly, while the contamination of the *world* is cultured and refined, appealing to the intellect and the artistic in man. The contamination of sin is like dirty motor oil poured on a beautiful white wedding gown. But the contamination of the world is like a colorful pattern printed on white doth. From the human standpoint, a wedding gown with dirty motor oil splashed on it is considered filthy and undesirable, whereas a cloth with a colorful design is not dirty, but rather desirable. However, in the sight of God, BOTH ARE UNDESIRABLE! God’s standard has always been neither a stained garment nor a colorful piece of cloth, but a pure white garment. “And to her was granted that she would be arrayed in fine linen, *clean* and *white*: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints” (Rev. 19:8). “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white *raiment*’ (Rev. 3:5). Just as a dirty spot is not pure white, even so a colorful design detracts from the pure whiteness. Likewise, the world appears better than sin, but when related to the divine nature, both are contaminating and require purging.

Furthermore, the effect of sin and the world upon man differ greatly: sin defiles and degrades man, whereas the world possesses man. It is just as serious for man’s life to be controlled and dominated by the world as to be defiled by sin. If Satan only uses sin to contaminate man, he only causes man to be perverted and shamed, but if he uses the world to possess man, then man is alienated from God into a realm of ego-centric self-sufficiency and self-deception. Sin may be defined as an act of *disobedience to God*, while the world may be defined as man’s organized system or kingdom by which he lives in *independence from God*.

A study of Genesis makes the difference apparent. Although Adam was corrupted by sin, he was still living in the presence of God. It is not until Genesis 4 that we read of Cain: “And Cain went out *from the presence* of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden... and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch” (Gen. 4:16-17). This is most significant! “Nod” is the Hebrew word for *exile* or *vagrancy*. Thus, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, away from the life of the Kingdom of God, away from his inheritance in God, into exile, to walk totally independent from God and outside of God. This “land of Nod” or *condition of exile* is stated to be “on the east of Eden.” The Garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, was westward, but Cain travelled eastward. Adam was driven away from the Tree of Life, driven eastward (Gen. 3:24), and now Cain continues on yet farther in an eastward direction (as all the metaphysical religions do today!) away from even the presence of God. Oh, what spiritual realities lie hidden in these simple words of Holy Writ! The Word of God clearly reveals that the route of spiritual progression is *from east to west*. Jesus Christ, who is the *wisdom of God*, is pictured by the Psalmist as a bridegroom typified by the sun who comes out of his chamber to run a race through the heavens (Ps. 19:4-6). Malachi speaks of Christ as “the sun of righteousness, arising” (Mal. 4:2). Everyone knows, of course, that the “race” of the sun is run from east to west. The lightning referred to in Mat 24:27 is actually the sun, for the Greek word merely means a *bright shining*, and lightning, as we know, does not flash from east to west, having no specific design or direction. Thus, Jesus said, “For as the bright shining (sun) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Cain, had it not been for sin, would have been living in the Garden of Eden, which typifies the Kingdom of Heaven on earth – man dwelling and walking and living in the economy of God, the Spirit. In spite of sin, he was still able to know the

presence of God, which typifies the *anointing*. But now Cain is rejecting even the presence of God and moving in the opposite direction of the course of the anointing, moving further and further from the life of the Spirit. His final end is that of an exile, a vagrant, living on a territory not pertaining to him, not his true inheritance or possession. There, alienated from God, and severed from the anointing, the record states Cain *dwelt*. He *settled* there. He *built* there. How happy is the man who clearly understands that the pathway of the anointing is *ever from* glory to glory, and as long as we are short of the image and incorruptible life of God we must never settle anywhere! The very condition of settling precludes our re-entrance into the Paradise of God. The man who settles is lost from the on-going purposes of God. Those blessed ones who in this hour hear and heed the call to sonship cannot settle in any zone until they stand in holy splendor with the Lamb upon the pinnacle of Mount Zion in the heavenly sphere of life and glory and dominion. But men always settle when, following the spontaneous moving and revelation of God, they begin to organize and systematize it, building walls of formulated creeds and dogmas about it, endeavoring to *preserve* it, as though the almighty Spirit who gave the outpouring in the first place had never commanded, "leaving... let us GO ON to perfection!" Once the move of God is creedalized and organized those within its walls are nevermore free to follow the course of the anointing, or to walk with God in His on-going unfolding of His glory.

Sin began with Adam in the Garden, for Adam sinned and was corrupted by sin and overcome by death, but he did not fall into the world at that point, neither was he possessed by the world then. The word "world," as we have pointed out, translates the Greek word KOSMOS meaning order, arrangement, system of things. The *world* is a negative thing in relation to God. James declares, "...the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The apostle John adds his testimony, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16). Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the world is the movie theater, the dance hall, stylish clothing, and such like. Others confuse the world with the *earth*. But the world is the present system of things upon this earth conceived by the carnal mind and generated by the natural man. The world consists of *all* that man has instituted that replaces God in his life. The present political, economic, educational and religious systems are not of God, but of the world. When people, activities, or things – whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly – enslave man and usurp God, they comprise the world. Anything that causes man to disregard the Spirit, be removed from the anointing, or be independent of God is the world. All that does not come from the Father, all that originates outside of the consciousness of God, all that man institutes by his own carnal wisdom and fleshly activity is of the world, and is contrary to the life, nature and ways of God. There is an interesting statement in Eph. 1:4. "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." The word "foundation" translates the Greek word KATABOLE which is a compound word made up of BALLO meaning "to cast, to throw" and KATA meaning "down." When man fell from his high and holy relationship with God and was cast down into the carnal realm of existence, the "foundation" of the world was laid in his heart and actions. But – blessed be God! The apostle Paul informs us that God the Father elected some sons in Christ "*before the foundation of the world*"! The word "before" translates the Greek word PRO meaning "to go before, to precede." Hence, the Father's act of choosing us in the Christ preceded the fall of man and the establishment of the world system. We are not told how many days, years or eons this choosing preceded the world, but methinks it was away back there when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy!

Since the world is in such opposition to God we must consider its origin and process of development. The world began with Cain. Cain built the first city – organized society, civilization – which typifies the worldly system of independence from the SPIRIT. The world did not exist when man was created (except in abstraction), but developed gradually after the fall, as man removed himself from the anointing and walked in his own carnal way. When man was brought forth from the formative hand of God there was already the universe, the heavens and the earth, and all created things; but the world did not exist. Following the fall, when unregenerated man began to multiply upon the earth the Serpent in man gave direction and character to the “New World Order” of man, thus the scripture speaks of the natural man as walking “according to the course of this *world*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the SPIRIT that now worketh IN the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

There are three primary requirements for man’s existence and well-being on earth: provision, protection, and pleasure. For man to live an abundant and fulfilled life in the earth realm he needs the provision of food, clothing, shelter, etc., a means of defense to protect himself from adversaries, and a form of recreation and amusement for his happiness. Prior to the fall GOD WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THESE THREE NEEDS OF MAN, and they were supplied abundantly in the Garden of Eden experience. After Cain’s departure from the anointing, the scripture describes him as “of that Wicked One” (I Jn. 3:12). The preposition “of” is in the Greek EK – “out of” – “Cain was OUT OF that Wicked One” – the seed of the *Serpent!* Out of the descendants of Cain were produced the founders of man’s own system of supply for these three great needs of life. These were the three sons of Lamech. Jabal was the father of tent dwellers and cattlemen (Gen. 4:20). Tents and cattle are for the supply of man’s living and therefore belong to the category of provision. In the beginning God intended that HE should be our provision and so made Himself available to man in the Tree of Life, that in union with Him we should have all things, even the supply of God Himself. Jabal represents man’s own efforts, apart from the anointing, to make provision for himself. Spiritually, this symbolizes the carnal religious systems with their rituals, ceremonies, and ordinances designed to “feed” God into man. All religion is the invention of man in his effort to meet man’s spiritual need – *apart from the anointing!* Alas! they understand not that the reality of God’s life is not contained in, nor ministered through, doctrines, programs, rituals, ceremonies or ordinances. Those who live in that realm know nothing of the mighty power of the indwelling Christ of God. Man’s religion is of the *world*, for it is outside of God, being not of the Spirit, nor by the anointing.

Another of Cain’s sons, Jubal, was the father of all that handle the harp and organ. Playing harp and organ is for pleasure and inspiration and thus pertains to the category of pleasure. This worldly aspect is fulfilled, spiritually, in the maze of social activity in religion, as well as in much of the music, programs, and sermonizing, all of which is designed to be pleasant, acceptable and entertaining to the people. I personally have little use for most of the concerts, programs, and pulpit showmanship which constitutes much of the so-called “ministry” among God’s people today, for it is, without doubt, very appealing to the carnal mind which is ever wont to feed upon soulish entertainment rather than with reverential awe and holy brokenness to drink at the fountains of living water from the throne of God. I am convinced that our faithful heavenly Father has given the ministry of the blessed spirit of Truth for the *perfecting* of the saints, whereas the worldly church system has given us a veritable smorgasbord of *religious shows* for the *entertaining* of the saints. Most solemnly do I declare unto you that all such ARE OF THE WORLD, and not of the Father, for their methods and means are outside of the anointing of the Spirit and can never lead God’s people beyond the husks of man’s own vanity. Thank God! a people is arising who are finding their way out of Cain’s pleasure land of entertainment and sentimentality, back to the Paradise of God, back to the Tree of Life, where they partake deeply

of this sublime truth: "... in *Thy presence is fullness of Joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore!*" (Ps. 16:11).

The third son, Tubal-Cain, was the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron instruments. These instruments were formed for the purpose of defense, thus referring to the category of protection. Ignorant of the power and sufficiency of the indwelling Spirit, with what pompousness do the religious systems construct about them their walls and implements of defense! Church history is replete with examples of revival after revival in which men were sovereignly caught up into heavenly places of glory and power, only to have man put his hand of flesh upon the workings of God, to control, protect and preserve it, as though the omnipotent Spirit needed man's useless wisdom and regulations to preserve His mighty work! Out there in Cain's world you must have the earthly braw and iron implements of Tubal-Cain – the implements of organization, denomination, creed, coverings, fellowships, rules, regulations, boards, etc., to defend and preserve the work; but, blessed be God! as one moves *westward into* the anointing of God's presence and life the omnipotence of the *indwelling Spirit Himself becomes* our fortress and exceeding strong tower! With what deep comprehension of the ways of the Lord did the Psalmist pen the words of faith in the power of God alone when he wrote, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. For THOU art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor shall our horn be exalted. For THE LORD IS OUR DEFENSE; and the Holy One of Israel is our King" (Ps. 89:15-18).

In these three important inventions of the sons of Cain man found within himself the answer to his need of supply, defense and amusement. Man found no need of God, of the anointing, for he set about to establish his own world, independent of God. This was the civilization produced after mankind departed from the presence of God – a godless life created by men. This present world system of things is patterned after the order of Cain. It is all *outside of God*. That does not mean that it is all evil. It simply is not of the Spirit! How clear that in this earth the politics, economics, education and religion is outside of God! When we have learned how the world was formed, it is easy to define the world. Originally, man was in the family of God, lived by God, relied entirely upon Him, and had at his disposal ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD. Now the Serpent, through subtlety, sophistry, the carnal mind, the wisdom of this world, has systematized the world to replace God in being *all* to man. Man, having forsaken his inheritance, having departed from the presence, and having lost the anointing relied upon the world and was overcome by the world. Therefore, the world consists of everything that replaces God and possesses man.

Cain built a city – as did Nimrod after him. "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch" (Gen. 4:17). There was no city in Eden, no fleshly system, no carnal arrangement of things. Not system, but LIFE! I wish to speak with utmost solemnity here. Throughout the centuries the religious systems have accumulated a great number of traditions, rites, ordinances, methods, institutions and practices, each of them supplanting something of the pureness and freshness and glory of the SPIRIT. These things have become so universal in the churches of the world, and in the lives of their members, that there is no thought of ever being able to "run" the church and its business without them! Generation after generation, people have been raised up from childhood in this atmosphere and have absolutely no knowledge of anything else or another way. It never even enters the minds of these people that THE CHRIST WITHIN is the Head of the church, the life of the church, and the whole sufficiency for the church, its people, its work, and its needs. Each church must be constantly creating new plans, programs and activities to keep the people busy "doing something". The idea is to keep the people busy and to keep up the interest, so that they may be kept in that church. In the church

world such a church is known as a “lively” church, and the pastor is known as one of the “successful” pastors. Spirituality has little, if anything, to do with it, for the whole group, including the so-called pastor and church leader, is simply a natural body of people, carrying on what *they imagine* is a church.

He who makes God’s house of living stones depend on mere outward forms; he who confounds Truth with the shibboleths of sects and denominations, or the usurpation of preachers, builds upon the baseless and shifting sands. The true and eternal church depends solely on the presence of Christ. Sweep away from your spiritual walk as much as you will the infinite cobwebs which the ambition and the ignorance of men have spun for centuries over the surface of the faith. Fling to the four winds the voluntary humility and all the vain deceits, traditions, and ordinances, which, like those of the Pharisees, are but “weak and beggarly elements.” It is not the form but the essence which constitutes true religion. Christ knew nothing of external paraphernalia, and those who follow the Lamb know nothing of it either. Distinguish between the flickering shadows of outward symbols and the verities of eternal life. Distinguish between the valueless injunctions of touch not, taste not, handle not, and the divine nature which produces love, joy, peace, righteousness of heart, and all were suddenly swept away, it would in all probability cease *to function*. If the churches had to drop all their rituals, forms, programs and ceremonies; all their confirmations, baptisms, and communion services; all their special singing, organ music, and altar calls, they would feel as though they had been stripped naked and could not serve God in any way. All this simply demonstrates the terrible fact that the faith and dependence of the churches is not in *God*, but is in the trappings they have accumulated to themselves throughout the centuries. The thought that God is perfectly able and fully willing to run His church without the aid of anything in the way of fleshly contributions, is found to be abhorrent to the average church member.

God’s true church, in contrast to the false religious system of Babylon, has never been contaminated by the *world*. You may be assured, my beloved, that the Father has faithfully answered the prayer of Jesus, “And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy Word; and the *world* hath hated them, because they are not *of the world*, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep ties and powers in the celestial realms, and the hope of all creation for deliverance and restoration to the Kingdom of God. Let all who treasure the call to sonship know once and for all that CHRIST WITHIN I-S s-u-f-f-i-c-i-e-n-t! all else is – the *world*.”

The truth that is set like a diamond in the pages of God’s Word is the absolute and total *sufficiency* of the Christ within. To say that the Christ Himself is not sufficient for our whole life as sons of the Most High, that the indwelling spirit of life is not enough, that there is something the outer man must do to add to, supplement, or improve on what *He is within us* is an insult to God and a blasphemy against our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet we see men doing this on every hand. The carnal mind is never able to take God at His word! It continually seeks to initiate some additional actions or services on the natural plane to take the place of pure spiritual reality.

When Jesus came in the flesh, He came into a world steeped in religion. He came into a condition brought about by centuries of teaching the law and the rites and sacrifices of the temple worship. Into this had been woven the traditions of the elders, an accumulation of those same centuries. It had come to include also even the washing of pots and cups, together with ceremonies of washing of hands before eating and a multitude of other practices imposed upon the people by their leaders. The temple in the city of Jerusalem was the symbol of all this to the people. Their whole life revolved around that building and the rites and sacrifices the priests

offered in it. It was the sacred spot of the nation and of all Jews wherever they were in the world. Every Jew had that one desire to go to Jerusalem and worship. This system of religion was imbedded in the lives of the people, and had been for long centuries. It had become a part of their life and they endured it all with the hope perennial within their hearts that some day the Messiah would come and lift not only this yoke, but that of the Roman empire as well. But when the Messiah came, they did not recognize Him. For here was all this great mass of law, ritual and Pharisaical teaching and tradition, while the Messiah was but an unknown man, of almost unknown origin. Jesus brought a new and revolutionary way of life. It was a way of *believing*, and not a way of *doing*. It was faith in the Christ and right relationship with God and did not consist in the doing of anything, or the keeping of external observances. It was simplicity in the highest degree, set up against organized worship of the highest degree. The revolutionary way of life which Jesus brought to the people was in exact and complete opposition to the bondage under which the people now found themselves.

The people were constantly taught and instructed that they must observe all the things the priests and Pharisees told them, or they would perish. Jesus came into their midst and said that all those things would do them absolutely no good whatever, but if they wanted *life* they should come unto *Him and drink* – merely by *believing into Him!* He was placing the Christ and faith in the Christ against all the accumulated tradition of the nation. He was assuring them that they would NOT LOSE A SINGLE THING by coming unto Him, and casting all else away from them. And they would gain *life*. But who could hear such a thing in the day of Christ. In fact Jesus Himself said that no man could come unto Him, except the Father who had sent Him, would draw that man. It is just as true today! Ah, beloved, if you were to go into any church on any Sunday and say to the people, “If you will cast aside all your form, all of your traditions, all of your rituals, all of your ordinances, all of your cherished and time-honored creeds, all of your solemn assemblies, all of your myriad activities, all of your committees, and SIMPLY COME UNTO THE CHRIST AND BELIEVE INTO HIM AND DRINK OF H-I-M, YOU WILL LOSE NOTHING, but you will gain the glorious and eternal *reality* of God forevermore,” what kind of reception would you receive? You would actually be asking the people to give up *everything they are doing* and all the *things* they have been given by their ministers and church orders with which to serve and worship God – exchanging it all for GOD ALONE. What an unbearable burden it would be for the people to be REDUCED TO GOD, to possess *nothing* but GOD HIMSELF! You would find this an almost impossible thing to accomplish. Truly Christ has been usurped by the *world*.

## THE TRADUCER

As we have pointed out, the most outstanding characteristic of the Serpent is his ability to deceive. From the very dawn of human history, as recorded in the Bible, he is depicted as a liar and deceiver. “The Serpent beguiled me and I did eat,” was Eve’s plaintive cry, and in the closing book of the Bible, the fact of his deceiving nature is further emphasized in the words of the Revelator who described him as “that old Serpent called the devil and Satan, which *deceiveth the whole world*” (Rev. 12:9). The apostle is referring back to that significant statement in Gen. 3:1 wherein we read, “Now the serpent was more *subtle* than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.”

The Bible was not written in English, but Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. It is to the ancient Hebrew words we will refer, to glean the truth from this passage. From a casual view of these words comes the ancient myth of a snake wound around a tree in the Garden of Eden. However, the Hebrew word translated “serpent” is NACHASH. This word NACHASH means “to hiss, mutter, whisper; as do enchanter.” Secondary meanings are “to divine,” “enchant.” It is

because of these expressions that the noun “serpent” appears. An allied Chaldean word means brass, actually polished brass, from a root word meaning to be bright. Dr. Bullinger, in the Companion Bible, says, “the Hebrew term probably includes the sense of fascinate, enchant” This element of fascination connects with the later use of Nachash as “serpent.” Satan, then, is a WHISPERER, an ENCHANTER, a FASCINATOR, and a SHINING ONE! He is a speaker, a teacher, a diviner, a creator of illusions and appearances – a deceiver!

And just how does Satan deceive? A key is found in the Greek New Testament name for Satan – the devil The Greek word is DIABOLLOS. DIABOLLOS is a compound of two words – DIA and BOLLO. DIA means “a channel of an act” and BOLLO means “to throw – either with force, or without force, yet with a purpose, or even carelessly.” Hence, the Devil is A CHANNEL SOMETHING PASSES THROUGH. The pipe through which water enters your home is a channel – a means of passage. The frequency bands assigned to a single transmitting station for either radio or television is called a channel – the frequency or means of passage of communication from the station to your receiver. Any channel is the vehicle through which a thing passes from one location or state to another. And, may I add, the Devil is the channel (DIA) through which a carnal thought, idea, concept, desire, passion, etc. passes before it reaches your CONSCIOUS MIND. This explains very well why Strong’s Analytical Concordance has rendered the compound word DIABOLLOS as “a traducer.” The English word “traduce” means “TO TRANSFER FROM ONE ORDER OF REASONING TO ANOTHER ORDER OF REASONING, as to translate from one language to another language.” Hence, the Traducer, the Devil, the Translator, the Interpreter sits enthroned in the mind of man and his primary job is to transfer or translate KNOWLEDGE!

This ancient Phoenician coin, which was minted long ago in the bustling commercial city of Tyre, bears a curious image. The coin shows a serpent entwined around a tree stump. To the left of the stump stands an empty cornucopia. To the right, a flourishing palm tree. Curious, yes. But is it significant? Amazingly, the story these symbols tell is of great relevance to our spiritual understanding!

To classical scholars, the symbols on the coin are familiar ones. They are found in the art and mythology of many civilizations through the millennia. What do they all mean? First, consider the snake. The snake on the Phoenician coin is the symbol of a powerful god whom the Romans called *Aesculapius*, the Greeks *Asklepios*. Who was this personage? Aesculapius was an ancient pagan god of healing. To his temples sick people came from all over the world. His symbol was the *serpent*! This symbol has come down to us today in the two snakes which intertwine the staff on the shields of the medical profession. Persons wishing healing from this god were instructed to lie down in his temple so that the tame snakes of the priests could slither over them. The sufferer who was “fortunate” enough to have this dubious honor take place was said to have been touched by the hand of the god of healing! His healing powers are reflected in the meaning of his name, Aesculapius. It means, literally, “THE MAN-INSTRUCTING SERPENT.” Now we see a significant *connection*! The Serpent who sought to teach *mankind* is mentioned, of course, in the third chapter of Genesis, where he seduced our first parents, Adam and Eve. It is none other than man’s adversary, “that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). In mythology, Aesculapius was believed to be the child of the Sun, and thus the “enlightened” of mankind. He was often represented in art by a serpent or as an old man holding a staff around which a snake is entwined.

This “Traducer,” or “Translator,” or “Enlightener,” is nothing more nor less than the *spirit of your mind*! Those elect saints who read these lines know that the metaphysical and occult “channelers” have no light of truth or Holy Ghost power to set men free or transform into the

image of God, but how often we fail to realize that there is a MASTER CHANNELER sitting as a god right within our own minds, and how often we yield our lives into his hands of illogical reasoning – deception and delusion. The words coming from this Translator may be enticing and exciting – but only to the natural man; and, my beloved, they minister *death!* Hence the need to heed the apostle’s inspired admonition, “Put off the old man... and be *renewed in the spirit of your mind*” (Eph. 4:22-23). The simple truth is: YOU CAN’T TRUST YOUR INTERPRETER! Of him our Lord stated plainly, “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). And he is “that crooked serpent” (Isa. 27:1).

The magicians of Egypt were diviners and enchanters. God spoke unto Moses and said, “What is that in thine hand?” Moses replied, “A rod.” God said, “Cast it on the ground.” He obeyed and the rod became a serpent. This was a very important lesson to him because the symbol of the *serpent* to an Egyptian represented WISDOM. It did not symbolize evil, Satan, or the Devil. Remember what Jesus taught his disciples... “Be ye as WISE AS SERPENTS and harmless as doves.” God took that dry, lifeless stick and made it come alive. The lesson was plain to Moses. The rod is a type of the Christ. Isaiah spoke about a rod coming out of the stem of Jesse (Isa. 11:1). Jesus became the WISDOM of God. Later, Moses and Aaron his brother went to meet Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. They went in to Pharaoh and asked him in the name of the Lord to let the people of Israel go. And Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord? Why should I obey His commands? What sign can you show me that your God has sent you?” Then Aaron threw down his rod, and it was turned into a snake. But there were wise men, magicians, in Egypt who heard of this. They came in and threw down their rods, and their rods also became snakes. But Aaron’s rod, in the form of a snake, ran after them, overtook them, and swallowed them all; and then it became a rod again in Aaron’s hand. The message is clear – *Christ, the wisdom of God, swallows up and consumes all the wisdom of this world – of the carnal mind!*

Again I would quote the timely words of a friend who has shared with us her keen insight into the mysteries of God. “Paul in II Cor. 11:3 warns the church at Corinth to beware lest they fall into the same trap that ensnared Eve. I fear, ‘said he, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.’ The English here does not tell the full story. It is, therefore, to our advantage that we delve into the Greek that we might receive in greater depth that which was intended by the Spirit of God for our hearts. When it was said that the serpent “beguiled” Eve, the Greek indicates that he cheated her out of something, for the word used is a combination of the Greek word EK which means ‘out’ and the word APOTAO which means ‘to cheat.’ She was, then, ‘cheated out’ – sold short – and it was no less thing than the glory of God that she lost. That is why it is written of all mankind, ‘All have sinned and come *short* of the GLORY of God.’ The means by which the serpent – the Seer – beguiled Eve and cheated her out of her inheritance was through *subtlety*. Again, delving into the Greek, we find that the word used is PANOURGIA meaning ‘adroitness, trickery, craftiness, and sophistry.’ It is this word ‘sophistry’ that has captured our attention, having been quickened for our consideration by the Spirit of God. The English definition of this word is, ‘Reasoning that is *superficially* plausible but is actually fallacious.’ It is a synonym for intellectualism and has to do with *sophism* which is ‘an argument that is correct *in form* or *appearance* but is actually invalid.’ It is, also, ‘an argument that is used for deception or displaying intellectual brilliance.’

“We find, then, that in cheating Eve out of her inheritance, in causing her to fall from the Glory, the serpent employed the use – NOT OF AN OUTRIGHT LIE – but of a TRUTH! He used an argument that is correct *in form*, but because it was *only form* and had lost the *essence*, Eve was deceived by it. What was the argument, that he used that was ‘correct in form but was

actually invalid'? Hear it! 'God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened?' That was a truth – and 'ye shall be as gods' was also a truth, for after the man and the woman had eaten, the Lord God Himself verified the serpent's statement as being absolute truth. 'Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil,' God said. *In form*, then, the serpent had a truth. What the serpent failed to reveal, however, was the *essence* of the form which is that INDEPENDENTLY OF GOD man can NEVER be a partaker of the divine nature! This should have been a self-evident truth, but man failed to see it. He was deceived by the very form of truth and was thereby brought to ruin, cheated out of the very thing that he sought. Man became a god, alright, in the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – but he became a god in the wrong realm, for at the same time that God acknowledged man's 'deity' He also CAST HIM FROM THE GARDEN – cast him from the heavenly realm – and set him in the earth 'to till the ground from which he was taken. 'It is one thing to be 'a partaker of the divine nature' and it is quite another thing to be the 'god of this *world!*' In the former, there is contained the thought of TOTAL DEPENDENCE – in the latter, the principle of INDEPENDENCE. Though the terminology is the same – that is, 'ye are gods' – the essence is not. 'The man has become as one of us' but he did not become, in *his* rebellion, an actual partaker of divinity. The serpent, then, through reasoning that is superficially plausible but is actually fallacious, beguiled Eve. It was through a mere *intellectual* grasp of the word of God that Eve was 'cheated out' of her inheritance in the Living One and fell into the realm of death. We must not, as we consider these things, lose sight of the fact that the apostle Paul had a fear for the church that BY THE VERY SAME DECEPTION, our minds should also be corrupted! I fear, 'said he, lest... as the serpent beguiled Eve through SOPHISTRY (the form of truth without the essence), so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' May we have ears to hear!" – end quote.

The apostle Paul, in speaking of Christ as One in whom are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*, hastily adds: "And this I say, lest any man should *beguile* you with enticing words." The word "beguile" here is in the Greek PARALOGIZOMAI meaning "to mis-reckon, to wrongly reason." It is a compound word consisting of PARA meaning "along side of" from which we get our English terms *paralegal* and *paramedic*. In medicine the word PARA is used to denote something *disordered* or *abnormal*. The second half of the word is the Greek LOGOS which is translated to mean the WORD OF GOD, as in Jn. 1:1. Ah – the great Traducer, the Translator, the Interpreter, the Beguiler is he who causes us to NOT REASON GOD'S WORD CORRECTLY. The deceiver adds an idea along side of God's Word – the *form* added to the *essence*, the *letter* added to the *spirit*, the *shadow* promoted instead of the *substance*, and the results are very DISORDERED AND ABNORMAL! Eve did not correctly reason the things the Traducer communicated to her conscious mind and this whole world of illusion, deception, sin, pain, limitation, sorrow and death is the tragic result!

Earlier I pointed out that the second half of the Greek word DIABOLLOS (Devil) means "to *throw* or to *cast*, or to *cast right through*." Another word that has been quickened in my spirit is "input". We get "input" from the negative realm of spirit – the spirit of our carnal mind. This dart throwing of the adversary refers to thoughts, beliefs, concepts, ideas, feelings, moods, desires, etc. injected into your conscious mind out of the invisible realm. Though we may be alert for danger from without, the greatest danger always lies within ourselves. Both our ability and our wisdom are but foolishness in the sight of God, and should we consciously or unconsciously set our hearts upon them, we find ourselves leaning upon our own meager resource, devoid of the Spirit of God, and abandoned to our own devices. With what holy unction does the apostle Paul exhort the saints, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, ...above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery *darts of the wicked*" (Eph. 6:13,16).

You want to watch that crafty Translator within! In the temptation of Jesus we discover this wily adversary-coming upon the Master with Bible in hand, so to speak. "It is written!" – this was the glittering weapon, the fiery dart, the master-stroke of the Traducer. "If Thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread." "It is written!" he thundered as he offered the kingdoms of earth to Jesus if He would bow to the shrewd worldly wisdom the Traducer outlined in His mind by which He could have conquered even the might of the Roman empire. An easy way to popularity was pointed out – it was suggested that He cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple. No harm would come to Him for God had promised to send His angels to care for Him. And the multitude, amazed, would follow Him. What gave immeasurable force to the Traducer's suggestions was his appeal to the awful authority of God's Word. He cast about the things he offered the glow of Divine approval. He enforced his ideas with the sacred sanction of the scriptures. It was with the Bible in hand that he approached the Son of man. "It is written!" If the Word of God supports it, if the Bible sanctions it, why it must be good. How the Traducer loves to come to us with the Bible in his hand! It casts about him such a holy air. But here is where we discover the awful depths of the Traducer's duplicity. He is no stranger to the scriptures, and he will quote the Word when such a procedure will serve his purpose. When he deals with a chosen one of God, obviously, he must meet such a one upon the high plane on which he lives. He could get nowhere by suggesting the gross sins of the flesh to one separated unto God. It must be through the Word. It must be through a carnal, twisted, literalistic and erroneous understanding of that Word – the letter that killeth. The *letter killeth*, and Satan has the *power of death!* The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are the same *tree* in the midst – the tree of knowledge is the outer *form* of truth, whereas the tree of life is the *spirit* of truth. To be carnally minded *is death*, says the apostle. How much plainer can it be that the crowning work of the Traducer is to put a natural, carnal, reasoned, intellectual interpretation to the Word which is spirit and life. He takes the language of SPIRIT and translates it into the perverted, garbled dialect of fleshly wisdom and carnal understanding. People sometimes accuse me of *spiritualizing away* the Word of God. How, I ask, can you spiritualize something that already I-S SPIRIT AND LIFE? The danger lies not, precious friend of mine, in spiritualizing away the Word – it is, rather, in canalizing *away* that which is SPIRITUAL! To bring the spiritual thrust and essence of the Word down to the low lands of carnal forms of religion is the subtlety of the Serpent. Ah, what a Translator he is! What a liar and deceiver! And all the time he is quoting the Word of God and rejoicing in what a really *sound* "fundamentalist" he is.

There isn't a vice you cannot justify, there isn't a doctrine, however contrary to the heart of God, you cannot prove, there isn't a religious methodology you cannot deify, there isn't a Babylonian garment you cannot glorify, by appealing to the scriptures. All have an, "it is written" to fall back on. The damndest lie can be made to appear true. All the Traducer needs to do is to quote scripture. Every dirty heresy abroad, every false cult, all find in God's Word their foundation. "They that are unstable and (spiritually) unlearned wrest... the... scriptures unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16). I have learned that one can prove or disprove anything with scripture. Brethren sometimes write to me trying to engage me in lengthy debate over some point of doctrine – the letter that killeth. The hour is too late, the time too short, the purposes of God too urgent, my friend, to give myself and the precious time and energy Father has placed in my care to such foolish wranglings and carnal disputations. This is not a moment to jot every doctrinal "i" and cross every creedal "t". There is a truth that runs like a golden thread throughout all the pages of Holy Writ, teaching us that the elect whom God has chosen must become aware of the abiding *presence* and indwelling *life* of the Spirit. Students of theology, poor souls, pour over their musty volumes, they learn all the arguments and proofs of the doctrines *about God*, but the almighty God Himself they do not know. They become ineffective and spiritually impotent because they have separated Truth from the Person, knowing the form, standing on the letter, reciting the *doctrine*, articulating the *facts*, but having no vital, living relationship with Him who

alone IS THE TRUTH. A lifetime of walking with God has taught me that it is possible for one to know all the arguments and appear to have all the answers, but still be a stranger to the heart of God. I testify to every man who reads these words, however, that the moment any man begins to know Him wonderful changes take place in his understanding, for to know *Him* is to be *like Him*. “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Cor. 3:18). His Word is SPIRIT, His Spirit is LIFE, and His Life is POWER to transform, to awaken our consciousness to the abiding reality of Himself, to raise our being up into that heavenly, eternal sphere where I AM THAT I AM.

My good friend Elwin Roach, in his PATHFINDER PUBLICATIONS, some time ago wrote a series of timely articles on this subject of The Traducer. In closing I would share a portion of the wisdom that flowed from his anointed pen.

“When we hear religious teaching and acquire knowledge, if the thoughts are not coming from the Spirit of Christ (the anointing), they are passing through this *soothsayer* (traducer) before reaching our minds. This is the *sayer* who is *soothing*, he is lying, and is calculating. He is the translator for the humanistic, Adamic mind. The Traducer is very accomplished at what he does. Therefore, we should become more cautious WHAT we are hearing and HOW we are hearing, as Jesus warned in Mk. 2:24 and Lk. 8:18. Men and women alike have the tendency to try and grasp any and all things with their own minds that has been so logically put together by this brilliant Traducer, but let us be reminded of this: The carnal mind cannot receive the things of God, for they are *spiritually* discerned, and there is nothing about it which desires the things of God, for that mind is enmity against God (I Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7). However, as we have already mentioned, the Traducer does make the word of God pleasing and understandable to this dusty mind. Very often, when we read the Bible, the words coming off its pages go through the *channel*, through the dia, that thing in the mind called *the traducer, the translator*. This is what has produced so many fictions, frictions and factions in the church. The Traducer has helped to form many thoughts, ideas, reasonings, imaginations, images and idols – in other words, A LOT OF WIND, A LOT OF WINDY DOCTRINES! This translator is very consistent, for he can only translate one way. He always conveys dusty thoughts and carnal revelations, because this is all that the mind of man can receive. All scriptural truth (the *reality* of God) comes from above, even from Jesus who is the truth, the Lord from heaven. In other words. THE TRADUCER VEILS THE TRUTH, while JESUS IS TRUTH REVEALED!”

## **HIS MAJESTY THE DEVIL**

Down through the centuries many books have been written, many songs have been sung, many sermons have been preached, and many things have been said about the Devil. Satan has been blamed for everything from ingrown toenails to the disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle. It pains me to say it, but to most Christians Satan is their GOD ALMIGHTY, for they fear him more than they do the Lord of glory. I do not believe, as the above title suggests, that Satan is worthy of one iota of respect or honor, but none can deny that the vast majority of Christians certainly do, by word and action, ascribe to him the attribute of omnipotence. Most professed Christians do not believe in ONE GOD – they honor at least two, one good God and one evil God. And to hear them articulating their esteem of these Gods you would be led to believe that the Devil is certainly the more accomplished and the most powerful of the two, for they talk far more about the Devil, and spend more time lauding his praises, ascribing to his negative realm dread of mammoth proportions. Some continually worry that he is lurking around every corner, and when they least expect it he is going to hit them from behind with everything he has. The average testimony meeting is full of praises for the Devil. If a score

were kept, the Devil would come out the winner by about two to one over the Christ, relative to what has been done. I heard the story once of this certain minister who dreamed one night that on his way down the road he met the Devil. "Alright, you old Devil," he shouted, "I am going to kill you and put an end to you for all those nasty things you've been doing. I am going to let you have it, you old Devil!" As he drew near to the Devil with fists clenched, ready to smash the Devil's face, the Devil said, "Hold it! Don't do that! Remember – if you kill me, you will have nothing to preach about." What a word!

The good God, according to the common testimony of church goers, is ever *trying* to do this and that, while the Devil is continually interfering with His plans, frustrating His purposes, usurping His instruments and defeating the issue. On some good days the good God wins, on some bad days He loses. They go about continually talking to the Devil, praying to the Devil (though they call it commanding and rebuking), and give place to him over and over again. They "bind" him in this meeting or in that situation, but, like Samson breaking the cords of Delilah, he bounces right back in full regalia at the next meeting or occasion. These "devil-worshippers" ever beat the air against him and do occasionally, they claim, win a *battle* against him, but the *war* rages on. If they do not get an immediate answer to their prayer, they are sure the Devil is hindering. If everything does not go according to plan, the Devil is interfering. If obstacles appear along the way, the Devil is fighting them. The outcome of this battle exceeds the ludicrous – it is a terrible blasphemy. Not only are most Christians constantly defeated in their spiritual life, but they actually consign to the Devil the final victory in God's creation. The majority is thoroughly convinced that in the end the Devil wins at least 90% of humanity and carries them down with him into everlasting damnation and hell-fire. The picture drawn is of a frustrated God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to be its Saviour, but alas! only a handful of the teeming billions of earth can be persuaded to take advantage of His gracious provision, the rest led captive by the ruthless and unrelenting grasp of the Devil. The bad God is thus far more effective in his designs for mankind than the good God. I long with intense longing that the Lord's precious people will repent of ever having believed the insipid and useless traditions that make the almighty God seem to be a victim of the will of His own creation. It is my opinion that most of the theology of the Christian world is stupid prattle that seeks to render the almighty God impotent by robbing Him of His omnipotence. It teaches that God gave His Son that all the world through Him might be saved and then renders His sacrifice hopeless by leaving ninety-nine percent of all His creatures in the hands of the Devil for all eternity. In this view God finally gives up, throws up His hands in defeat, and says, "I've had enough!" He then turns the billions of souls over to the Devil, consigning them all to banishment from His presence into the unending torments of fiery damnation. The fact is, precious friend of mine, a scene such as this would be comparable to the President of a country handing the masses of his nation over to the enemy as punishment because his General lost the war – while he (God), his General (Jesus) and the army (the saints) are rewarded with peace, wealth and pleasure forevermore. Everyone becomes a prisoner, burning forever in torment, EXCEPT THE ONES WHO HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WINNING THE WAR! I tell you solemnly and reverently that the God I serve is not the author of this kind of nonsense. Such a doctrine as that belittles the power and wisdom of God and does despite to the spirit of grace, the atoning work of Christ, and the precious blood that He shed so that the world through Him might be saved. Such a doctrine as that is, undoubtedly, one of the "doctrines of devils" of which Paul warned. I say that because I cannot think of anyone outside of the Devil himself who would be happy with the prospect that Calvary was such a colossal failure! But the preachers, including some who profess to be in the "Kingdom Message," would lay down their lives for such an abominable heresy!

I say to all who read these lines that OUR GOD IS SOVEREIGN AND OMNIPOTENT. If ever there will come victory over the negative realm, the adversary, it will be when we come to

KNOW THAT GOD IS GOD, AND THERE I-S N-O O-T-H-E-R GOD. He is sovereignly in control of all that touches our life, and of the march of history and the final outcome for all creation. The nations know not this God, nor do the professing Christians in the church systems know Him. So the Lord almighty within must bring forth those who can be His witnesses – people who have come to experientially KNOW THAT HE, and HE ALONE I-S GOD. Those whose very lives convey the message and bear the evidence that there is but ONE GOD. We have had enough of the world's stupid witness, those who believe in a God for good, and another God for evil, and oft times it is not clear which "GOD" they are declaring, especially when they spend more time exalting the prowess of the Devil than they do proclaiming the praises of their Creator and Redeemer. Let all men know – God is even now producing His witnesses WHO KNOW that HE alone is God, that HE controls the interplay between good and evil, that all is by HIS design and at HIS word, and the evidence of this reality is demonstrated by their lives. Once Christ truly and experientially becomes LORD OF ALL IN YOU, then He will have abolished for you all Devil-consciousness and HE will be both the Center and the Circumference of your reality. In that day, my beloved, for you, THERE IS NO DEVIL ANYMORE!

I do not wonder sometimes that those who only read my writing think that I am a hard and vindictive man, especially as I warn men of the error and abominable apostasy of the nominal church systems. But if you only knew, I am one of the most peaceable and gentle men in the world. I am a very quiet man (except in the pulpit!), and believe that I am merciful and compassionate toward every sinner, I have only been a fighter because I had to fight. Was Jesus Christ not a great fighter? Is He not a great fighter still? And is He not the Prince of Peace? Is He not God's Lion, the Lion of the tribe of Judah? And is He not the Lamb of God? God's Lion is a Lamb! God's Lamb is a Lion! I call God to witness and you to witness that when I have been called upon to fight – for whom have I fought?" I fought for God. I fought for Truth. I fought for reality. I fought against the false shepherds who were taking away the key of knowledge, who entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hindered. I fought those who withstood the right ways of the Lord, deceiving the people and holding them in bondage to slavish forms of empty religion and superstitious conceptions of God. Stephen fought the devils in the Jewish system to their very faces although he knew he would die. He saw his Master in the heavens. Do you see your Master in the heavens? Do you see that the only Reality is that which emanates from the Christ-Spirit? Do you know Him within, in the depths of your being? Do you hear His voice? Do you know what He wants you to do? He wants you to follow in His steps, to BECOME HIS SALVATION unto the ends of the earth. He wants you to grasp hold of life, and deliver His creation from sin, sorrow, death, hell and the demonic power which curses this world. The peace of God means war with sin. He that is a friend of evil is the enemy of God. This is the kind of peace Jesus left. He made warriors of men. They went forth to fight the world and the Devil, in Greece and Rome, with thirty thousand gods. They marched up the Acropolis; they marched upon the Parthenon; they threw down the altars of the boni dei, they threw down the altars of Venus; they destroyed the altars of Jove, They demolished the altars of Mercury. They smashed them, by the Spirit's power, with the sword of TRUTH they trampled upon them; they triumphed and brought in a dimension of the kingdom of God.

Oh, that is such a sublime verse where Jesus said, "ALL AUTHORITY is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations..." (Mat. 28:18-19). Do you see that? There is a tremendous power in that "Therefore," I am with you. I will back you. Every angel in heaven if needful will come forth and surround you. Fight! What does it matter, the puny governments and armies and courts of THIS WORLD? All authority is given to the Christ of God, and we are the members of God's Christ! The hosts of God will troop over all the skies, ten

thousand times ten thousand millions, if need be. Embrace TRUTH! Speak TRUTH! Live TRUTH! "I COMMAND... Go ye therefore, you poor fishermen, and tax-gatherers and discredited rabbis, go, I am with you." If only we realized what power there is behind us!

God is raising up a SONSHIP COMPANY that will go for the Devil's fortresses, to batter him, shatter him and break up his kingdom. God is even now preparing an army of OVERCOMING ONES, transformed in the spirit of their mind, triumphing over sin, error, limitation and death, who shall go forth in the power of the SPIRIT to pull down the strongholds of creed and ritual and religious foolishness and ignorance and set the captives free; who will beat down the strongholds of mis-conceptions, mis-information, mis-understanding – sin and death – and let the prisoners go free! Satan is not a God like unto the Lord my God. He does not interfere with God's purposes nor frustrate God's plans. ALL AUTHORITY is given to the Christ of God – in heaven and in earth! How much authority is "ALL" authority? I shall fight that battle against the lies of religion and for the supremacy of the Christ while there is a drop of blood in my body. I shall claim that every foot of this earth and every man upon this earth and under the earth belongs to Christ, for He made the earth and He made every man. He tasted death for every man, and therefore, every foot of the earth; and every man on the earth and under the earth belongs to Christ my Lord. They are His by right of creation and they are His by right of redemption. No Devil anywhere can gainsay that fact. I claim for His this great and universal Kingdom. The church has forgotten that Christ came to establish a Kingdom and that it must break in pieces and CONSUME (take into itself) every other kingdom including the Devil's kingdom. The Gospel which Christ preached was the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. The hope and aim of all His work was the establishment of the Kingdom of God. When the end shall come, He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and in it will be everything God created, that God may be ALL-IN-ALL. We who preach this Gospel of the all-inclusive redemption of Christ preach not a Gospel of limited atonement, nor of a partial Kingdom, nor of a Christ who was a failure, nor of a Devil who wins the battle for souls and possesses the souls of untold billions throughout an endless eternity. Such a doctrine would be blasphemy! We preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and of the triumph of that Kingdom in every realm. We demand that every man upon this God's earth, and under the earth, and in heaven and hell and throughout the universe, shall bow the knee and glorify God by calling Jesus Lord and serving and obeying Him with a willing heart. God shall grant it. If it takes ages upon ages, God shall grant it!

We must have it! We shall fight it out to the end, and we will win. The Christ in us shall win. Sin shall be abolished. Disease, death, pain, and hell shall pass away. This victory must be fully accomplished in the firstfruits first. The Day is at hand. Then, O Christ, and then alone, wilt Thou see the travail of Thy soul and be satisfied. Then, O Christ, and then alone, can we be satisfied; when the last rebel has bowed at Thy feet, and there is no more Fight; for there is no more Devil anywhere. Hallelujah! God shall reign forever, the reality of creation! It is a living hope; this hope that, at last, every poor sinner will have heard the glad sound, and that at last every poor spirit in earth and heaven and hell will bow before the Christ, and will own His sway, and there shall be harmony and peace and unity everywhere, for God shall be All in All. That is my hope.

# Chapter 34

## THE DOMINION OF ANGELS

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, and TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He DROVE OUT THE MAN; and placed at the east of the garden of Eden CHERUBIMS, AND A FLAMING SWORD which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:22-24).

When we come to the garden of Eden it is evident that this is more than merely a piece of real estate somewhere over in Mesopotamia! No such place has ever been found, neither the angel with the flaming sword to keep men out. The garden of God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is a higher existence for man than this cursed state we find ourselves in by physical birth. It is the state of being that man was in when he was first brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed here upon earth. It represents man living in the presence of God! Man with the incorruptible life of God accessible to him! Man as master and lord over all things! Man living above sin, sickness, sorrow, pain or death! Blessed realities, one and all! This great truth of man’s STATE OF BEING constituting the garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures.

Think of the momentous tragedy when that first blessed pair, made in the image of God, commissioned to rule the world and have dominion over all things, entered into transgression at the forbidden tree and consequently “God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man...” The original denotes something more than a gentle dismissing. The words “sent him forth” is the term used in speaking of the divorce of a wife from her husband, which implies a violent separation, a stern and angry ejection. Man was thrust forth from the garden, thus losing his life, his glory, and his DOMINION.

He was cast forth from a heavenly realm into the natural realm. It is the realm that can be *seen* with natural eyes, *heard* with natural ears, *touched* with the natural hand, *tasted* with the natural palate, and *smelled* with the nostrils. The realm of the spiritual is neither seen nor touched by any of the physical senses, yet, it is ten thousand times more real than the natural world. Man has been excluded from that heavenly realm ever since that unhappy hour in which God banished him from the glorious garden in Eden. On that fateful day his eyes were closed to those things which are above and man awoke to discern the physical and natural with all of its limitation, bondage, barrenness, and death. As one has written, “Scales of spiritual blindness beclouded his vision, shutting out from his sight for the dispensations to come the effulgent glory of *that world* where God dwells in the Spirit. And yet that realm is as close to us today as it was then, the only difference being that our darkened vision cannot see it!”

### THE CHERUBIM AND THE FLAMING SWORD

When man was banished from his realm of life, glory and dominion, the record states, “So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:24). Man must be

excluded from the tree of life until a provision is made by which he can approach and partake of it. Nor is Adam merely driven out of Paradise; but a guard is assigned to the place to make any approach to it impossible, just as watches are stationed in the vicinity of fortresses and armies. The Cherubim were placed to “KEEP THE WAY of the tree of life,” and it is interesting to note that the word here for “keep” is the Hebrew *shamar*, meaning to guard, to protect, to hedge about as with thorns. The illustration is clear, if you would keep your neighbor’s cows out of your garden you must fence it with a good thorny hedge (modern day barbed wire)! Thus, life was denied to mankind by God, and so death came upon every man, even those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.

Some teach that the Cherubim with their flaming sword were placed at the portals of Eden to KEEP THE WAY OPEN TO THE TREE OF LIFE, not to close it. The idea is that before you can partake of the tree of life, you must pass through the inworking of the flaming sword, and thus be qualified to partake of it, having all carnality, flesh, sin and death severed and brought to death by the flaming sword. That such was and is not the intent of the cherubim is clear from the very words of God that stated their purpose: “And the Lord God said, Behold... LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, and eat, and live forever... therefore... He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep (guard, defend, protect) the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:22-24).

Moreover, those Cherubim at the gate of Eden did not have a metal sword to ward off such as would approach, but the Hebrew denotes a movable sword, that is, a flash or a flame, such as of lightning, which is unsteady and blinds the eyes. This flame or lightning is depicted as having the form of a sword that is in continuous motion and moves to and fro. Because of the cutting, flaming sword of the Cherubim, no living human being makes his way across that dread portal! The tree of life, yea, all that Eden represents, was guarded by the power of death, it became untouchable, divinely unapproachable. From that day Adam’s life before the gate is a continuous attack upon the realm from which he is excluded. It is a flight and a search upon the cursed ground of the carnal realm to find what he has lost, and then a repeated, desperate rage against the power with the flaming sword; he continually runs against it, it always stands in his way, and the sword is formidable, preventing his circumventing it. Nothing is plainer in the whole Word of God than the fact that the Cherubim with the flaming sword were not stationed at Eden’s gate to point, direct, or guide man back into life – they were placed there for the express purpose of SHUTTING MAN OUT FROM LIFE! The guards of Paradise were not appointed to show man the way back to his lost heritage; rather, they were assigned their determined duty “LEST he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” (Gen. 3:22).

The Cherubim bespeak of a REALM OF DOMINION which we shall explore later. The word that proceeds from the Cherubim is typified in the flaming sword. The word “sword” is found in the Bible over 400 times. That indicates the tremendous importance the Spirit of God attaches to it. There are both the positive and negative aspects. Hear the Word of the Lord as the apostle Paul speaks of the whole armor of God, admonishing the saints to “put on... the *sword of the Spirit, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD*” (Eph. 6:17). Then the writer to the Hebrews declares that the sword of God’s Word is “QUICK”. Quick means LIVING AND ACTIVE – LIFE-GIVING! “For the Word of God that speaks is alive and full of power – making it active, operative, energizing and effective; it is sharper than any two-edged sword...” (Heb. 4:12, Amplified). Ah, yes, here is the sword that conquers the death in us and GIVES LIFE! As it is written, “It is the *SPIRIT* that quickeneth; the *FLESH* profiteth nothing... for the *LETTER KILLETH*, but the *SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE*” (Jn. 6:63; II Cor. 3:6). The sword of the Spirit is the quickening, energizing, life-giving WORD OF GOD!

I shall not hesitate to explain to you, dear ones, that there are two aspects of the Word of God. Jesus Christ is THE WORD – THE LOGOS – THE LIVING WORD! But there is also that word which Paul calls “the letter”. The letter is the record and history, the laws, rules and regulations, the types, shadow and figures, the external observances of sacraments, ordinances and rituals, the visible FORM OF THE WORD which tells us, in terms understandable by the *NATURAL MIND*, many things *ABOUT* the Living Word, Jesus Christ. As I meditated upon the Cherubim and the flaming sword in Genesis the Lord began to speak to me saying, “The flaming sword is a word.” I would ponder this, arrive at nothing, only to have the words come again, “The flaming sword is A WORD!” Then in a sudden burst of divine illumination, the truth of it dawned upon me. Jesus Christ is THE WORD – THE LIVING WORD – and IN H-I-M IS LIFE! But the flaming sword at the portal of Eden is A WORD, not The Word, not the Living Word, but the FORM of the Word, that is, A WORD about THE WORD! But this word is a DEAD WORD, it is FORM without ESSENCE, LAW without LIFE, it is “the letter” that “killeth,” it keeps men from life and shuts them up unto the dominion of death. It should not be difficult to understand that as Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God, the sword of the Spirit that quickens, so is the letter of the Word a deadly sword, killing, rather than quickening. Ah, TWO WORDS, the Living Word *and* the letter of the Word. And TWO SWORDS... the Living Sword of the Spirit *and* the death-dealing sword of the letter of the Word!

It is important to note that the sole purpose of the Cherubim with the flaming sword was to KEEP MAN OUT from life! The flaming sword did not minister life, but death. It did not impart life, neither did it point to life or lead to life. It was a SWORD OF DEATH... a WORD OF DEATH! It was not the sword of the Spirit, but the sword of the letter of the Word!

On the personal and individual plane, the Cherubim are guards which prevent men from entering into the inner truth of spiritual life and reality, by their own works or intelligence. It is only the spirit of truth proceeding from the Lord that enlightens man and enables him to see clearly the inner truth of the Word of God. If a man endeavors to enter into the mysteries or sacred secrets of the spirit from himself and his own intelligence, and not from the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, he is deceived by the flashing light of the flaming sword and the blinding brilliance of the Cherubim – the glory in the external, written, letter of the Word. This is the mercy of the Lord, for if a man were to enter into the glory of the Kingdom of God out of self-effort and carnal conceit, he would profane it, and his later state would be worse than his former state. The Cherubim are guards in the letter of the Word which prevent man by his own strength, wisdom or ability from entering into the inner sanctuary of truth. There are many things in the letter of the Word which are “hard sayings,” many things which cause those who do not penetrate the realm of the spirit to question, “How can this be the Word of God?” On the other hand, there are multitudes of “fundamentalists” who only know God in the outer husk or chaff of the letter of the Word. They are quite certain that in that surface realm of superficial truth they have attained to all reality and have a corner on pure doctrine and eternal life. The letter of the Word is therefore written in such a way that those who are unenlightened by the Holy Ghost can never get past the flaming sword to enter into God’s glorious and eternal reality; and so it is that the spirit of the Word “is hidden from the wise and prudent” in the systems of this world and is revealed unto babes – those who are birthed into the realm of the spirit from above!

## **THE FLAMING SWORD**

Man’s approach to the realm where God dwelt was barred completely by the flaming sword – by A WORD which issued as a fiery, consuming stream from the dominion of the Cherubim. With what divine genius does the Holy Spirit on the blessed pages of Holy Writ unfold for us the identity of this death-angel. There was a day in the long ago when God’s chosen people Israel

stood before Mt. Sinai. The cloud and fire of His divine presence covered the mountain and the voice of God called Moses to come up into the mount amidst flaming fire, black darkness, rushing wind and out of it a trumpet-blast, the voice of the Almighty speaking human words. There in the midst of flaming flashes of fire (the flaming sword!) the LAW was given, which Paul in II Cor. 3:6-7 speaks of as THE MINISTRATION OF DEATH. "The letter killeth," he tells us, "but the Spirit giveth life."

So terrible was the voice from Sinai that those who heard it begged and prayed that it might say no more, for what it commanded was more than they could bear. So fearful was the spectacle that Moses cried out as Adam did at Eden's gate, "I am terrified and tremble!" Amidst the terror of blinding, piercing streaks of lightning and the deafening roar of thunder, under which the whole mountain shuddered, God gave the law, the letter that killeth, the MINISTRATION OF DEATH! Fearful judgment, fierceness of fire, devouring the adversaries – this is the message from Sinai!

How I wish God's people could understand the law. The law of the Old Testament was of a three-fold character: (1) the *civil law* of rules and regulations governing every aspect of daily life, social relationships, business dealings, etc., (2) the *ceremonial law* of external religious observances of sacrifices and offerings, of feast days and holy days, of rites and ceremonies, of ritual washings (baptisms) and purifications etc., (3) the *moral law* of the Ten Commandments, the "Thou shalt" and the "Thou shalt not".

The Old and New Testaments are contrast. Law and life are the contrasts. You surely have noticed how Paul clearly points out the striking differences between the ministration of the law and the ministration of the Spirit in II Cor. 3:6-11. "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the *ministration of death*, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the *ministration of the Spirit* be rather glorious? For if the *ministration of condemnation* be glory, much more doth the *ministration of righteousness* exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if *that which is done away* was glorious, much more *that which remaineth is glorious.*"

LAW and LIFE – what contrasts! FORM or ESSENCE – what a difference! Every creature naturally acts according to the life that is in it, without any law or compulsion from without. The bird needs no law to bid it fly, or the fish to make it swim: its life makes it a delight. A law is a proof that the life is lacking. The law that forbids stealing is a proof that the life of those for whom it is made is wrong. And a law is not only a proof that the right life is lacking, but it is helpless to produce it. And not only is it helpless to produce it, but it administers judgment to those who break it. It may check and restrain, but cannot transform. It can demand, but cannot give; it has power to command, but not to create what it seeks.

Ah, beloved, the law is not the way to God, neither does it point, direct or guide man back into life, instead it bars the sinner from coming to God. It says, "Do this, or die. Keep this, or perish." The law, ANY LAW, was not designed to save a single member of Adam's fallen race, or to keep anyone saved, or to bring anyone to perfection, but rather to cause us to look elsewhere. We cannot progress with God into true sonship until the Spirit of God has made wonderfully real to our hearts the blessed fact that there is not a law, commandment, creed, ordinance, ritual, sacrament, ceremony, tradition or EXTERNAL OBSERVANCE OF ANY KIND that can bring one closer to God! They are, one and all, but thieves and robbers as Jesus said (Jn. 10:8), for

while men trust in them they rob men of the life of God in the Spirit, standing between the seeker and Christ, shutting him up into a FORM while cutting him off from the SUBSTANCE. And I must state with the greatest possible clarity that nowhere in all the world has the FORM OF TRUTH, EMPTY EXTERNAL CEREMONIES, ORDINANCES and RITUALS held more deadly sway than in the church system. The flaming sword of the dead LETTER OF THE WORD has slashed its way from the pulpits until the precious life of the Spirit has been lost and the horrid stench of death hangs like a shroud over God's people. Moses' law or the man-made rules and rituals of your church, it makes no difference, my friend, ALL LAW is a DEAD WORD and will kill you if by it you seek to enter into God!

Please bear with me for a few moments more as I point out the importance of the law to give to anyone, for while these things may seem elementary to many who read these lines, they are basic to the things I shall later share concerning the ministry of the Cherubim. "Now we know that what things so ever the law saith, it sayeth to *them who are under the law*: that every mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED in His sight, for by the law is THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN (*not* the knowledge of God!). But now *the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...*" (Rom. 3:19-21). The law (all kinds of laws!) has been preached in an effort to produce righteousness. It will produce a righteousness, but only self-righteousness. Paul states in Rom. 4:15, "The law results in divine wrath..." Again, "But then law came in, ONLY TO EXPAND AND INCREASE THE TRESPASS making it more apparent and exciting opposition" (Rom. 5:20, Amplified). "The sting of death is sin; and THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW" (I Cor. 15:56). The law demands perfect obedience. One single sin is enough to bring swift and fearsome judgment, for James says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he IS GUILTY OF ALL!" (James 2:10). So Paul says, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if *righteousness come by the law*, then CHRIST IS DEAD IN VAIN!" (Gal. 2:21)

Righteousness and life do not come by the law; therefore, something else must come by the law. What is it? What does the law bring forth? The law brings us to CONDEMNATION AND DEATH! "The ministration of *DEATH*, written and engraven in stones." In the light of this truth can we doubt that the flaming sword at Eden's gate bespeaks a WORD OF DEATH – the LAW – the FORM OF TRUTH? The flaming sword SEPARATED mankind from the presence and power of God! It shut God up from man, and man out from God! It stood between man and his lost heritage in God and said, "Stay out, keep away, no admittance!" This, I am convinced, is what Paul meant when he penned these inspired words to the saints at Galatia: "Is the law then to be looked upon as a contradiction of the promises? Certainly not, for if there could have been a law which gave men spiritual life then that law would have produced righteousness. But, as things are, the scripture has all men "imprisoned" under the power of sin, so that to men in such condition the promise might be given to all who believe in Jesus Christ. Before the coming of this faith we were all IMPRISONED UNDER THE POWER OF THE LAW, with our only hope of deliverance the faith that was to be shown to us. The law was like a STRICT TUTOR IN CHARGE OF US until we went to the school of Christ and learned to be justified by Him. Once we have that faith we are COMPLETELY FREE FROM THE TUTOR'S AUTHORITY. For now that you have faith in Christ Jesus you are SONS OF GOD" (Gal. 3:21-26, Phillips).

## **THE DOMINION OF ANGELS**

We have stated that the Cherubim represent a REALM OF DOMINION. In the beginning Adam was given dominion over all things. When he was driven from Eden's lovely garden he not only lost his dominion but was brought under dominion. Not only did he relinquish his God-given

rulership but now alas! he himself would be ruled over. He forfeited his *sonship* to become a *servant*. Upon his departure from Eden, the man who was destined to rule the whole vast universe at once *became subject to an authority over him* – the Cherubim at the gate! We would be blind readers indeed, if we could not see that the authority of the Cherubim, the sword of the Cherubim, yea, the administration of the Cherubim constituted A DOMINION OVER ADAM'S LIFE.

I am convinced by the Spirit of God that the Cherubim represent an angelic administration – the dominion of angels! All the ancient sages of Israel believed the Cherubim to be of an angelic order. Before proceeding with this thought it is significant to note that the word “angel” in both Hebrew and Greek simply means “MESSENGER” – which in no way in itself limits it to celestial beings or visitants from another world. A very grievous error is committed by the church in general today by rendering the Greek word AGGELOS as “angel.” The word “angel” is not a translation of the Greek at all, but merely an English adoption of the Greek, which has been portrayed as a very beautiful creature with long flowing hair, voluptuous breasts, a long flowing gown, and wings. The source of such folly is nothing other than popish deception and ignorance. “Angel” means *messenger*: one sent with a message, one sent with a message, who is the personal representative of the Sender. Anyone sent with a message is a messenger – an angel. If there had been Western Union messengers in Bible times they would have been called “Western Union Angels,” for “angel” means “messenger,” and that’s all that it means.

Sometimes the Hebrew word MALACK or the Greek AGGELOS is used in reference to those messengers or envoys sent by men, those sent by Satan, and those sent by God. Any messenger sent by a king, or any other person, is in the original languages of the Bible called an angel of that person, viz: a messenger. If sent by a human being, the messenger-angel was the personal representative of that one, in the message he was commissioned to bear. Lk. 7:18-28 speaks of the messengers of John the Baptist as angels. Yet in the same passage we learn that the messengers sent were two of John’s disciples! The term is also used of John the Baptist himself, only it is translated, “Behold, I will send My *messenger* before thy face.” The context always decides whose angel or messenger it is. John was filled with the Holy Spirit, to bear a word of God, to accomplish a mission for God and for the Anointed One – Christ. In the anointing, the word, and mission, John was a man-angel of God, the greatest prophet born of women!

In the Old Testament the technical term “Angel of Yahweh” refers specifically to the eternal Word of God in His appearances to men as God’s mouthpiece or “messenger.” There are many passages where He is identified as Yahweh Himself. For example, “the Angel of the LORD (Yahweh)” in Gen. 31:11-13 says, “I am the God of Bethel,” and, in Ex. 3:2-6, He declares, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham.”

Any messenger of God is His angel, His personal representative in that particular mission and message. “And Jacob went his way, and the angels (messengers) of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is GOD’S HOST: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim (two companies, two armies)” (Gen. 32:1-2). When James the apostle is retelling the story of the spies who came to Rahab in the days of Joshua he uses the word which in other places is translated angel, yet there we find it is messengers. So we might show scores of illustrations of the same type revealing the fact that the word angel is often translated messenger and frequently refers to men in the flesh. The Word of God is not lacking in evidence, however, that there are in God’s universe both TERRESTRIAL ANGELS and CELESTIAL ANGELS, messengers of spirit from heaven and messengers in the flesh on earth. On the night of the birth of Jesus Christ, the solitary shepherds faithfully tending their flocks in the fields surrounding the

slumbering city of David were startled by the sudden interruption of their mundane activities as “the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them” (Lk. 2:9). And just as suddenly and supernaturally there was with the angel “a MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Lk. 2:13-14). Then follows the significant statement, “And it came to pass, as THE ANGELS were gone away from them I-N-T-O H-E-A-V-E-N, the shepherds said one to another...” (Lk. 2:15). Ah, angels from heaven! The apostle Paul referred to these when he wrote these words of exhortation: “But though we, or AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

While there are messengers or angels on many planes, both in the flesh and in the spirit, I have no hesitation in saying that there is a messenger-realm, an angelic-order that is a special creation of God and distinct from both God Himself and the man-angels so often seen in the Bible. There is a verse of scripture in Heb. 2:5 that reads thus: “For unto the angels HATH HE NOT put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.” In verses 1-4 of the same chapter we find that the preaching of the “great salvation” brought by Jesus brings us finally to a glorious new age in which the saints shall rule and reign over all things. In verses 10-12 the apostle reveals that these ruling saints are the Sons of God. My heart goes out in prayer that the God of all wisdom and understanding will open the hearts of all who read these lines that they may see that the world or age to come shall not be ruled over by the messenger-realm, the angelic-order – but by MAN! If man-angels, whether in the flesh or out of the flesh, are the only angels there are, then these words of inspiration are totally without meaning or intelligence: “For God did not put the future world of men under the control of angels, and it is this world that we are now talking about. But someone has truly said: What is MAN, that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that Thou visiteth him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou didst put ALL THINGS under his feet. Notice that when the writer put ‘all things’ under the sovereignty of MAN: he left NOTHING OUTSIDE OF HIS CONTROL. But we do not yet see ‘all things’ under his control” (Heb. 2:5-9, Phillips). Again, “For to which of the angels did He ever say such words as these: *Thou art My Son*, This day have I begotten thee? Or, again: I will be a Father to him, and he shall be to Me a *Son*? Does He ever say this of any of the angels: Sit thou on MY right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet?” (Heb. 1:5, 13-14, Phillips).

Three outstanding truths are clearly evident in these verses. First, there is an order of angels which are not men. Secondly, these angels will not rule over the world to come. And thirdly, the sons of God, born from above, are of a divine order HIGHER FAR THAN ANY OF THE ANGELS, to whom is given all power and authority. Of Christ and His “many brethren” it is written, “This Son, radiance of the glory of God, flawless expression of the nature of God, Himself the upholding power of all that is, having effected in person the cleansing of men’s sins, *took His seat at the right hand of the majesty on high* – BEING MADE SO MUCH BETTER THAN THE ANGELS, as He hath by inheritance obtained a MORE EXCELLENT NAME THAN THEY... it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom all things, in bringing MANY SONS TO 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. 1:3-4; 2:10-11, Phillips & KJV).

We should direct our thoughts to yet another consideration, the meaningful words of Paul in I Cor. 6:1-3, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not *before the saints*? Do you not know that the saints *shall judge the world*? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that WE

SHALL JUDGE A-N-G-E-L-S? How much more things that pertain THIS LIFE.” The writer of Hebrews says that angels shall not judge the world, but Paul states that the saints shall not only judge the world, but will even judge the angels! Ah, can we not see by this that GOD HIMSELF IS PREPARING A GOVERNMENT AND A KINGDOM that will swallow up all others until the kingdoms of this world, and all the principalities and powers of the heavenlies have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. Can we not see that there is a company of saints, the sons of the Most High, who shall yet govern this world and all the unbounded heavens in wisdom and righteousness? And can we not see that there is an angelic-realm which shall *not* rule the world to come, and who are never called *sons* of God, the very fact that it is specified that they shall not rule THE WORLD TO COME proves that they DO RULE – there is a realm which is subject to the DOMINION OF ANGELS!

It is a well known and documented fact that the religion of ancient Israel came from angels. Most people, however, would merely scoff at the idea. But the fact is that even the Jewish historian, Josephus, in the first century when Christ Jesus was on earth, acknowledged that “the most holy part of our law and the most holy doctrine came by angels” (Antiquities of the Jews, Book 15, chapter 5, section 3). This may seem outrageous to us moderns in Western Christian civilization, but the fact is that even the Jews will admit that their religion came from angels. The Jews thought much of their law, because of the majesty of its proclamation. Spoken from the inaccessible cliffs of Sinai, with its overhanging crags, its red sandstone peaks bathed in fire; while thunderings and lightnings, thick clouds and trumpet-notes, were the sublime accessories of the scene. It was the authorized belief of the priests and scribes and doctors of the law that the law was given through angels (Deut. 33:2; Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19, Heb. 2:2). And the thought that these strong and sinless beings were the medium of the Almighty’s will served, in the eyes of all devout Hebrews, to enhance the sanctity and glory of the law.

With these thoughts in mind we approach a most enlightening passage of scripture. Among the most precious and awe-inspiring chapters in God’s precious book, Hebrews chapter two stands out in magnificence. After contrasting the ministry of angels with the ministry of sonship in chapter one, the writer proceeds to say, “THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which WE HAVE HEARD, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the WORD SPOKEN BY ANGELS was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be SPOKEN BY THE LORD, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him” (Heb. 2:1-3).

Two “WORDS” are presented to us in these verses. The first is THE WORD OF ANGELS. Of that word it is stated, “...and every transgression received a just recompense of reward.” The second is THE WORD SPOKEN BY THE LORD. This is the word which brings “so great salvation.” Oh! that God may give us hearts to grasp the importance of these things which have been hid from the wise and the prudent, but God hath revealed them unto babes! In the whole world and in all of history there have never been but *two words*: the WORD OF ANGELS and the WORD OF THE LORD! The word of angels brought judgment to the hearers, whereas the Word of the Lord brings great salvation. The word of angels was spoken of old, the Word of the Lord began to be spoken when Jesus came into the world.

The scriptures abound with the evidence that the word of angels is the LAW – the whole realm of commandments, regulations, external observances of ordinances, ceremonies, traditions etc., while the Word of the Lord is the gospel (good news) of CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY. The word of angels is “the ministration of *death*, written and engraven in stones,” but the Word of the Lord is “the ministration of the *Spirit* written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the

living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” The word of angels is “the letter that killeth,” whereas the Word of the Lord is “the Spirit that quickeneth” as Jesus said, “The WORDS that I speak unto you, THEY ARE SPIRIT, and they are LIFE” (Jn. 6:63).

The Jews counted it one of their great privileges that the law was GIVEN BY THE MINISTRATION OF ANGELS. Paul declared that the law “was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it (the law) was ORDAINED BY ANGELS in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. 3:19). I am aware that someone will exclaim, “But the law wasn’t given by angels, the law came by Moses!” Let us read this verse from the Amplified Bible which brings out the truth quite clearly, “And it (the law) was arranged and ordained and appointed THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF ANGELS and was given by the hand of a go-between – an intermediary person (Moses) between God and man.” Yes, Moses received the law on behalf of Israel, in so doing he acted as the “mediator” (go-between) between God and Israel, but in addition to this fact it is revealed that God communicated the law to Moses THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF ANGELS!

That magnificent saint, Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, indicted his murderers with these pungent words moments before his untimely death in the streets of Jerusalem, “Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have *received the law* BY THE DISPOSITION OF ANGELS, and have not kept it” (Acts 7:52-53). Then speaking to them of Moses, he declared, “This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness WITH THE ANGEL WHICH SPAKE TO HIM IN THE MOUNT SINAI... who *received the lively oracles to give unto us*” (Acts 7:38). From these statements of Holy Writ it may be said with certainty that Moses WAS NOT ALONE ON MOUNT SINAI! And neither was God alone on the holy mount!

The words of the Psalmist are very revealing, “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, AS IN SINAI, in the holy place” (Ps. 68:17). At Sinai the Lord was in the midst of that blazing phenomena which the ancients called “Shekinah”. We read that “Moses went up into the mount and a CLOUD covered the mount. The GLORY OF THE LORD abode upon Mount Sinai. The CLOUD covered it six days; and the seventh day (God) called unto Moses out of the midst of the CLOUD. The sight of the GLORY OF THE LORD was like DEVOURING FIRE on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the CLOUD... and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights” (Ex. 24:15-18). Thus, according to the Psalmist, the Shekinah or blazing “chariots of God” which rested upon Mount Sinai, and in the midst of which Yahweh was enthroned, and from which He spoke to the children of Israel, and by which He communicated the law to Moses, were billions of *celestial beings* which formed “a cloud”, “like devouring fire”, manifesting “the glory of the Lord”. In other words “the pillar of fire”, or “Shekinah”, is not composed of earthly fire which consumes, but of a vast company of celestials of whom the apostle wrote when he said, “For to which of the ANGELS did He ever say such words as these: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee? Or, again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son? Further, when He brings His Firstborn (Son) into this world of men, He says, LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP H-I-M. THIS is what He says of the ANGELS: Who maketh of His ANGELS WINDS and HIS MINISTERS (servants) A FLAME OF FIRE. But does He ever say this to any of the angels: Sit thou on My right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet? Surely the ANGELS ARE NO MORE THAN SPIRITS IN THE SERVICE OF GOD, commissioned to SERVE THE HEIRS of God’s salvation!” (Heb. 1:5-7, 13-14, Phillips).

Note further that the “chariots of God” composed of innumerable blazing angelic hosts are said by the Psalmist to surround the King of Glory “as in the Holy of holies”. This confirms the truth that the “pillar of fire” which is also called the “cloud”, is composed of the angelic host which surrounds the throne of God in the manner in which Ministers of State surround a King in his courtroom. “As God was at Sinai” so also “He was in the Holy of holies”. In both instances He dwelt in the midst of the Shekinah. The Glory Cloud penetrated the goat hair tabernacle and came to rest between the gold Cherubim above the mercy seat (Ex. 25:10). Observe that the “pillar of fire” did not consume the goat hair tent. The reason? The “fire” is composed of angelic spirit beings who are God’s ministers (servants, not sons), and whom He has made “FLAMES OF FIRE”. These flames do not consume the servants of God, yet they may burst as the wrath of God is poured from the cup of His fury – for these are administrators, the upholders and the executors of HIS LAW!

We will never comprehend the importance of the superiority of SONSHIP over the ANGELIC DOMINION until we understand that to the angelic realm is committed the ministry of the law. The dispensing of the law is an angelic ministry. The upholding of the law is an angelic administration. And the power of the law rests in the DOMINION OF ANGELS.

## **BEYOND THE ANGELIC DOMINION**

The angelic realm and the law are inseparable. The law was given by the disposition of angels. The word “disposition” is from the Greek DIATAGE meaning “arrangement, i.e. institution.” In the English language some of the synonyms for disposition are *administration, management, conduct, direction, control, and superintendence*. The angelic not only delivered the law into the hands of Moses, but throughout the entire dispensation of the law they were the unseen but ever-present ADMINISTRATORS and RULERS of the law-system. Thus, every man who is UNDER THE LAW is also subject to the DOMINION OF ANGELS!

The law is the flaming sword, the fiery, consuming, devouring, judgmental WORD, the outer FORM of truth, the letter that killeth, the ministration of death stationed so long ago at the portal of Paradise. “The law made nothing perfect,” declared the apostle, “but the BRINGING IN OF A BETTER HOPE DID” (Heb. 7:19).

“Being made SO MUCH BETTER than the angels, as He (Jesus) hath by inheritance obtained a MORE EXCELLENT name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, THOU ART MY SON, this day have I begotten thee?” (Heb. 1:4-5). He who was above all angels became lower than the angels for a little time; that He might lift men from their abasement, and set them on His own glorious level in His heavenly Father’s Kingdom. The superior excellence of sonship above angels consists in this, that God has wrought redemption for us in His Son, has quickened our spirit with His Spirit, begetting us out of the loins of His own divine life. The whole epistle of Hebrews is the unfolding of the glory of the person and work of the Son. As the New Testament is higher and grander than the Old, so is the realm of sonship higher and more excellent than angels. The more completely we comprehend this, and have our hearts permeated by it, the better we shall apprehend the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus now prepared for us. The book of Hebrews is “the book of BETTER THINGS.” The book begins with a glorious declaration as to how God speaks and reveals Himself to us. Once He spoke through prophets and angels (Heb. 1:1; 2:2), but now He reveals Himself in *sonship*. And dear friend, if you think Jesus is keeping all the glory of this sonship and heir-ship to Himself, then you haven’t read Rom. 8:17 where it tells us that we are HEIRS OF GOD, and JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST.

If we would grasp the truth and experience the reality of this we must tarry here in deep humility until God reveals to us what it means, that HIS SON is the Captain, the Leader of our salvation, bringing many sons to glory. The infinite excellence of SONSHIP above the angels is the measure of that heavenly life THE SON brings and gives within the SONS. The angels could tell of God and of life and of righteousness. The Son has, the Son is, that LIFE OF GOD, and gives it. He that has THE SON, HAS LIFE!

Ah, yes, Jesus has been highly exalted and given a name above every name, seated at the right hand of the majesty on high; *there* He dwells, opening up and keeping open THE WAY BACK INTO EDEN, even a NEW and a LIVING WAY, through the veil, into the Holiest of All. He brings us back to our lost dominion. He brings us to the throne of the universe, the throne of our Father. Let no one think that I speak of what is too high. I speak of what is your heritage and destiny. The same share you have in Jesus on the cross, you have in Jesus on the throne. Be ready to sacrifice the earthly life for the heavenly; to follow Christ fully in His separation from the flesh and the world and His surrender to the Father's will; and Christ in the heavenlies will prove in you on earth the reality and power of HIS HEAVENLY LIFE!

No promise is given to the angels of ruling the age to come, nor of having all enemies put under their feet, not of sitting on the right hand of God, nor of being joint heirs with Christ. Yet these promises are all given to us, after having first been given to the first begotten Son of God. No angel will ever know what it is to sit in the throne of God. This place is reserved for "him that overcometh," for the saints who are in Christ Jesus. Sonship is a relationship to Deity that angels cannot know. Heb. 1:10 shows that the firstborn Son was the creator of heaven and earth. Heb. 1:6 states that God Himself became human substance and was brought into this world of sin. When the firstborn came into the world of men the angels were told to worship Him. Why? Because He was the very substance of Deity. He was their Creator! Why did they have to be *told* to worship Him? Because He was so much in the likeness of man! Angels would not worship man, they had been given dominion over man. They had to be told that this man was more than man, He was Deity veiled in humanity. I am sure that many of my readers would tremble in awe and marvel at the presence of a mighty angel. Yet, the realm of sonship is HIGHER FAR THAN THE ANGELS WILL EVER ATTAIN TO! This is the place Jesus walked and overcame every enemy. This is His inheritance which He shares with us, His body.

It is recorded in the book of Exodus (Ex. 34:29) that, upon Moses' return to the congregation of Israel after He had gone up into Mount Sinai to receive the covenant of the law, *the skin of his face shone* with the glory of God and he hung a veil over his face so that the children of Israel would not behold the glory that was slowly fading away. Have you ever wondered why it was that the face of Moses shone after he had received the law that kills, and why he put the veil over his face? Now when Paul was commenting on this remarkable incident in the life of Moses, he said, "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; *which glory was to be done away*. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit *be rather (more) glorious?* And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, THAT CHILDREN OF ISRAEL COULD NOT STEDFASTLY LOOK T-O T-H-E E-N-D OF THAT WHICH I-S A-B-O-L-I-S-H-E-D" (II Cor. 3:7-8, 13).

The manifestation of the ANGELIC GLORY must have been awesome – the talk of the whole camp of Israel. However, the real purpose that Moses covered his face with the veil was not to enable the people to look at him, but that "the children of Israel COULD NOT LOOK TO THE E-N-D of that which is abolished." Israel never did know at what time the glory-shine ended,

whether it lasted for an hour, or a day, or a week, it just faded away under the veil and one day Moses appeared without the veil, and program carried on.

The law has a glory, the glory of the angelic realm, but it does not compare to the glory that is in THE SON. When Moses received the law from the hands of the angels, his face shone with the glory of the law. This glory would fade away, but Israel would not see the glory of the law fade in contrast with the glory of Christ. Many even today do not see the purpose of the veil that Moses put on. It was not just because his face was too bright to look at, but because the GLORY WOULD FADE and Israel could not see the fading glory of the law. Moses put the veil over his face as an illustration that the fading of the law was something ISRAEL REFUSED TO SEE!

I must tell you plainly that many Christians today also refuse to see the fading glory of the law as they cling to their iron-clad rules, regulations, dress codes, do this, don't do that, observe this ordinance in this precise way or you will go to hell, the continual preaching of judgment and damnation upon the people. Much ministry we have in the church systems today is tainted with the ministry of the law – the exhortation to works for justification, external observances of rituals and ordinances by which the blessing of God is supposedly ministered, bondage to multiplied church laws and regulations etc. You can always spot a person who is living under the power of the law – the law is a MINISTRY OF CONDEMNATION! (II Cor. 3:9). You can also recognize the man or woman walking in the spirit of sonship. A son is not a minister of condemnation. Jesus is not a minister of condemnation, but of love, forgiveness, mercy and life. “For God sent not His SON into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him MIGHT BE SAVED” (Jn. 3:17). When the law said that one caught in the act of adultery should be stoned, the SON said, “NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE: go, and sin no more” (Jn. 8:5-11). Jesus said in John 5:45, “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is ONE THAT ACCUSETH YOU, EVEN MOSES (the law), in whom YE trust.” My brother! My sister! Hear the words of Paul in Rom. 8:34: “Who is there to condemn us? Will Christ Jesus, the Messiah, Who died, or rather Who was raised from the dead, Who is at the right hand of God actually pleading as He intercedes for us?” Christ maketh INTERCESSION for us. He will not condemn and intercede at the same time, that gets ridiculous!

To be a minister of the New Priesthood is to release people into grace by faith, not by works. In the atmosphere of God's grace and glory the believer can then be dealt with by God until the whole nature is changed and transformed from a sinner under death to a saint under life. No man can stop sinning to be saved! Once a man has been saved by the grace of God through faith, he can then learn by God's grace HOW TO STOP SINNING TO BE M-A-D-E P-E-R-F-E-C-T! We are in a transition period. The hangover of the law is still upon us, for though it has been thoroughly taken away, we have clung to its principles. If a preacher demands that you drop your cigarettes or drinking before you can experience God's grace – he is saying that you are under the law and must earn your way into grace. If you are exhorted to *do* something to get blessed, you are still under the law and receiving by works. If someone commands, “Thou shalt not be angry with thy wife,” or “Thou must not covet a new fancy car,” – where is the *power* to perform it? We all know we are to love one another. When a preacher rants and raves because of the lack of love, where is the power to perform it? It is certainly NOT IN THE DEMAND! “You should have family devotions” – “You must not overeat” – “You should be on time to meetings” – we all know this is well and good, we desire to do even as we are told and yet fall short. Why? Because we have been ministered to as by law. Paul said, “I preach CHRIST – the power of God!”

Thank God! there is a New Covenant of grace, and in that grace is contained the power of God to transform. There is no one single leap into perfection, but how we rejoice that the EXTERNAL

LAW with its angelic dominion is done away, replaced by the NEW COVENANT which is established upon better promises, for the Spirit's inworking shall fulfill within us all the righteousness of the law, being a ministration of righteousness unto more abundant life.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that all who live their lives under rules, laws, by-laws, creeds, commandments, regulations, what we must or must not eat or drink, what we must or must not wear, how we must observe this ordinance, that ceremony, and the other ritual HAVE PLACED THEMSELVES UNDER THE DOMINION OF ANGELS and do despite to the Spirit of grace and life in Christ Jesus.

We are not admonished to LOOK UNTO THE LAW, but to LOOK UNTO CHRIST. We are nowhere told to LOOK FOR ANGELS, but "unto them that look for HIM shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). Even that which was made glorious (that is, the law) had no glory at all by reason of the glory that excelleth. The glory that excelleth is the LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST. Surely, if that which speaks death to sinners is glorious, that which speaks of incorruption, immortality, and eternal life to saints is more glorious. All who walk in the life of sonship have no veils over our faces, but REFLECT LIKE MIRRORS THE GLORY OF THE LORD. We are transfigured by the Spirit of the Lord in ever-increasing splendor into His own image. Glory!

# Chapter 35

## THE DOMINION OF ANGELS

*(continued)*

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, and TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He DROVE OUT THE MAN; and placed at the east of the garden of Eden CHERUBIMS, AND A FLAMING SWORD which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:22-24).

When man was banished from his realm of life, glory, and dominion, the record states, “So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” Man must be excluded from the tree of life until a provision is made by which he can approach and partake of it. Nor is Adam merely driven out of Paradise; but a guard is assigned to the place to make any approach to it impossible, just as watches are stationed in the vicinity of fortresses and armies. The Cherubim were placed to “KEEP THE WAY of the tree of life,” and it is interesting to note that the word here for “keep” is in the Hebrew *shamar*, meaning to guard, to protect, to hedge about as with thorns. The illustration is clear, if you would keep your neighbor’s cows out of your garden you must fence it with a good thorny hedge (modern day barbed wire!). Thus, life was denied to mankind by God, and so death came upon every man, even those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.

Because of the cutting, flaming sword of the Cherubim, no living human being could make his way across that dread portal! The tree of life, yea, all that Eden represents, was guarded by THE POWER OF DEATH; it became untouchable, divinely unapproachable. Nothing is plainer in the entire Word of God than the fact that the Cherubim with the flaming sword were not stationed at Eden’s gate to point, direct, or guide man back into life – they were placed there for the express purpose of SHUTTING MAN OUT FROM LIFE! The guards of Paradise were not appointed to show man the way back to his lost heritage; rather, they were assigned their determined duty “LEST he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.”

The Cherubim represent a REALM OF DOMINION. In the beginning Adam was given dominion over all things. When he was driven from Eden’s lovely garden he not only lost his dominion but was brought under dominion. Not only did he relinquish his God-given rulership but alas! now he himself would be ruled over. He forfeited his sonship to become a servant. Upon his departure from Eden, the man who was destined to rule the whole vast universe at once *became subject to an authority over him* – the Cherubim at the gate! We would be blind readers indeed, if we could not see that the authority of the Cherubim, the sword of the Cherubim, yea, the administration of the Cherubim constituted A DOMINION OVER ADAM’S LIFE!

### THE MINISTRATION OF DEATH

As I meditated upon the Cherubim and the flaming sword in Genesis the Lord began to speak to me saying, "The flaming sword is a word." I would ponder this, arrive at nothing, only to have the words come again, "The flaming sword is A WORD!" Then in a sudden burst of divine illumination, the truth of it dawned upon me. Jesus Christ is THE WORD – THE LIVING WORD – and IN HIM IS LIFE! But the flaming sword at the portal of Eden is A WORD, not The Word, not the Living Word of the tree of life, but the FORM of the Word, that is, A WORD about THE WORD! But this word is a DEAD WORD, it is FORM without ESSENCE, LAW without LIFE, it is "the letter that killeth," the whole realm of FORM, LAW, EMPTY EXTERNAL CEREMONIES, SACRAMENTS, ORDINANCES and RITUALS, creed and tradition, all of which SHUT MEN UP INTO A FORM while cutting them off from the SUBSTANCE.

As Andrew Jukes has written: "When Adam left Eden's glory his fallen mind was in mercy shut out from that blessed realm of life, for it was unfit to deal with heavenly things. FORMS OF TRUTH (for the Cherubim and the flaming sword were such forms) reveal, as through a veil, some ray of glory such as the fallen mind and nature can bear. To the fallen man the way back into life and reality was closed, he could not enter there. But – at the gate were FORMS OF THE HEAVENLY, carnal representations of that higher realm; Cherubim, veiling the reality and yet revealing the shadow of God's glory; "figures of the true," which the natural mind could understand, instead of purely spiritual communications, serving as a veil for heavenly things, reminding man in a vague kind of way of a realm now lost to him, and yet, like the veils of the tabernacle, which were covered with Cherubim, shutting man out from the very substance of that which lies within!"

In my previous article on this subject I set forth in some detail the great truth that the Cherubim represent an angelic administration – THE DOMINION OF ANGELS. The scriptures abound with evidence that the ministry of the angelic realm is the administration of the LAW – the realm of commandments, regulations, external observances of ordinances, do this, don't do that, perform this ritual and that rite etc., etc. In the giving of the law to Israel we read, "And thou shalt put into the ark THE TESTIMONY which I shall give thee... And He gave unto Moses two tables of TESTIMONY, TABLES OF STONE, written with the finger of God. And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand" (Ex. 25:16; 31:18; 32:5,16).

We note that they were TABLES OF STONE, bespeaking a cold, dead, hard WORD. These were written by the finger of God, but contained within nothing of the LIFE of GOD HIMSELF. It was the LAW, called a "testimony", which is the same word as "witness." The law came as a testimony, a witness to the children of Israel of that which was holy, just, and good. So long as they obeyed it (which they never fully did!) it witnessed to their good. However, if they did not keep the law, it became a testimony against them, revealing the awfulness of their sin, how they missed the mark, went beyond limits, and they had to face the verdict, "the soul that sinneth, it shall DIE!" The law revealed God's holiness but at the same time was their executioner. Being God revealed in STONE it was the outward FORM OF TRUTH but not the LIVING ESSENCE OF TRUTH that quickens and makes one with God.

Many and varied have been the speculations about the identity of the Cherubim. Some have taken the highly symbolic description in Eze. 1:10 quite *literally* and view the Cherubim as celestial winged creatures having physical features both animal and human, each with four faces: of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle. Some have seen in the two Cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies a representation of the Father and the Holy Spirit gazing with satisfaction upon the blood-stained mercy seat of Christ's redemption. Others have interpreted the two Cherubim as illustrating two attributes of Jehovah's character – Love

and Justice. Then there are those who see these Cherubim as two aspects of the Christ, Head and body, while others identify them as the sons of God who are the radiance of the glory of God and the flawless expression of God's nature.

In spite of all the considered opinions of men, a careful and prayerful study of the Biblical record concerning the Cherubim clearly demonstrates one significant fact: the ministry of the Cherubim was *never* a POSITIVE ministry, it was *always* (without exception) a NEGATIVE ministry! It may be said with certainty that their purpose was not to reveal God's glory, but rather to conceal it! They did not ever bring men to God, but they did shut men out from God! Throughout the Old Testament the Cherubim are seen in relation to judgment on sin. They are the GUARDIANS of the life and the holiness of God. The following are some examples:

1. Gen. 3:21-24 – The Cherubim standing in judgment in the beginning guard the *tree of life* with the flaming sword at the gate of Eden.
2. Ex. 26:31-33 – The Cherubim are inwrought within the veil (Heb. 10:20), and are seen guarding any presumptuous intrusion to the Holiest of all.
3. Ps. 80:1 – The Shepherd of Israel dwells *between* (not IN) the Cherubim. "Thou that dwellest between the Cherubim, *shine forth* (from your concealment)."
4. Ps. 99:1 – The Lord reigns and *sits between* the Cherubim.

The word "Cherubim" is, according to Dr. Taylor Lewis, derived from the Hebrew root CHARAB, meaning "to cut, to engrave," a meaning that carries with it, like the engravings on a coin, the idea of *representation* – but not the substance or reality of that which is represented – a *form*. The Cherubim we gather from the word itself, were to be the representative of God, at least in one aspect, as the image "cut" on a coin represents fully the sovereign, or government that issues it. When our first parents had forfeited, by their disobedience, their place in Eden and were expelled "the Lord God placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. The Cherubim here represent that in the character of God's government that *forbade* the return, or approach, or blessing of His sinning creatures."

## **THE CURTAINS OF THE TABERNACLE**

Much of the following information on the Tabernacle, curtains, veil, etc., has been gleaned from various books on the subject. The most costly building, for its size, ever erected, was the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. Though only forty-five feet long, and fifteen feet wide, and having only two rooms, one the size of an ordinary living room, and the other the size of a bedroom, its cost is estimated to have exceed two million dollars. All of its framework and its furniture was overlaid with pure gold. It stood within an enclosure the size of a city lot, and was bounded by a white linen fence seven and one-half feet high, suspended on sixty pillars or posts of solid brass, resting upon sockets of brass. This enclosure was called the Court of the Tabernacle. White linen, of course, speaks of God's perfect righteousness. The brass pillars point to God's judgment upon sin. God's perfect holiness, revealed in the tables of the law which He gave by the hand of Moses, prevents and forbids man from coming unto God, as long as he has sin upon him. This fence, therefore, was put up to close God in and to shut the people of Israel out from the realm in which God dwelt!

The roof of the Tabernacle consisted of four layers of material. The first covering placed over the Tabernacle and, therefore, the only one which would be visible from the inside, was a curtain of fine twined linen, embroidered with blue and purple and scarlet color. It covered the entire top of the Tabernacle and hung over the sides, almost to the ground. Of this first and innermost layer of fine linen we read, "Moreover thou shalt make the Tabernacle with *ten curtains* of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with *Cherubim* of cunning work shalt thou make them" (Ex. 26:1).

Three outstanding truths are clearly evident in this verse. First, the first and innermost set of coverings are emphatically called in the Hebrew "The Tabernacle." "Thou shalt make the *Tabernacle*, ten curtains." The Tabernacle! Dwelling place of God! But could it not also be called the HIDING PLACE of God? for the curtained roof and walls of this blest abode veiled Him completely from the eyes of Israel, and none dared intrude thither; not even the priests themselves were allowed to pass within the veil. No worship was carried on there; no communion between God and man; no revelation of the One who dwelt there ever penetrated through the veil; no human voice was ever heard within its precincts. In fearful majesty the God of Israel dwelt between the Cherubim of glory. The express purpose of the curtains, then, was to CLOSE GOD IN and SHUT MAN OUT. Man's entrance into the Tabernacle where God dwelt was barred completely by the curtains.

Secondly, we are told that there were to be exactly TEN curtains. Ten is the number of TESTIMONY. Ten stands for responsibility, intensified, signifying the measure of responsibility and its judgment or reward. This is a number used under the LAW, there were TEN COMMANDMENTS representing the law-covenant, man was responsible under the law to keep the commandments and bear a testimony for God and, if he did not, the law was a testimony against him!

Thirdly, and in our present study the most important feature of all, beautifully embroidered in the pattern of these linen curtains were the FIGURES OF CHERUBIM overshadowing both the *Holy Place, and the Holiest of All!* This main curtain consisted of ten separate curtains coupled together to make one great covering for the interior of the Tabernacle. Moses received minute instructions as recorded in Ex. 26:1, "Thou shalt make the Tabernacle with ten curtains: WITH CHERUBIM OF CUNNING WORK shalt thou make them." The Hebrew indicates that the curtains were A MASS OF CHERUBIM! Is it not truly remarkable that the Cherubim standing in judgment at Eden's gate should again appear in the Tabernacle of Moses, interwoven upon the ten curtains of the divine law, standing guard over the realm of God's life and glory and fullness as they did of old? Indeed, their ministry here was the same as in the beginning – to "guard" the way in to God's life and shut men up under A WORD OF DEATH!

## **THE VEIL**

One of the most awesome sights in all Israel was one which only one man could see, and that only once a year. It was the Cherubim of glory which overshadowed the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, and between which the God of Israel manifested His glorious presence. The High Priest alone went into this place, just once a year. If you were not a descendant of Levi, of the sons of Aaron, no matter how meticulously you kept the law, how upright or capable or important you might be, or how ardently you hungered to behold it, your eyes could never look upon this scene. It was impossible. Even if you were a prophet, priest, king or general of the army, till the day you died, there was no way your eyes would ever look upon the glory of that realm.

I have previously stated the fact that the ministry of the Cherubim is consistently through the scriptures revealed as a negative one, ever concealing the life and glory of God, always shutting man out from life; a veiled, vague, shadowy *manifestation of glory*, but a *ministration of condemnation and death*. Nowhere is this more evident than when we come to the veil of the Tabernacle. The whole ritual of Old Testament worship, under the law, was one that served to maintain the distance between God and man. BOUNDS WERE SET ABOUT SINAI, so that not even a beast might touch it: and the people felt their safest place was afar off. One tribe alone was permitted to encamp around the Tabernacle: one family alone of that tribe was singled out to be allowed to enter the Holy Place: and one man alone of that family had access to the Holiest; and that, only once a year, and with such preparations, and fearful ceremonies, as must have inspired him with dread, lest, in the very act of approach, through some omission, he might incur the judgment of the Most High. All others were barred, and any attempt to enter meant certain death.

Now, the way into the Holiest was barred completely by a heavy veil. Behind this veil was the Ark; over the Ark the manifest presence and glory of God; and before any can enter into that realm the veil must be taken care of. The Hebrew word translated “veil” is derived from an unused verb signifying to *break*, and in a secondary sense, to *separate*. It is called “the veil of the covering” (Ex. 39:34; 40:21). It was hung up in order to SEPARATE between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, and also to cover or hide the Ark (Ex. 26:33; 40:3). A veil is a divider or a separation curtain used to HIDE SOMETHING. A number of veils are revealed in the Scriptures, all fulfilling the same purpose:

1. The veil of the Tabernacle (Ex. 26:31-35).
2. The veil of the Temple (II Chron. 3:14).
3. The veil upon Moses’ face (Ex. 34:33-35; II Cor. 3:11-16)
4. The veil of Christ’s flesh (Heb. 10:19-20).
5. The veil of blindness on Israel (II Cor. 3:13-16; Rom. 11:25).
6. The veil upon all nations (Isa. 25:6-9).

I have stated these things to emphasize the following fact: Just as the fine linen curtains had inwrought Cherubim, SO THIS VEIL WAS TO HAVE CHERUBIM! “And thou shalt make a veil of... fine twined linen of cunning work: WITH CHERUBIM shall it be made: and the veil shall DIVIDE unto you between the Holy Place and the Most Holy” (Ex. 26:31,33). Furthermore, the veil measured TEN CUBITS giving us another picture of the LAW. Any man who presumed to come into the presence of the Holy One of Israel had to face that law. Not only did he face the law, he also came face to face with the Cherubim – the angelic administration which administered and enforced the law!

The measurement of the veil (ten cubits) bespeaks the LAW. The Cherubim interwoven in the veil are representative of the angelic principalities and powers, the administrators of the law-system. The veil itself, we are told by the apostle, is THE FLESH OF CHRIST. “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.” Armed with this understanding that the veil is HIS FLESH I would point out the wonderful significance of the CHERUBIM EMBOSSED UPON THE VEIL, thus something *imposed upon the flesh of Christ*.

Consider now how remarkable this statement by the apostle Paul, “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, MADE *UNDER* THE LAW, to redeem them that were under the law (angelic rule), that we might receive the adoption (placement) of SONS” (Gal. 4:4-5).

Hear it! As the veil of the Tabernacle lay beneath the image of the Cherubim, so was the human FLESH OF THE SON OF GOD PLACED U-N-D-E-R T-H-E L-A-W! The Son of God left His glory, and descended to the depths of shame and reproach. He came into a world of men on this side of Eden, this side of the Cherubim and the flaming sword, and took our place of disgrace. He came down in human form, took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7), and was made in the likeness of men, made under the curse of the law, subjecting Himself to the principalities and powers upholding the law, the ministrations of death.

Now notice what the writer of Hebrews says of Him: “But we are able to see Jesus, who was RANKED LOWER THAN THE ANGEL FOR A LITTLE WHILE, crowned with glory and honor because of His having suffered death” (Heb. 2:9). The Authorized Version reads, “But we see Jesus, who was MADE A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS...” This phrase, “made a little lower than the angels” does not mean that He was merely a little less important than the angels, or that His body was in some way inferior to that of the angels; the Greek indicates that He was made SUBORDINATED TO ANGELS, *lower in rank*, therefore *ruled over and governed by the dominion of the angelic realm!*

To be “subordinated to angels” is the same as being “made *under* the law,” for all who are under the law (and all that it represents) are subjected to its angelic government. My dear friend, if you go to China, the moment you step off the plane in Beijing, whether you like it or not, you are at once SUBJECT TO ITS COMMUNIST RULERS. By virtue of entering upon their territory and sphere of influence, you place yourself under their power. It is same with the law! The moment a man places himself under the law HE STEPS OUT FROM UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SON OF GOD BY THE SPIRIT and subordinates himself to THE DOMINION OF ANGELS! Now perhaps we can understand the terrible solemnity of the statement made by Paul in Gal. 5:3-6, “I say this solemnly again to every one of you: every man who consents to be circumcised is bound to obey all the rest of the Law! If you try to be justified by the Law you automatically CUT YOURSELF OFF FROM THE POWER OF CHRIST, you put yourself OUTSIDE THE RANGE OF HIS GRACE. For it is *by faith* that we await in His Spirit the righteousness we hope to see. In Christ Jesus there is no validity in either circumcision or uncircumcision; it is a matter of faith, faith which expresses itself in love.” And again, “but now that you know God – or rather are known by God – how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be *enslaved* by them all over again? You observing *special days* and *months* and *seasons* and *years*! I fear for you, that somehow I HAVE WASTED MY EFFORTS ON YOU!” (Gal. 4:9-11, New International Version).

## **THE CHERUBIM OVER THE MERCY SEAT**

Before proceeding to the glorious triumph of sonship over the government of the angels, bear with me as I share briefly one further aspect of the ministry of the Cherubim. The Ark of the Covenant, a gold-plated, oblong box, stood behind the veil in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. It was a symbol of the nature and life and authority of God – the place of His throne. The Ark was surmounted by a crown of gold. Placed over the top of the Ark was the mercy seat, and upon it God came down in the Shekinah pillar of fire and cloud. Over this mercy seat, with outstretched wings, stood the Cherubim, the guardians of God’s life and glory. It is of utmost importance that we grasp the picture presented here.

Let us meditate in deep reverence upon a few of the scriptures which speak of the function of the Cherubim over the mercy seat. "And the Cherubim spread out their wings on high, and *COVERED* with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another" (Ex. 37:9). They did WHAT? REVEALED God's grace and glory? Oh no! my brother, my sister, they did no such thing! They "*COVERED*" the mercy seat, the place of God's glory! The word in the Hebrew is SAKAK meaning to FENCE IN, COVER OVER, HEDGE IN and SHUT UP. Ah! the ministry of the Cherubim hasn't changed one iota since the day they made their appearance at the gate to Eden! Even here, in the typology of the Holiest of All, they are still seen fencing God in, covering over His glory, hedging in His life, and shutting man out!

The all-wise and eternal God, recording with unerring accuracy through the pages of His blessed book, again bears immutable witness to the fact that the ministry of the Cherubim is the ministry of CONCEALING GOD rather than REVEALING HIM: "And the priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord unto his place... into the Most Holy place, even UNDER THE WINGS of the Cherubim: for the Cherubim... COVERED THE ARK" (II Chron. 5:7-8). The Hebrew word here for "*COVERED*" is KACAH meaning TO COVER, CLOSE, CONCEAL, HIDE and OVERWHELM! No revelation of God here!

Heb. 9:5 says, "And over it (the Ark) the Cherubim of glory *SHADOWING* the mercy seat..." The Greek word for "*SHADOWING*" is KATASKIAZO from KATA meaning "down" and "skia" meaning SHADE, SHADOW, DARKNESS OF ERROR and ADUMBRATION, all bespeaking the same truth which courses its way like one mighty river of unbroken revelation through the pages of Holy Writ. Significant the term "darkness of error" – the whole realm of law, ritual, creed and tradition *is* AN ERROR – for does not the apostle John declare, "The LAW was given by Moses, but GRACE and TRUTH came by Jesus Christ!" (Jn. 1:17). That which is NOT TRUTH is, obviously, ERROR. The scripture could well be stated, "AN ERROR was given by Moses, but... THE TRUTH came by Jesus Christ." Jesus Himself said, "I am the way, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father, but BY ME" (Jn. 14:6).

To every Christian with a spiritual mind and an understanding heart it should be extremely obvious that *nothing* in the whole vast universe except Jesus Christ IS T-H-E T-R-U-T-H. There is A TRUTH in the law, and in ritual, in creed, ceremony, ordinances, baptisms, communions, foot washings, etc. but it is the words without the music, the outer shell without the kernel within, the external FORM OF TRUTH void of the power of the INDWELLING SPIRIT OF LIFE.

In that marvelous declaration at the opening of John's gospel, – "In the beginning was THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word *WAS* God," – much more is involved than that which meets the casual eye. THE WORD here is in the Greek THE LOGOS. In the beginning was the Logos. We do not have a word in English that is the direct equivalent of Logos. In fact, it is well nigh impossible to express its meaning by even the use of a sentence or a paragraph. The LOGOS is the WORD SPOKEN, but it is more than that. It is the LIVING SPOKEN WORD, and yet more than that. It is A LIVING PERSON SPEAKING THE LIVING WORD. Dr. Adam Clarke says it should remain untranslated. It was THE LOGOS who spoke the words, "Let there be light," and there was light. It was THE LOGOS who before the tomb of Lazarus said, "Lazarus, come forth," and he came forth. The Logos is the living, speaking, manifesting, LIFE-GIVING WORD OF GOD!

The only true God I know about is the One who identifies Himself as the LIVING God! The only true Word I know anything about is that Word which is "LIVING AND ENERGETIC" – as Heb. 4:12 says in the Greek – and is "sharper than any two-edge sword." Thus, any word that is not living, life-giving and energetic is NOT T-H-E W-O-R-D OF GOD! It may be a true word about

The Word; it may be a beautiful doctrine, a good commandment, a beneficial law, a touching ceremony, an inspiring ritual, a soothing sacrament, an excellent program, a meaningful religious exercise, a successful method, even an ordinance seemingly instituted by the letter of the Word – but it is not The Word of God! The Word of God is The Logos – the Living Word – Christ Himself, who IS THE TRUTH. Anything, then, that purports to be the Word of God, no matter how much truth it is, is NOT the Word of God unless it is COMING FORTH IN LIFE AND PRODUCING LIFE.

In FORM the TRUTH of God, stripped of its LIFE, is turned into a LIE, and this is what the passage Heb. 9:5 means when it says in the Greek that the Cherubim “shadow” the Ark of His Presence, bringing a DARKNESS OF ERROR over the realm of God’s ineffable glory! That which appears to be reality, but is, in fact, form, is A WORD which is AN ERROR. This is what Paul was pointing out in II Tim. 3:1-9 where he says, “This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud...having a FORM of godliness but denying the POWER (life) thereof... EVER LEARNING (the form of truth) but never able to come to the knowledge of THE TRUTH (Christ, the Substance).”

In closing these thoughts on the ministry of the Cherubim I would mention that the Cherubim over the mercy seat stood “with their faces ONE TO ANOTHER; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of the Cherubim” (Ex. 37:9) The face always represents the outer revealing of the inner nature. But here, instead of an open face turned outward in revelation, the faces are turned *inward* – concealing! Can we not see by this that in the Cherubim, the law, the letter of the Word, the form of truth, there is NO REVEALING OF GOD, but a dark and terrible concealing of His life!

### **BEYOND THE CHERUBIM!**

And then, “in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to REDEEM THEM THAT WERE UNDER THE LAW” (Gal. 4:4-5). Not to redeem them that were under the power of sin, lust, fornication, drunkenness, murder and thievery, but to redeem them that were under THE LAW! Oh yes, thank God! He saves from all those things, but to *redeem* means to purchase, to buy back, and those He purchased were under the dominion of the Cherubim with the flaming sword. Christ came under the dominion of that law and its administrators, walked under it and fulfilled it *PERFECTLY*, then in that consecrated human body He took our sins to the cross, He paid the penalty and the price, and when He finished the work let us see what happened to the veil which represented His flesh: “Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE WAS RENT IN TWAIN FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM...” (Mat. 27:50-51). No human hand rent the veil in twain; neither was it torn from the bottom towards the top, but a hand from above rent it from the top to the bottom.

It was a miracle. It was a heaven-sent miracle. Historic writers tell us that the veil was so firmly woven that two teams of oxen pulling in opposite directions, with the veil between them, could not tear it apart. Neither could the veil be repaired, for it was rent by God’s hand from the highest heaven. History also tells us that the priests tried to mend and sew the veil together again, but were unable to, for no thread, no cord, would hold in the repaired part. It was rent once for all, and forever. Access to the heaven of heavens, to Paradise lost, to that blessed Eden from which man was banished was to be laid open; no love and no power could either have devised or accomplished this, but the love and power of God.

The grand and glorious truth to which the Spirit of God would now draw our attention is this: THE SAME HAND THAT RENT THE BEAUTIFUL FABRIC WHICH HITHERTO HAD CONCEALED THE HOLIEST OF ALL SIMULTANEOUSLY *RENT THE CHERUBIM UPON IT!* In all my thirty years of ministry I do not recall ever having heard any teacher or preacher touch upon that fact. There are so many things written in God's Word that beggar description, defy understanding and challenge explanation, but their mystery can be revealed and made shining clear by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. This wonderful truth – that Jesus not only opened up the way through the veil, but as well THROUGH THE CHERUBIM – will open up a whole new world of understanding and glory to those whose enlightened minds can grasp the wonder of it. Yes, Jesus passed from the Holy Place of His sanctified human flesh into the Most Holy Place of His glorified body – FAR ABOVE not only the realm of human flesh, but FAR BEYOND the angelic dominion of the LAW and A-L-L E-X-T-E-R-N-A-L F-O-R-M-S O-F T-R-U-T-H!

How often through the years have I encountered a lack of comprehension among the people of the Lord! They have eyes, but they do not see. They examine the outer shell, but never taste the kernel within. They say they understand, but their spirit has not grasped the truth. Someone will ask, "How do you know they do not see or understand?" The answer is so simple. TRUTH TRANSFORMS the receiver and flows from him so that deep calls unto deep. During recent years numbers of people have told me that they have entered with Christ beyond the veil, into the Holiest of All. You will have to write a very large book, dear ones, if you are going to convince me that you have passed through the veil *while you continue to observe the outer forms of the church systems and practice the carnal ordinances, external ceremonies, man-made methods, Babylonian holidays and holy days, programs etc.* which are a visible FORM OF TRUTH BUT NOT T-H-E T-R-U-T-H ITSELF. Ah, talk is cheap indeed. It is not he who proclaims the theory of entering with Christ beyond the veil who has entered, but he who once for all *leaves behind* ALL THE OLD ORDER OF THE HOLY PLACE to enter with Christ in to a realm higher far than any observance or dominion beside THE FULLNESS OF THE LIFE OF GOD W-I-T-H-I-N!

Let me present to you this realm – BEYOND THE CHERUBIM! The Greek word for "heaven" is "OURANOUS." The meaning of "ouranous" is ELEVATION, HEIGHT, EXALTATION, EMINENCE. It has both natural and spiritual applications. In its spiritual application it bespeaks THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT in which God and all celestial beings dwell – FAR ABOVE the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. It is not a geographical or astral location. It is not a place. It is A DIMENSION OF LIFE AND REALITY, A STATE OF BEING, A SPHERE OF EXISTENCE. Every spirit life-form lives on a plane of spiritual awareness and being. Each of these planes constitutes a "heaven", a spiritual realm ABOVE THE PHYSICAL. Jesus, in His body of resurrection, ascended up "F-A-R A-B-O-V-E A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED." He was made to sit at the right hand of God, FAR ABOVE the realms of all the other forms of spiritual life that inhabit God's vast universe; not above them geographically, but above them in RANK, in QUALITY OF LIFE, in EMINENCE and POWER and NATURE and GLORY!

In the scriptures there are many "heavens." Each is an "ouranous," a plane of spiritual life, an order of being, a rank, a realm of dominion, a sphere of activity, a nature and glory – elevation, height, exaltation and eminence. In Eph. 1:20-21 we have something more. "... which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES, F-A-R A-B-O-V-E ALL PRINCIPALITY, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND NAME THAT IS NAMED, not only in this world, but in that which is to come." The Greek phrase *en tois epouraniois*, "in heavenly places", bears a remarkable revelation. Here the word "ouranous" is compounded with another word and the compound word

thus formed is of such great import to us that we must consider it very, very carefully. We have the Greek word EPI, which means “superimposition,” or in plain speech, ABOVE or OVER. When joined to OURANOUS, it becomes EPOURANIOIS. The two words joined together mean “above heaven” or “higher than the heavens” or “the highest heaven” or “FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS.”

Our Lord and Saviour when on earth, was made under the law, for a little while lower in rank than the angels; He descended beneath all heavens to be made in fashion as a man, and, with all of Adam’s race was subjected to the angelic dominion established by God over this planet. But then He arose the conquering Christ. And not only that, but He ascended victor over all the powers of the realms beneath *AND ALL THE POWERS OF THE REALMS ABOVE!* “Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is ABOVE EVERY NAME” (Phil. 2:9). Or as Paul tells us in Eph. 4:10, “He... ascended up *FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS.*” This does not mean, as the Churches so foolishly tell us, that Jesus ascended up to some Disney World in the sky, far above all the galaxies. Nowhere is it stated that He ascended up beyond planets, stars, or universes. Hear it! “He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand ‘*IN EPOURANIOIS*’ *FAR ABOVE ALL PRINCIPALITY, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED...* AND HATH PUT A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S UNDER HIS FEET” (Eph. 1:20-22).

“Far above all principality and power” means not merely above witches and goblins and demons and devils. It means above all the angelic hosts in celestial realms, yea, above E-V-E-R-Y N-A-M-E that is named anywhere in all God’s unbounded heavens! Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the Majesty on high, exalted NOW.

And let demons rage. Let fools and unbelievers hang their heads in shame. We quote once more from that blessed Book which is given by inspiration of God and is wonderfully true. “*BUT GOD... HATH quickened US together WITH CHRIST... and HATH raised US UP together, AND MADE US SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS!*” (Eph. 2:4-6). And this “heavenly places” where we now sit with our Lord and Saviour is this same SUPER-HEAVEN, or *epouraniois*, the same position which He holds “far above all heavens.” We who have come the way of the cross, we whose spirits have been quickened by His Spirit, are enthroned with Him in this super-eminence N-O-W. This is not a place. It is the realm far above every dominion INCLUDING THE DOMINION OF ANGELS! It is the sphere of God’s own divine life where we live in Him and move in Him and have our being in Him. And yet Christians in ignorance and unbelief sing, “When we all get to heaven, What a day of rejoicing that will be!” Ah, it IS! Heaven for those made alive in Christ is not a future hope. It is not something we are expecting to receive; it is a present reality, a blessed and eternal reality NOW. Oh yes, our bodies may still be tied to earth, but those truly born from above are discovering the blessedness of HEAVEN N-O-W!

Once heaven seemed a far off place  
Till Jesus showed His smiling face;  
Now it is here within my soul,  
‘Twill be while endless ages roll.

O hallelujah! yes ‘tis heaven;  
‘Tis heaven to know the Son that’s given;  
O’er land or sea, what matter where:  
Where Jesus is ‘tis heaven there!

There is a much misunderstood passage of Scripture in Col. 2:15 where we read, “And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” The popular interpretation of this verse is that the principalities and powers “spoiled” by Christ were the negative forces of the demonic kingdom – that Christ, by His death and resurrection, overcame the demonic realms, conquering and humiliating Satan and his hosts, triumphing over them. With the deepest reverence and godly fear I must declare to you that Jesus did indeed conquer sin, death, and Satan, but this glorious fact IS NOT THE SUBJECT IN THE VERSE QUOTED ABOVE. The notion that these principalities and powers were *devils* is a most grievous error. Note the verse that precedes this: “Having cancelled and blotted out and wiped away the handwriting of the note with its legal decrees and demands, which was in force and stood against us – hostile to us. This note with its regulations, decrees and demands HE SENT ASIDE AND CLEARED COMPLETELY OUT OF THE WAY by nailing it to His cross” (Col. 2:14, Amplified). Then the verse immediately following our text: “Let no man *therefore* (because the principalities have been “spoiled”) judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come, but the body (substance, reality) IS OF CHRIST” (Col. 2:16-17).

The subject here is not the bondage of the Devil, but the ordinances of the LAW! Interesting that the Greek word for “having spoiled” is APEKOUSAMENOS which is a compound Greek word consisting of two prepositions and a noun. APO means “away from;” EK means “out from;” and OUSAMENOS means “strip or put off.” The compound word means to *strip off from ones self*, as clothes or armor, having the force of *getting out of ones garments, wholly putting them away from one’s self*. It is obvious that the principalities and powers here are none other than the angelic host THROUGH WHOSE MINISTRY THE LAW WAS ADMINISTERED! Christ came to earth “made *under* the law,” but blessed be God! He came out from under that rule, rising into a higher order to live no longer after the law of a carnal commandment but after the POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE.

Let us consider further the work of the cross and of the Christ who died upon it that our minds may be enlarged and we might better understand how this LAST ADAM included IN HIMSELF every person and everything that belonged to the OLD creation on this side of Eden’s gate, putting it all out of the way, nailing it to His cross. In thus crucifying the whole world in His Son, He robbed principalities and powers and all rulers of condemnation and death of the fearful power they held over us by reason of the fall. By His death He blotted out and made ineffective every ordinance that was against us, because laws are not made for dead men nor do they apply to men of the new creation who, with Him, have risen to newness of life, but to those only who still live as members of the old creation.

Not only was the law against us, it was a curse to us. “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:” (Gal. 3:10-13). Paul says that Christ has redeemed us from the *curse* of the law. In another place Christ is the *end* of the law. Herein lies the great contrast – on the one hand you have the curse of the law while on the other hand you have the freedom of Christ removing us from slavery under the law. So here is Christ redeeming us from the curse of the law. What he is saying in effect is that the angels that brought and mandated the law brought God’s people under a curse and that it was Christ who came to free us from that curse. It doesn’t sound reasonable at first but there is no doubt that if you study the Old Testament and the law administration you will see the harshness,

vindictiveness and cruelty it brought. I have known men who have become atheists because they couldn't understand or accept the behavior of the God of the Old Testament who ordered, for instance, the genocide of whole races and cultures of people. We should look at the God of the Old Testament and ask ourselves whether He is a God we would like to serve under, for evidently Christ had other ideas – He expressed and revealed God in a totally different light, way, nature and reality. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Mat. 5:43-48).

“Where then lies the point of the Law? It was an addition made to underline the existence and extent of sin but only until the arrival of the “seed” to whom the promise referred. The Law was appointed by means of angels, by the hand of an intermediary. The very fact that there was an intermediary is enough to show that this was not the fulfilling of the promise. For the promise of God needs neither angelic witness nor any intermediary but depends on him alone. ... Before the coming of this faith we were all IMPRISONED UNDER THE POWER OF THE LAW, with our only hope of deliverance the faith that was to be shown to us. The Law was like a strict tutor in charge of us until we went to the school of Christ and learned to be justified by faith in him. Once we have that faith we are completely free from the tutor's authority. For now that you have faith in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God.” (Gal. 3:19-20, 24-25, Phillips translation). What Paul is saying is that the law – and the angelic dominion that mandated the law – was our school master, and now since Christ has come we are no longer under the schoolmaster, but are brought home to the Father. The new creation is sonship under a loving God and Father, and no longer under an autocratic schoolmaster. “Now I say, That 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. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 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. 4:1-7).

If Jesus suffered, died, rose again and ascended to relieve us from angelic religion and its consequences, why cannot we be free from the bondage that they have brought upon us? Why are so many precious saints of God restricted, condemned, and oppressed by their doctrines and legalism? I do not hesitate to tell you that all legalism, man-made rules and regulations, ecclesiastical hierarchies, rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, sacraments, and every other form of “bondage” that religion lays upon people stem from the dominion of angels and not from the liberty and grace of Jesus Christ. The pathway to freedom from angelic dominion is open to everyone. Most Christians are unaware of this aspect of Christ's triumph. Most saints readily recognize that Christ died to save us from our sins. But I can assure you, my friend, that you can forgive all the sins you like – but if someone is continuing to hold over you the *condemnation* of sin – THE LAW – even when you have been forgiven, you still labor under the consciousness of guilt, unworthiness, condemnation and judgment. The demands of the law are never lifted off the person who lives under condemnation. And all who live under a sense of guilt, shortcoming, and condemnation are yet subject to the dominion of angels!

The apostle Paul had some statement about this that are most revealing. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6-7). This "other gospel" is a perversion of the gospel of Christ, it is not the gospel of Christ, but something else. It may be *called* the gospel of Christ, but it is something that penetrates into another direction. It is LAW! Then Paul declares, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8-9). Paul drew a very clear line of demarcation as if to say, "Look, if you go the way of law, sin consciousness, condemnation, works, and outward observances, you will be brought under the dominion of angels, but if you stand in the truth of the grace of Christ you can be free. You have that choice. If the gospel you receive bears the stigma of angelic religion, or comes from an angel itself, then it is an error which will bring a curse."

When Christ arose from the realm of Adam's death He then ascended – passed right through the dominion of the Cherubim with the flaming sword! He strode boldly and fearlessly back into Eden's garden; He claimed again the dominion and the eminence and the glory which once belonged to the first Adam. He made an open show of the Cherubimic realm, not only triumphing over them to pass through the gate, but leading them in a splendid celestial procession, showing them as HIS SUBORDINATES AND SUBJECTS, becoming Himself the Head not alone to His body, the Church, but indeed "... the Head of A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER!"(Col. 2:10).

What heavenly peace comes into the spiritual mind when we understand this mighty truth: WE DO NOT PASS THROUGH THE CHERUBIM WITH THE FLAMING SWORD in order to enter back into Eden. No! The veil has been rent, the Cherubim have been torn asunder, their dominion over us has been broken, their power has been spoiled, their authority has been taken out of the way, and we have access to God now by pure GRACE! "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; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:19-22). Oh, my brother, my sister! The blood of Jesus! Think what it means! We do not have boldness to enter through the Cherubim with the flaming sword, but we do have boldness to enter *by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way* which He has consecrated – opened up – for us! Entering the most Holy Place is the same picture as entering back into Eden. Oh, will you not this day believe that His blood gives you confidence, boldness to draw nigh, to enter the very Holiest? Yes, believe it, that the blood and the blood alone, brings you into the very presence, into the very life, into the very glory, into the living and abiding fellowship of the everlasting God. The blood calls us to enter in through the rent veil, through the gate formerly barred by Cherubim with flaming sword, into the place where the High Priest lives, where the ineffable glory of the Most High shines brought, and where the tree of life flourishes, there to live and walk and work always in the Kingdom of the Father. We are not required to be perfected in order to enter – ah, we enter by grace through faith – and from thence we "go *on* to perfection."

We rejoice in the triumph of Christ – in His life, at Calvary, at the tomb, and we can glory in how He "... disarmed the principalities and powers ranged against us and made a bold display of them... triumphing over them *in it*" (Col. 1:15). Significant that in the Greek text the words "in it" are literally IN HIMSELF. HE gained the total victory IN HIMSELF. Now all this victory must be worked INTO US – not known merely as "positional truth", but experientially FULFILLED IN US,

as it was IN HIM. As the magnificence of His triumph, and of our joint-seating with Him in the higher than all heavens, far above all principality and power and dominion breaks in divine illumination upon our minds, we will live no longer in slavish bondage to powerless laws, empty ordinances, and vain religious observances, but risen with Him we will live gloriously and victoriously by the INDWELLING LIFE OF GOD'S SON!

In closing this article my prayer is that the God of all wisdom and understanding may reveal to each of my readers the majesty of the High Calling which is yours in Christ. We are living in an hour of intense interest in the ministry and visitation of angels. How many God's people would tremble in awe and marvel at the presence of a mighty angel! Today we have these self-proclaimed prophets announcing their visions and dreams, telling of spectacular angelic visitations and their special revelations and doctrines – and God's precious saints are inspired to seek after a visitation by angels. I must speak a word against that! Dear ones, if you cherish the bright hope of sonship hearken to the words of the apostle Paul in Col. 2:18-19, "Let no man *beguile you of your reward* in a voluntary humility and worshipping (paying respect to) angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not HOLDING THE HEAD, from which all the body... having nourishment ministered... increaseth with the increase of GOD." The Moffatt translation reads, "Let no one lay down rules for you... with regard to fasting or ANY CULT OF ANGELS, presuming on his visions and inflated by his sensuous notions, instead of KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE HEAD..." The Phillips translation says, "Nor let any man cheat you of your JOY IN CHRIST by persuading you to make yourselves 'humble' and fall down and worship angels. Such a man is... in his cleverness forgetting the Head. It is from THE HEAD ALONE that the body... is nourished and built up and grows according to God's laws of growth."

To not "worship" angels means simply that we are not to give them a degree of respect or homage or esteem *not due to them*. Oh, beloved, the realm of sonship is HIGHER FAR THAN THE ANGELS WILL EVER ATTAIN TO! Angels are N-O-T your superiors – they are your inferiors! THEY marvel and stand in awe of YOU! Oh, yes, God may dispatch an angel with a message to you, many are the examples of this in the Word, for "the angels are... spirits in the service of God, commissioned to SERVE THE HEIRS of God's salvation" (Heb. 1:14, Phillips). But – if a Western Union messenger delivers a telegram to your house with an important message you don't stand in awe of the messenger boy and ecstatically announce to all your friends, "Oh, guess what! A Western Union messenger appeared at my door yesterday at 10:00 A.M. Oh! Oh! Oh!" You just receive the message, thank the messenger (who is probably your inferior), and let him go his way. The angels are but the lowly messenger boys in the Kingdom of God.

There are certain things that you can do that angels cannot do. God has never called an angel His "son" (Heb. 1:4-14). No promise is given to the angels of having all enemies put under their feet, nor of sitting on the right hand of God, nor of being joint-heirs with Christ. Yet all these promises are given to us who have been raised up to sit with Him in the higher than all heavens. The angels live and move in the lower heavens. Spiritually, they don't "descend" to deliver a message to you, they must "ascend", finding temporary admittance into a realm not theirs, as when the messenger boy delivers a telegram to the office of an important person. No angel will ever know what it is to sit in the throne of God. This place is reserved for "him that overcometh," for the saints who are in Christ Jesus. Sonship is a relationship to Deity that angels cannot know.

Angels cannot preach the gospel or expound the deep mysteries of God. I have met people who were asking angels to explain scriptures and discuss doctrine with them. That is dangerous!

Every such one I have met, without exception, has fallen into a delusion! Never, never, my brother, my sister, ask an angel to explain scripture or discuss the truths of the Kingdom of God. The fact is, he doesn't know half as much as you about the purposes of God! Did you know that? The apostle Peter makes this crystal clear in these inspired words, "The prophets who prophesied (under the Old Testament) of the grace which was intended for you, searched and inquired earnestly about this salvation. They sought to find out to whom or when this was to come which the Spirit of Christ working within them indicated when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. It was then disclosed to them that the services they were rendering were not meant for themselves and their period of time, but for you. It is these very things which have now already been made known plainly to you by those who preached the good news to you by the same Holy Spirit sent from heaven. *Into these things* THE VERY ANGELS L-O-N-G T-O L-O-O-K!" (I Pet. 1:10-12, Amplified). I can assure you, beloved, that the angels are STILL INQUIRING about the revelation God is giving His saints in THIS HOUR! The angels understand nothing that pertains to the realm of sonship and the Kingdom of God. They DO understand LAW – external rules and forms. And it is interesting that many who have claimed supernatural revelations about keeping the law (Sabbaths, etc.) were visited by an angel and *received* their "revelation" *from an angel* – NOT FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT! The realm of law and legalism lies within the province of the angels. The ministration of death is referred to in the scriptures as "the word spoken by angels," whereas the ministration of life by the Spirit is declared to be "the Word spoken by the Lord" (Heb. 2:2-3). The high and holy things in the realm of the CHRIST-LIFE can never be revealed to anyone by an angel, but blessed be God! He "hath revealed them unto us BY HIS SPIRIT: for the SPIRIT (not angels) searched *all things*, yea, the *deep things of God* (which angels can only desire to look into!)" (I Cor. 2:10).

I am reminded of a most frightening directive given to Moses by God. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swore unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff necked people: lest I consume thee in the way." (Ex. 33:1-3). The people of God had spun completely out of control because of lust and idolatry. Not only did they murmur and complain against the Lord, and disbelieve His Word, but they wanted to dance, to play, to fornicate, and to create their own god in a golden calf. Then followed the dread revelation that the Lord had removed Himself from them – He had departed lest He slay them in His anger. But still they were commanded to move on to claim their inheritance in the land. God said, "I will give you what I promised." He was bound to keep His covenant with them for Abraham's sake. God said they could go on into their inheritance – but HE WOULD NOT GO UP WITH THEM. Instead, He would SEND AN ANGEL BEFORE THEM! They could claim all their rights, all the blessings and promises; they could move on with an angel to lead them; but because of their sin and stubbornness – they had no more claim on the Lord's presence. They could have their blessings and His protection and their angel – but not HIMSELF! What a dreadful and colossal loss! An angel in the place of God! How many of my readers would relish that choice – exchanging the Lord for an angel! But Moses wanted something greater than a land flowing with milk and honey. He wanted to know and experience the presence and glory of the Lord God Himself. "And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, THAT I MAY KNOW THEE, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here

that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.” (Ex. 33:12-16). Moses was unwilling to settle for an angel and an inheritance. The only favor he wanted was the abiding presence of his Lord. So it was with Paul, whose heart cried out, “Oh, that I might know Him!”

“Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son?” Oh, yes, when Christ overcame this dark world He ascended to the higher than all heavens, passing through each realm, overcoming in each, becoming Head in each, reaching the highest plane of all – GODHOOD – there to rule over all the realms beneath Him. It is THERE that you and I are given JOINT-SEATING WITH HIM! If we live in this “epouraniois”, LET US ALSO WALK IN THIS “EPOURANIOIS”! Beyond the veil, beyond the Cherubim, in the Holiest of All – Eden regained!

# Chapter 36

## THORNS AND THISTLES

“And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree... CURSED IS THE GROUND FOR THY SAKE; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; THORNS ALSO AND THISTLES shall it bring forth to thee... in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Gen. 3:17-19).

As I have stated repeatedly in this series of articles, the Garden of Eden represents the realm of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN on earth, a higher existence for man than the cursed state we find ourselves in by natural birth. It is the state of being that man was in when he was first brought forth from the creative hand of God. It is heaven and earth kissing each other. What if Adam had never sinned, had never been banished from that blest domain? Ever wonder about that? Ah! – that would have made a world of difference! There would be no giant military establishments today consuming the time of millions of soldiers and the wealth of governments. No violence. No wars. A different business and commercial world. No sickness or disease, no need for doctors, nurses, hospitals and their staffs. No crime, no police forces, jails and prisons. No death, no funeral homes or cemeteries. There would be peace everywhere – between nations, groups, families and individuals. Abundance everywhere with joy-filled lives effervescent with anticipation of the ever-increasing glories of the Kingdom of God. Yes, think of it! You and I would be living in a totally different world!

The Garden of Eden represents man living in the presence of God Almighty, walking in the presence and glory of celestial realms, with the heavens opened over his head. Living by the fruit of the tree of life man would know God as the indwelling power of life and be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit and shining in the image of God. Man as master and Lord over all things! Man living above sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death! In Eden’s lovely garden the effulgent perfumes of the heavenly realm were fragrance and life to man’s nostrils. He touched spiritual things and tasted spiritual realities. THIS was the glory of Eden – the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

### THORNS AND THISTLES

There is neither time nor space to consider the myriad ghastly consequences of the fall of man, but I would draw your attention to the judgment pronounced to the man: “Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Gen. 3:17-19). All the natural is a parable of the deeper spiritual realm, so let us look at the natural aspect first. The physical creation was brought under the same law of curse and death that came to Adam. Where previously the earth had freely yielded ALL that was needed to sustain Adam’s life, now it was to oppose even Adam’s efforts to cultivate his own food. The man would now have to struggle for survival. It would be only with *sorrow*, or *pain*, or *great stress*, involving significant physical effort, that Adam could continue to sustain his physical life. Sorrows and pains were to become a very real and distinct part of his existence in the earth. The soil of the earth itself would now oppose Adam’s efforts to cultivate it. “Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.” Where previously the perfect earth had nurtured only plants that were beneficial to the life of man in his domain, now the imperfect earth was to nurture

noxious plants that would compete against those beneficial plants that were expected to produce man's food. Instead of keeping and tending a garden full of sweet smelling flowers, dwelling in a paradise where there were not weeds to choke, or thorns or thistles to tear, prick or poison, the whole earth would be invaded by these, which would only be kept at bay by the sweat of Adam's face. Instead of caring in joy for the Garden of God, he now has to care in sorrow for the earth from which he came. In order to be able to live from the earth, man has to keep digging, weeding, and drawing forth from the ground.

Where once Adam walked about among the most fertile trees, in lovely meadows, and among vegetation and flowers of all kinds which grew spontaneously and profusely, there now sprang up out of the earth dandelion, wild oats, weeds, nettles, thorns and thistles in such abundance that the good plants were almost overwhelmed. Consider a field that has been plowed and prepared for planting. The moment it has been sown, weeds and dandelion come up more quickly than the crops that are useful for life. In fact, you can diligently tend your ground, and still find that the winds will blow in the seeds from afar, and they have to be constantly dealt with. Unless they are destroyed with diligent care by the farmer every day, those pernicious plants gradually take possession of the field, and the good seed is choked. The earth indeed is innocent and would gladly produce the best products, but it is prevented by the curse which passed upon it "for man's sake." Well did George Hawtin pen these penetrating words: "Men who are accustomed to fighting every curse in this age would not know what to do if they were to suddenly find themselves in Eden where no curse is. All our lives we have struggled against the curse of thorns and weeds. In the sweat of our faces we have fought with drought and heat; we have wrestled with floods and endless pests. Frost and hail have snatched away the hope of our labors; fire has devoured the dreams of a lifetime. During the days we have been scorched with the heat; in the night we have been bitten with frost. Sickness, disease, war, fear, and death have dogged our pilgrim pathway from the cradle to the grave. Our days have been full of trouble and sorrow as the sparks fly upward."

As previously stated, all the natural is a parable of the deeper SPIRITUAL REALM. The book of Genesis deals largely in typical representations: that is, figures of spiritual realities, brought forth in the language and form of the physical world, but pointing to that which is higher and grander, the verities of the spiritual world. With this truth in mind let us consider further the words of the Lord in Gen. 3:17, "cursed is the GROUND (the *earth*) for thy sake." The Hebrew word that is translated "ground" here is the same word that is translated "earth" in Gen. 1:1 and other passages. The verse could well be rendered, "Cursed is the EARTH for thy sake."

What is the "earth" that is cursed? Ah, far more than just the dirt of the ground we walk on! Of the formation of man it is written, "And the Lord God formed man of the DUST OF THE GROUND" (Gen. 2:7). Then to man God said, "For out of it (the ground) wast thou taken: for DUST THOU ART" (Gen. 3:19). The sweet singer of Israel intoned these meaningful words: "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we ARE DUST" (Ps. 103:14). The apostle Paul penned these inspired words, "The first man was from out of the earth, made of dust – earth-minded; the second Man is the Lord from out of heaven. Now those who are made of the dust are like him who was first made of the dust – earth-minded; and as is the Man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven – heaven-minded. And just as we have borne the image of THE MAN OF DUST, so let us bear also the image of the Man from heaven" (I Cor. 15:45-49, Amplified).

Ah, yes, as surely as the thorns and thistles grow up out of the earth of your garden and choke the life out of the good plants you have planted there, so do evil "thorns" and "thistles" abound in the "earth" of man's carnal nature to choke out the life from the good seed of the Kingdom of

Heaven planted there by the heavenly husbandman! Can we not see that there came a fundamental change in the nature of man, the fall was a *DESCENT* from life on a higher plane to life on a lower plane, from a spiritual state of being to a sensual state of being. Where once the “ground” of Adam’s spiritual mind brought forth spontaneously and profusely the manifestations of God’s life, now his carnal mind would produce a vast crop of fleshly manifestations designed to choke the life of the spirit. So now man WORKS... and WORKS... and works... diligently pursuing multiplied religious observances, external forms, activities of all sorts, and for all his effort he is able only to produce a pitifully small harvest of reality, seeking out but a meager spiritual existence! The “weeds” are not a special creation of God, for the Lord declared, “Thorns and thistles shall IT (the *ground*) BRING FORTH to thee.” The “weeds” are the natural product of the “earth” to which the man is banished – the realm of the carnal mind! Here, the good seed has to be planted and cultivated, but the weeds are inherently present!

## **PLANTING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

The first parable given by the Lord Jesus Christ is the one commonly called the Parable of the Sower. It is about the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus says of it that it is the parable of parables and unless it is understood other parables cannot be. You must realize that all the parables in the Gospels are about the Kingdom of Heaven and this parable is the first. It is the starting point of Christ’s teaching about the mystery of the Kingdom. In Mat. 13:3-9, 18-23 we read, “And He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among the thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit... Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When anyone heareth the Word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; AND THE CARE OF THIS WORLD, AND THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, chokes the Word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth...”

The first word of this parable challenges attention – “Behold – Harken!” The last word repeats the challenge – “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” As we hear, may the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God make very clear to our hearts that this important parable is *not* the parable of the Sower, nor yet of the Seed, but rather a parable of the SOILS. It is about the soil of human understanding and response into which the Word of the Kingdom of Heaven falls. “And there were gathered unto Him great multitudes” – *there was the soil!* Why had they come? Some from curiosity – idle followers of the crowd. Some came from self-seeking motives – it might be profitable to cultivate the company of this rising star. Some came as revolutionaries – to make Him king, to use Him as a flag of revolt against Rome. Some came in quick but shallow enthusiasm, others in deep longing, yet others drawn irresistibly by the Father, and others they knew not why. How would they receive His Words? As variously as the soil of a Galilean hillside receives the seed! Not in vain had Jesus watched the sower tramping his furrows. He would tell the multitudes a story about themselves. Being under no illusions He would tell them just what chance His teaching would have with them, and why in some it would find no lodgment. “And He spake many things... saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow...”

Ah, there stood the Sower in their midst, and He was also the Seed! He was cast into their earth, He spake as never man spake, the Word of eternal life, the Word of the Kingdom, of a higher plane of life available to men, the life of the Spirit. Although no one can, with the natural mind, understand the level of life belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven, a man can understand the level of life on which he is. Everyone can see the nature of life in this world. He can see through his outer senses what is done by people on this level of life: and he can, if he looks at himself, see with his inner senses what he does. He will then see what life is like and what he is like on this natural plane. And I do not hesitate to say that neither life nor himself can be different *at this level*.

The fault was not in the Sower, nor yet in the Seed, but in the Soil. The fault was not in the factor of initiative, but in the factor of response; the hearer was at fault, for he was in a condition *incapable of receiving the Word*. There must be fertile ground and a favorable climate for plant growth. From the soil, the rain, and the sun, comes an inner life which, coursing in its veins, causes it to prosper. We cannot now deal with all the aspects of the parable, but let us meditate briefly upon the seed which “fell among thorns” – not on ground already covered with thorns, but on land “fouled” by latent weed-seeds. Who has not seen a grain field brilliantly but ruinously streaked with red poppies or defaced by patches of thistles? The weeds were not visible when the crop was sown; they were in the uncleansed soil. There is a gradual ascent in quality of the four types of character revealed in the parable. The first, the soil of the wayside, is impenetrable. The second, the rocky ground, is too shallow, but the third is rich earth with possibilities of a generous harvest. This hearer is a man of high potential, of genuine vision, but he is not wholehearted, part of him is held in reserve, uncrucified. He lives in a state of duality, double-mindedness, divided between irreconcilable loyalties: “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” “The care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word,” Jesus says. This man fails to bring forth the fruit of the Kingdom because the soil of his life is “thorny ground” in which the weeds “growing up choke the Word”!

As with the plant, so it is with the growing life of the child of God. It is completely impossible to over-emphasize the importance of this foundational and fundamental truth: YOU ARE THE SOIL into which is cast the Word of the Kingdom of God! This is why Jesus declared, “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is WITHIN YOU” (Lk. 17:21). It is here, Oh child of God, that the majesty, magnificence, glory, power and dominion of the everlasting Kingdom of God has its beginning. The Most High God, full of wisdom, grace, and faithfulness is preparing a people in the lowly estates of this present evil world who are destined to reign with Christ in His throne, first over all the nations of this planet and then from universe to universe. Hear me! These present days of preparation in the lowest parts of the earth are fraught with infinite importance and eternal significance. It is here and now that preparations are to be made. You are mistaken, dear ones, if you suppose that the Lord has paid the high price of Calvary and wrought mightily by the sovereignty of His omnipotent Spirit within your life merely to whisk you away to some golden street to strum a harp forever!

“That ye should walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His *kingdom* and glory” (I Thes. 2:12). “Wherefore we RECEIVING A KINGDOM which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28). “Him that overcometh will I grant to SIT WITH ME IN MY THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). The Greek word for “kingdom” is *basileia* meaning to rule, or reign, as well as all the territory or realm over which the king reigns. Thus, one could say that the word “kingship” could be used quite properly as an indication of the position of one receiving a kingdom. Those who truly become ONE IN UNION WITH HIM are to reign in glory with Him. It is a faithful saying and full of truth that ALL who are WITH HIM are

*called*, and *chosen*, and *faithful* (Rev. 17:14). Think not in your heart that you pass your days here upon this earth, carefree, self-seeking, and careless concerning the high purposes of God, suddenly one day to find yourself sitting with Christ governing the universe and reconciling all things unto Him, because such a thing will not be.

God does not have any “honorary” positions in His Kingdom! You do not just awaken one fine morning to look in the mirror and discover that you have been raised up to sit with Christ in the sphere of His almighty power and infinite dominion. Well did Paul say, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him; but if we deny Him, He will deny us” (II Tim. 2:12). To “deny” Him means more than verbal cursing and swearing and saying with Peter, “I know not the man.” It simply means that if we do not permit Him His rightful place of LORDSHIP in our lives, if we deny Him in our identification with Him in His suffering, rejection and death to self, He will deny us the right to share the glory and dominion which follow death to self. Righteousness is the very foundation of His throne, and not until we are “holy as He is holy” will we be qualified to share that throne with Him. Many in this hour aspire to their “kingship rights” to fulfill their own will, in the lust for power to exercise dominion over others. The idea of exaltation and authority fills their hearts with pride, their ego becomes inflated. But before we receive a heavenly kingship we give up our rights, our will, our ways, and learn to be servant of all. “Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER” (Mat. 7:21). When in every fiber of our being there is a surrender to His will, followed by active obedience, then shall we enter into oneness with HIS KINGSHIP. Then shall the deep and earnest prayer of our heart be, “THY Kingdom come, THY will be done, in us.” Until it is truly “NOT I, BUT CHRIST” we have not yet qualified to receive from Him a Kingdom – sharing His throne.

This truth of the Kingdom of God within us is of such dimension and vital importance to God’s apprehended and separated ones that one scarcely knows how best to articulate its significance that God’s people may be inspired to forsake the weak and beggarly things of earthly cares and pursuits and the vain trappings of tradition and religion to lay hold upon the glorious and eternal reality set before us. Jesus Christ has been in the process of *PREPARING* the Kingdom for almost two thousand years. The first word of teaching to fall from His lips declared, “The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” It was at hand when He spoke, for He was Himself the embodiment, expression and manifestation of the Kingdom. After preaching the Kingdom and displaying the glory and power and peace that issues from it, He then began to prepare through many fiery trials and severe processings A PEOPLE who themselves shall BECOME its fulfillment, its living reality in expression.

The Kingdom of God began to be established in individual, yielded, believing hearts as the great Sower planted there within the furrows of their earthen vessels the good seed of the Word of the Kingdom. Christ enters the fertile soil of the believing heart. He takes the throne and begins to rule and lead the believer till in him CHRIST IS ALL, and ALL IS CHRIST. This is the Kingdom of God *within you*. In some believers His Kingdom is unable to gain a foothold and become established BECAUSE THE GROUND IS NOT FIT FOR THE SEED. It is unreceptive as the uncultivated roadside, where, finding no root, it brings forth nothing, but is carried off by the birds of the air, or stony, or thorny and full of weeds. The message is clear: In the thorny ground the seeds sprout, there is growth and new life, but the vitality is quickly smothered by prickly thorns so that the ultimate harvest is aborted. The cares, riches, and pleasures of life suffocate the new plants. They strangle the shoots. The synoptic writers all use the word choke. The throbbing spiritual life is gagged, the vision is blurred, the hope dimmed. Fruit buds appear; but here is no fruit. The seed never develops to maturity. The buds appear; but there is no fruit. The seed never develops to maturity. The point is straightforward. JOBS, HOUSES, SWIMMING

POOLS, SNOWMOBILES, STOCK MARKETS, SKIES, BALL GAMES, CLOTHING, CARS, AND STEREOs abort the growth of the Kingdom in our lives. They sap the life of the Kingdom and squelch the harvest!

But in some, thank God! the seed of the Kingdom brings forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundredfold. Thus it has been through the centuries as God has prepared His Kingdom in men. In Jesus' day there was some good soil, and therefore Jesus sowed in hope. Among the multitude there were men and women who were sin-sick and world-weary, who longed and yearned and prayed for the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God. They were "such as... having heard the Word, hold it fast." These enlightened souls clung doggedly to every revelation of higher things! They walked in the light while it was day, and when night came they kept faith with the illumined hour, nor allowed the world's glare to turn aside from the hope beating perennially within their breasts. They were such as "bring forth fruit with patience."

Let it be fully understood that all through the past nineteen hundred years the Kingdom of God has been in our midst, within the elect and en-Christed ones. The body of Sons is now almost prepared. The King is making ready. Very soon the apprehended ones will move into an entirely NEW REALM, but not a strange realm, for we have already partaken of the firstfruits of its glory. Like the man of whom Paul spoke who, though *here on earth* in body, was nevertheless caught up into the realm of the third heaven, so these en-Christed ones will be "caught up to God and to His throne" that the next phase of the Kingdom may begin and spread its blessed government abroad in all the earth. During this age the Kingdom has been planted in the hearts of a firstfruit company composed of men *out of* every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. In the age to come the Kingdom shall find expression no longer merely in individual believers, but the NATIONS of them that are saved shall walk in the light of the city and the kings of the whole earth shall bring their honor and glory into it (Rev. 21:24).

There are two errors abroad in the land. The first error is the notion that the only manifestation of the Kingdom of God the world shall ever see is that which we have seen for the past nineteen hundred years. Of those who believe that the present indwelling of Christ in His people is the only phase of the Kingdom of God there shall ever be, some believe that this present arrangement will continue on indefinitely into unending ages yet to come and that in every generation there will be the repeated contest between light and darkness, good and evil, God and Satan and the saints and the wicked. Others embrace the crude notion that this age will finally end with Christ coming to snatch all the saints off some far-off heaven after which the sinners will be sent to hell to burn eternally and the earth passes away to exist no more. End of game. Consummation of God's purpose of the ages.

The second error is the idea that there is a difference between the body of Christ and the Kingdom, that the Kingdom has not truly come, that the KINGDOM IS A FUTURE AGE. Those who subscribe to this teaching are always LOOKING FOR THE KINGDOM TO COME and cannot believe that it will ever be here until *after* the second coming of the Lord or the manifestation of the sons of God. The truth lies between these two extremes. That the Kingdom of God is not merely a future hope but a present reality should be among the most evident of truths for "the law and the prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached and EVERY MAN PRESSETH INTO IT" and the Father "hath delivereth us from the power of darkness, and HATH TRANSLATED (Gr: transferred) US INTO THE KINGDOM OF HIS DEAR SON" (Lk. 16:16; Col. 1:13). What we long for and so intensely await is not the reality of the Kingdom but the INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM.

Long ago the prophet announced, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: OF THE I-N-C-R-E-A-S-E OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND PEACE THERE SHALL BE N-O E-N-D” (Isa. 9:6-7). Eternal INCREASE! Eternal increase of HIS KINGDOM! From realm to realm, from age to age, from galaxy to galaxy – of the INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT there shall be N-O E-N-D! An ever-increasing Kingdom and dominion until God is all in all from sea to sea and throughout all the unbounded heavens. It is inconceivable to imagine any scripture or any inspired saying that could possibly enlarge on such all-embracing words as these. Ah, yes, my friend, this age will end, yea, is ending, and another more glorious age looms bright upon the horizon. But make no mistake about it, the next age is NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD. It is but the *next stage* of an ever-increasing Kingdom that through ages of ages shall grow, enlarge, advance, expand, intensify and triumph unto the glory of its eternal King.

The spiritual realms of the Kingdom of Heaven are being entered here and now by a company of the firstfruits of the Kingdom whether we know it or not. But Satan, knowing that his time is short, has great wrath and has stirred himself to destroy this manchild as soon as he is born, for he is to rule all nations in the age to come. The tactics the adversary uses are not what saints expect. He is not destroying them with drugs, drunkenness, demon possession, gross sins of the flesh, or even by persecution and martyrdom. He is destroying them with sleepiness, carelessness, much catering to the flesh, and with human zeal to accomplish things for God. Christians dread prayer and fasting but love crowds and excitement, forms of godliness and imaginary gifts of power, concerts and hand clapping, entertainment and dead works, pomp and ceremony. These are the weapons Satan uses, but it is not the Satan out there somewhere with horns, a pitch fork, and a funny suit, but the Satan growing up out of our own carnal mind as thorns and thistles in our very own Garden!

## **THE CARES OF THIS LIFE**

The first mention of thorns and thistles is just this side of the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve sinned, God sent them forth from the Garden and said, “cursed is the ground (earth, outer man) for thy sake; ... thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.” Ever since that time man has contended with weeds. The thorns and thistles became the symbol of the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of life which grow rampant in the lives of men and women today, choking the spiritual life of the Kingdom. Our temptations, fleshly desires, carnal appetites, worldly pursuits, pressures, and needs can all be symbolized by the bramble patch. Forever clinging, grabbing, tearing, choking, and hurting, the realm of the carnal mind reaches out to ensnare and entangle us in a hopeless jungle of no release. So for millenniums man has been fighting thistles, without and within, unsuccessfully. The roots run deep and wild, springing up in unsuspected places with a harvest of pain.

While there could be many and varied applications of the weeds growing in the fertile soil of the carnal mind, in His parable of the Soils Jesus spoke of how there was that seed which fell among the thorns that choked it. And when He gave the meaning of the parable, He said it was choked by CARES, and RICHES, and PLEASURES OF THIS LIFE and therefore brought no fruit to perfection. The word “cares” is from the Greek *merimna* meaning literally “divisions, distractions”. Jesus gave another solemn warning about these “distractions” in Lk. 21:34-36: “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all things... and to stand before the Son of man.”

The cares of this world have turned many people's lives into a pressure cooker. The strain of everyday living is steadily growing worse because of financial problems, higher taxes, inflation, government policies, the disturbing world situation, added responsibilities, sickness, hospital bills, rebellion in the home, unemployment, etc. The divisions and distractions of "this life" are numerous beyond recounting, we are all faced with them every day. There are necessary involvements in daily living from which we cannot and would not escape, but when they so OVERWHELM us that we find ourselves fragmented and so divided that we are unable to gather ourselves together to focus sharply upon the purposes of God in our lives – then we need to be LOOSED from these snares, escape from them, flee out of them. The cares of life are insidious – coming between, choking out a crop, making it unfruitful. Some give all their thought to the things of "this life," as though they would live here forever. God cannot work with such as these. To be near to the heart of God, to feel the pulse beat of His compassion for creation, one must walk with God in the highlands of the Spirit. It is tragic but true that in the lives of many of God's saints, instead of lovely gardens of roses, marigolds and lilies, we find stinkweeds, thistles, and thorns. And those who live in the midst of such patches of weeds can never produce a harvest of fruitfulness in the Kingdom of God. I beseech you, dear brother, precious sister, to take a tour of your garden today and ask yourself this question; How many flowers have I discovered? How much fully ripened fruit is there on the trees?

With what keen insight and spiritual discernment did George Hawtin admonish all who would follow on to know the Lord: "I feel I cannot be too strong in my earnest exhortation to all who read that we would earnestly seek day by day to have an ever increasing fullness of the Holy Ghost. It is your God-given duty to seek for the Spirit with far greater earnestness and sincerity than you would for silver or gold. I greatly fear that the god of this age is the dollar bill. It is called the almighty dollar and certainly that is the honor given it by most Christians today. Earthly and financial gain has become the prime and foremost requisite in most Christian lives while prayer, meditation, the reading of the Word., praise, kindness, love, the grace of giving, tithing, the leading of the Spirit, constant communion, repentance, and all such things that pertain to the fullness of the Spirit have been relegated to the realm of annoying nuisances that hinder us from going all out for the god of this age. How sorely we need to read and learn the lesson taught us by Peter when he wrote, 'And beside all this, giving all diligence *add to your faith* virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience *godliness*; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.' Now listen to the promise that follows this exhortation. 'For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ... For if ye do these things, ye shall *never fall*; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the *everlasting kingdom* of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.' 2 Pet. 1:5-8,10,11." Praise God, there is an escaping from the cares of this life – if we take care of the weeds in our earth!

God has a way out of the briar patch! When everything starts to fall apart, HIS LIFE WITHIN gives the strength and faith to ride out each crisis, to PASS THROUGH all these things, and to stand before the Son of man, praise His name!

There is another area of division and distraction that is a part of the cares of this life also – and that is the "religious realm" which can cause one to be so caught up in its programs and works that it literally becomes a CARE. Well do I remember former years of pastoring churches when every weekend was crowded with such a whirlwind of feverish activity, meetings, visitation etc. that come Monday morning I needed another sabbath to rest and recuperate from the one I had just been through! I suppose I will make some enemies, but I must tell you the truth nonetheless. How much eager-beaver religious work is done out of a carnal desire to make

good or appear successful! How many hours of prayer are wasted beseeching God to bless projects that are geared to the glorification of men! How much hard-earned money is poured out upon men who, in spite of their tear-in-the-voice appeals, nevertheless seek only to make a fair show in the flesh! I have no hesitation in saying that a dynamic personality and a shrewd knowledge of human nature is *ALL* that any man needs to be a success in religious circles today, including the “spirit-filled” ones.

Let no one misunderstand me. I am not in any way condemning meetings, ministry, or corporate expression. We praise God for all the precious saints that the Lord has gathering together in seasons of praise, worship, seeking the Lord, exhorting and edifying one another in the spontaneous flow of His life, we also meet and minister among these as the Lord enables and are blessed and strengthened thereby. But the church systems, for the most part, have accepted the monstrous heresy that noise, size, activity and bluster signify that something vital is being accomplished for God. The simplicity which is in Christ is rarely found. In its stead are programs, methods, organizations, committees, board meetings, basketball tournaments, religious splash parties followed by devotions, weekend camping trips with a Bible quiz around the fire, Sunday School picnics, puppet shows, building fund drives, business men’s banquets, revival meetings and a world more of feverish activities which occupy time, energy, and attention but can never satisfy the deepest longings of the heart. The shallowness of the average Christian’s inner experience, the hollowness of his worship, the emptiness of his words, and that servile IMITATION OF THE WORLD which marks the religious system’s promotional methods all testify that the whole program, instead of being a divine out-ricing of THE CHRIST LIFE, is naught but part and parcel of “the cares of *this world*.”

Oh! to escape religiosity that we might learn to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. And we rejoice to see how God is causing His people to flee this care. And let me assure you, my brother, I have no intention of assuming the burden of paying for men’s programs, building men’s kingdoms, or joining in their efforts to save the world, when God already has a plan for the salvation of all nations which will work, while men’s efforts have failed. But to remain in the midst of all this activity and not become caught in its snare, is an escape which only God can work in us and maintain for us.

Dear man of God; dear woman of God; dear friend and brother of mine! Let us pull up by the roots the noxious, choking weeds of religious excitement and pseudo devotion and seek the face of the Lord in deep humility until He comes and breaks up our fallow ground and rains righteousness upon us! The soil that shall bring forth fruit unto perfection is that which has been PLOWED UP, CLEANSSED, and impregnated with the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, daily exposed to the arising of the Sun of Righteousness upon it, and the rain of His Spirit of life.

## **BURNING OFF THE FIELD**

Jesus identified the “thorns and thistles” of the ground as the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and pleasures of life which choke out the good seed of the indwelling Kingdom of God. Any “care” of life that chokes the Word and makes it unfruitful in our lives is a pernicious weed growing in our ground. Were one to make account and analyze all the perils, tribulations, pressures, situations, etc. facing men today they could soon become double-minded, becoming over-anxious about these things. The more men take into account the so-called conspiracy seeking to destroy our nation, worry about inflation, economic collapse, famine, nuclear war, New World Order, etc. the more they are moved away from their settled place in God, they are no longer secure in the secret place of the Most High and these earthly concerns, like weeds and dandelion, choke out the peace and triumph of HIS LIFE within. Blessed

is the man who “has *no fear of evil tidings*: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord” (Ps. 112:7). He belongs to that KINGDOM WHICH IS FROM ABOVE, and which is established deep within, and no longer fears the collapse of the kingdoms of this world.

This may be a hard word for some, but the simple truth is that quitting your job, moving away from the city, buying a farm, clearing land, building a cabin, getting back to nature, trudging through mud, hand-pumping water, raising your own food, canning, cooking on a wood stove, sewing our own clothes, using an outdoor john, reading by lantern light, storing guns and ammunition, in short – BECOMING SELF-SUFFICIENT – has *absolutely nothing whatever to do with producing the fruit of the Kingdom of God and entering into sonship!* Now, if you just naturally enjoy roughing it, or if your desire is to farm, then go ahead! Farming is a noble occupation, but farming will in no way enhance your prospects of becoming a son of God! In fact, those who go to such lengths to prepare themselves in a natural way for the calamities to come upon the earth can become so involved with the physical and material aspects of coming events that the CARES OF LIFE AND THE DECEITS OF THESE THINGS CHOKE THE FRUIT-BEARING LIFE right out of the Kingdom seed!

The sons of God live NOW in the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven and do not concern themselves with what tomorrow may or may not bring. Our omnipotent Father is more than able to keep that which we have COMMITTED UNTO HIM against *that day*. When we concern ourselves with the dangers of the hour, what might happen tomorrow, becoming so involved in MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THE FLESH, a hedge against the future, until we miss caring for the seed of life that is within, we are in danger of losing the fruit that we waited so long for. Remember, dear ones, it is with much PATIENCE that we possess our souls and THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION (not by missing it!) we must enter into the Kingdom of God.

The thorns sprang up in our earth as a result of Adam’s fall. But God has a way out of the briar patch! The One who came into this world so many years later to pay the penalty for man’s sin, was forced to wear a crown made of these vicious plant spines. In recording the events of the trial and crucifixion of our Lord, the apostle John writes, “and the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put in on His head” (Jn. 19:2). The so-called “holy land” is like the rest of the world – unholy – and it has more than its share of them. Probably no other country exists where so many plants of this sort thrive and flourish! At least two hundred thousand different species of thorny plants can be found there. Listen! “Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee... and the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and put it upon HIS head.” We shudder at the thought of the piercing thorns and never look beyond them to a creation DELIVERED FROM THE CURSE, and a King reigning WHERE THERE IS NO MORE CURSE.

We have read the dead letter of the Word – seeing only the physical, while the reason and the results were completely missed! Thorns... cares of life... pressures... problems... fleshly desires... and then comes the Word: “Casting ALL YOUR CARE upon HIM; for He careth for you” (I Pet. 5:7). Think of it – thorns upon HIS brow! Ah, that’s where they all belong! May our meditations upon these things make us more aware of the curses that still remain upon the ground, and the need for full deliverance and restoration, not for ourselves alone, but for ALL OF GROANING CREATION. May we be able to truly “commit our cause” to the Lord, finding a deep place of peace and confidence in the very midst of the agitations and turmoils of the world about us.

Some will not cast all their cares upon Him, becoming identified with His thorn pierced brow, finding blessed deliverance from the curse, having their soil cleansed from the weeds of inner wickedness. For these careless or rebellious ones God also has a process. This ground in

which the seed sprouts up with such promise only to be choked later, is described in Heb. 6:4-8. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain... and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: *but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected*, and is nigh unto cursing; WHOSE IS TO BE BURNED."

The first eight verses of Hebrews chapter six are dealing one central truth – "going on to perfection". The apostle says, "And this we will do, if God permit." He then speaks of those who fall away, their spiritual life is choked, where once they had feasted on the glorious Word of God, and had tasted the powers of the coming age, but now turn away from the reality of these things, and the Arthur S. Way translation says of them that "it is a task beyond human powers to go on indefinitely rekindling in them the new-life purpose." But as the earth has to be purged by fire to rid it of the thorns and thistles, so also these who will not continue in the increase of the Kingdom because their ground bears a bountiful crop of briars will have to be purged *BY FIRE* before they will come to that place of being able to bring forth fruit unto perfection. One cannot continue forever with a polluted, uncleansed soil, but will eventually be dealt with by fire to end the cause of their fruitlessness, that they might be restored into oneness with the purposes of God. M. R. Vincent, in his WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, points out that in Heb. 6:8 it is the "earth" which is burnt, the land itself, and may I add that as a field full of thorns and briars is burned over, *making way for the plowing and cleansing of the soil so that a new crop may be planted*, so will God deal with our crop of weeds as He sends His purifying fire into our lives consuming the clinging, pricking, choking underbrush.

# Chapter 37

## THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

A Lamb is obviously a very familiar figure in the Word of God. The first blood earth's startled soil ever drank was shed in that primeval Paradise in Eden. Thousands of years later John the Baptist began the ministry of Christ by proclaiming, "Behold the *Lamb* of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). In the last book of the New Testament we read, "Worthy is the *Lamb* that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing..." (Rev. 5:12). In the opening chapters of Genesis we read: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make COATS OF SKINS, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:7, 9-10, 21). We would be totally void of understanding as to what kind of victim it was that provided this blessed covering for the sinning man and his wife, were it not that the Holy Spirit has shed precious light upon this wonder, revealing that Christ is "the LAMB slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) who verily was "a LAMB without blemish or spot...foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:19-20). I now invite you to meditate deeply upon my words. In the process of changing our garments, covering our nakedness, and clothing us in the righteousness of Himself God brings us to the LAMB, which has its base in the foundation of God before the world (cosmos – world system) began, for Christ the Lamb was foreordained *before* the foundation of the world, and He is the Lamb slain *from* the foundation of the world, and however you interpret "the foundation of the world" that certainly carries us back to Eden.

Redemption is not an afterthought of God by which He hopes to salvage a few of the broken and shattered pieces of His creation. Redemption is PART OF THE PLAN OF CREATION. If the fall of man is part of the plan of God, then the redemption of the fallen creation must also be a part of the same plan that issued forth from the fathomless depths of His omniscient mind. If Peter was speaking the truth when he wrote of God's Lamb, "Who verily was FOREORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Pet. 1:20), then the fall of man must certainly be a part of the plan of the Creator. For what possible purpose was the blessed redemptive Lamb foreordained before the world began if redemption itself were not already in the mind and plan of God? All Christians love to quote the Golden Text of the Bible, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son..." (Jn. 3:16). Yet what is the real message of this beautiful passage? Is it not that God SO LOVED that He GAVE His Son? Does not 1 Pet. 1:20 make it very plain that the *actual giving* of that Son was *before the world began* and before man was driven from the Garden planted eastward in Eden? Ah, the agonies of the cross were endured only two thousand years ago on Golgotha's hill, but the actual giving of the redemptive Lamb took place before the present world-system began and the actual slaying of the Lamb took place from the beginning of the world-system, in the mysterious mists of the sacred Garden of long ago. Well do I know that there are deep mysteries involved in this, yet the meaning is clear enough. It is that long ago before "The morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy" the purpose of redemption was conceived and carried forth as a burden of love and a sacrifice of pain, in the heart of God. But the day came – wonderful day! – when that love-purpose, conceived in eternity, was born

into time. The fullness of time having come, God “sent forth His Son.” Upon the cross of Calvary the eternal purpose became a historical verity.

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

Two thousand years ago, the CROSS didn’t inspire religious awe or thoughts of the Messiah’s redemption. Instead, the cross inspired sheer TERROR. A crucifixion was a gruesome, torturous, and shameful way of dying – the lowest form of execution, reserved for traitors and hardened criminals. It was undoubtedly one of the most barbarous and exquisitely cruel forms of torture known to man. The method used by the Romans in the time of our Lord was a refinement of this gruesome form of death devised by the ancient Assyrians. The sadistic form of crucifixion originally was IMPALEMENT of the enemy upon sharp stakes. Cutting the branches off a small but sturdy tree, these masters of torment would shape it into an upright post with a razor-sharp point. Hauling their victim to the crucifixion site they would rip the clothing off his body in the presence of his frightened associates. These strong soldiers would then lift him up in the air over the upright CROSS, poising his wildly twisting body momentarily over the sharp point in the rectal area. Suddenly, with precision timing, the powerful warriors who held him would drive his body downward with all their might. If they were especially skilled they would drive the sword-like stake through the intestines, and all the way to the diaphragm. Although strong enough to drive the cross into the heart they would stop short so that the screaming, jerking victim would gyrate long enough to burn the event into the souls of his watching countrymen. The Assyrians knew that such a memory would aid them in conquering other cities, tribes, and nations without so much as a battle.

The Greek word used in the New Testament for “cross” is STAUROS. From the time of Alexander the Great, who also practiced the awful art of crucifixion, the term STAUROS meant “an upright stake.” In respect to the Roman cross the word STAUROS referred to the upright post – the horizontal beam was called the PATIBULUM or cross-arm – for there was no word in the Greek language for “cross” as the Romans made it. The Persians who picked up the practice of crucifixion from the Assyrians were the first to change the form of execution by impalement through the bowels to impalement through the hands. Their purpose in this was not to be more humane but, rather, to cause a more lingering death to impress the vanquished with the foolishness of resisting their military might. The Persian version of crucifixion, using the crossbeam in addition to the upright post, was picked up by Alexander and his generals and carried back to the Mediterranean world.

The Romans learned the art of torture by crucifixion and immediately set out to refine and improve it in many subtle ways. At the time of Christ the Romans made use of four cross forms. In addition to the upright STAUROS which was used alone for impalement through the bowels, there was what they called the CRUX IMISSA in which the cross-beam was located about one-third the way down the post. This is the traditional design which is usually associated with the

cross upon which Jesus was slain. The third Roman cross form was called the CRUX COMMISSA in which the crossbeam was hauled to the very top of the pole, forming a T-shaped cross. The fourth Roman cross form was in the shape of the letter "X" and was called the CRUX DECUSSTA. Tradition maintains that Peter was crucified upside down on this shape of cross. The Latin word CRUX, which was the Roman term for these instruments of torture, comes into English as "cross" by way of the French CROIX.

Regardless of the cross form used it was a slow and agonizing death – reserved for traitors, slaves and in general the SCUM of the Roman world. But the process of crucifixion involved more than the shame of a brief public hanging. First, the victim was mercilessly scourged with spiked whips, sticks and all manner of physical and verbal abuse. Then the victim was forced to CARRY his own heavy cross to the site of the crucifixion. Afterwards came the painful process of nailing his hands and feet to the cross. Finally, this slow, agonizing death was aggravated by taunts, threats and buffeting from the crowd. The terror of the cross – like the anticipation of a public hanging – is heightened by the victim's fear of the event. Most criminals were crucified immediately after their trial because the forebodings of pain were more than most mortals could handle. The crucifixion of Jesus was typical in this respect – He was crucified on the same day He was convicted. But this death sentence was no sudden surprise to Jesus. He anticipated His death by the cross throughout His three-and-one-half year ministry. As a young man growing up in Galilee, He undoubtedly witnessed a number of Roman crucifixions.

Of all the lives that have suddenly ended in what would seem to be defeat and tragedy, none would have appeared to be more defeated or more tragic than the life of Jesus, the teacher from Nazareth. He had claimed to have power over all things, even over life and death. In fact, He had proved His claim by bringing the dead back to life, yet, to all outward appearances, He seemed to be unable to forestall His own death. Not only did Jesus die, but the tragedy and defeat seemed even worse because He died under the most shattering circumstances. According to the custom of the times, to be hanged on a tree was to be forever accursed – to have the memory of your name blotted out both in earth and in heaven. The triumph of Christ over this kind of death only adds immeasurably to His ultimate victory, because He transformed His cross – the symbol of the curse – into the symbol of His eternal triumph. Yes, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death – EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS! Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it!

When Jesus hung upon the cross the heavens robed themselves in midnight mourning and bowed to the earth and wept. The rocks in their dumb grief burst, because their Creator was put to death by those whom He came only to save and bless; and the earth itself rocked with convulsive throes. As the Lord of glory hangs there – absolute silence takes the place of the noisy babble of the crowd. At length after three hours, the silence is broken, and a cry pierces the darkness, till it strikes a heaven not opened now, but closed even to Him, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

In spite of the awful fact of Calvary's dreadful scene I would be remiss if I failed to tell you that the CROSS OF CHRIST was not a cross of wood. The cross on Golgotha's hill was undoubtedly a wooden cross, but the cross of Christ which the apostles preached and in which they gloried and by which the world is reconciled to God was something more than a wooden beam. When in wisdom and holy expectation our Lord exhorted His disciples, saying, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up HIS CROSS, and follow Me," He was not making reference to a cross of wood, but to a cross that would bring death to one's own identity, will and ways, and identify his life henceforth with the life of Christ. The DEATH OF THE CROSS is in some mysterious and divine way the gateway to the LIFE OF THE CROSS. The wooden

Roman cross on which Jesus was crucified was not actually HIS CROSS, for the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe, all the handwriting of ordinances of the law were nailed to His cross, and He made peace and reconciled all things in heaven and earth unto Himself by the blood of HIS CROSS. No literal parchment was nailed to the cross of Calvary, nor does that cross even exist today.

It is my deep conviction, and I say it with all reverence and respect to my blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, but the truth is that Jesus in the natural suffered no more on the cross than thousands of others who were nailed to a tree, or thousands of others who died on the rack during the Roman inquisition, or thousands of others who were burned at the stake, or fed to the lions, or made blazing human torches at the Circus in Rome. The physical suffering was no greater. The cross of Christ refers to a greater spiritual cross and a greater spiritual death. The cross of Christ had its beginning that day in heaven, when the Word of God, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of NO REPUTATION, and took upon Him the FORM OF A SERVANT, and was made IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN; and being found IN FASHION AS A MAN, He HUMBLLED Himself, and BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS." Fierce as was His suffering at Calvary, that fearful hour of agony and blood was but the final act of a life of the cross as step by step He descended from the majesty and glory of equality with God to the fearsome moment when in anguish He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Though I am sure it is impossible to plumb the shining depths and the inexhaustible riches of the meaning of the cross, I would like to endeavor to set before you the deeper meaning of the cross of Christ. We will never understand the mystery of the cross until by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God our eyes perceive the eternal cross in the heart of God Himself. The only true and eternal life in the universe is the life of God. He alone is self-existent. He alone is reality. He alone is eternal substance. If we are to fully know and partake of that life, we must die to all that is contrary to that life. Everything that exists in the universe has its opposite – and as surely as God exists there is the opposite for all that He is. God is love – and the opposite of love is hate. God is light – and the opposite of light is darkness. God is truth – and the opposite of the truth is the lie. God is life – and the opposite of life is death. Every positive has its negative, and all the laws of the universe reveal this principle of opposites. Jesus enunciated the fundamental principle of life (spirit, God) when He said that except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die it brings forth the increase of life. Every negative must be brought to death. Everything in the universe must die to all that is contrary to divine life and nature, being born again of the Spirit. This is the meaning of "Behold, I make ALL THINGS NEW" (Rev. 21:5). This has been the Father's plan for man – man in the image and glory of the incorruptible God.

The principle was set in motion with the first man, Adam. Adam had to fall into darkness, sin and death, not because he was inherently evil or rebellious, but because all that is contradictory to God must be stirred up, experienced, faced, understood, repented of, overcome and eternally put to rest in man's will before the image of God can shine safely and eternally through him. In recent months my whole understanding of why the cross is the gateway to LIFE has been clarified and crystallized within my spirit. I have come to see that God Himself dies to everything but His self-giving self, which is love. God Himself dies to every dark principle that would sow selfishness, pride, strife, bitterness, trouble, pain, sorrow, chaos, disappointment, weakness, limitation or evil of any kind. The cross is the very heart of God, and the basis of why He is the ETERNAL GOD. He is eternally God just because He IS ETERNALLY all that makes Him God.

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 we have understood with natural minds. That this passage may become clearer to our minds, scintillating in heaven's light like the ray which is broken into many prismatic hues, consider now the glorious things concealed in this mighty word of the Lord. The Lord our God is ONE. One, in the numerology of scripture, means UNITY, UNITED, UNDIVIDED, UNFRAGMENTED. One is the primary number, denoting beginning or source. Unity being indivisible, and not made up of other numbers, is therefore independent of all others, and is the source of all others. "One" 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. Perhaps, as someone has said, this is only another aspect of viewing the same truth, for God is truly one, undivided in Himself, or in His will and purpose. And surely HE alone is God! But this One God IS ONE. It is a great and blessed fact that God is ONE. He who is united, undivided and unfragmented in every aspect of His nature and state of being cannot be influenced, affected, moved, upset, frustrated, changed, altered, damaged, destroyed, made discordant or set at variance in any way. The character of God is eternal, change-less, 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 devise or devils say or do, the love of God, the purpose of God, the holiness of God, the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, unaffected, without fluctuation. He is Jehovah, the SELF-EXISTENT ONE. He is ONE. No power in the universe can cause any deviation whatsoever in God's nature, will or action.

But how is it that God is UNCHANGEABLE in His nature – is it because He CANNOT change or because He CHOOSES not to change? Truly God "cannot lie" and God cannot be anything other than life, light and love. But why CANNOT He be? The answer that the blessed Spirit of Truth has revealed in my heart is because HE HAS ETERNALLY DIED TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT DARKNESS CAN ARISE IN HIS LIFE! The entire principle of darkness has its foundation in the life of God, for was it not God Himself who "divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called night" (Gen. 1:5). "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things" (Isa. 45:7). This mystery of darkness in God's nature remains unrevealed because He has eternally WILLED to be Life, Light and Love. All the negative potential is there – the law of opposites – but there is a cross in God's heart--by which He eternally dies to all that would make Him anything less than GOD. This is ALWAYS happening in God's life, because the cross is an eternal fact. "Eternity" doesn't mean unbeginning time in the long ago or unending time in the inscrutable future. Eternity means NO TIME. Eternity is TIME-LESS. This means that the decision to die to the negative principle is not subject to review or change – it is forever settled and determined in the heart of God. That's why He says over and over, "I change not." It is not that He is intrinsically set so that He cannot change. Rather, it is that He has ETERNALLY CHOSEN not to change. It is an eternal, accomplished, irrevocable choice, born of wisdom and understanding. It is the eternal cross in His heart. Therefore He cannot change. He is forever love. He is forever pure. He is forever righteous. He is forever wisdom. He is forever Light and Life. He is forever SAFE!

The cross is the secret of God's gift of love. It means that God does not live for HIMSELF. All the selfhood of God is forever crucified upon the cross in God's heart. Selfhood must be a vital characteristic in any life. The selfish desire that would cause God to live for Himself--to this God

eternally dies. He has willed to be a self for others instead of a self for self, by eternally dying to the dark, selfish principle. Andrew Murray said that the spirit of love in AN ETERNAL WILL TO ALL GOODNESS. The best and most wonderful word in the universe is Love. For God is love. What is love? The deep desire to give itself for the beloved. Love finds its joy in imparting all that it has, all that it is, to make the loved one happy and fulfilled. This is THE ONE ETERNAL, IMMUTABLE GOD that, from eternity to eternity, changeth not, that can be neither more nor less, but an ETERNAL WILL TO ALL THE GOODNESS that is in Himself and comes from Him. The creation of ever so many worlds adds nothing to, nor takes anything from, this immutable God: He always was, and always will be the same immutable WILL TO ALL GOODNESS. So that as certainly as He is the Creator, so certainly He is the Blessor of every created thing, and can give nothing but Blessing, Goodness and Happiness from Himself, because He has in Himself nothing else to give.

The spirit of love does not want to be rewarded or honored; its only desire is to become the blessing and happiness of everything that needs it. The wrath of an enemy, the treachery of a friend, only gives the spirit of love opportunity to be more triumphant. The rebellion (selfhood) of Adam opened up avenues for mankind to experience and know the incredible depths of the love of God! God IS LOVE! And His sons are of His own nature. The Sons of Love! What a blessed title! Little wonder, then, that the whole vast creation, sold under slavery and bondage to sin, sorrow, and death GROANS for the manifestation of THE SONS OF LOVE!

From this flash-point, Life sheds forth Light and Love. The whole creation sprang out from this unselfish love, for God said, "Let there be..." and "God SO LOVED THE WORLD that He gave..." Life begins after the cross, even in the life of God. The cross is more than Calvary – it is the fulcrum or point of power in which the entire infinite might of the forces of divine desire issue in love, creation, and self-abnegation for others. This is why Jesus said, "Take up YOUR CROSS and follow Me." We carry our cross with us in our walk IN SPIRIT – the cross that God has in His heart – not to suffer physically necessarily, but to die to all negatives and all selfhood and selfishness and spring forth as rivers of living waters in life anew. So we become life and light for others. As Adam Parker wrote, "How does the sun in the sky give light? It is continually dying to produce light. We don't see the death, or the dark contracting forces in this great star. We only see the light. But death is the key to the light. And that light is the life of our world in the physical dimension. So also the Son, with the cross in His heart, is the Daystar risen in our lives. We share in His eternal death and new life, for He is our very life – and He in us is the light of the world that brings life to all men.

All the books in the world, though written with pens of silver and ink of gold, could never fully describe the glories of His cross, nor could all the learned tongues of men or the heavenly voices of angels explain to the mind of man how He, who was rich, for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. Eternity itself will not be too long to sing the praises of such a One, who came from the cross in the bosom of God to shed His life blood that all creation might find eternal life in Him.

I would draw your reverent attention to a few significant passages of scripture. Most Christians seem to think that the time the Christ of God left the glory above was when He was conceived in the womb of the virgin of Nazareth and born a babe in Bethlehem's stable, laying down that life that He had with the Father, birthed into our life which is a life of death, separated from the eternal glory of the Father for a mere 33 years, then laying aside that robe which was of flesh to return to the Father and take again that glory which He had with the Father until that wonderful day when the angel Gabriel was dispatched by God to Mary in Nazareth. But a close inspection of the scriptures will give us a different idea.

In that wonderful prayer Jesus prayed on the night before His crucifixion, He said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Then He went on to ask, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world (cosmos) was" (Jn. 17:4-5). These words certainly indicate that Christ had been away from the Father's glory for a lot longer than 33~ years. He is actually saying that He left the glory BEFORE THE KOSMOS CAME INTO BEING. How long ago that was I don't have the foggiest notion--but it was certainly centuries, millenniums, yea, vast and innumerable ages before our blessed Christ walked among us. Now He was asking the Father to restore to Him the glory He had forsaken before ever the cosmos came into being. In the 24th verse we read: "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: FOR THOU LOVEDST ME BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD."

Why these references to the beginning, yea, before the beginning, before the founding of the cosmos? What happened away back there that He should appeal to it? Why did He speak of the Father's love for Him in that distant point of time? Did not the Father always love Him? I feel deeply within that something tremendously important happened at that time that invoked a special love from God, His Father, causing Him to love His Son in a very special way. One thing is certain--that was the time when the Christ left His pre-existent glory. Otherwise, why should He say, "Father, glorify Thou Me, with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee B-E-F-O-R-E THE KOSMOS WAS." If He had left the glory of the Father only when He came to earth as a man, why not say, "...the glory which I had with Thee before I came to earth"? Ah -- it was not in Mary's womb that He descended from the glory of the Father, it was much farther back -- BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD!

Notice now these wonderfully meaningful words penned by John the Revelator. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD" (Rev. 13:8). Let us notice just what truth is stated here. A better rendering would be, "The Lamb that was PUT TO DEATH from the founding of the cosmos." Weymouth's translation reads, "All the inhabitants of the earth will be found worshipping him; every one whose name is not recorded in the book of Life--the book of the Lamb offered in sacrifice FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD." The sacrifice and death of the Christ did not start with the events surrounding Calvary; it began away back there at the beginning, and culminated on Calvary. He was the Lamb who was put to death from the beginning. Just as the cross did not begin at Calvary, so the crucifixion of Christ did not begin at Calvary. Peter expressed the fact that the cross existed as a work of God before the foundation of the world in this manner: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was FOREORDAINED B-E-F-O-R-E THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, but was manifest in these last times for you" (I Pet. 1:18-20). The Lamb whose offering was already a glorious and eternal reality in the heavens, remained only to cast its shadow upon the earth, on Calvary's hill. We would have thought that in calling our Lord "the Lamb" this name would have been used only in respect to His humiliation in His earthly life. However, in scripture it is most used in reference to His glory in the heavenlies. Peter saw Him as a Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world. John saw Him as a Lamb that had been put to death from the founding of the cosmos, highly exalted, standing in the midst of the throne. Actually John saw the Lamb SLAIN IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE! What a wonder!

What does it mean that Christ was the Lamb slain "before the foundation of the world"? The word "world" in these passages translates the Greek word KOSMOS meaning "order, arrangement, system of things." The "world" is a negative thing in relation to God. James

declares, "...the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The apostle John adds his testimony, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I Jn. 2:15-16). The world is the present system of things upon this earth conceived by the carnal mind and generated by the natural man.

The world consists of all that man has instituted that replaces God (the Spirit) in his life. The present political systems, economic systems, educational systems and religious systems are not of God, but of the world. When people, activities, or things – whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly – enslave man, they comprise the world. Anything that causes man to disregard the SPIRIT, be removed from the anointing, trust in the outer world of flesh, or be independent of God is the world. All that does not come from the Father, all that originates outside of SPIRIT, all that man institutes by his own carnal wisdom and fleshly ability is of the world, and is contrary to the life and nature of God.

The word "foundation" (foundation of the world) translates the Greek word KATABOLE which is a compound word made up of BALLO meaning "to cast, to throw" and KATA meaning "down." When man fell from his high and holy relationship with God and was cast down into the carnal realm of consciousness, the "foundation" of the world was laid in his heart and actions. But--blessed be God! The apostle Paul informs us that God the Father elected some SONS in Christ BEFORE the foundation of the world! "According as He hath chosen us in Him BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD... unto the adoption of sons..." (Eph. 1:4-5). The word "before" translates the Greek word PRO meaning "to go before, to precede." Hence, the Father's act of choosing us in Christ preceded the fall of man and the establishment of the world system.

These blessed ones chosen by the Father are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), and they are the heirs of the Kingdom of God "prepared for them from the foundation of the world" (Mat. 25:34). Praise God, our sonship is assured, our victory over the world is certain, the outcome of God's plan is sure – therefore all creation is standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own! The world, as a result, shall pass away and "the kingdoms of THIS WORLD shall BECOME the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ!"

It was when the Christ hung upon the cross before the foundation of the world, in the precincts of Eden, that He became the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. He tasted death for every man and was made perfect through sufferings that He might lead many sons to glory. It was under the shadow of His cross, that we were found and were quickened by His Spirit. It is there He found us, and it is there that we found Him, the Man who is our hiding-place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest. It was there that streams of living water were poured out in the dry place; from that moment the Rock followed us, and out of it, living streams are flowing more abundantly. It is the cross in OUR LIVES which brings the release of these living streams to mankind, for the body of Christ is the channel of His life by the extension of His cross. While we praise God for the cross of Calvary, and while the soul of man will ever love to thank Him who gave His life for us, yet I believe the triumph of the Christ began at the cross in the heart of God before the foundation of the world and ends only when the race has received from God the Father, through the Christ, Head and body, the grace, power and glory of God that makes them sons of God like Himself.

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

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

The term “Lamb” is used of Christ no less than twenty-eight times in Revelation, and has two vital characteristics. Christ is the *sacrificial* Lamb and the *conquering* lamb. He is never presented this way except in the majestic scenes around the Throne. We see the Lamb marching to the ultimate throne of universal empire in complete triumph and as absolute victor. Confronting the power of the beast and the kings of the earth, and the hordes of hell, and the lewdness and deception of the harlot system, and the wars and battles and bloodshed that fill the soul with dread, is THE POWER OF THE LAMB, whose victory has been assured and whose glory is guaranteed. God has given the Lamb for a leader and a counselor; so He is both our leader – for we are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth – and He is our counselor and commander; a counselor to counsel us concerning the things of God and His Kingdom, the Kingdom that hath no end. So glory to God and to the Lamb! Glory be unto God and the Lamb forevermore! And the Lamb shall have the victory! Of this we are assured, though all the wild beasts and the wolves, and the dogs, and the goats and bulls of Bashan, the spotted leopards, and all the wild heifers of Ephraim, the horses of Pharaoh, and the wild Ishmaels, profane Esaus, envious Cains, which may gather in a brotherhood, and Gog and Magog, professor and profane, if all these rise against the Lamb and His followers, without or within, yet I say the Lamb shall have the victory over the beast, the whore, and the dragon, over the flesh, the world, and the devil, for Christ is Lord over them all, for He was slain before they were, and

will be reigning when they are gone, blessed be His wonderful name! He has conquered and shall conquer all who rise up against Him. For seventy years the ruthless, atheistic communist regime in Russia blasphemed the Lamb and jailed, tormented and killed all who proclaimed His name. They planned and purposed to eradicate His Kingdom from the earth. Today the communist government no longer exists in Russia and it is ironic that the Russian government, through its ministry of education, has invited a consortium of sixty American evangelical groups and Christian colleges to train educators in 120,000 Russian public schools on how to teach Christian and spiritual principles. In commenting on the invitation, Evgeniy Kurkin, the Russian deputy education minister told *U.S.A. Today* on November 10, 1992: "Seventy years ago, we closed God out of our country and it has caused so many problems in our society we cannot count them. We must put God back into our country and we must begin with our children. "AND THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME THEM!" This is the great and beautiful message of the book of Revelation, and this is why the Spirit witnesseth "Blessed (happy) is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

But the Lamb in the book of Revelation has another note. The word used for LAMB here is peculiar to this book. It is the diminutive form of the Greek word for lamb, and is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. It means a young lamb, or a lambkin, weak and small. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is THE LAMB of God, and joined to Him are the members of His body, His brethren, the younger sons of God, the lambkin company. To see this company as *the body of the Lamb* is not to magnify man, but to exalt Christ, for it is HIS LAMB LIFE formed in them and lived out through them, giving expression to the Lamb nature. We know that HE is the preeminent One, and that it is HIS LIFE which is given, and by that life we are conformed to HIS image, made partakers of HIS divine nature, becoming the revelation of HIMSELF in the earth. All the qualifications of The Lamb must now be found in this people who make up the body of The Lamb. As one has written: "THE LAMB beautifully took care of all the work on God's side towards man, and the lambkin will have a beautiful ministry from man's side, to bring things back to God. His kingdom shall come, His will shall be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. There are many paths through the sunshine and the shadows, but we learn to see His hand in it all, for He is preparing and fashioning those who shall become part of the lambkin, who are ONE IN THE LAMB, to be given for the salvation of the ends of the earth."

It is in keeping with this that in Revelation chapter fourteen, we find the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. Having been rewarded with "the glory that follows," He is now highly exalted. We are told that in eastern countries where, of course, this symbolic scene is set, when sheep and goats are left to roam where they will, the goats invariably climb to the tops of the hills, while the sheep ordinarily seek the low places, the valleys. So to John it must have seemed most unusual that a Lamb should be on Mount Zion. By this is brought to light a most important truth concerning Jesus, The Lamb of God. He did not attain to His high position on Mount Zion by means of self-exaltation, but because, sheep like, He had sought the low places." He humbled Himself, and because of this His heavenly Father exalted Him. It was because Jesus permitted Himself to be led as "a lamb to the slaughter" and did not open His mouth in self-defense or seek otherwise to justify Himself before His enemies that the Father, by resurrection and ascension, highly exalted Him. He had sought the "low places," and now we find the Lamb exalted to the Throne of the city of God! Our Lord does not sit enthroned in the heavens, as Ruler of the universe, because He was divine in His birth, and messianic in His office, but because He was a LAMB IN CHARACTER. It was because He "made Himself of no reputation." It was because, coming as a man, He "took the form of a servant." It was because, as a bond-slave, He "learned obedience." It was because, in obedience, He went all the way, even "unto the death of the cross."

“WHEREFORE, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:5-10).

Even now, as Christ sits enthroned at the right hand of the Father, He reigns in virtue of the fact that He is a Lamb. He reigns as a Lamb-King, because God is raising up lamb-kings in the earth, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit in the earth to establish in each member of the body of the Lamb in the earth the nature, and the character, as well as the authority of Him who sits on the Throne. “He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you” (Jn. 16:14). It is the work of the Holy Spirit not only to impart unto His people the POWER of God, but ALL that pertains to the exalted Lamb, His very nature, and character, and life, that He might be here in the earth, dwelling in His body, to be to you and me, yea, to be through you and me EVERYTHING THAT JESUS IS UPON THE THRONE. The “lambkin” as a figure of Christ is indeed complete and perfect; yet it is a type of Christ in a limited measure and at the same time in the greatest measure. How strange this sounds to our ears, how curious to our minds! As far as the Lord Himself is concerned, He is not limited at all, but as far as our experience of Him is concerned, there is such a limitation. When we come to the Lord and receive Him as our redemption, the Christ we receive is whole, complete, and perfect; but as far as our experience of Him is concerned, we experience Him in only a small measure, just as the little lamb of salvation. From the time we experienced Christ as the Lamb, we have always been progressing and advancing; we have continually made progress in our experience of Christ and received of Him more and more. This does not mean that Christ has become greater and greater. No, Christ is the same, He changes not! But as we grow in our appropriation of Him He becomes greater and greater TO US AND IN US. Day by day in our experience Christ is becoming greater and greater. At the stage of our experience in which the total triumph of the Lamb is achieved within, Christ is unlimited to us, He becomes ALL IN ALL. It is His almighty strength in the heavens revealed through the weakness of our humanity on earth — the TRIUMPHANT LAMBKIN! Hallelujah!

## **THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB**

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

The blood of Jesus Christ is of such vast importance to God the Father that He has decreed that there shall be (1) no remission, (2) no salvation, (3) no atonement, (4) no redemption, (5) no propitiation, (6) no cleansing, (7) no justification, (8) no peace, (9) no new covenant, (10) no sanctification, (11) no reconciliation, (12) no entrance into the Most Holy Place, (13) no sonship,

without the blood of Jesus Christ whose blood is called by Paul the BLOOD OF GOD (Acts 20:28; Heb. 10:19-20).

Mary Rosenthal, a Christian Jew, has related the following story. “My grandmother was a very religious Jewess. She was an orthodox Jew. So under Judaism, as an orthodox Jew, my grandmother would have a man, a Gentile, in our case a black man, who would come into our neighborhood every Friday evening after sunset. He would come into our neighborhood and he had his prescribed customers within that Jewish community. He had those customers because under the Law, they were not permitted to turn on the lights or turn off the lights after sunset on Friday, the beginning of the Sabbath. He would come into our home because my grandmother would begin cooking a chicken dinner before the Sabbath began Friday evening, but she couldn’t turn the stove off after the Sabbath began – that was breaking the Law. She could get it started in time, but she couldn’t turn it off. We had a coal furnace – you were not allowed to throw coal on the fire during the Sabbath – you would be breaking the Law. You were not allowed to remove the ashes from underneath – that was breaking the Law. So we had a *Shabat Goy*, a *Sabbath Gentile*, who would come into the neighborhood, and he would come into my grandmother’s home, and she would say, ‘Turn that light on, turn that one on, and shut that one off. Come back in an hour and a half, and the chicken will be done then,’ and he would return and turn the stove off at 8:30 at night. Then he would return a third time at 11:00 P.M. to fill up the furnace so the coal burner would burn all night. My grandmother would get up on Saturday morning and she wouldn’t get into a car because it broke the Sabbath. She wouldn’t carry money – it broke the Sabbath. She wouldn’t walk more than three-quarters of a mile – it broke the Sabbath. Let me tell you what my grandmother would do for Yom Kippur, the highest holy day, the Day of Atonement. I can remember as a youngster, she would take me by the hand on Yom Kippur, and she would go into a store in our community. In this particular store, at the season of the year, the only thing they sold was chicken – live chickens – chickens that would be in wooden, slotted crates, along the whole wall of that store from the floor to the ceiling. My grandmother, with me in tow, would go up and down, looking at all those chickens, for a half hour she was examining all those chickens. I often wondered why – I now realize she was looking for one without spot and without blemish. Then she would find one that looked healthy and wholesome and she would open the cage and grab that chicken; she would turn around to the counter and pay for the chicken. With the chicken in one hand and me in the other she would walk to the back of the store. We went into that little room where there was a man who was trained in the ritual slaying of animals. He would kill the chicken by slitting its neck, the prescribed way by the Law, turn it upside down, drain all the blood out according to the Law. Then he would take that chicken and swing it over our heads, and he would say a prayer – I remember seeing this bloody chicken going over my head, and he would say, ‘This is a *kaparah* – a *covering* or *atonement* for sin!’ There is a small remnant to this day, just a handful, perhaps one fiftieth of all Jews, who know that God said in the Old Testament that without the shedding of blood there is no *covering* for sin, no remission of sin. So she would take a chicken, have the chicken slain, and it was for a *covering* for sin – still seeking to be justified by the continual works of the Law.”

Never forget, precious friend of mine, that Jesus came as THE PRICE WHICH COVERS, the substance in the scale that replenishes all deficiency. He shed His blood – His divine life – pouring it out for us. Life and blood are synonymous. Spirit and blood are synonymous. Spirit, blood, and life are all different names for the same element. Jesus performed His mighty works by the shores of Galilee, but then He died, resurrected and returned in mighty SPIRIT POWER to be the MIRACLE WORKER WITHIN. Nothing less must become ours, than HIS LIFE – the divine life He lived in human flesh. “As I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me even he shall live by Me,” Jesus said. The truth is so simple – He has poured out His blood-life to us to

quicken us again to the glory of God that belongs to man. Our spirit is quickened by His Spirit and in union with Him we are brought to union with God. Christ gave Himself FOR US and TO US. Our spirit must be quickened by His Spirit. This is the power of His redeeming blood. That He might liberally pour His dear-bought treasures into benighted human storehouses, was the inspiration of Jesus' intense human sacrifice. Some hold not to this truth, choosing rather to believe that they are a self-sufficient god within themselves, needing no Saviour beyond the development of their own inherent divinity.

There is a deep longing and intense hunger in the hearts of vast numbers of the Lord's people in this significant hour. They are earnestly searching for *reality* but the church systems and so-called revival movements have failed to meet their need. But the profound hunger, the intense need in their life cries loudly for satisfaction, their soul seeks ardently and resolutely after truth, life and eternal substance. Their great need is not being met by the churches nor by the television evangelists, nor by the crusades, nor by all the good meetings with their tongues, prophecies, healings, manifestations, and preaching of faith and prosperity. So these dear folk begin to look to other sources. Many of these "other sources" are dangerously deceptive, especially to those who desire "more knowledge," "deeper truth," or "the latest revelation." My beloved, there is an invasion right into the camp of those whose hearts have been moved by the call to sonship of "humanistic – new age" philosophy that is deceiving many precious people today. It was prophesied by the apostle Peter that this enemy of the Lamb of God should appear right in the midst of the very elect. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord that bought them* and bring upon themselves swift destruction (separation from the flow of divine life)" (II Pet. 2:1). The key word is – "even denying the Lord that *bought* them." The denial is against the atonement, the ransom, the redeeming blood. They are offended at the Lord that bought them, though they may be devoted to the Lord that *taught* them. Ah, in very fact, they do not deny the Lord – they call Jesus Lord and esteem Him as the Son of God, the Christ, our Guiding Teacher, our Great Example, the Way-Shower, our Pattern. They speak effusively of His goodness, His love, meekness, unselfishness, understanding, compassion, mercy, power, and wisdom. They believe that His mission was to show us just how great is the potential of the true spiritual identity within every man, and the raising up of the Christ-consciousness within. They proclaim that Jesus became the Saviour by *blazing the trail and showing the way* of salvation to all who would follow in His steps. The only problem is that they are required to go in their own power, their own inward identity, their own godhood, their own inherent divinity, to follow Jesus into the fullness of the divine life. There is no reconciling, atoning, redeeming, cleansing, sanctifying, justifying, transforming power of His precious blood involved, no quickening of His life, no new birth, no washing of regeneration or renewing of the Holy Ghost. And yet, to the natural mind it all sounds so good – so very *right!* But we must truly allow the Holy Spirit of Truth to give wisdom and understanding that we may *discern* the difference between the precious and the vile. These satanic agents are described by the inspired apostle as those who appear to be teachers of the deep mysteries of God, yet they bring in damnable heresies, in all cunning craftiness and subtlety, consummating in the repudiation of the *redeeming blood* of Jesus Christ. It is not strange that there is resentment against the mystery of the blood which does not exist against any other thing in the vast panorama of Truth. It is not strange that the ministers of satan, appearing as the apostles of Christ and messengers of Light, should fortify their lies and hypocrisies by contending for almost every phase of revealed truth, including the bright hope of sonship; yet subtly omitting, or violently denying, the one and only point upon which the interests of God and Satan divide.

In the testimony of scripture the order is ever: "Unto HIM that loved US, and WASHED US from OUR SINS in HIS OWN BLOOD." And, "to as many as received HIM, to THEM gave HE power

to BECOME the sons of God.” Break these links and the chain is gone. Let us never forget this! Some trust so strongly in their own divinity, in the raising up of the Christ-consciousness within every man, that they need no Saviour beyond themselves, no sun or wind or rain from without to quicken the life within. The unwary are caught by it. All this time the blood of Christ is omitted or ignored. Not one word is said about it. The silence is ominous. Do let us understand truth clearly, for “there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even DENYING THE LORD THAT B-O-U-G-H-T THEM and bring upon themselves swift destruction. The destruction is the drying up of the spiritual life, the aborting of the spirit of sonship, and ultimate separation from the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. Do away with the blood of atonement, the blood of remission, the blood of salvation, the blood of propitiation, the blood of reconciliation, the blood of justification, the blood of cleansing, the blood that gives eternal life, the blood of the new covenant, the blood that speaketh better things than Abel’s, the blood by which entrance is made into the Most Holy – destroy, I say, this wonderful stream of the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot and every room within the towering temple of reality comes crashing down to earth! The love of God became a man, the love of God became human flesh, the love of God in Jesus Christ has flowed into our souls as the precious blood of Christ to wash away the veil of carnal consciousness and quicken us again to our true heritage in God. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed by such corruptible things, as silver and gold from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.” Hallelujah for the blood!

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

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

Because life is in the blood, and not in the flesh of God’s creatures, He permitted men to eat *flesh* but it must be *without blood*. God is very insistent, even in the New Testament, on this

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

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

Jesus came as the Head of an entirely new creation. In fact He Himself WAS A NEW CREATURE, different from any that had ever been. I want to make it very plain that Jesus was in no way derived from the First Adam, either by flesh or by blood. If He had even one ounce of the first Adam's blood coursing through his veins, then He Himself NEEDED A SAVIOUR. Hear now what Paul says of the Christ: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is THE LORD FROM HEAVEN" (I Cor. 15:45-47). Jesus was not fifty percent the first Adam and fifty percent the last Adam. He was one hundred percent the last Adam! He was not

fifty percent the first man and fifty percent the last man. He was not fifty percent the man of earth and fifty percent the Lord from heaven. The second man I-S (100%) THE LORD FROM HEAVEN. To be the second man and the last Adam He could in no way contain any part of the first Adam. To be the man from heaven He must not be a descendant of the man of the earth. He must be an entirely NEW KIND OF MAN, separate from every other creation of God, as was the first man Adam in the day when he was created. The first Adam was truly without father, without mother, and without descent – he was not derived from the life of any other man who had ever lived. So the last Adam! Though He was conceived IN the womb of Mary, He was not OF Mary. He was not formed from the union of the sperm of God with the ovum of Mary. His genes were not half from Mary and half from His heavenly Father. “That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called THE SON OF GOD,” declared the angel to Mary. Mary was merely a *surrogate mother*. That fact should settle for all time the morality of surrogate motherhood! Jesus was as truly man, as truly flesh, as was the first man, but He was also as truly a UNIQUE CREATION OF GOD as was the first man in Eden.

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

This great mystery of the blood has often been misunderstood. It has been supposed that the Old Testament sacrifices meant that God exacted bloodshed as a condition for the requital of man’s guilt. What a hideous affront it is to the God of our salvation to wickedly accuse Him of needing to give His own Son as a propitiation TO APPEASE HIS OWN WRATH, though this is the inexcusable lie we hear continually from the pulpit and over the air waves! God is portrayed by the preachers as so mad at sin and sinners, so violently angry and beside Himself that He is metaphorically foaming at the mouth with uncontrollable rage which can only be appeased by looking upon the bloody sweat and cruel, ugly death of His Son upon a Roman cross. All sermons and songs that picture God as a God of rage who must be “appeased” and “soothed” by blood are heathenish and should be piled on a bonfire and burned. The Old Testament sacrifices serve as a beautiful revelation of God’s love towards us, in His reconciliation. Whatever Israel brought to God was brought at HIS COMMAND and was an expression of their dependence upon Him. Sacrifice was not intended to make God gracious it was brought in recognition of a grace which He Himself had assured. Every sacrifice was offered from this point of view, and free from any thought of appeasing an angry and hostile God. The idea of man being able through the death of a victim, or through some act of self-immolation, to appease the anger of an offended deity or to change His mind toward the worshipper, has clung persistently to most pagan religions. How alien it was to the Israelitish conception of the relation between God and man is clear from the statement in Lev. 17:11, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I HAVE GIVEN IT TO YOU UPON THE ALTAR TO MAKE AN ATONEMENT FOR Y-O-U-R

S-O-U-L-S.” Ah, God gave the sacrifice, and not to change His attitude toward man, but to CHANGE SOMETHING ABOUT MAN! How could the blood of the sacrifice appease the wrath of God and make Him merciful toward man? It was the gracious, loving character of God that *gave the sacrifice!* “I have given it to you upon the altar.” How clear that the blood of the sacrifice was not God-ward, it did not avail to make God gracious, for HE AGAINST WHOM THE OFFENCE HAD BEEN COMMITTED HAS HIMSELF PROVIDED THE MEANS OF RECONCILIATION!

Never was holiness more vindicated, than at the cross, when Jesus “suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might *bring us to God*” (I Pet. 3:18). Never was love more lavishly outpoured than when “God SO LOVED the world that HE GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have the life of the ages” (Jn. 3:16). Notice, dear reader, it does not say that God was so *mad* at the world, or so *offended* by the world, or so *angry* with the world, or so *vengeful* toward the world, or so caught in a dilemma because of His justice – but GOD SO LOVED the world that HE GAVE. Hallelujah! We stand in awe before this fulfillment of Gen. 22:8, when by the Spirit Abraham prophesied to Isaac, “GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF a lamb for a burnt offering.” As one has pointed out: “And that is just what He did, He provided HIMSELF! Stripping Himself of His glory, He who was in the form of God, took upon Himself the form of man, and offered that form in that great sacrifice, yea, Poured out the life contained in that form, which life was freely given to reconcile all things back into Himself. Never was grace more majestic in its operation, than when ‘He made Him to be sin (Greek, literally, A SIN-OFFERING) for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him’ (II Cor. 5:21).” How inspired the words of John the Baptist when he declared of Jesus, “Behold the LAMB OF GOD, which taketh away the sins of the world” (Jn. 1:29). Ah, this Lamb was no sacrifice to appease – it was the perfect and purposeful embodiment of God’s grace and mercy and love and life to reconcile a hostile world unto Himself!

Appeasement is the basis of the offerings and sacrifices in all pagan religions. J. A. Dowie once wrote: “The religions of the world are worldly, are sensual, and are devilish for the most part. No one will doubt that is true in China. No one will doubt it, notwithstanding the clever philosophies and moral axioms of the Chinese Analects, or the works of Mencius or Confucius or the commentators upon these. No one will doubt that the worship of the Chinese is essentially a Devil Worship. I remember once going into a very fine Chinese joss-house (temple), in Australia, where offerings of the costliest kind hung upon the walls, where many interesting things were to be found. I was talking with the chief priest, and said to him: ‘Tell me how you worship.’ And he told me, ‘Why,’ I said, after I had heard attentively, ‘My dear fellow, it seems to me that you are worshipping bad divinities.’ ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘Of course we do. The good ones we do not need to worship. They will do us no harm. To protect ourselves we have to get right with the bad ones, so we make it right with the devils.’ I thought to myself that there were some other people like that in America and Europe, who are not Chinese.” – end quote.

Can we not see by this that the Christians have copied the heathen and have made a fiendish devil of their God, and have then used the sacrifice of Jesus to “appease” this God who is more like a malicious devil than a loving and gracious Creator and Redeemer? Most Christians know, by hearing at least, that “God is Love,” but the sense of condemnation from His Presence beclouds the vision of the heart, so that The Face which He has revealed in Christ Jesus cannot be seen. Often that is because of the continual preaching which describes God as a destroyer of Him as an avenger of every little thing that they did wrong. Parents have said, “Now don’t you do that because GOD will punish you! He will punish you!” And even much stronger things are told to little children. It is one thing to describe God as a loving Father, and all the relations of

the little child to a LOVING Father who corrects in order to bless. It is quite another thing to darken the heart of a little child with threats of the certain vengeance of a Being who is a constant terror over their life. It is a false and terrible thing to leave upon the heart of a little child, as their first impression of God, that He is always waiting, lurking around, to punish them.

Think of it! That little child whose whole being is susceptible to LOVE; who is always looking for and wanting LOVE; who is capable of the purest and fullest simplicity of response to LOVE – think of it! Marked and stamped with the impression that “God” is one to be constantly scared of. As though He is waiting everywhere with a punishing whip of large dimensions! Such impressions remain through a whole lifetime as an actual foundation of belief and action. That Wonderful Father! That Gracious Redeemer! That most Loving of all Beings! Oh, how I LOVE Him! He turned my heart back again and restored me into His life. God, the Father, the Most High, sent Jesus – the very fullness of His own heart – sent Him into the world to die on Calvary’s cross. But the real grasp of what that love and mercy actually IS, may often be nearly destroyed by the impression of WRATH deeply ingrained in the mind. If our basic understanding of “God” is that He is a Destroyer, that impression can discolor and influence our thought and our prayer life and our faith so that we can with great difficulty SEE HIM AS HE IS. How wonderfully He changes that when we come to Him repenting and believing in His loving Word. We cry out with an almost inexpressible joy that we LOVE Him. It is love, HIS LOVE, which does it! He flows in to our lives in WHAT HE IS, and we no longer think of Him as a great force out there somewhere or a great destroyer, but as the LIFE GIVER.

The real meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices in time became lost, but originally they were not based on the idea that God was exacting the penalty of death from an innocent victim as a means of satisfying His vengeance against sin and sinners. The blood of the victim has an altogether different meaning: it symbolized not death, but life. Dr. Westcott in his note on I Jn. 1:7 calls attention to the passage I have already referred to in Leviticus which throws great light on the Israelite sacrifices. “The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement *by reason of the life.*” The blood was shed with the object of detaching and releasing the life, setting it free, so to speak, from the gross material conditions of the body, and in this state presenting it as an offering to God. The idea was not primarily that of exacting a death-penalty from an innocent victim. Incidentally the creature had to die, but only in order that its life might be offered to God as a symbol of the life God has provided for all men as an *atonement*, a *covering*, a *remedy* for sin. The outward and visible sign was the blood, but the inward and spiritual grace is the life which it symbolized, the life God gives above and beyond our human capacity, to give freedom from guilt and victory over sin. This life is the blood of God’s Lamb, Jesus the Christ. But the blood of the Lamb is something more than the red liquid that ran through the veins and arteries of Jesus’ physical body. That red liquid is not the property of our salvation, and there is no Biblical basis for attributing any unusual properties to Christ’s body fluids. The term “blood of Christ” is far more significant than any magical or mystical power ascribed by religion to the natural blood of Jesus. There is an old Roman Catholic dogma which says that Christ carried His blood with Him to heaven in a bowl. Without even knowing its source, the preachers and churches today cling to that ludicrous idea from the Dark Ages and perpetuate a form of mysticism around the physical blood of our Lord. But it was not the plasma with its corpuscles, platelets, and nourishment which provided redemption for a fallen race, but the DIVINE LIFE of God in Christ! It was His heavenly blood, His celestial and divine life which was poured out to transform men and raise them up into the Kingdom of God.

Beloved sons and daughters of God! The blood of Jesus! The blood of the Lamb! Oh, think what it means! God gave it for your redemption from Adam’s race and your transformation into the

image of God. God accepted it when the firstborn of the new creation entered heaven and presented it on your behalf. God points you to it and asks you to believe in its omnipotent energy, in its everlasting sufficiency. Ah, this heavenly Man was injected into a whole world full of men descended from the earth-man to impart something we had lacked from the day Adam was driven from Eden's portals. That something was LIFE, LIVING BLOOD, for He said He came to give life to the world. He could impart a life to the world that would change it completely.

When Adam transgressed, the life of God, which had been breathed into his nostrils, departed from him and all that was left was a residue, that mortal something which flowed as blood in the veins of his body. This blood contains nothing of the life of God and in its composition and nature is similar to the blood of the animal kingdom, for when the glorious power of divine life departed from Adam, he entered into the kingdom of death. Adam was made a *living soul*. From the Greek the statement reads, "The first man Adam was made a *zoe psuche* (living soul)." ZOE is the word which throughout the whole of the New Testament is used of the life of God, divine life, eternal life. PSUCHE, on the other hand, is used of the natural life of animals and men. This life, ZOE, is the life Jesus promised to give to man when He said, "I give unto them eternal life (*zoe*), and they shall never perish," and this, beloved, is the LIFE THAT DEPARTED FROM ADAM when he transgressed, leaving him ashamed, fearful and dead. The life is in the blood, but our blood, being devoid of eternal life (*zoe*), is in reality dead blood capable of sustaining only physical, animal life (*psuche*), and that only poorly until man returns to the dust from whence he came. It is not without significance that, when the bodies of men are embalmed, the first act is to remove the corruptible blood that the dead body may be better preserved. To redeem this dead sinner, life must be again imparted. The only remedy for death is LIFE. This life is in the blood, and so blood must be furnished which is sinless and incorruptible. Now none of Adam's race could do this, for "in Adam all die." There was only one, yes, ONLY ONE, who could furnish that blood – the virgin-born Son of God, the Man from heaven, with a human body, but sinless supernatural blood, inseminated by the Holy Ghost.

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

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

## THE CLEANSING OF THE BLOOD

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

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

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

Concerning the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb, no greater statement of truth was ever made than that given by the beloved John on the rocky steeps of Patmos: "Unto Him that loved us, and *washed* us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5). Some modern translations substitute the word "freed" for "washed", but a look at the Greek word shows that they are in error. The word is LOUO meaning "to BATHE THE WHOLE PERSON *in the same way clothes are laundered in water.*" But praise be to God! this is not an outward washing but an INWARD CLEANSING. One aspect of the power of the blood of Jesus lies in its marvelous ability to ABSORB all that is in the blood or the life of the Adamic man. The apostle Peter by inspiration penned these words of deep and wonderful truth: "Who His own self BARE OUR SINS in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should LIVE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS" (I Pet. 2:24). This one who hung upon the cross possessed *a life* or *a blood* that would course its

way through the veins of our inner nature and remove all our sins, infirmities and death. It is very wonderful and thrilling to many Christians to stand up and testify that they have been washed in the blood of Jesus. But if you would ask them to explain *how* they were washed in the blood, about the only answer many could give is that it was by faith. The Christian who has testified concerning being washed in the blood of Jesus has been unable to tell how because he has not understood the significance of one word that he was using. That word is WASHED. We have somehow in the past unconsciously given to that word “washed”, as used in connection with the blood of Jesus, some special meaning. It must be that we have not been able to associate such a common and lowly procedure as washing clothes with the work done by the blood of the Lamb. And that is just where we have missed the whole point!

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

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

## THE LIGHT OF LIFE

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

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

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

The characteristics of the meaning of "white," namely, "dazzling, illuminated, and shining as the sun," were literally manifested in the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount. We are told in Mat. 17:2 that "He was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light." In the ninth chapter of Mark, we are told that "His garments became glistening," which, in the Greek, means: "To lighten forth, flash forth like

lightening.” Within that form that was marred more than the sons of men, dwelt glory ineffable. As He prayed upon the Mount of Transfiguration, He opened a little way the robe of humanity with which He had covered Himself when He came down to earth, and His majesty and glory burst forth! None can overlook the precious significance here, when the scripture is compared with the clause that we are now considering in the Song of Solomon. The Shulamite declares that her Beloved is “white”, or that He is dazzling, white as the light, shining as though illuminated by a mighty sun.

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

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

## OVERCOMING BY THE BLOOD

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

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

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

I have had the experience of becoming so involved with the pressures of everyday living until the vital presence of God was crowded out of my life. When we spend all our time working and visiting and fellowshiping in carnal things, reading the newspaper, watching television, tinkering with hobbies, and multiplied other natural activities the Spirit is crowded out of our lives, the flow of His life-blood is hindered. How filled our lives are with EARTHLY THINGS! Constantly going, going, going, and doing, doing, doing. Occasionally we spend a few minutes in prayer, or in the Word, or in blessed fellowship with another saint, or time and effort wasted in some dead meeting, and then wonder *why* there is no power in our lives and we are not overcomers! There is a LAW OF LIFE that must be at work in us. But you don't really need to be concerned about

the *law* of life, you just need the LIFE! The law will work naturally. When the life is there the law will work. When the law is working the power of darkness and death is annulled, the negative realm is neutralized. Therefore, seek LIFE! If the glorious presence of God, the light of life, can keep me in the spiritual state of overcoming victory for ten minutes...or for two hours...or for three days...then the same substance of HIS LIFE WITHIN can *keep* me in that condition of victory and transformation for as long as the flow of His life is maintained – this is the absolute unfailing *key* to overcoming! Death always sets in in any body member where the flow of blood is prevented. People have lost hands and arms and feet and legs when for some reason the blood circulation was cut off. Maintain the *flow* of the precious blood of Christ and you will have little trouble with the flesh.

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

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

# *Chapter 38*

## ***RETURN TO PARADISE***

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE ALSO IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN” (Gen. 2:8-9).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD” (Rev. 2:7).

As we approach the conclusion of this series of articles in which the blessed Spirit of God has graciously opened a little way the veil, revealing before our wondering eyes some of the glorious mysteries of the Garden of Eden, my deep desire is that men may see the whole plan of God as celestial harmony, hymning its beautiful song from the heaven-kissed hills of Eden to the brilliant glory of the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. The book of Genesis is a most remarkable book, and I think all who comprehend even a minute portion of its mystical truths will agree when I say that all the other books of the Bible are messages from God progressively enlarging on the revelations from this wonderful book. The whole Bible shows the progression of the plan of God from Alpha to Omega, from beginning to end, from Eden to Eden, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, from man in the image of God in the beginning to “God all-in-all” in the end.

### **LOOKING UNTO JESUS**

In the state of New Mexico more than a hundred years ago a cowboy became curious concerning a certain gaping hole in the earth, out of which millions of bats emerged every evening at dusk. He secured equipment and supplies but tried in vain to persuade certain friends to accompany him and help on a proposed exploration venture into the inky blackness below. At last a Mexican boy was found who had sufficient courage to go with him. That venture resulted in the discovery of the wonders of the now-famous Carlsbad Caverns.

The extent of these caverns with their innumerable passages, and rooms, and blind alleys, and grottos, is not known. It is known, however, that they are of considerable extent, and that there are different levels or floors, some as deep as 1,100 feet below the surface have been explored, and deeper ones exist. According to the latest information available to this writer some thirty-five miles of passageways have been explored, of which only three miles are open to visitors. Although the known entrance to these caverns is Bat Cave, to the best of my knowledge, the real entrance and exit are not known. The existence of a main entrance and exit is certain, however, from the fact that there is a constant flow of fresh air which remains at the same temperature the year round. Through the years it has been thought that the entrance may be in the mountains of New Mexico and the exit in the state of Texas. Some day that entrance and exit will be known. And some day it may be possible for tourists and vacationers to travel the entire length and extent of those caverns. But, if ever that becomes a possibility, those who enter will emerge safely only because of their following a marked-out pathway. Anyone who should stray from the beaten path would very soon be hopelessly lost.

Following the path of man from his expulsion from Eden's fragrant Garden into the incomprehensible darkness of sin, sorrow and death, and onward until that final day when every man is presented faultless before the throne of His glory, is comparable to entering a cave which has but one entrance and one exit. Only ONE! Between these two points there are innumerable passages and rooms and blind alleys with an entrance but no exit. Someone had to go before and explore to find a safe passageway. And only those who follow this plain path of the explorer can ever again see the light of day. All who deviate from this course become hopelessly lost.

"Let us make man in our image and after our likeness," was the proclamation of the Lord, and having so proclaimed His intention, the Father set in motion a plan which included the lowering of man into this dark depth of sorrow and travail, for his learning, testing and proving. Thousands of years would pass before the first Son of man, the first begotten Son of God, would emerge from the inky darkness and be presented perfected and faultless as the Captain of our salvation and the redeemer of us all. Then, after perfecting the first Son, other thousands of years would roll by while "He who hath begun a good work in US" is performing it right up until the day of Christ. Ah, One has entered into this dark and treacherous realm of sin and death in which all mankind gropes, and has discovered the WAY OUT! He marked out before us the one safe passageway, the plain path of faith and obedience, and all those faithful ones who FOLLOW HIM will emerge at the one and only exit to stand again in the light of God's eternal day, bright and blessed.

I think this understanding will give much greater meaning to the apostle's inspired admonition in Heb. 12:1-2: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and *let us run* with patience the race that is set before us, *looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." As Andrew Murray has written, LET US RUN – there we have the intense exertion, claiming all the emotion, will, and action of our beings. LOOKING UNTO JESUS – there we have the inner life of the spirit, a heart always fixed on Jesus in faith and worship, pursuing the Forerunner, who has entered within the veil for us, leaving behind His track and footsteps for us to walk in. This is the new and living way which leads to life and to God. Looking unto Jesus – the author and finisher of our faith. He leads in the way of faith, He walked in it Himself, He opened it for us, He draws and helps us in it. In Hebrews chapter eleven the roster of Old Testament saints, from righteous Abel onward to king David, gives us thrilling examples of faith, but Jesus is the Source and Leader and the Perfector of OUR FAITH, the faith that through death enters into resurrection life and the Holiest of All, that better and more perfect thing which God had opened up for us and for all mankind.

Yes, let us run, looking unto Jesus! Looking not to ourselves or our weaknesses, but to Him who strengtheneth us. Not to ourselves or to our faith, whether in its weakness or its strength, but to Him whose presence is the life of our faith. Not to the world or its temptations, but to Him who hath said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Not to Satan or his threats, but to Him who hath brought him to naught. Not to men, their fear or their favor, but to Jesus, the God-man, Immanuel, God with us, our Brother and King. Looking to Jesus and Jesus alone! Looking to Him always and in all. In trial and trouble, as in joy and prosperity; in solitude and repose, as in company and business; in praise and worship, as in the mundane activities of daily life; – always, only, looking to Jesus. Looking to Him, to see what He is, to hear what He speaks, to do what He says, to follow where He leads, to trust for all He waits to impart. Looking to Him to be changed into His likeness from glory to glory. Let us run the race with patience, LOOKING UNTO JESUS!

Do you know, dear friend, why the masses of Christians today have little or no revelation of the purpose of God, no hope of sonship, no going on to perfection, no putting on of the mind of Christ, and no conformation to His glorious image? It is because at every turn they have ceased to LOOK UNTO JESUS, having left the road He has marked out to wander in Stygian blackness. Here, there, and everywhere, one finds in tracts, books, magazines, on the radio and television, and from behind pulpits across the land some poor deluded traveler who is proclaiming his particular alley – his theory, his doctrine, his gift, his ministry, his sect, his baptism, his form, his tradition, his methods, or feeble little spiritual experience – to be the only passageway to a new and better day. But in all these we find no true dawn. Instead of bright sunlight and clear skies, all we find here is some poor soul groping hopelessly by the pathetic light of a flickering match which he himself holds.

I present to you, beloved brother, sister, a RISEN SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS in all His beauty, majesty, and incorruptibility, who bids us FOLLOW HIM to enter the glories of His new day of life and light and glory! There is but ONE TRUE WAY. ALL OTHERS ARE FALSE, AND CAN BUT LEAD TO SHAME AND FAILURE AND DISGRACE, in spite of the zeal of the preachers and people who recommend such a course. Looking unto JESUS! This then is God's plan of the ages – first to perfect the Prince Redeemer, the first begotten Son, the apostle and priest of our confession, and the head of the body of Christ. Having completed this, He next must bring to perfection the sons of God who are the completeness and fullness of the body of Christ and, when their perfection is complete, then the Bride must make herself ready, and she, too, having come to the fullness of Christ, shall open her twelve gates that the nations may bring their glory and honor into her. Then it will be universally seen that God is in Christ, RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, not imputing their trespasses unto them, bringing every son of the first Adam into the image of the last Adam, which is the image of God.

## **RETURN TO PARADISE**

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7). Paradise! When people think of Paradise, they imagine a better world with cool breezes, white sandy beaches, green grass, blue sky, tall coconut trees, and a life of ease and pleasure in such an idyllic environment. Many of us dream of such a place because our lives are often filled with drudgery, problems, and trials. Our English word “paradise” comes to us from ancient Persian by way of the Greek language. Paradise is the transliteration of the koine Greek word PARADEISOS which, in turn transliterates the Old Persian term PARIDAEZA. The PARIDAEZA of the Avesta denoted an enclosed park, beautifully landscaped with floral and fruit trees planted along a spring-fed stream, belonging to the king and his nobles. It is so described to quite some extent in Xenophon who tells of the idyllic beauty of the orchards of the king's forests, grazed by sheep, and guarded at the entrance by two soldiers whose task it was to see that intruders and spoilers were kept out. Only those who were friends of the Monarch were given the pleasant privilege of passing peacefully through its gates to enjoy the sweet waters of the stream and the delicious fruit of the trees. In fact, the Old Persian word PARIDAEZA gained such international popularity that it became a loan word in Aramaic and Hebrew as well as Greek.

It is astounding how the word *paradise* has been perverted through the fanciful teaching of men swayed by tradition and their sentiments rather than revelation. Seldom is a funeral sermon preached that the deceased is not put in Paradise! The Hebrew word for “paradise” is GAN, the word used in Genesis for the Garden of Eden. In the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint Version) the word PARADEISOS is used and Gen. 2:8 reads, “The Lord God planted a PARADISE eastward in Eden.” This Paradise, as we have stated repeatedly in these articles, is more than

merely a piece of real estate somewhere over in Mesopotamia. The Paradise of God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is the state of being man was in when first he was brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed in splendor here upon earth. It is man living in the presence of God, man with the incorruptible life of God accessible to him, man as master and lord over all things, man living above sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death! It is in THIS PARADISE that the overcomer shall eat of the tree of life! In that lovely Eden the thief came to steal, to kill and to destroy. He stole their wisdom, their dominion, their life and their glory until the image of the heavenly was obliterated from them and only the image of the earthly remained, flooding them with sin, sorrow, limitation, pain, sickness and death. The waster brought them to desolation and all creation with them was reduced to sweat and tears. They would ever be at war within and without and return at last to the dust from whence they came. Though Paradise was lost in Adam, the blessed assurance abounds that Jesus, the last Adam, came to regain all that was lost in the first.

A most wonderful and significant event, completely passed over by the vast majority of christians, occurred at the time of the crucifixion of our Lord. In the purposes of God extending from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, the time came when all three of the characters (God, Adam, the serpent involved in the ancient drama in Eden MUST meet again – this time AT THE CROSS! You will understand a great truth when you see how it is that Christ, Adam, and the serpent ALL MET AT THE CROSS. Let me unfold for you this deep and blessed mystery which transpired on the hill called Calvary. Yes, Christ, the manifestation of God in flesh, the consciousness of God in our spirit, was present there at Calvary. But Adam was also there in flesh, old Adam, the self-consciousness of man in the soul – he was not there in the flesh of Jesus (the last Adam), but represented in the flesh of one of the thieves crucified WITH HIM. Furthermore, the serpent was there, that ancient serpent, the power of the carnal mind, the law of sin and death in our members – this serpent was manifested in the flesh of the other thief crucified WITH CHRIST. Three and a half years prior to this event Jesus had encountered the serpent in the wilderness of Judea, the temptation came in these subtle words, “I-F THOU BE THE SON OF GOD, command that these stones be made bread” (Mat. 4:3). And now, on mount Calvary, while drinking in obedience to the Father the last bitter dregs from the cup of suffering and death, the satanic voice is heard once more taunting Him through the lips of this jeering malefactor: “I-F THOU BE THE CHRIST, save Thyself and us!” (Lk. 23:39).

Do you imagine, my friend, that it was an accidental and inconsequential incident that Jesus was crucified between TWO THIEVES? No way! The truth of God is multi-faceted and the scriptures abound with many and varied representations of the redemptive plans, purposes, and processes of God. There are those unique passages which point to all that has been wrought and made blessed reality IN CHRIST. The prepositional phrase “in Christ”, appearing some thirty-five times in the New Testament, is filled with spiritual dynamite! Vital necessity, this reality of being IN CHRIST. This has much depth and preciousness in it when we remember that Christ is made up of many members, and that they ,are joined together as one, ONE MANY-MEMBERED CHRIST. There is a realm of fullness to come into, and it is IN CHRIST, until it is no longer “Christ *and* me” but just – CHRIST. God has chosen us IN HIM, and we are made alive IN HIM. We are new creatures IN HIM and are to walk IN HIM as we have received Him, rooted and builded up IN HIM and established in our faith. We become the righteousness of God IN HIM, we are established IN HIM, and can do all things IN HIM that strengthens us. God always leads us to triumph IN HIM, making our lives a sweet savor of Christ. IN HIM we have every spiritual blessing in heavenly places; as we abide IN HIM we are made complete IN HIM who is the head of all principality and power.

We should direct our thoughts to yet another consideration. Wonderful as is this truth of our identification IN CHRIST, let all who read these lines know and thoroughly understand that there is another and blessed aspect of truth to be embraced in the precious words "WITH CHRIST". Now I believe that I am quite correct in this statement--I am certain that Paul never said that he was crucified IN CHRIST. He did say that he was crucified WITH CHRIST. Paul gave us a remarkable clue to this great mystery when he explained, "I am crucified WITH CHRIST" (Gal. 2:20), and again "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified WITH HIM, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom.6:6). With these words in mind it should not be difficult to see that Paul never makes the statement or the inference that Christ DIED IN HIS STEAD. But Paul made it the sharing of a common death by saying that he was crucified W-I-T-H CHRIST. This may seem to be an insignificant and unimportant point, but it makes a whole universe of difference whether we were crucified IN CHRIST or WITH CHRIST. Every word of inspiration is meaningful and full of depth. Truly Christ died FOR US, not in our stead, precluding our dying, but on our behalf, thus enabling us to truly die and rise again WITH HIM.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). What is this that Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ"? What does the apostle really mean? In what sane and solid sense does he use these hitherto un-heard-of words? Saul of Tarsus, we have his own word for it, had never seen Christ in the flesh, nor His cross either. He had not been in Gethsemane with Christ like Peter, nor on Calvary with Him like John. The two thieves might have said, "We were crucified with Christ," but how could Saul of Tarsus say it? For he was still at home in his own country; he was only as yet an aspirant to Gamaliel's school when Christ was crucified; and the crucifixion of Christ was long past before Saul had set a foot in the city of the crucifixion. In what sense then can he say, and say it so often and so boldly, "I am crucified with Christ"?

Nearly half a century ago Lloyd C. Douglas wrote a best selling religious novel called THE ROBE. Paul Rees, in reviewing the book, points out that its readers will remember that Marcellus Gallio was the Roman tribune who was supposed to have been the officer in charge of the actual crucifixion of Jesus. When Marcellus returned to his quarters after the crucifixion, he made a confession to his Greek slave Demetrius. He confessed that he felt dirty and ashamed. When Demetrius tried to console him by reminding him that he was only obeying orders given him by Pilate, Marcellus asked, "Were you out there? ... Were you there when He called on His God to forgive us?" And the rest of the story is concerned with the strangely persistent way in which this Roman noble was haunted by his sense of guilt for having crucified the Lord. He, who was supposed to be upholding the law by executing a guilty man, was somehow condemned by that man's innocence and made to feel guilty himself. "WERE YOU OUT THERE," he asked. It is a fair question that Marcellus put to Demetrius. And the answer is "Yes." WE WERE ALL OUT THERE! Whether Roman or Greek, whether Israelite or Gentile, we WERE there when they crucified our lord.

Yes, the Christ was crucified "for us" – on our behalf – but Paul goes deeper into the mystery that is Christ and says that if we want to understand the deep meaning of the cross, we shall have to see, not just Christ dying for us, but also our identification with Him, we will have to see ourselves on that cross dying with Jesus. You see, IF JESUS MERELY DIED INSTEAD OF US, then Jesus will merely rise instead of us. Selah. Pause and think about that ! The scripture declares that we are crucified with Christ so that we may rise with Christ. If there is no participation in the cross, there can be no participation in the resurrection. George Hawtin has given beautiful expression to this precious truth in his article, THE CHRIST LIFE. He writes: "Every man and every woman will have to face the cross. If there be no cross, neither will there be a crown. We will have to face it in our own lives and, if I am not mistaken, we will have to

face it every day we live. 'For to me to live is Christ, and to DIE is gain' (Phil. 1:21). Death to ourselves will be the greatest death we ever die. This death will never be accomplished by our vain struggling and trying, but it will be accomplished in that blessed hour when the Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts the truth that He revealed to Paul: 'I AM CRUCIFIED with Christ.' The world itself cannot contain the full truth of this precious statement, 'I am crucified with Christ.' We will never GET crucified nor will we ever have faith to crucify ourselves. We will never go to an altar and accomplish this act by faith. The lesson we must learn, my earnestly seeking friend, is simply this: Before ever there was a world or a sinner in it, God Himself by His almighty power placed ALL MEN IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST and then, having done so, He crucified Him and, when He crucified HIM, He also crucified ME, because I was in Him. 'When HE crucified His Son, He crucified YOU, because He had placed you in Him. All this took place before the foundation of the world. All men died IN ADAM and, because all men died in Adam, ALL MEN live IN CHRIST, because God has placed all men in Him. 'For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive' (I Cor. 15:22). 'But,' you ask, 'why is it then that all men are not saved?' The truth is that all men are saved, but all men have not yet believed, because God has not yet opened their eyes. All christians are crucified with Him, but few, oh so few, have ever been told that crucifixion is an accomplished reality – accomplished by God Himself and left for us to accept and believe. Once the believer grasps this truth and seizes upon it by faith, then he understands that all of the old carnal realm with all its terrifying specters was a paper tiger, an alarming, petrifying panic, a phantom, a dead lion, no more real than a nightmare. My brother, my sister, in that good and glorious moment when you see God by His almighty power placing ALL MEN IN CHRIST, yea, even before the world began, and, having done so, He sent Him to the cross to be crucified, then you will know that, when Christ was crucified, YOU were crucified, for you were in Him. Then you will join with Paul and every participant of the revelation, saying, 'I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.' Then you will be able for the first time in your life to RECKON YOURSELF DEAD UNTO SIN, BUT ALIVE UNTO GOD" – end quote.

Now actually, Paul nor any of us, nor anyone else from Paul all the way down to us, was actually, physically, bodily crucified with Christ. I refer of course to that particular time of the crucifixion of Jesus. Jesus the Christ was there at the crucifixion as the embodiment and manifestation of THE LIFE OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT, the pure, sinless, separate, divine, heavenly One pouring out His divine life for the world. So also did Adam, man in his self-consciousness in the soul, have a representative or a manifestation of himself there at the crucifixion. One man, a thief, was there as the representative of the living soul, of all humanity, or the representative of the first Adam, if you please. And the remaining thief, the jeering malefactor, was the representative of the serpent and his kingdom, the spirit of the carnal mind, the power of sin and death in our members. And ALL THREE DIED ON THE CROSS – TOGETHER! They all died the same natural death and not one of them was saved from it. The two thieves, above all who have ever lived, were truly and uniquely CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

Turn aside with me for a few moments and meditate upon these THREE CROSSES on Golgotha's hill. We will find a very wide field of truth opened before us in these THREE CROSSES. There were THREE MEN met together there by the counsel of God that fateful day. Three, in the numerology of scripture, stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. E.W. Bullinger, in his book, NUMBER IN SCRIPTURE, points out that "All things that are specially COMPLETE are stamped with this number three. God's attributes are THREE: omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. There are three great divisions completing time – PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE. Three persons, in grammar, express and include all relationships of mankind. Thought, word, and deed, complete the sum of human capability. The simplest proposition requires three things to complete it; viz., the SUBJECT, the PREDICATE, and the COPULA. Three kingdoms embrace our ideas of matter--MINERAL, VEGETABLE, and

ANIMAL” To which I would add--man himself is a TRIPARTITE being composed of SPIRIT, SOUL, and BODY. Those three parts comprise the whole man. The three crosses on that hill far away were there by neither accident nor coincidence. There is deep mystery and divine meaning in the scene!

It is interesting to note that two of the three men there that day were THIEVES. I must emphasize that any man, message, action, or entity that brings to mankind any thing less than LIFE is a THIEF and a ROBBER! Man is spirit, soul, and body, and is it not a self-evident truth that TWO OF THESE THREE have no life of themselves and can transmit naught but corruption and death. Truly did Jesus say, “It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth (giveth life); the FLESH (soul and body) profiteth nothing” (Jn. 6:63). The apostle Paul adds his testimony in these words, “For to be carnally (fleshly) minded IS DEATH; but to be spiritually minded IS LIFE and peace. And if Christ be in you the BODY IS DEAD because of sin; but the SPIRIT IS LIFE because of righteousness. If ye live after the FLESH, ye shall DIE; but if ye through the SPIRIT do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the BODY, ye shall LIVE” (Rom. 8:6, 10, 13). Should one seek ever so earnestly for life and immortality in either soul or body, all such seeking will remain unfulfilled, for neither possesses one iota of divine life. They both, in very fact, DEPRIVE mankind of that most precious gift of all--LIFE! There is no life in the natural mind nor in the physical body, both fall dreadfully short, and should we trust in the flesh, exercise the flesh, or walk after the flesh IT WILL ROB US of the reality of the SPIRIT WHICH IS LIFE. The SPIRIT (Christ) alone possesses life, eternal life, incorruptible life, abundant life! The man or woman who lives out of any dimension other than SPIRIT will sooner or later discover to his or her chagrin that soul and body are indeed TWO THIEVES! And it was these three – spirit, soul, and body – the whole man in the totality of his reality that was crucified upon three crosses in that long ago!

You remember that the thieves began to rail on Jesus, but one of them said, “Lord, help me!” The rulers, and the soldiers, and the people standing there derided and mocked Him, but this one malefactor asked that Jesus have mercy upon him. How foolish it seems to the natural mind for this one to ask Jesus to help him or have mercy upon him, for here are two men, both dying upon a cross, yet one requests help of another who is in no better position to help him than he is himself. Such a thing appears utterly ridiculous and because it was so absurd in the natural there MUST BE A MYSTERY HIDDEN IN THESE THINGS. All three of these died at approximately the same time, on the same day. When the soldiers came to Jesus, He was already dead and they broke the legs of the two thieves so that by shock, as we know it today, their deaths might be hastened. All were dead by sundown. So the manifestation of God in the flesh (spirit) died. The manifestation of humanity (Adam) in the flesh also died. And the manifestation of the serpent (sin, carnal mind) died. They all entered the realm of death.

Listen now with infinite care as the drama of Calvary is enacted in that solemn hour. The thief who represents the living soul, man’s self-consciousness, or Adam, turns to the thief representing the serpent, the carnal mind, the law of sin and death in us, and says, “Dost thou not fear God, seeing that thou thyself art under the same sentence of condemnation and suffering the same penalty? And we indeed suffer it justly, receiving the due reward of our actions; but this Man hath done nothing out of the way – nothing strange, or perverse or unreasonable” (Lk. 23:40-41). He then turns to Jesus, crying out, “Lord! REMEMBER ME when you COME INTO YOUR KINGDOM!” (Lk.23-42).

With these poignant words he confessed a wonderful faith in the almighty power of Christ. It has no parallel in the Bible. There hangs the cursed malefactor with Jesus of Nazareth, and he dares speak and say, “I am dying here under the just curse of my sins, but I believe Thou canst take me into Thy heart and remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.” The word

“remember” means to recollect and both of these words can be broken down into two words: remember and re-collect. The prefix “re” before them means to REPEAT OR TO DO SOMETHING AGAIN. So the malefactor was asking that when Jesus came into His Kingdom, He would remember him, or make him a member again. He was saying, “RE-COLLECT or collect me again into that Kingdom and give back to me my original place.” This is re-restoration, re-newing, re-demption, re-conciliation, re-freshing, and re-surrection he was asking for! This was man, Adam, the living soul seeking the restoration of life, fellowship, authority and glory that he first had – in Christ! This is the soul crying out to the spirit for salvation!

Oh. that we might learn to believe in the almighty power of the CHRIST WITHIN! The penitent thief believed that Christ was a King and had a Kingdom, and that on the other side of the cross He would take him up in His arms and in His heart and remember him, make him a part again, when He came into His Kingdom. He believed that, and believing that, he died. Dear brother, sister, you and I need to take the time to come into a much larger and deeper faith in the power of Christ, that the almighty Christ will indeed take us in His arms and carry us through this death process, revealing the power of His death in us. Christ must do it. Christ CAN do it! Now that Christ is upon the throne, now that the revelation has dawned that HE has all power and authority in heaven and in earth, would you be afraid to do what the malefactor did when Christ was upon the cross, and entrust yourself to Him to die His death and to live His life? Christ, the very Christ of God within your spirit, will carry you through the very process He went through. He will make the process of death work in you until it is complete and your soul is swallowed up into the reality of HIS SPIRIT.

We have seen the faith of this man. Now let us consider the response of Christ to his cry. First, the Lord met him with that wonderful promise, “Today shall thou be with Me in Paradise.” It was a promise of fellowship, relationship, participation with Christ--“Thou shall be WITH ME.” Further, it was the revelation of the amazing and glorious and triumphant OPENING OF EDEN AGAIN, a promise of entrance back into Paradise from which walking after the flesh had cast man out – “With Me IN PARADISE.” Finally, it was the heralding of a change, of the dawning of something new for all mankind, a NEW DAY, a new age, a new Kingdom, a new order, a new realm, a new glory, a new covenant, a new reality, a new identity, a new nature, a new spirit, a new heart, a new mind, a new life, a new dominion – “TODAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN PARADISE!”

Such truth as this requires deep spiritual thought and meditation. What do you think, beloved, Jesus meant when He announced the glad tidings to this poor thief dying WITH HIM, “Verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be WITH ME IN PARADISE.” Today--in Paradise! Do you imagine that He meant that the thief would, that very twenty-four hour day, walk with Him up and down streets of gold, strumming a harp, in some far-off heaven somewhere? Or do you suppose Jesus was telling this man that within a few short hours he would find himself in some “compartment of departed spirits” deep in the heart of the earth? Ah, I do not hesitate to tell you that the Christ spoke of things infinitely higher and grander than such time-worn traditions of men, for the blessed Son of God, the all-conquering last Adam, spoke of the amazing and wonderful and triumphant OPENING OF EDEN AGAIN. By death and resurrection Christ triumphed gloriously over the whole kingdom of sin and death; He strode boldly and fearlessly back into the Paradise of God from which man had been banished; He opened up for us all a NEW and LIVING WAY: He passed through the dominion of the Cherubim and the flaming sword keeping the way to the Tree of Life; He claimed again the dominion and the eminence and the glory which once belonged to the first Adam.

Consider the scene! “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE ALSO IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN” (Gen. 2:8-9). “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD” (Rev. 2:7). Paradise today! That is what Jesus opened up for us. Truly, yesterday no longer exists, and neither does tomorrow; the only thing that exists is the Present. Paradise must be found in the Present; it is not some futuristic pie in the sky, but a present reality of life full and abundant in the Kingdom of God. Through His cruel passion and bloody sweat, the stripes He bore, the thorns He wore and the shedding of the blood of eternal life Jesus delivered that thief and the whole creation from the curse, and, rising triumphant from the dead, a victor over the flesh, sin and death, He offers life and the image of God to all mankind, in the beginning the thief came to kill and destroy, but “I am come,” saith Jesus, “that ye might have life, and have it *more abundantly*” (Jn. 10:10).

Beloved, these are but symbols, shadows, word pictures of grand and glorious SPIRITUAL REALITIES. Great and precious promises are given to the “overcomer” – the overcoming one is promised a crown, a throne, a white stone, a new name, a feast of manna from a golden bowl, the fruit from the tree of life, and the privilege of becoming a pillar in the temple of God! He is, furthermore, promised entrance into the PARADISE OF GOD. But this does not mean that the overcoming sons of God will live in an earthly Paradise, nor does it signify a mansion just over the hill-top in some bright glory world above. This Paradise is far more than a piece of real estate somewhere over in the Middle East. The Paradise of God which is promised the saints of God is not a physical place or geographical location on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is the state of being man was in when first he was brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed in splendor and infinite dominion here upon earth. The Paradise of God was the place where heaven and earth met together in the very person of Adam, the son of God. It is man living in the presence of God, walking in the mind of God, clothed with the glory of the incorruptible life of God, man living above sin, sickness, fear, pain sorrow and death, man as master and lord over all things! It is in THIS PARADISE OF THE SPIRIT that the overcomer eats of the tree of life!

During those moments of agony upon the cross, God ordained that one solitary first-fruit of Adam’s race should be gathered from the world of sin and death and restored to the Paradise of God as wonderful proof that THE WAY WAS OPENED UP. It was the Spirit of God that moved upon the heart of this dying thief, causing him to turn his eyes upon the crucified Lord. There was a quickening, a rending of the veil of the carnal mind, and opening of the heavens above him, and in an instant his vision became clearer than that of all the multitude, and the soldiers, and the priests, and even the disciples. He saw in the Man hanging between him and his fellow thief, the Messiah, the Son of God, the last Adam, come to OPEN ANEW THE GATE OF THE PARADISE OF GOD.

That is why Jesus came – to open again to man the Paradise of God. He lived and moved and ministered from that Paradise all the years of His sojourn on earth. The pure river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb is again accessible as Jesus said, “If any man thirst, let him come unto ME, and drink. He that believeth on Me...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:37). The tree of life is now within constant reach as it is written, “This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is IN HIS SON” (I Jn. 5:11), and again, “He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth in Me SHALL NEVER DIE” (Jn.11:25-26). This tree is vibrantly and continuously bearing the fruit of His divine life in all who partake of it. The leaves of this wonderful tree are for the healing, the restoration of THE NATIONS. In this blest realm of Paradise, the Kingdom of

Heaven on earth, the curse is removed, as it shall finally be in all the earth, for there shall be NO MORE CURSE. The throne of God and of the Lamb is with men – heaven and earth are united again. The river that flows from the throne of God flows from out of our innermost being, the Kingdom of God IN MAN. In this Paradise His servants serve Him, for they behold His face in the light that the Spirit brings. His name shall forever be in their foreheads, His nature reigning in their minds and hearts – only His will forever and ever. There is no night here in this city of living stones, for the never-ending day of the Lord has come. No need for the light of candles, or lamps, nor for the light of the sun or the moon, no external light of any kind is needed, for the glory of the Lord, the light of the SPIRIT floods the length and breadth of the city of God. God Himself has reconciled all unto Himself and HE GIVETH THEM LIGHT

TODAY! Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise, Jesus assured the thief. Oh, the wonder of it. “Today” did not signify a particular date on the calendar two thousand years ago. The word heralded the bringing in of a NEW DAY, a NEW DISPENSATION, a NEW PROVISION, a NEW ORDER, a NEW REALM OF LIFE AND VICTORY, GLORY AND POWER! Ah, today! Paradise! In this one notable statement Jesus reveals that the Garden of Eden, the Paradise of God, the high and holy estate from which man fell, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth was at last OPENED ANEW. Thank God – we can now enter! Today is THE DAY!

And yet, the mystery would not be complete apart from the knowledge that there is within us that which must die upon the cross NEVER TO LIVE AGAIN. The second thief died – and for him there was no repentance, no hope, no today or tomorrow, no offer of life, no promise of Paradise. He died to pass out of existence forevermore. Only by the spirit of revelation and understanding from above can we see that this bespeaks of the death of the carnal mind and of the law of sin and death in our members. The carnal mind is hopelessly blind to eternal things, pitifully helpless, and dreadfully full of death. The heart of the natural man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE. This explains why DEATH is necessary for our return to God. Death is the only way out of the world in which we are. It was by death to God that we fell out of God’s world. And it is by death TO SIN AND THIS WORLD that we are delivered from the power of sin and death and the folly of the outer world. So – may I say – you will never get out of this world alive!

Can we not see by this that there is that which must die to live and there is that which must die never to live again. Christ died to give us His life. The repentant thief represents that in man which must die to receive of HIS LIFE that it may live. Death alone, without ANOTHER LIFE, is not enough to bring us back to God’s world. We need death to get out of this world, but we also must have the life of God to live in God’s world! The soul of man is the receptacle of His life in the Spirit--in which union man’s soul is redeemed, restored to the Paradise of God. This is the first thief. This thief dies to live by receiving the life of the Christ upon the cross in the midst. But the second thief represents that serpent in us which must forever be done away, whose head must be thoroughly crushed once and for all, the BODY OF SIN which is DESTROYED. “Knowing this, that our old man IS CRUCIFIED WITH HIM, that the body of sin might be DESTROYED, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is DEAD is freed from sin” (Rom. 6:6-7). Three crosses, three men, and three deaths. Oh, the mystery of it!

If you can see it, my beloved, the second thief is that work of the cross the apostle sets forth in Gal. 6:14, wherein he says, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” There are vast multitudes of believers in the church systems today who may have grasped the concept of the death of Christ for them, and go about glibly declaring that Jesus died for them, and yet they do not even

faintly perceive the fact that this also means that THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED UNTO THEM. When the Bible speaks of the world in the New Testament, it is not referring to planet earth nor to the created universe, not to the stars and clouds and mountains and flowers, but most always to the WORLD SYSTEM – to the corrupt system of this world order with all its evil devices, with all its vain and false and selfish and corrupt desires, its aims and goals and purposes, its self-centeredness and egotism. The “world” in scripture is this whole fleshly and carnal system that passes from father to child down through the centuries. The result of man’s rebellion against the Spirit has been the establishment of a whole world system which the Spirit testifies is PASSING AWAY.

If we are God’s elect the world has been crucified to us; it is dead. It is somewhat like a man who loves a woman. He greatly loves her but one day she dies, perhaps even in his arms. He looks down at her body which just a moment ago was warm and moving. Now all is still and silent. The light has gone from the eyes. Perhaps, if he really loved her, he might even yet smother her face with his kisses. Wait but an hour or so and that body will grow cold, and a little longer and it will no longer be soft, but now stiff and cold. Wait but a few days and it will begin to rot and stink. A week later one would not be able to stand to go into the room with it. That is what the Lord says should be happening in every believer’s life concerning this whole world system, with all its vaunted success, all of its goals, with all of its economics, politics and religion. The world has already received at the cross, its death blow. Even its king, the devil, has received a wound in his forehead from which he will utterly perish. So this system is crumbling into oblivion. Even now you can smell the putrefaction of it. For the sons and daughters of the Most High it has lost its allurements with all its baubles and successes which men in the world count of great value and of high esteem.

Ray Prinzing commented on this passage: “While experimentally the world becomes crucified unto me – so that we no longer have any desire for the things of the world, no longing for friendship with the world, no latent feelings that can be awakened and stirred up by the world; to make it even more complete, ‘I am crucified to the world.’ Thus, as far as the world is concerned, you become dead to them also. They have no more desire for you – there is nothing in you that appeals to them, you are as useless to them as a corpse. You cease to exist in their realm. Don’t be amazed, then, if they no longer seek you out or try to fellowship with you. Only those who are quickened to the same new life which you are receiving, can fellowship with you in that life. To all others you are a stranger and a foreigner.”

In the Song of Solomon the King, beautiful type of God’s corporate Son, Head and body, exclaims, “Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me up to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense” (S. of S. 4:6). Myrrh in the scriptures is a figure of death, while frankincense is a figure of life, and was uniquely the fragrance of the Most Holy Place, the incorruptible realm of God. Beloved, THE CROSS IS THE MOUNTAIN OF MYRRH. It is not just a small amount of myrrh, but a great and eternal MOUNTAIN of this costly perfume. How many times we go up to the cross with our self-life as if it were mountains of grief and regret, of suffering and sighing, of rain and loss, and not a sweet and priceless fragrance unto God. How often when we take up our cross to go after Jesus, we follow Him moaning and repining at every step. All the fragrance of this precious mountain is lost when we go up reluctantly and grudgingly, or withholding something from death. Oh! let us go up with joy unspeakable and full of glory, exulting that we have been counted worthy to suffer and to follow in His footsteps, and that to us it has been granted to die to the vain spirit of this world, to the carnality, childishness and abomination of the wretched religious systems, and to have our own fleshly minds, ambitions, desires and ways firmly nailed to the cross, to be gloriously alive unto God and exquisitely conformed to the image of God’s beloved Son.

It is not enough to make an occasional trip up to the cross, for death must become a mountain to us, we must go there to stay until the day breaks and the shadows all flee away. It bespeaks of a STATE OF BEING. To BE DEAD is a STATE OF BEING. We must abide in the Lord's death. Today, many zealous christians have the wrong concept. They believe they must fast, weep, pray, and wait on the Lord in order to die. That is all good, but it is not death. To tarry at an altar is easy; to pray for a week is easy; even to fast for a month is easy; but to stay at the Mountain of Myrrh for a lifetime is not easy. We could all fast and pray for a long time without any sleep, but to stay in the Lord's death means that we so absolutely DIE to the flesh, the world, and the devil that we simply ARE DEAD. It is only then that the day breaks eternal and shadows of this earthy realm forever flee away. Let us open ourselves before the Lord. I do believe that we all have the sense that our Day is not yet fully broken. We all realize that there are still some haunting shadows of limitation, fear, lack of understanding and fleshliness about us. Even in our bodies, the lines, the gray hairs, the weakness, reveal that our bodies have not yet caught up to our spirit. No matter how much we say that we are the elect sons of God, sons of Light, sons of the Day, kings and priests of the Most High, living in the Holiest of all and feasting at the feast of Tabernacles, there is still the sense that we are not clearly in the Day. As long as we have such a realization we will spontaneously say, "UNTIL the day break, and the shadows flee away, I WILL GET ME UP TO THE MOUNTAIN OF MYRRH, AND TO THE HILL OF FRANKINCENSE." But, praise God, the Day is at hand!

## **THE LAW OF CIRCULARITY**

Nothing is more evident in the Word of God than the fact that man had his beginning IN GOD. Every son of Adam, born as he is in trespasses and sins, enters into this world shrouded by the darkness of the carnal mind and imprisoned by the power of the carnal nature. But it was not always so! Everything everywhere OUTSIDE OF CHRIST belongs to the realm of death, and because it belongs to the realm of death, it likewise belongs to the realm of darkness. Before ever man touched this dreadful realm the record states: "*In the beginning WAS the Word, and the Word WAS with God, and the Word WAS God. In Him WAS life; and the life WAS the light of men*" (Jn.1:1,4). WAS! It is a wonderful fact that in Him IS life, and His life IS the light of every man who believes, but, wonder of wonders, in that long ago beginning Christ WAS THEN THE LIFE and His life WAS THEN THE LIGHT OF MEN. It was into this realm OUTSIDE OF CHRIST, the realm of OUTER DARKNESS, that Adam was banished when he partook of that strange tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There he died, as God had warned, and we all died in him. Thus death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. Has mankind not fully proved throughout the centuries that he is in truth the son of Adam? Which of all God's commandments have we not broken, justifying ourselves in having done so even as Adam seemed to do.

Oh, sweet mystery of the ages, that a second Adam should stand upon the earth and declare, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. I am that bread of life. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn. 10:10; 6:33,48,51). No greater revelation can break upon any man's consciousness than this simple truth that there is ONLY ONE LIFE in the universe, and that one life is JESUS CHRIST. May God make this truth real to your hearts! When a man comes to Christ the life, he comes not only to the life that IS the light of men, but to the same life that in the beginning WAS the light of men. What we have received in Christ's opening again of Paradise is a re-turn, a re-storation, a re-newing, a re-demption, a re-conciliation, a re-surrection. The prefix "re" means BACK, AGAIN, ANEW – and all words with this prefix speak of

something that LEFT ITS PLACE AND HAS NOW MADE ITS CIRCUIT AND COME BACK TO THE POINT OF ITS BEGINNING.

Let me give you now a scripture that shows the hand of God in this and the extensive scope of both the departure from, and the returning unto, God. I quote from Ps. 90:1-3. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. THOU TURNEST MAN TO DESTRUCTION; and sayest, RETURN, YE CHILDREN OF MEN." You could never read this word "return" here, if you had not first read that man had been "turned" away to destruction. In this passage the word "destruction" has this meaning in the original: A COMPLETE COLLAPSE, crumbling man to a contrite condition.

Here is the picture: For the magnificent purpose God had in mind He made all the provision necessary before the foundation of the world. He made provision for a Lamb to be slain (Rev. 13:8). He made provision for a company of people to be chosen in Christ, to be Holy and without blame before Him in love, as a firstfruit of His redemption in the earth (Eph. 1:4-5,10). Then He brought into Eden a poisonous serpent, a murderer, a MANSAYER (Gen. 3:1). Having prepared all this HE THEN BROUGHT MAN INTO THE GARDEN. Having brought man into the Garden, GOD PUT HIM INTO THE PATHWAY OF A COMPLETE COLLAPSE. It was GOD who turned man to destruction, set him on this downward course, sent him into outer darkness, and made him subject to vanity. God our Father has never once blamed man for the fall, but takes the responsibility for it Himself when He says, "For the creation was subjected to frailty – to futility, condemned to frustration – *not because of some intentional fault on its part*, BUT BY THE WILL OF HIM WHO SO SUBJECTED IT. YET WITH HOPE that creation itself WILL BE SET FREE from its bondage to decay and corruption and *gain an entrance* into the glorious freedom of God's children" (Rom. 8:20-21, Amplified). Man did not volunteer for this time of travail, but the plan of God included this process, so God turned man into this route, this experience, and it will also be the sovereign work of a sovereign God who shall BRING BACK INTO HIMSELF the whole of His creation.

After turning man to destruction God then says, "RETURN TO ME, ye children of men." In verse four of Psalm ninety, the writer makes the statement that in God's sight a thousand years is as a day when it is passed. But in verse thirteen the Psalmist exclaims, "Return, O LORD, HOW LONG?" In the beginning of the Psalm the writer is joyful in the knowledge that though the Lord has turned man to destruction, yet God has also given the command to return, and what if it does take a thousand years or more, it is but a day in God's sight. But by the time the writer reaches the position of the thirteenth verse, he begins to cry out, saying, "O Lord, HOW LONG is all this going to take? HOW LONG before our full return to You?" A thousand years had become an unbearably long time. Surely this is the cry from the hearts of men today! This is the crying, groaning, and travailing we find the creation passing through in the 8th chapter of Romans, waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God.

There was a day when Paul, standing in the center of the Areopagus (Mars Hill Auditorium) declared to the philosophers of Athens, "The God Who produced and formed the world and all things in it, made from one common origin, one source all nations of men to settle on the face of the earth, having definitely determined their allotted periods of time and the fixed boundaries of their habitation - their settlements, lands, abodes; SO THAT THEY SHOULD SEEK GOD, IN THE HOPE THAT THEY MIGHT FEEL AFTER HIM AND FIND HIM, although He is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your own poets have said, FOR WE ARE ALSO HIS OFFSPRING" (Acts 17:24-28, Amplified).

Oh, yes, He turned us to destruction, but planted deep in the sub consciousness of every man the SECRET COMMAND to RETURN, which has become that inner desire, yearning, craving, seeking, feeling, compulsion which is never satisfied until man does find himself home in God once more. All the religiousness of men, from the witch doctor in the jungle to the modernist in the pulpit in America, is the manifestation of this FEELING AFTER GOD, IF HAPLY THEY MIGHT FIND HIM. While mankind in general is still lost in the hellish darkness of sin and death, yet there is a firstfruit company whose hearts have been charged by the inward call to return, and with the Shulamite maiden in the Song of Solomon share this blessed experience: "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth; I sought Him, but I found Him not. I will arise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him but I found Him not. The watch-men that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I FOUND HIM WHOM MY SOUL LOVETH: I HELD HIM, AND WOULD NOT LET HIM GO" (S. of S. 3:1-4). As the Spirit has witnessed through the prophet, "And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13).

Mankind is yet groping about in the dense darkness of the carnal mind, knowing not that HE is standing right there in the shadows, were their eyes opened to see. Yet He hath appointed a day – Oh glorious day! – when His light shall shine forth and the plan shall be completed as the apostle saith, "For God has allowed us to know the secret of His plan, and it is this: He purposed long ago in His sovereign will that all human history should be consummated in Christ, that *everything that exists in Heaven or earth should find its perfection and fulfillment in Him*. In Christ we have been given an inheritance, since we were destined for this, by the One who works out all His purposes according to the design of His own will" (Eph. 1:9-11, Phillips).

The very laws of physics and mathematics establish with indisputable certainty the absolute inevitability of the creation's return back into God. Psalm nineteen was long a source of amusement to Bible critics. In speaking of the sun, the Psalmist says: "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his *circuit* unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (Ps. 19:6). It was claimed that the writer of this verse obviously believed in the ancient notion of the sun's revolving about the earth. This charge is most unjust, since we still use words and phrases of the same sort, simply because from our natural viewpoint the sun does rise in the morning, move across the sky, and set in the evening. The whole science of nautical and engineering astronomy is based on the assumption, made purely for convenience, that the earth is the center of a great celestial sphere, moving along the surface of which in ordered paths are the sun, moon, planets and stars. And as far as any practical usage is concerned, this is so. On this assumption, courses can be plotted, positions determined, and scores of other applications made.

But the words of the Psalmist have a deeper, more scientific meaning than that. It is now concluded by the leading astronomers that the sun, with the entire solar system, actually does move through space at the tremendous speed of 600,000 miles per hour in such a gigantic orbit that it requires over two million centuries to complete it, but complete it it shall, returning again and again, as the ages roll onward, to the point of its beginning. Furthermore, it is believed that our galaxy is also moving with respect to other galaxies. The sun's circuit IS from one end of the heavens to the other! Who can accuse the Holy Spirit of ignorance of modern astronomy?

The entire universe is an infinite sphere and each galaxy, solar system, star and planet within it moves continuously and harmoniously in circular motion; thus, all worlds and suns have circles for their pathway. This principle has been referred to by scientists as the "law of circularity". Science is beginning to tell us that in the highest development of physics and mathematics the

old theory of straight lines of infinite length has to be changed and modified to satisfy all the data of electro-dynamics, light, and some of the new electrical phenomena. There is no such thing in the universe as an absolutely straight line of infinite length. All straight lines will be found to be portions of immense circles. This law of circularity runs through all nature. If you were to leave planet earth traveling steadily in one direction, the day would surely come, be it in some distant age millions or billions of years hence, when you would arrive back at the precise point of departure, having completed the circuit – home again! Someone (a scientist) has said that if we were to build a telescope that would see into infinity, we would one day be looking at the back of our heads!

This great law of circularity by which all things in God's creation are seen to RETURN to the place of their BEGINNING, in its spiritual significance, is expressed in Rom. 11:36: "For FROM HIM and THROUGH HIM and TO HIM are all things – for all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to CONSUMMATE AND TO END IN HIM. To Him be glory forever! Amen" (Amplified). All manifestations of nature discernible to the senses confirm this law of circularity. "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccle 1:5-7).

The King James version of Rom. 11:36 begins, "For of Him..." This word "of" comes from the Greek word *ek* literally meaning OUT OF. This clearly places God as the Source of all things, and hence the Amplified's beautiful translation, "For all things originate with Him and come from Him." Col. 1:16 says, "For it was IN HIM that all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities" (Amplified).

The law of circularity requires that EVEN AS ALL THINGS BEGAN IN CHRIST, ALL SHALL END IN CHRIST. "I am ALPHA *and* OMEGA, the *beginning* and the *end*, the *first* and the *last*," saith the Lord" (Rev. 22:13). Only the glorious mind of Christ can reveal to our hearts what that means! Through a glass darkly I can see that He was the FIRST – "before all things." Can I also believe that HE IS THE LAST? If He is the BEGINNING, can my feeble mind dare to comprehend what it signifies when He says that He is also the END? All that existed IN CHRIST before the ages began, shall RETURN INTO HIM AGAIN that He may be the FIRST *and* the LAST, the BEGINNING *and* the END. All that came out of Him, lowered into the realm of vanity, completes its circuit and returns once more to its former estate – RETURN TO PARADISE!

From the earliest years of my memory there stirred deep within my bosom an insatiable longing after Christ. Though only a child, I wanted to know Him who once was spat upon for me, who was crowned with thorns for me, who died and rose again and ascended to the highest heaven for me. I wanted to intimately KNOW the Christ, the great and good Friend who was compassionate to all men, who forgave the thieves and harlots and drunkards, and healed the sick and gladdened the sorrowful, who brought the dead to life again, and loved and blessed the children. Oh! how I wanted to KNOW HIM! Sometime after my twelfth birthday, the Lord came to me in a remarkable visitation, flooding my life with billows of His presence, power and glory. From that moment Christ became a living Reality. He filled the skies. He filled the earth. He filled my life and flooded my heart with unspeakable love for His creation. He whispered in my ear and unfolded within the depths of my spirit the precious knowledge that He is the Good Shepherd who will seek until the last lost sheep is in His fold. He proclaimed the omnipotence of His love in the sweetest of tones. The Good Shepherd who came from heaven, and gave His life, will seek, and seek, and seek, and save, and save, and save, until He has brought all men

back to God. This is the work of the Redeemer and the redeemed. I remember sitting, some time after this experience, in the auditorium of the public school in the rural community where we lived in south Alabama, looking at the several hundred students assembled there, as the Spirit mused in my heart, "Some day, some way, somewhere, CHRIST WILL SAVE THEM ALL!" The revelation was real to me, Christ was there bursting forth in my spirit, and I rose and departed with gladness that Christ is indeed Victor!

They told me as I went on in my Christian life that Christ did not die for every one. "How is that," I would ask, "the scripture says that He tasted death for EVERY MAN" (Heb. 2:9). "But, Preston," they would say, "it only means every man who believes." "Well," I said, "it does not say that. Paul said, 'We thus judge, that if ONE DIED FOR ALL, then were all dead: and He DIED FOR ALL, that they which live (those who were dead till He died for them) should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again' (II Cor. 5:14-15). God is not ignorant, stupid, or incapable of correct calculating. And He did not die in vain! If He DIED FOR A-L-L, then, not only were ALL DEAD, but ALL HE DIED FOR SHALL BE MADE ALIVE. If all are not made alive, then He who died for all DIED IN VAIN!" "But it does not mean that," they replied.

"Ah, but," I said, "here is another scripture which says, 'For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. THESE THINGS COMMAND AND TEACH' (I Tim. 4:10-11). It says, 'ALL men'" "But it does not mean that," they contended, "And you will be a heretic if you say that!" "But," I said, "Peter wrote in his epistle that GOD IS NOT WILLING that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance, and Paul wrote to Timothy that God WILL HAVE ALL MEN to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. If God wills all men to be saved, and men will not to be saved, whose will is stronger, the will of God, or the will of men? Many try to absolve God from the responsibility for His creation by saying that MAN'S WILL is more powerful than GOD'S WILL, that God cannot, or will not CHANGE men's wills, that men will to be sinful and hostile to God, therefore God cannot save them. But all such forget that not only did God create man, HE CREATED MAN'S WILL WITH ALL ITS CAPABILITIES AND PROPENSITIES! It is my deep conviction that in the end it is GOD'S WILL that shall be done!" "But, Preston," they said, "God made man a free-moral-agent, and if man wills to be lost God will not override his will." "Well," I said, "that is what you say, but that is not what the Bible says."

"And," I said, "Paul states these unmistakable words in Rom. 5:15-19, 'But God's free gift is not at all to be compared to the trespass – His grace is out of all proportion to the fall of man. For if many died through one man's falling away – much more profusely did God's grace and the free gift that comes through the undeserved favor of the one Man Jesus Christ, abound and overflow to and for the benefit of many. Well then, as one man's trespass – one man's false step and falling away – led to condemnation for A-L-L M-E-N, SO one Man's act of righteousness *leads to acquittal and right standing with God, and life for A-L-L M-E-N*. For just as by one man's disobedience THE MANY (the mass, all) were constituted sinners, SO by one Man's obedience THE MANY (the mass, all) WILL BE CONSTITUTED RIGHTEOUS – made acceptable to God, brought into right standing with Him' (Amplified Bible)." "Oh," they would say, "it cannot mean that by one Man's act all will be saved, for man is a free-moral-agent and he must make up his own mind, and if he rejects the offer of life during this life it will never be offered again." "Ah, my good friend," I reply, "it does not say that. You are putting words into God's mouth."

"And here," I said, "Jesus says, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth WILL DRAW A-L-L M-E-N unto Me' (Jn. 12:32)." "It does not mean that," they argued, "it means He will draw all men who believe." "But how many does it say He will draw?" "All men." To which I answer, "If that

proclamation is not true, if He is not strong enough, and purposeful enough, and loving enough to draw every spirit on earth and in hell, and throughout the universe, to Himself, then He has told a lie. If He can, but won't, then He is a mean, hard, vindictive tyrant. And if He can't, then He's not God." "Oh, Preston!" they cry, "that is heresy!" "But," I said, "that is Jesus. Was He a heretic?" "Oh, no; you do not understand, we can explain all that away, and you must not talk until you know better."

It came with such power one day. I said, "Oh Master! let me have a word that covers it with certainty." As I began to pray, my thoughts went to what Christ had prayed, recorded in Jn. 17:1-3, as He opened His lips and prayed to the Father, saying, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may also glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him POWER OVER ALL FLESH, that He should give eternal life to AS MANY AS THOU HAST GIVEN HIM. And this is eternal life, that THEY might KNOW THEE the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." I have always been fond of a plain, straight logic. As I read those beautiful verses, I saw that Jesus WAS GIVEN POWER OVER ALL FLESH, making All Flesh His, that He might give eternal life to as many as God had given Him power over; therefore, as God had given Him power over ALL FLESH, and He had authority to give eternal life to all that had been given Him, to all flesh, it was perfectly clear that eventually all flesh, all spirits born into human flesh should be redeemed, and brought back to God.

I do not hesitate to preach it. I do not hesitate to tell it. At the same time I have warned the sinner that if he sins, the face of God is against him; that if he sins, hell is in front of him; the way of the transgressor is hard, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience. But let us not falsely say that such men will never be saved.

Long millenniums ago Adam was banished from the Paradise of God and its life-giving tree. But God has provided a way by which His banished may return! Some glad morning, when the unfolding plan of God is complete, all who once stood "in Adam" in the Garden will again be gathered together and their eyes will behold with endless joy that heaven blest Eden in which walked Adam, the son of God. But even now there is a remnant, the election of grace, the firstfruits WHO IN SPIRIT HAVE ENTERED THOSE ONCE – CLOSED PORTALS AND HAVE PARTAKEN OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE! Though the Cherubim and the flaming sword once blocked the way into Paradise, thanks be to God! the Lord Jesus Christ has opened "a NEW and LIVING way" into the Holiest of All. The Cherubim stood with their flaming sword to block the gate at the east, the entrance into the Paradise of God. The eastern gate speaks to us of the rising of the sun, the dawning of a new day. Jesus rose from the dead very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun. His triumph over death brought a *new day* of life and hope and victory! The east, the place of the rising sun, represents Christ – the entrance back into the place in the Garden where Adam was, is opened for us through Christ. It is not through the Cherubim or the flaming sword that we must pass – but IN CHRIST we are given an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God!

In the typology of scripture the Garden of Eden is synonymous with the Holiest of All. In the power of Christ, though the firstfruits of Christ's redemption still move about in a world which is under the curse, where the traces of sin are visible on all hands, they have found their way, by faith, to the bosom of the Father, and are NOW AT HOME AGAIN IN GOD! The mighty transformation that has come and is coming to our lives shall be experienced ultimately by ALL MEN, God's own law of circularity secures it, and none can resist it, praise His glorious name!

# Chapter 39

## RETURN TO PARADISE

*(continued)*

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE ALSO IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN” (Gen. 2:8-9).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD” (Rev. 2:7).

It is generally supposed by most professed Christians that the words “paradise” and “heaven” are essentially synonymous and that in the Bible they are both used to describe the “eternal home” of the “saved”. There is an old tradition, however, one of the many “doctrines of the Pharisees” taught by the Rabbis in the time of Christ, that there was a realm of the world of the dead, called Sheol in Hebrew and Hades in Greek, located deep in the heart of the earth. Out of the discussions and theories of the Rabbis, there grew a popular belief that Sheol, or Hades, was divided into two compartments, the lower and the upper, Gehenna comprising the lower, the region of the damned with its flames and torments; the upper being Paradise, the intermediate place of bliss and rest into which, at the time of death, the spirits of the righteous entered to await the resurrection day at “the end of the world.”

The earnest prayer within my heart is that God’s apprehended ones may turn aside from all such carnal-minded traditions and fables of the Pharisees. Jesus warned His disciples: “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees... then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *DOCTRINE* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Mat. 16:6,12). Paul also admonished Titus, his son in the faith, “Not giving heed to *Jewish fables*, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth” (Tit. 1:14). There is only ONE PARADISE to be found in all the pages of God’s blessed Book, and that is the glorious Paradise in Eden from which Adam was banished – now opened once more to every wandering son of Adam’s race through the precious blood of God’s Lamb. Ah, the promise is clear: “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the PARADISE OF GOD” (Rev. 2:7). This Paradise is not, nor has it ever been, in the heart of the earth!

All the important revelations in the Book of Revelation are taught by symbols. The symbols used in Revelation, in fact, throughout the entire Bible, are things and circumstances concerning which we, as humans, have at least some knowledge; otherwise the symbolic language of the Bible would have no meaning to us. There are things we know about the sun, the moon, the stars, and about sheep and goats, wheat and tares, rivers and trees, storms and earthquakes. So when the Bible uses these as symbols, certain lessons are conveyed to us.

In Revelation chapters two and three, seven wonderful promises are made to the faithful followers of Jesus, the “overcomers” of this present age. All these promises are illustrated by

things with which we have at least some acquaintance. We read in chapter two, verse ten, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” No child of God possessing a spiritual mind, in reading this, supposes that he will be wearing a literal crown in some far-off heaven someday! A crown signifies rulership, and the overcomers will share in the highest form of life in the universe, the divine and incorruptible life of God. To receive a “crown of life” means to rule and reign in the power and nature of the divine life!

In chapter two, verse seventeen the promise is given, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” The expression, “hidden manna,” takes us back to the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. In the Most Holy of this tabernacle, was the “Ark of the Covenant.” In this was placed a golden bowl of manna. While the manna collected daily by the Israelites corrupted, bred worms, and stank, that which they placed in this golden bowl did not. This, then, reveals the truth of INCORRUPTIBILITY. No spiritual person supposes, however, that the overcomers will someday 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 shall 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, even in their bodies, this mortal shall have put on immortality and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

In Rev. 3:12 the promise is, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out.” No overcomer will be transformed into a pillar, as Lot’s wife was turned into a pillar of salt, to be placed in a literal temple in heaven. This is a symbol of the sure and fixed position to be attained by those who overcome all things. Now we are being processed, tried, and tested, and are subject to “falls” along the way. We catch a vision of high and holy realms in God and, in moments of exceptional anointing, enter for a little while into those blessed experiences, only to have the anointing lift and the vision fade, once more to face the mundane activities of daily life. Ah, there is a promise, bright and blessed, that in due time the processing will be completed, the testing will be finished, the secret inworkings of God consummated, and those who have overcome will be as pillars, fixed and secure, in that glorious spiritual temple which will be the meeting place between God and men in the ages yet to come.

Beloved, so should we understand the blessed promise given of eating of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. This does not mean that the overcoming sons of God will live in an earthly Paradise, any more than the other promises mean that they will wear literal crowns, eat manna from a golden bowl, or become marble pillars in a literal temple. This Paradise – let me state it again in this concluding article on the Garden of Eden – is far more than a piece of real estate somewhere over in the Middle East. The Paradise of God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is the state of being man was in when first he was brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed in splendor here upon earth. It is man living in the presence of God, man with the incorruptible life of God accessible to him, man living above sin, sickness, fear, pain and death, man as master and lord over all things! It is in THIS PARADISE that the overcomer eats of the tree of life!

## **THE WAY OF THE CROSS LEADS HOME**

We often ask earnestly, “How can I enter fully into this glorious life of Eden? How can I become a true and full overcomer – free from the self life, putting on the mind of Christ, filled with His love, joy, peace, righteousness, wisdom, knowledge and power, perfected in the image of God,

incorruptible in spirit, soul and body, reigning over all things?” Ah – the answer lies in the pathway marked out for us by our Forerunner who has entered in! For fallen man the way to life is and can only be through death. The cross is the way to life – this is confessedly the truth revealed by Jesus. In the words of the old hymn, “The way of the cross leads home!”

But what is the cross? Does Christ’s death save us unless we die *WITH HIM*? Our Lord distinctly says, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose *HIS LIFE* for My sake shall find it” (Mat. 16:25). Again, “This is a faithful saying, If we be dead *WITH HIM*, we shall live with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us” (II Tim. 2:11-12). The overcomer must be able to say, “I am crucified *WITH CHRIST*, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20). “We are debtors, not to live after the flesh, for if we live after the flesh we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live” (Rom. 8:12-13).

Why is the way of life for us through the cross, that is through death? Why can it not be otherwise? If we see the way by which man got away from God, we shall see the way of his return, and why this must be through death; for indeed the way, by which we came away from God in Eden, must be *RETRACED* if by grace we come back to Him. How then did man depart from God, and die to Him, and fall from His kingdom? By believing a lie – not an outright lie – but a half-truth.

A friend has shared this beautiful explanation of the fall of man in Eden: “We find, then, that in causing Eve to fall from the glory, the serpent used an argument that is correct *IN FORM*, but because it was *ONLY FORM* and was void of the *ESSENCE*, Eve was deceived by it. What *WAS* the argument that he used that was correct in form but actually invalid? Hear it! ‘God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened!’ That was a truth – and ‘ye shall be as gods’ was also truth, for after the man and the woman had eaten, the Lord God Himself verified the serpent’s statement as being absolute truth. ‘Behold, the man is become as *ONE OF US* to know good and evil,’ God said (Gen. 3:22). He was saying that Adam had become as a god himself! ‘Ye shall be as gods,’ the serpent said, and that he told the truth is confirmed in the words, ‘The man has become as one of us’ – he has become *AS A GOD*!

“In *FORM*, then, the serpent had a truth. He had, in fact, drawn on the very word of God itself to tempt Adam and Eve, for the Lord had said, ‘Let us make man in our image.’ What the serpent failed to reveal, however, was the *ESSENCE* of the form which is that *INDEPENDENTLY OF GOD* man can *NEVER* be a partaker of the divine nature! This should have been a self-evident truth, but man failed to see it. He was deceived by the very form of truth – taking the Word of God which had promised to make him in the image of God, receiving it as a *DOCTRINE* rather than a revelation, as *FORM* rather than life, and was thereby brought to ruin, cheated out of the very thing he sought.

“Man becomes a god in the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil – but he becomes a god in the wrong realm, for at the same time that God acknowledged man’s ‘deity’ He also *CAST HIM FROM THE GARDEN* – cast him from the heavenly realm – and set him in the earth ‘to till the ground from which he was taken.’ Musing upon this incident years later, the prophet David wrote, ‘What is man that Thou art mindful of him... for Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands.’ It was as a god that man had dominion, but a further reading of this passage reveals that the works of the hands of God over which man was given dominion under the first covenant was limited to the *EARTH REALM*. Thus, we find that Adam truly became a ‘god’ – as the serpent promised and God confirmed – but he was not an heavenly god. He became, rather, the ‘god of *THIS* world’ (II Cor. 4:4). It is one thing, however, to be ‘a

partaker of the DIVINE NATURE' and it is quite another thing to be the 'god of THIS WORLD.' In the former, there is contained the thought of TOTAL DEPENDENCE – in the latter, the principle of INDEPENDENCE. Though the terminology is the same – that is, 'ye are gods' – the essence is not. 'The man has become AS one of us' but he did not become, in his rebellion, an actual partaker of divinity. The serpent, then, through reasoning that is superficially plausible but is actually fallacious, beguiled Eve. It was through a mere INTELLECTUAL grasp of the Word of God that Eve was 'cheated out' of her inheritance in the Living One and fell into the realm of death. We must not, as we consider these things, lose sight of the fact that the apostle Paul had a fear for the Church that by the very same deception, *our minds* should also be corrupted! 'I fear,' said he, 'lest... as the serpent beguiled Eve through his SOPHISTRY (the FORM of truth without the ESSENCE), so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' May we have ears to hear!"

By disobedience and independence man was separated from God and died to God's world. Can we not see by this that death is a PASSING OUT OF ONE WORLD INTO ANOTHER? Adam passed from God's world into his *OWN WORLD* and by this death *TO GOD* man lost the place which God had given him in Paradise, fell into the kingdom of darkness; as Andrew Jukes said, "His inward life turned like sweet wine into sourest vinegar, into a life of ceaseless aching restlessness; to escape which he turns to outward things, hating to come to himself even for a moment, unconsciously driven by his own inward dissatisfaction to seek diversion from himself in any outward care, pleasure, or vanity; while his body became like that of the beasts, subject to the elements of this world, and to all the change and toil which make up 'the course of this world.'" From that fateful day to this man without God has been *hopelessly blind* to eternal things, *pitifully helpless*, and *desperately carnal*. Once our eyes become closed to the invisible things, then we are blind to the eternal things, for the things which are *seen* are temporal, but the things which are *not* seen are eternal. When our eyes are closed to the invisible, then our vision changes from *things above* to *things beneath*. Because we are no longer conscious of the invisible and the eternal, we begin to feast our eyes on the visible and the temporal. Without God men are hopelessly IN THE FLESH. They pass their time in worthless pursuits of the flesh. Their days are spent in vanity, seeking to gratify the five senses of the physical body, all of which perish with the using. They are remarkably ALIVE to a PERISHING realm, the realm of death.

As Andrew Jukes put it, such was the fall of man, and it explains why death is needful for our return to God. Death is the only way out of any world in which we are. It was by death to God that we fell out of God's world. And it is by death *WITH CHRIST* to sin and to this world that we are delivered from the power of sin and the toil and sorrows of this outward world. For we are, as the Word of God and our own hearts tell us, not only in the outward world bodily, but in our spirits we are living in a spiritual world, which surely is not heavenly, but hellish, and no soul of man is at rest or satisfied till quickened by the Spirit of God. And, may I say, you will never get out of this world alive! To get out of this dark world we must die: die to this physical sense-oriented nature, to get out of the seen world, and die to sin to get out of the power of darkness. We must die both to the bodily realm and the spiritual realm of darkness if we would be free to enter again through the portals of Eden. Christ died this double death for us, not only "to sin," but also "to the elements of this world" (Rom. 6:10; Col. 2:20).

But now we ask, "How can I die this death?" The answer is, "Get another life!" We often speak about the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, but I doubt if we fully realize that the Holy Spirit is a HEAVENLY LIFE come to expel the selfish, fleshy, corruptible, earthly life. Death alone, without ANOTHER LIFE is not and cannot of itself be enough to bring us back to God's world! We need death to get out of this world, but we also must have the life of God to live in God's

world! Just as without the life of this world we could not enter this world, so God's life must again be quickened in man before he can live again in God's Kingdom. In Christ the work has been accomplished! In Him God's life has again been raised up in man, and in the power of this life Christ has died both to sin and to the world, and so, through death, resurrection, and ascension has come back out of darkness to God's right hand. But whether in Christ, or in us, the work is only wrought through death.

Fallen man is still excluded from Paradise. Old Adam, the flesh, the carnal mind, will never pass through the gate of Eden. Old Adam is shut out, but the SEED can enter! The NEW CREATION MAN is he who enters, the Head passed first, and now the members. The first Adam, the flesh, may not enter into that from whence God has excluded him, but the second Adam, the New Man is invited to "draw near, with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:22). And now, how changed is all! As then the Cherubim sounded the warning: *Enter not!* so now the call goes forth: *Enter in!*

## **PARADISE OPENED**

Crucified WITH HIM! How can I enter into this fellowship of the cross? We find an illustration in the story of the penitent thief. The immature and self-assured disciples made all kinds of brash statements prior to Christ's death. Thomas said, "Let us go and abide with Him." And Peter said, "Lord I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death." But the disciples all failed, and our Lord took a man who was the off scouring of the earth and hung him upon the cross of Calvary beside Himself, and He said to Peter and to all, "I will let you see what it is to die WITH ME!"

Let us consider with care the drama of Calvary enacted in that solemn hour. The penitent thief, who represents fallen humanity in the first Adam, confessed his sin and that he deserved death. Then next, he confessed a wonderful faith in the almighty power of Christ. It has no parallel in the Bible. There hangs the cursed malefactor with Jesus of Nazareth, and he dares speak and say, "I am dying here under the just curse of my sins, but I believe Thou canst take me into Thy heart and remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom." The word "remember" means to recollect and both of these words can be broken down into two words: re-member and re-collect. The prefix "re" before them means to REPEAT OR TO DO SOMETHING AGAIN. So the malefactor was asking that when Jesus came into His kingdom, He would remember him, or make him a member again. He was saying, "RE-COLLECT or collect me again into that Kingdom and give back to me my original place." Through him was heard the voice of every son of Adam ever to live upon the earth. This is restoration, re-newing, re-demption, re-conciliation he was asking for! Ah, this was Adam's voice seeking the restoration of the life, fellowship, authority and glory that he first had – in Eden!

During those moments of agony upon the cross, God ordained that one solitary firstfruit of Adam's race should be gathered from the world of sin and death and restored to the Paradise of God as wonderful proof that the way was opened up. It was the Spirit of God that moved upon the heart of this dying thief, causing him to turn his eyes upon the crucified Lord. There was a quickening, a rending of the veil of the carnal mind, an opening of the heavens above him, and in an instant his vision became clearer than that of all the multitude, and the soldiers, and the priests, and even the disciples. He saw in the Man hanging between him and his fellow thief, the Messiah, the Son of God, the second Adam, come to OPEN ANEW THE GATE OF THE PARADISE OF GOD.

Thank God, the Jesus of the penitent thief is my Jesus! Thank God, the cross of the penitent thief is my cross! During the thirty-three years of Christ's life there was not a man upon earth that had such wonderful fellowship with the Son of God as the penitent thief, for with the Son of God he entered glory. What made him so separate from others? He was on the cross WITH JESUS and entered Paradise WITH HIM. And if I live upon the cross with Jesus, the Paradise life shall be mine every day!

As another has so wisely exhorted: "Let us commune together of things that will greatly help our walk in God, for the Spirit of God teaches me that God's people will not – yea, cannot – forget the things which are behind until the glory of the things which lie before has laid hold upon them, captivating their hearts, enthraling their vision, and quickening their steps as they urgently press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. He who wears a thin and ragged coat will wrap it close about him and keep it as a precious thing, though in it his body shivers with cold, until a new and better garment is offered him. Then, despising the old, he will cast it from him to embrace with joy the new. God's people do not – yea, cannot – release their hold on the fleeting things of this present evil age, persuade them as we will, until their vision has caught a true glimpse of the eternal. 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath *shined* in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'"

## **BEYOND THE BORDERLAND**

Few men have been caught away by the spirit of inspiration as was the wise king Solomon when he penned the beautiful Song of Solomon. God dropped one thousand and five songs down into the heart of Solomon, but of these, only five, comprising the Song of Solomon, have been preserved and have found a place in Holy Scripture. Inspiration named it "The Song of songs." Just as the "Holy of holies" was the Holiest place of all, just as the "Heaven of the heavens" is the highest Heaven of all, just as the "King of kings" is the greatest King of all, so the "Song of songs" is above and beyond all the songs that have ever come from human heart and human lips.

God's meaning of a "song" is "message, revelation". All songs are meant to convey a message. Man calls *anything* a song, any weird beat, the ba-ba-bu of the jungle is merchandised as a song. In the Book of Revelation we read of a "new song" – bespeaking a NEW MESSAGE, a NEW REVELATION, a NEW EXPERIENCE in God. The "Song of songs" doesn't just contain a revelation, it *is* THE REVELATION OF REVELATIONS, the MESSAGE OF MESSAGES. This is the Song that is above all other songs; a Song sent down from the courts of Heaven, from the throne of God; a strain from the celestial choir. This is the ineffable, preeminent Song; ineffable because it is of the ineffable love and relation between Christ and His bride. Preeminent because it is of Him who is "The Head of the body, the Church;" because it is of Him, "Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell."

In chapter four of this lovely Song there is a beautiful passage in which the Bridegroom calls to the bride, imploring, "Come with Me from Lebanon, My spouse, with Me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Herman, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards." Lebanon was a border mountain between the enemy's country and the Promised Land, and it was never conquered by the Hebrews. It is symbolic of the spiritual borderland between the world of darkness and the glories of Eden; between flesh and spirit; between half-heartedness and abandonment to God; between carnality and spirituality; between the realm of death and the fullness of His incorruptible life. As has been said: "It is too high for

earth and too low for heaven.” These border mountains were infested with wild beasts, which lurked in the hiding-places of the clefts and rocks, ready to spring out upon the unwary and belated traveler. They were filled with dangers from lions and leopards, from chasms and precipices.

The lion is the symbol of the enemy as a roaring, open foe, going about seeking whom he may devour; strong, courageous, but bitter and full of open hatred toward God and man. The leopard is the symbol of the enemy, as a subtle, fierce, swift foe, moving against the spiritual life of God’s people. In Revelation 13:2, the leopard is used as an emblem of the antichrist spirit. It is in the borderlands, the enemy pushes the fiercest warfare that he may capture and destroy those who are escaping “from the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

He never pursues and attacks those who are in the world and have no desire to escape; neither can he follow those who hasten beyond the borderlands and border mountains to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, to which God is calling his chosen ones. It is against those who linger between the world and the Kingdom of God, that the enemy as the lion and leopard, directs his efforts. The enemy always attacks the weak child of God who is bewildered and distressed and does not have a deep and abiding relationship with Christ, and who is easily unsettled. Have you noticed that the enemy never comes and tries to unsettle you along the lines of Truth where you are firmly established, and the areas of living where you have victory? Ah – there is a realm where the lion and the leopard have not trodden! If you will examine the places in your life where you do not live triumphantly, and where you are the most beset by the enemy concerning the Truth of God, you will find you are still in the borderland and have not gone on in the knowledge of God and His great plan and purposes. You have not gone over upon God’s ground and, by faith, planted your feet there, with the determination to hold all you tread upon. As you do this, you will find the enemy has retreated from that place, and has begun an attack at some other point.

In the natural, mountains once crossed do not face us again; but spiritually, these mountains of decision, which lie between God’s best and compromise, are continually facing us in realm after realm. At every step and point of decision, in every experience and circumstance, the call of God to come away with Him, is as urgent as it was the first time He called us. Even after we leave the high peaks and ranges of the border mountains, it is surprising how many foothills there are before we are clear of the borderland; and we are not safe until we have left even the foothills. Many times the enemy makes sudden sallies and carries a belated traveler back to the highest peak of bewilderment and indecision.

The Bridegroom would not have His beloved loiter in these mountains; He calls her to come with Him that she may possess ALL OF THAT WHICH HE HAS PREPARED FOR HER. He has translated her out of darkness into His marvelous light, out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light; and He would not have her lingering in the questionable region that separates light from darkness. He woos her to hasten in the race, by inviting her to look from these high passes and behold the glorious Paradise of God shining bright before her, the land of the fullness of the glory of the Lord where man walks in the image of God.

It is not enough to have visions of the High Calling of God in Christ. It is not enough to have visions of the life of sonship to God. It is not enough to have visions of a realm of perfection and glory where the carnal mind is exchanged for the mind of Christ and death is swallowed up of His life. Visions are not possession; and though they may be from God, they are only given to encourage us to hasten our footsteps that we may enter in. It is not enough for us to leave the

world and religious Babylon and begin the journey; we must hasten on to the end and finish our course even to the last step.

How many who start on the journey, settle down in these border mountains! How many settle for something better than what God called them out of, but LESS THAN WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN CALLED TO! Ah, yes, this borderland is an alluring place, a subtle experience, a crafty and cunning temptation. It is the territory between Babylon and Mount Zion where are felt the powers of both, but in the mixture neither are fully experienced. Those who abide here settle down comfortably in some “New Testament Church” order, with shepherds, gifts, and forms of worship – and fail to GO ON! These concern themselves with the “first principles” of doctrines, baptisms, laying on of hands, etc. and lay these foundations over and over, refusing to LEAVE THEM in order to GO ON TO PERFECTION.

The borderlands are a dangerous place for all who SETTLE THERE. If they are not devoured by the enemy that lurks there, they eventually retrace their steps and are found in the world from whence they came. Ah, we praise God for these borderlands, for it is needful that we PASS THROUGH them, but *pass through we must!* The mountain vision of a distant land of beauty and sunshine does not feed nor warm the one who sees it. Moses did not go over into Canaan, though for forty years he bore the children of Israel as a nursing mother bears a child upon her bosom, and stood between God and His people as the mouthpiece of God. God took Moses up on the top of Mount Pisgah and let him view the land, but He told Moses that he could not go over and possess it. The sight was, no doubt, beautiful to this servant of God; and yet how was he profited by the milk and honey, which flowed in the land that he beheld?

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

There were some among the disciples, who were privileged to behold the glory of the heavenly Garden of God, and the glorious One who is Lord of it. Shortly before Jesus accomplished His decease, He took Peter, James and John up into a mountain apart from the others: “And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became glistening, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them.” Peter, in speaking of this ineffable experience said, “We were eye witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father glory and honor, when there was borne such a voice to Him by the majestic Glory, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount.”

Though Peter, James and John beheld the glory of Christ’s Sonship and heard the voice of the Father witnessing to Him, they could not go with Him at this time. Before they could go in to the glory of sonship to God they had a course to run, they had a ministry to fulfill, they had a fight to fight, they had a faith to keep even unto death. Only when they had done these things, could they enter into this glory, which they beheld in a measure upon the Mount of Transfiguration. So

it is with us. How beautiful is that land of far distances! Our souls are ravished by the revelations of our high calling, which we see while upon this high elevation, caught up in the Spirit. But we must come down and hasten over the path that leads to the possession of all we have seen, and all that God has offered us. There is no working of the enemy so treacherous as the working of deception that would make us mistake for POSSESSION the great REVELATIONS God gives of sonship and the Kingdom of God and our High Calling in Him.

Truly, this is the enemy as a treacherous leopard, deceiving the unwary soul. If the deception is not perceived in time, that soul becomes puffed-up with a lot of HEAD-KNOWLEDGE and SELF-SATISFACTION, which is fatal to receiving that which has been revealed. Better would it be to not have any revelations, than to mistake them for land possessed; for some who steadily obey the Lord and follow Him without such revelations, will reach the goal; while the others may not.

How the Lord woos His chosen ones to come after Him! From those high border places over which we must go to come into the land, He lets us look upon His Garden. He allows us to overlook the high terraces of the Paradise of God, and oft times we catch glimpses of the Forerunner who has entered there for us. With that vision permeating our hearts, we hasten onward!

Though my natural eyes have not beheld the sacred glories of Eden, I can think of nothing more wonderful than to have my spiritual eyes opened, and I now attest that the eyes of my understanding have been transfixed as they have caught glimpses of the effulgent glory of that realm of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE. Though my natural feet have not trod upon the sacred ground of the heavenly land, I bear witness that in spirit I have entered and now stand enraptured upon its hills of splendor, beauty, glory and power. Only soul and body remain without, now to be transformed as by the purifying wind of His Holy Spirit He sweeps away as clouds of useless dust the earthiness of this carnal realm to which they have so long been bound. Arise, oh man! and enter in; for an entrance has been opened by our blessed Lord for the WHOLE MAN. Arise, oh sons of God, shake off the clinging dust of this low realm, and let us RETURN TO PARADISE!

## **JUSTIFIED!!!**

Old Adam, the flesh, the carnal mind will never pass through the portals of Eden. The New Creation Man is he who enters and he enters with no dread of the Cherubim and the flaming sword upon him, for he is fully JUSTIFIED. There can be NO OBJECTION to his entrance, for justification is being DECLARED RIGHTEOUS. "Therefore by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (declared righteous) in His sight" (Rom. 3:20). The fact that men could not justify themselves by works was demonstrated by Israel under their Law Covenant, and proves that this wrong or sin was in the very natures of men, untamed by the law, therefore NO LAW could ever bring them to the point of being DECLARED RIGHTEOUS for "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Justification is neither forgiveness nor pardon. Forgiveness, of necessity, is a recognition of guilt – but covered by mercy. To forgive means to overlook an offence and to give up the desire to punish. Without guilt THERE CAN BE NO FORGIVENESS! Nor does justification mean to make righteous; this, too, would be a recognition of guilt, unrighteousness, and thus justification would be a correcting of an unrighteous state, not a declaration of righteousness. No one is justified by the law for the law CONDEMNS, and condemnation is antithesis of justification. "We are justified

by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law” (Gal. 2:16), for “there is therefore now *NO CONDEMNATION* to them that are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

It may be shown by contrasting CONDEMNATION with JUSTIFICATION that both acts are judicial and not executive. The act of granting “pardon” is an executive act, the act of a ruler – president, king, governor etc. – who grants reprieve to one pronounced “guilty” by a judge or jury simply because it pleases him to do so. He thereby restores to society one who is still JUDICIALLY GUILTY, yet free to resume his place in society as a normal citizen. “Justification,” on the other hand, is the act of a judge, a forensic act, in which a judge pronounces the person arraigned as FREE FROM GUILT and entitled to be treated as righteous according to the law. If “to condemn” does not mean “to make evil” then “to justify” does not mean “to make good”. Therefore, since condemnation is judicial, so, also, justification. When the Bible says, “God *justifies* the believer,” we are not at liberty to say that it means that He either pardons, forgives, or sanctifies him. It means, and can only mean that He pronounces him JUST – without fault.

Justification must not be confused with sanctification. Justification does not bring about reformation, or a change of character, causing those who were “bad” to become “good”. It is a declarative act on the part of God in His judicial role as Judge, and not in His executive role as Sovereign. It is a forensic act in which the Lord declares that the accused is NOT GUILTY, and the accused cannot be condemned but must be granted an acquittal, declaring the one arraigned to be entitled to all the blessings, benefits and rights of the Kingdom of God!

Ah – to be justified means to be ACQUITTED. Acquitted means to be declared by a court of law NOT GUILTY – EXONERATED! Justification means that you really DIDN'T DO IT! Thus, justification relates not to forgiveness or pardon for the errors and sins of the OLD NATURE, but to the STANDING AND STATE OF BEING OF THE NEW CREATION. The New Man, born from above, *really* DIDN'T DO IT! The New Man is CHRIST IN YOU, the divine nature, the image of God. The old man is declared DEAD, the New Man is positively NOT GUILTY, therefore we are JUSTIFIED before God, acquitted, and the case dismissed! God delivers us from all that we are in the first Adam, that we may be all that is true in the last Adam. So, “AS HE IS, so are we in this world” (I Jn. 4:17), and “If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is BORN OF HIM” (I Jn. 2:29). Furthermore, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (I Jn. 3:9).

Therefore, “...since we are justified – acquitted, declared righteous, and given a right standing with God – through faith, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... therefore, since we are now justified – acquitted – by Christ’s blood, how much more certain is it that we shall be saved by Him from the indignation and wrath of God” (Rom. 5:1,9, Amplified Bible).

Yes, old Adam was pronounced GUILTY and banished from Eden’s fair Garden. But new Adam is declared RIGHTEOUS and may, therefore, stride boldly back into Paradise! We are now JUSTIFIED to RETURN TO PARADISE...

**THE END**

**Of the Study of**

**Echos From Eden**

