

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

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“He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”(John 14:12)

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”(1 Cor. 2:9,10)

PREFACE

This book was first written in the spring of 1951, and published a few weeks later. It seemed to lay almost dormant for a number of years, for great revivals were sweeping the country, and the spiritual drought of many decades had given way to times of refreshing. God had much more for His people, but as long as the blessings continued to flow very few seemed to be interested in anything more. But then there came a famine in the land, and once again God was able to speak to the hearts of His people. In spite of all the wonderful things that were taking place in the Church, God's people were beginning to realize that something very vital was lacking; and many began to lose interest in the spectacular. The big tents were folded up and the people began to gather together just to "hear" what God was saying. There had developed a new hunger to know God's ways, and a new thirsting after God and righteousness.

This is not to say that God stopped working in the realm of the miraculous, for He has indeed been faithful in pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh even as He promised He would do in the last days. But in spite of the miraculous many of God's people have become aware of the fact that we have not been able to meet the challenge of this hour. And for every victory that we may seem to have entered into there remain evident areas of great distress and great defeat on every hand. The Church has still not become that vital, living manifestation of Christ in the earth that she should be. Our prayer is that God's people everywhere might quickly come to the overwhelming realization that we are still far, far from God's desire for us, and that there might come into our midst a genuine spirit of repentance before the Day of the Lord breaks forth upon us. For truly we are very close to that hour. It is harvest-time, and the Husbandman walks through the fields, examining the fruit to see how good it is, and if it is ready yet for the sickle. For in this hour He is looking for one thing, and for one thing only...and that is, "the precious fruit of the earth." That is why He is faithful to send the "latter rain" where it is needed, and faithful also to send the sunshine and the heat and the drought, to hasten the maturing of "the full corn in the ear." In harvest-time He desires one thing, and one thing only, and that is the FRUIT. In harvest-time everything else is chaff!

And what is "FRUIT"? Let any gardener answer that question. For certainly it is not just gathering what you can in a certain season called Autumn. Certainly it is not just coming to the end of a long, dry summer, and getting ready for winter. From the time He planted the seed the good gardener has been waiting patiently to receive something from His field that will be equally as good as the precious seed that He planted. Now the Lord is a good Gardener, and He is the Lord of the Harvest. And He cannot be satisfied until He comes into His garden and discovers the FRUIT that corresponds to the Seed that He became in the earth when He "fell into the ground and died."

And so beloved, let us remember that harvest-time is threshing-time. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you...and let us not be discouraged when we see all the devastation that is taking place, and will yet take place, in the political, the economic, and the religious world. For all must be crushed in pieces in this day when God is shaking "not the earth only, but also the heaven..." And let us remember that He is doing this for His own glory, and for your sake and mine. We have a kingdom which cannot be shaken; and we must be loosed from all the entanglements of this present world system. God has been very patient with us as He

prepared our hearts, planted the good seed, weeded the soil, watered it with the showers of heaven, and then sent the sunshine to dry up the stalk and to mature the fruit. “Be ye also patient, establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

August, 1980 --The author

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We believe the hour has come when the saints should know and understand, at least in part, the meaning of Israel’s annual Feasts, for they constitute a very beautiful type and pattern for the Church. There is a time and a season for the proclamation of every Biblical truth, and when God’s hour of revelation has struck, the Spirit of God is gloriously present to remove the veil from God’s secrets and initiate His people into the mysteries of God. Such is the office work of the Holy Spirit, to lead and guide the saints into all truth, and to reveal the things which are to come. (Jn. 16:13). A consecrated and holy walk in the Spirit, therefore, is the only genuine basis we have for a proper understanding of the Scriptures. Without that consecration and that walk in the Spirit we might acquire a considerable understanding of theology, but it will be theology devoid of Truth. After all, theology is the study about God and about Truth; whereas Truth is a living, vital, powerful demonstration of the Spirit of God, pulsating with Divine life and power and wisdom and knowledge.

JESUS HIMSELF, THE TRUTH

When Jesus declared so emphatically, “I am the Truth,” He there and then completely demolished the idea the Truth has anything in common with creeds and doctrines and theories about God and spiritual things. And not only so, for if Christ is Truth, then Truth comes to us in garments of humility and meekness and will find little acceptance at the hands of the learned or the ecclesiastical. It is strange but true that those who lead the masses in the religious realm are those who cast the Truth aside when He knocks at their door and asks for admission. There is only one answer to this strange state of affairs, and it is this: Ecclesiastical success has developed into pride of heart, and with that pride has come that Laodicean spirit so prevalent in all evangelical circles today: “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing...” (Rev. 3:17). Instead of hungering and thirsting after God and righteousness, we find on every hand the boastful claims of various sects as to how much Truth they have, and how much knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Perhaps it is needless to say that such boastful claims merely establish their Laodicean condition, and hinder them from taking their places as overcomers on the throne of Christ. The people of God have yet to learn that the Kingdom belongeth to those who are and have nothing, those who are poor in spirit, and such as hunger and thirst after righteousness. God exalteth the meek and lowly to inherit the throne of princes,

and the lofty and noble He sendeth away with empty hands. May God help us each one, as His people, to humble ourselves and pray and seek His face--and above all things to recognize how little we have of Truth and Righteousness, that we might be prepared to receive bountiful spiritual blessings at the hand of Him who giveth liberally to all men and upbraideth not.

GREAT THINGS AHEAD

Truly the Lord hath prepared great and mighty things for His people: things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man. (1Cor. 2:9). If God's true children would only believe this one Scripture with all their hearts, how greatly it would help to release the riches of Heaven, and unlock the flood-gates of Glory! We know, of course, that Christians everywhere loudly profess to believe this, as well as the rest of the Bible; but in actuality they do not believe it. Yes, they will acknowledge that God has some great and mighty things prepared for us when we get to Heaven, but Paul declares in the following verse that these unseen, unheard-of, and unthought-of things are "revealed...by the Spirit," and not by way of rapture or death. (vs. 10).

Let us, therefore, give all diligence to enter into the realm of the Spirit, which realm constitutes the real heritage of the saints. Truly the heritage is ours for the possessing. And if no man from the ascension of Christ until now has entered into it, it still does not make any difference. The fact remains, it is ours for conquest if we can believe for it and receive it. The universal Church has rejected the possibility of possessing it; that is true; but the history of the Church is by no means the pattern of spiritual attainment. Paul did not fully apprehend it either; that is true. But he beheld the glory of it, nevertheless, like Moses who stood on Mount Nebo and viewed the promised land. And furthermore, he pressed forward with all diligence by the Spirit "if by any means" he could apprehend it, and confessed that he had not done so. (Phil. 3:12,13).

Thank God, however, for the assurance that some are going to possess the land! God is not going to close this dispensation until some really enter in and possess their heritage in Christ Jesus. Paul declared, "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein." (Heb. 4:6). The first generation that came out of Egypt by Moses failed to enter in because of unbelief, and God decreed that they would die in the wilderness. However, He had already sworn that Abraham's seed would possess the land, and therefore He raised up a new generation who should go in and possess what their fathers saw but refused to appropriate. And they did. God's purposes cannot miscarry. He will have a people who shall believe their God and possess their possessions. The early generation of Spirit-filled people at the turn of the century took their journey from the blighting wilderness of denominationalism and encamped at their Kadesh-Barnea on the every doorstep of Canaan--but they too failed to enter in because of unbelief. Some saw the vision; the majority did not; and they perished in the wilderness. True, there were a few Calebs and Joshuas who rested in the promises of God and continued to look forward to better things--and God will certainly vindicate His word and His oath, and cause them to possess the land with the new generation that God is now raising up. But as a whole, the people whom God chose from amongst the denominations and called apart into a new fellowship in the Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost--they failed to enter into the land, denounced those who exhorted the people to do so--and turned back into the wilderness like their predecessors in Israel.

As surely, therefore, as God's Word is true and His oath immutable--so surely is the Lord now raising up a new generation who shall be empowered to take the promised land of spiritual power and authority, and enter into the realm of the Spirit of God. "Some must enter therein..." If this new generation withdraws from the promises in the face of violent opposition, it too will perish in the wilderness, and God will wait for still another generation to take the land. Because, "some must enter therein..." His Word has declared it, and it must come to pass. We feel confident, however, that this time God's people will not fail; that in this great hour God Himself will intervene in wonderful sovereignty on behalf of those who see the vision, and will take them through to complete and glorious victory. We cannot help but believe that this new generation will, by God's Grace, cross over Jordan and possess the Kingdom prepared for the "little flock" from the foundation of the world. The powers of heaven are being shaken, according to the prophetic Word. Great and momentous spiritual battles are being fought and won in heavenly places. Spiritual hosts of wickedness are beginning to feel the impact of the saints who are pressing in by the Spirit and beginning to possess their possessions in "the heavnlies." And above all, the saints of God are receiving gifts of the Spirit, the gifts are developing into ministries of the Spirit--and these ministries constitute God's only method "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4:12,13).

Thank God for that inborn confidence and assurance in the hearts of His people that the "hour has come" for the unveiling of the Sons of God; that the eternal purposes of God in the Church are about to be revealed; that we stand now on the brink of Jordan prepared and ready to follow the priests of the Lord and the ark of the covenant into a new experience in Christ; down into death and humiliation and abasement in Jordan, but up on the other side into life and victory and authority in Canaan. Let us constantly bear in mind the rules and principles of Christian warfare; namely, that we conquer by yielding, we receive by giving, we overcome by being defeated, and we live by dying. There is no other way except the way of the Cross. The Cross of Christ stands out on the horizons of time and eternity, not only as the means of pardon from sin and the gateway to Eternal Life--but as the one and only principle of Christian conduct. "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." (Matt. 16:24,25).

THREE GREAT FEASTS FOR THE CHURCH

We are confident that the hour has come in the history of the Church when Israel's annual cycle of Feasts is about to be fulfilled in the midst of the saints. And inasmuch as the natural observance of the Feasts constitutes a type and pattern of great and momentous spiritual events, it is vitally important that we should understand their meaning. The Scriptures reveal the fact that there were three annual festival seasons in Israel's worship. Other days were added in later years to commemorate certain events, but according to the original Levitical pattern there were three occasions during the year when all Israel was called upon to observe a national religious festival. And inasmuch as the Church of Christ is the true spiritual Israel (a fact which we will establish from the Scriptures later.) and what happened to natural Israel constituted merely a type and shadow of what should happen to spiritual Israel--we can derive great spiritual benefit and

comfort by studying the types in the Old Testament, and then discovering by the Spirit wherein they apply to us on a higher and vaster spiritual plane. For the scriptures make it very clear that “all these things happened unto them for ensamples (as a figure, or type): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1Cor. 10:11).

And not only so. For we have abundant evidence from the New Testament to establish the fact that two of the three annual Feasts of Israel’s worship have already been fulfilled in Christ and His Church: fulfilled, moreover, in a way so manifestly clear from the Scriptures that we do not hesitate to declare that we are now on the verge of the fulfillment of the last annual Feast of the Lord. If God declares that the Old Testament is to be fulfilled in Christ and His Church, that is certainly sufficient for us. But when we can actually look into the New Testament and see the manner in which two of the three Feasts have already been gloriously fulfilled, what great consolation and comfort it is for the saints who are looking forward to the fulfillment of the last Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles.

In this study, therefore, we wish to present some of the fundamental principles concerning the great events transpiring at this present season, and mention other events that are yet to transpire, by way of fulfilling the Old Testament Feasts. We appeal entirely to the Word of God and the Spirit of God; for it is evident that the natural man cannot receive, much less teach, the things of the Spirit of God. If it is God’s Word, then it is infinite and eternal, and far beyond any human understanding; and only the Spirit can reveal and quicken it to us.

We are aware that we have only touched the fringe of Truth relative to this great subject which we have undertaken to explore; and we know that when the Scriptures are openly and manifestly fulfilled before our very eyes--the unveiled Truth and Glory of the Feasts of the Lord shall far transcend anything that we have ever imagined in our contemplation and meditation of the Word. But this, indeed, is cause for great encouragement--knowing that in the hour of the great Unveiling of the Sons of God we shall see and hear and perceive and experience a power and a glory such as we have never imagined to be within the realm of possibility.

May God, therefore, give us guidance by His Spirit to see and understand and contemplate wondrous things out of His Word--the entrance of which giveth light to such as are in darkness, and the appropriation of which giveth understanding to the simple, wisdom to the foolish, and illumination to the blind. We care not for established creeds or doctrines or theological disputes, nor for the marginal notes we find in our various expository and reference Bibles. God has spoken, and that is sufficient. If Christians are content to abide by the revelation they have received at the hands of great men of the past--let them be content. But God is now leading His people onward and upward to higher heights, to greater depths, to vaster expanses of Truth and Glory than the saints have ever enjoyed or appropriated in the past. Therefore we fix our hopes and our eyes upon the God of increasing revelation, even on Him who is ...Able to do ...Exceedingly ...Abundantly ...Above all ...That we ask ...Or Think ...According to the power ...That worketh in us.

Let others look at the apostasy of a corrupt church system; but let us behold the unfolding glory of the true Church, and exult with the Apostle Paul, in the face of all opposition; “Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus through all ages, world without end. Amen.” (Eph. 3:20,21).

MANY GROUPS IN THE CHURCH

We make no particular attempt in this study to distinguish between the Church, the Body, the Bride, the Sons, and so forth. That there are many different groups which may be included in the word "Church" is quite evident from the Scriptures, and from Creation itself. But the Lord knoweth them that are His in each particular group, and in His own good time it will be manifest. A building in its formative stages appears to be but one vast conglomeration of scaffolds, framework, brick and steel--and it is not too evident how many rooms there will be, and for what purpose the rooms are intended. But in the day of its completion it is all quite evident. So shall it be with the Church of Christ. For there are celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; one glory of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars--and even one star differeth from another star in glory. So shall it be in the day of Christ, when each man is revealed in His own order according to the plan and purpose of God.

THE CHURCH IN OLD TESTAMENT TYPE AND PROPHECY

Before we begin to deal with the typical significance of the various Feasts of the Lord, it will be necessary for us to establish the fact that the Old Testament, in type and prophecy, is applicable to the Church of Jesus Christ on a spiritual plane. It is quite common among all evangelical circles to hear sermons which are based upon the Old Testament and expounded in the light of the New; but there are so many who would insist on a literal and natural interpretation if and when a spiritual interpretation would conflict with their theological views.

For example, there is no question as to the meaning of the Passover. It is established beyond all question that Jesus Christ is our Passover, who has been sacrificed for us. Then we have the type of the Unleavened Bread--and Paul exhorts the saints to keep this Feast, "not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1Cor. 5:8). All Christians are agreed on this interpretation. Next in order is the waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits before the Lord. That too, is generally recognized as having been fulfilled in Christ on resurrection morning: "Christ, the firstfruits..." Then comes Pentecost, occurring fifty days after the Passover sabbath--and the typical significance of this Feast is definitely established in the New Testament, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the waiting disciples to bestow upon them the promise of the Father. (Acts 2). But for some strange reason this pattern of Biblical exposition is forsaken, and men seek to postpone the last three events comprising the Feast of Tabernacles to some future age, and to a people other than the Church. And whereas the first four events are generally taught as being applicable to the Church in a spiritual way, the last three are given a most literal and natural and earthly interpretation, and consequently the real spiritual meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles is completely obscured and lost. It is essential therefore that the saints know for a certainty that the Old Testament was written for us, and that the truths which once applied to an earthly and natural Israel, are now gloriously applicable to a heavenly and spiritual Israel, only on a much higher and much more glorious spiritual plane. Much could be said concerning this, but we believe a few Scriptures will suffice for the purpose of this study:

Rom. 4:13-16. Here it is clearly and emphatically declared that the Abrahamic promises were not only to the circumcision, but also to the uncircumcision; and in either case to men of faith. Neither the circumcision nor the uncircumcision had any share in the promises of the Old Testament, except they were men of faith: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law; but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."

Rom. 9:6-8. Again the apostle stresses the fact that it is the children of promise, not the children of the flesh, who constitute the promised seed to whom the covenants apply. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Gal. 3:22. "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

Eph. 2:12-14. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."

Eph. 3:3,6. "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote afore in few words...) that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

1 Pet. 1:9-12. This is a most conclusive passage as to verifying what we have said concerning the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the Church. Here Peter plainly declares that the prophets wrote primarily of the grace that was to come unto us, and the glory that was to follow Christ's sufferings. He goes so far as to say that the prophets were not ministering to their day and age, but "unto us..." and that the things they prophesied are now proclaimed unto the saints under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. This is what he says, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (he) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into."

HOW THE APOSTLES ESTABLISHED CHURCH TRUTH

Many, many more scriptures could be quoted to confirm what we have been saying. But perhaps the most conclusive evidence of all is the fact that the apostles, in their writings, refer constantly to the Old Testament to prove the truths they are declaring to the Church, and make innumerable quotations from all portions of the Law and the Prophets to confirm their doctrines of Christ and the Church. Nor do they make any apologies whatsoever, or even intimate that they are taking an Old Testament Scripture out of its context. Therefore if it should seem strange to some that we should quote from the Law and the Prophets to confirm some spiritual truth concerning the Body of Christ--let the reader take careful note when reading the New Testament, as to how the apostles applied the Old Testament to the Church which Christ built, and applied to spiritual Israel what the prophets originally prophesied concerning natural Israel.

THE TRUE ISRAEL

The whole New Testament is literally filled with direct quotations from the Old, by way of establishing Church truth, and the saints of God as the true Israel. Notice this remarkable passage in Romans: "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved,

which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.” (Rom. 9:24-26). Paul has just referred to Jews and Gentiles alike as being the “vessels of glory,” and then he quoted this passage from Hosea to prove what he said. Bear in mind that Paul referred to them as the “vessels of glory” taken from Jew and Gentile alike. Then let us refer to the passage he quoted from in Hosea. Here we discover that the people Hosea wrote about constituted the true Israel. Without the further revelation given to the apostle Paul, one would never have discerned that Hosea was actually including the Gentiles in his prophecy concerning Israel’s blessedness. First of all he declares God’s displeasure with Israel, and affirms that God will not be their God: “Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.” That seems to be conclusive: natural Israel is rejected, and they are no longer God’s people. However, in the very next verse the prophet declares: “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.” (See Hos. 1:9,10). How could Hosea declare Israel had been rejected in vs. 9, then in vs. 10 affirm that the children of Israel should become as the sand of the sea? The apostle Paul quotes this passage from Hosea, and explains why the apparent contradiction. The answer is clear: God had now received the Gentiles into the Olive Tree of Israel. “Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles...As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people...” This clearly explains why Israel could be rejected on the one hand, and at the same time become as measureless as the sands of the sea. The natural branches were broken off, but spiritual branches were grafted in from the Gentile wild-olive--and the tree of Israel retained its glory. In fact, it became even more glorious as a result of Israel’s rejection--it brought to pass even “the reconciling of the world.” (Rom. 11:15).

Let us bear these truths in mind, therefore, as we study the various types and prophecies of the Old Testament--for unless we understand that the Bible, the whole Bible, was written for us, we are bound to deny ourselves the glory which God intended we should derive from the Word. “Unto us,” the prophets ministered (1Pet. 1:12). The history of Israel constituted them as “ensamples (or types)” for us, and the records “are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1Cor. 10:11). The Law, we are told, expressed “a shadow of (the) good things to come, and not the very image of the things.” (Heb. 10:1). And the saints of the New Testament are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God...” (1Pet. 2:9,10). Here again a simple reference to the Old Testament shows us clearly that the apostle was referring to the true Israel. (See Ex. 19:6, Hos. 2:23).

That God will yet restore the natural Israel that was cast off, and graft back into the Olive Tree the branches which were cut off in unbelief--that is true, and the glory which shall accompany such a transformation is beyond words to express. The apostle simply describes this revival in four brief words: “Life from the dead...” (Rom. 11:15). When and in what manner this shall be fulfilled, God shall manifest in His own good time, and it does not concern us so far as this study is concerned. But the fact remains, Israel never was completely cast off, for “God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” (Rom. 11:2). Only this disobedient were cast off; the believing Gentiles in turn were grafted into the same Olive Tree, and became “with them” partakers “of the root and fatness of the olive tree.” (Rom. 11:17).

Let us glory in our heritage, therefore, and in the fact that we who once had no share in the covenants of promise, and were without God and without hope in the world, are now “fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (Eph. 2:12,19,20).

In the following pages, therefore we have no hesitancy what-so-ever in quoting profusely from the Old Testament and New, by way of establishing these glorious Church truths. If the apostle Paul was “rightly dividing the Word of truth” when he made some eighty-five references to the Old Testament in the one letter he wrote to the Romans, by way of establishing the Gospel of the Grace of God and the doctrines of the Church; and at least eighteen such references in the short letter he wrote to the Galatians; and well over one hundred such references in the epistle to the Hebrews; and if Peter would dare make some thirty references or quotations from the Old Testament in his first epistle; and if the beloved John should make direct quotations from, or references to, practically four hundred Old Testament Scriptures in the Book of Revelation: then we care not in the least if orthodox theology forbids us to take Old Testament type and prophecy and apply them to the Church. The apostles have already done so under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and that is sufficient for men who believe in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

THE OLD, THE PATTERN OF THE NEW

There is a simple order that God has established relative to the progression of Truth and to the creation itself, and it is this: “Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” (1Cor. 15:46). This principle is evident everywhere in the Scriptures. First the old creation, then the New. First darkness, then light. First a garden in Eden and the tree of life, then the Garden of God and the real Tree of Life. First Adam, then the Last Adam. First the Passover, then the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. First Law, and then Grace. First the typical Feast of Tabernacles, then the unveiled glory of God in the spiritual Feast of Tabernacles. And the wonder of it all is this, that the end of the Old is the beginning of the New; and out of that which is destined to pass away there cometh forth that which is destined to remain.

And so it was that God called light out of darkness. It came to pass also that from the first Adam there came Christ, destined not only to become the Last Adam (the last of Adam, the last of the old race), but the Second Man (the beginning of the second creation). Likewise, the Last Passover was the occasion of the true Passover that was sacrificed for us. And when Christ died on the Cross, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain--that was the end of the Law, but it was also the beginning of Grace. God always “taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.” (Heb. 10:9).

It is important, therefore, that we should always observe that which is first, and natural, and from the natural learn to discern in what way it typifies the spiritual. If we read of the natural Passover, God intends that from the various circumstances and rituals connected with the natural we should hear what He would say to us concerning the spiritual Passover, even Christ. If it is the Feast of Weeks, then in this God would teach us concerning the true Feast of Weeks, even Pentecost. If it is the Day of Atonement, then let us learn to discern the pattern of the true Atonement. And so likewise, if the Feast of Tabernacles is being observed, it is for the purpose that we might learn great and mighty spiritual truths from the natural circumstances and events

transpiring at the Feast. If we bear this in mind we will receive a mine of wealth from the various occasions in the Old Testament and New when the Feast of Tabernacles was observed. There are three occasions in particular that we shall refer to, as having a most remarkable application to the spiritual Feast of Tabernacles which lies just ahead of us. These three occasions are: the dedication of Solomon's Temple, the restoration of the temple following the captivity, and the presence of Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles in the time of His earthly ministry. These three observances of the Feast will be dealt with in detail in the last three chapters of the book. The particular characteristics of all three events must find their glorious fulfillment, only on a much higher and vaster spiritual plane than when they were first observed--in this great hour in which we live.

THE ORDER OF THE FEASTS

As we begin this study, we would exhort the reader to carefully read all that we have to say in this first section of the book, for it is written to form a foundation, as it were, for some of the glorious truths which are to follow. We realize that much of the information that is given concerning dates and seasons may appear insignificant and unimportant, but they are necessary, nevertheless, in order that the reader may more readily appreciate the glorious truths concerning the third and last Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles.

The three great annual Feast of the Lord in Israel's worship are set forth in considerable detail in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. In a very real sense these Feasts prefigure and typify the whole Church age beginning with the Cross and consummating in the manifestation of the Sons of God and the glorious display of God's power and glory. It is, of course, this great unveiling that we are chiefly concerned about--for the eternal purposes of God begin to be accomplished in that glorious event. But we cannot have a proper understanding of the end, unless we know somewhat of the beginning. We cannot appreciate the Glory, unless we learn about the Cross. We cannot enter the Kingdom, unless we first learn obedience by the things which we suffer. The Feasts therefore begin with the Passover, and end with the Feast of Tabernacles; and in between we have the various steps and degrees by which the Church is brought out of death and into life, out of rejection and into exaltation, out of suffering and into the Kingdom. The three Feasts in Israel's annual cycle of religious ceremonies were:

The Feast of the Passover.

The Feast of Pentecost.

The Feast of Tabernacles.

These three Feasts, moreover, consisted of seven major events, three of which comprised the Feast of the Passover, then one stood alone--Pentecost, and then the remaining three events comprise the Feast of Tabernacles. A brief summary of the Feasts with their various festival events may be helpful:

I The Feast of the Passover, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

This Feast consisted of:

The Passover. (See Ex. 12:1-23; Lev. 23:4,5; Deut. 16:1-3).

The Unleavened Bread. (See Ex. 12:18; 23:15; Lev. 23:6-8; Deut. 16:3-4).

The Sheaf of Firstfruits. (See Lev. 23:10-14).

II The Feast of Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, of Harvest, of Firstfruits.

(See Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:15-21; Deut. 16:9-12; Acts 2:1).

III The Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Booths, or of Ingathering.

This Feast consisted of:

The Blowing of Trumpets. (See Lev. 23:24-25).

The Day of Atonement. (See Lev. 16; 23:27-32).

The Feast of Tabernacles. (See Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:34-44; Deut. 16:13-15).

All Israel's worship seemed to center around these three great annual Feasts. They were the occasions of great convocations, the keeping of sabbaths, the eating of certain foods, the performance of certain ordinances and rituals, and a time of great consecration and sanctification:

“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty.” (Deut. 16:16).

It is our intention to deal at some length with each of the seven festival events comprising the three Feasts, and to show in what manner they have been fulfilled, or shall yet be fulfilled, in the Church of Jesus Christ. Our primary purpose, of course, is to present the last great Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, in the light of the New Testament--and especially in the light of what God is now doing in the formation of His Body, the Church. For truly the Lord is moving by His Spirit, moving o'er all the earth--brooding dovelike over the distressing state of affairs existing in the Church today, that He might bring order and harmony and peace out of chaos and darkness. And as surely as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep in the beginning, and commanded light to shine out of darkness, and life to spring up out of the place of death--so surely will the voice of God once again in the ends of the ages restore the glory of Zion, and give unto her “beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”

CHAPTER 2

THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

The first Passover was observed by the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, on the eve of their departure out of the house of bondage into the wilderness. It was the evening of the fourteenth

day of the first month. God had raised up a deliverer for the people in the person of the Man Moses, and had equipped him with such power and authority in the Spirit that he was to Pharaoh even “as God.” Many and dreadful and great were the signs and wonders which were wrought by his hand, so that Egypt became utterly wasted at the hands of a God of judgment. One by one the plagues fell upon the land; and time and again Pharaoh promised to let the people go, only to harden his heart when the plague was lifted. Finally God declared His judgment upon the firstborn of all the land of Egypt--and then Egypt was literally “glad” to see the people depart, so dreadful and far-reaching was the destruction of the Almighty.

A NEW BEGINNING

“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you” (Ex. 12:1,2). As from this date Israel was to have a new calendar. It was to be the first month instead of the second, because God was going to deliver them from Egyptian bondage, and bring them into a new experience and into a new land. Israel’s old associations were to be gone forever. No longer would they serve the Egyptian taskmaster under hard bondage, but they were to serve the Lord their God. No longer were they to eat the leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt, but they would feast upon manna from heaven, and drink water out of the flinty rock. No longer would they abide in the houses of their little world in Egypt, but they would henceforth follow the cloud of glory from one place to another, from one experience to another, even from “glory to glory.” Had not the Lord plainly declared, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them.” (Ex. 3:7,8). And so, to deliver Israel from the judgment of the firstborn, and to prepare them for a new life as a separated and holy nation, God instituted the Passover. And this event would mean the preservation of Israel in the hour of God’s judgments upon the land of Egypt, and the beginning of a new era for the people of God.

So it is that the Cross of Christ becomes the beginning of a new era for the children of God. Old things begin to pass away, and all things begin to become new. The bondage of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, gives way to a liberty in the Spirit, and a life of servitude to the God of our salvation. “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” (Rom. 6:18). From the time we receive Christ as our personal Saviour, and really partake of the benefits of Calvary’s Cross--from that very hour we begin a new life in God. And whereas, we once served the enemy of our souls under cruel bondage, now we have become the voluntary bond-slaves of Christ. And after all, the only liberty man will ever find in this world is the liberty which he drives in becoming the “slave” of the Lord Jesus. Paul delighted in calling himself a “doulos,” a “bond-slave” of Christ. Man is only free when he is bound to Christ with a chain of love and friendship which neither the cares of life nor the attacks of Satan can sever.

A LAMB FOR AN HOUSE

Our Passover Lamb is sufficient for all our needs. And though men have appropriated His grace and blessing from the foundation of the world even until now--still there remaineth grace sufficient for any sinner who comes to Christ. “And God is able to make all grace abound toward

you; the ye, always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.” (2Cor. 9:8).

THE LAMB TO BE WITHOUT BLEMISH

This was necessary because it typified the true “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” (Jn. 1:29). “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 of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1Pet. 1:18,19).

THE LAMB MUST BE KILLED

Modernism will accept the Lamb of God as He teaches in the temple, lives a life of righteousness and purity, and expounds His parables. But they will have nothing to do with the Lamb who was crucified for their sins. And therefore the door of salvation is closed to them. For there is positively no acceptance for any man before God except by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and “without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Heb. 9:22).

THE BLOOD MUST BE APPLIED

It is not even sufficient that the lamb should be slain; the blood of the slain lamb must be applied to the door-posts of the house. In other words, there must be an individual and personal appropriation, by faith, of the work of the Cross. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (Mercy Seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Rom. 3:25,26).

THE FLESH MUST BE EATEN

Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.” (Jn. 6:53-55). It was a hard saying then, and it is a hard saying today. How can we eat the flesh of Christ? So reasons the natural man. But we can do so by the Spirit, through faith. We may eat His flesh in daily meditation and appropriation of the Word. We may eat His flesh in prayer and communion by the Spirit. And we may eat his flesh as we discern the Lord’s Body in the Communion. Jesus said, and incidentally it was on the occasion of the last Passover, “This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.” (Lk. 22:19). For He was the fulfillment of every Passover Lamb which was ever offered in Jewish ceremony; and the Substance having been revealed, the type has passed away.

THE PEOPLE MUST DEPART

The children of Israel were to eat the Passover lamb with their loins girded and with their shoes on their feet-ready to depart from Egypt. The moment a man receives Christ as his Passover Lamb, he must there and then be prepared to depart from the world and all of its allurements. He is not saved by works, and it is entirely unscriptural to teach holiness as the means of salvation. For it is not within the power of any man in Adam's fallen race to present himself acceptably before God. There is none righteous, no not so much as one; and by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. (See Rom. 3:9-31). He receives the efficacy of the blood, and eats of the Passover Lamb by faith--and that constitutes his salvation. But when one identifies himself with Christ he must depart from the world and its corrupting influences, and be prepared to follow his Lord in the pathway of separation and consecration. Then only, by the works of grace produced in the heart, do we behold the scriptural signs and evidences of the salvation of Christ.

THE BLOOD IS THE SIGN

"When I see the blood I will pass over you." (Ex. 12:13). For our part we must apply the blood by faith to our hearts. Our feet must be shod, and we must be ready to leave the old ways behind. We must participate in Christ, and give evidence of the fact that we are true disciples. But so far as God is concerned He beholds this one token: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." God is eternally satisfied with the work of Calvary's Cross, and we as God's children are "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:6). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2Cor. 5:21).

'Five bleeding wounds He bears,
 Received on Calvary,
 They pour effectual prayers,
 They strongly plead for me;
 Forgive him, O forgive, they cry,
 Nor let that ransomed sinner die.'

O, there are so many, many things that we have left unsaid concerning the Passover Lamb. He is the theme of the whole Bible. All spiritual blessings stem from Calvary, and all power and glory and majesty pertaineth to the Lamb that was slain, and He is therefore "Worthy...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:12).

CHAPTER 3

THE UNLEAVENED BREAD

The observance of the Unleavened Bread followed Passover and was associated with it. So much so that the two events were regarded as being one and the same Feast. We read therefore, “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.” (Lk. 22:1; Matt. 26:17). The Passover event itself was on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening. Then the Unleavened Bread continued from the fifteenth day until the twenty-first day, seven days in all.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEAVEN

As to the spiritual significance of the Unleavened Bread we are not left in doubt. Says Paul to the Corinthians, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1Cor. 5:6-8).

The penetrating and spreading characteristics of leaven make it to be a fitting type of malice and wickedness in a believer or in an assembly. Paul likens the persuasive and corrupting influence of the Judaizers upon the Galatians to “leaven.” “This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” (Gal. 5:8,9). Again, our Lord likens the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees to “leaven,” because of their evil influence. “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.” (Matt. 16:6). To observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, therefore is to live a life that is free from the corrupting influences of sin and the flesh.

HOW TO BE FREE FROM LEAVEN

When the children of Israel departed from Egypt they gathered up their dough before it was leavened, for they did not have opportunity to leaven it, “because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry.” (Ex. 12:39). Had they lingered in Egypt, they would have had plenty of opportunity to leaven their dough; but because they were thrust out in haste their bread was unleavened.

So it is with the child of God. As long as he is pressing on with God, and fleeing from the corrupting influences of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--his life is free from sin. He does not have “time” for sin to work within him. He is too busy following his God and following on in the pathway of obedience. But let him linger by the way, lose the vision of the glory that is set before him, and yearn for the good old days when he had plenty in Egypt--and leaven will begin to work afresh in his life. Let any child of God, or group of saints, lose the vision of God’s glory, and before long that man or that assembly becomes filled with the leaven of malice and wickedness. There is only one sure way by which a stream of water can be kept pure and clean--and that is by flowing. Let it be diverted into an open pit, and before long the water becomes a stagnant pool and will breed corruption and death. So it is with Truth. When an individual, and assembly, or a group of assemblies settles back in self-complacency, satisfied with their condition, and content with the thought that they have arrived at the Truth--stagnation immediately sets in, the leaven begins to function, and “malice and wickedness” characterize the whole denomination. You simply cannot expect to keep a sect clean from the corrupting influences of the flesh, because if they linger behind when the glory-cloud moves forward, they have plenty of time to leaven their dough. On the other hand, if you proceed from “glory to glory” there is no opportunity for you to become leavened.

MODERN PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

That is why Jesus warned the disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now the doctrines of the Sadducees were definitely false, for they denied the resurrection, the fact of angels and spirits, and so forth. They were the predecessors of our modern religions which have a form of godliness but “deny the power thereof.” They denied the supernatural; and we have plenty of Sadducees in the world today. But the Pharisees, on the other hand, were quite orthodox in their teachings; so much so that Jesus commanded His own disciples to observe and do what they said. (Matt. 23:3). Why then did He tell the same disciples to “beware” of their doctrine? For this simple reason: “They say, and do not.” What they said was all right, generally speaking, but their works gave the lie to their teachings. So it is with our modern Pharisees, our orthodox Christian teachers. They teach about the power of Jesus’ blood; they lift you to heights of praise as they expound the glories of the celestial, and the power of Christ’s resurrection; they speak much of the miracles of Christ, and the power of the early Church; they will expound the doctrines of healing, and miracles, and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. But “they say, and do not.” And not only that: for they condemn and denounce the man who wishes to go in and explore the glories of resurrection life and the “powers of the age to come.” They think it is all right to talk about resurrection and life and the heavenly realm--but when one suggests that this is the heritage of the saints here and now, there are loud protests from the Pharisees. Then the

leaven begins its subtle influence, and an orthodox theology develops into malice and wickedness.

O saints of God everywhere, let us launch out into the deep! Let us lift our anchor which has gripped the earth for so long--and let us become anchored to Christ in the heavens, where we ought to be anchored. For God has intended that our anchor should pass into the heavens, behind the veil, whither the forerunner has for us entered. (Heb. 6:19,20). If we are anchored to earth, and to the doctrines of men, we will be earth-bound creatures; but once we anchor to Heaven and to the Man behind the veil, we are Heaven-bound creatures--and we are constantly rising higher and higher and higher into the realms of the Spirit. Then one day, thank God!--the veil of the flesh shall be rent asunder, and we shall see Him as He is! And when we speak this way, we are not talking about physical death, nor about the rapture; but we are speaking of seeing Him "who is invisible," as Moses did of old. We shall see Him, even though the world sees Him not. Did not Jesus say, "The world seeth me no more; but ye see me..." (Jn. 14:19)? And was He not speaking of seeing Him in the Spirit, because of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the disciples?

THE LORD'S SUPPER

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover." (Lk. 22:1). It is most significant and enlightening when we discover that Jesus used the natural observance of the Feasts of the Lord by which to explain and reveal their spiritual significance. So it was on the occasion of the last Passover that Jesus revealed its true spiritual significance. To fulfill the righteousness of the Law on the one hand, and to establish the new Covenant on the other, the Lord kept this Feast with His disciples. "With desire," He said, "I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Lk. 22:15). He greatly desired to do this that He might introduce His disciples into a new order of worship and fellowship in the Spirit. On the eve of the Passover, when He Himself was about to be slain as the true Passover Lamb, then it was that our Lord gathered His disciples together and gave them the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. He finished the old ceremony that He might establish the new. For it is always consistent with God's plans and purposes that He takes away the first before He establishes the second. (Heb. 10:9). And again, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." (1Cor. 15:46). First the earthly, then the heavenly. First the flesh, and then the Spirit. Christ was therefore desirous to eat the last Passover with His disciples, that He might take it away and establish the new Feast, the Lord's Supper. "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you." (Lk. 22:19,20).

THIS IS THE HOUR OF RESTORATION

It is certain that God is now preparing His people for the greatest Feast of her long history--the Feast of Tabernacles. And therefore it is not without significance that in this day and hour of restoration God is stressing the spiritual significance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that we might be prepared to go on to the fullness of Pentecost, and then to Tabernacles. And this must be so, because it is always God's plan to lead us from "glory to glory" and from one experience

to the next in Divine order. And though it is true that the Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, both found their fulfillment in Christ and the early Church--we have now come to the "ends of the ages" when the glory of the past must be restored and absorbed in the last great Feast of the Church. Truth having been largely lost or obscured during the Dark Ages, the Spirit is now as never before bringing forth out of God's treasure-house things new and old, re-establishing the walls and foundations of Truth, and rebuilding the Temple of God. And so from Reformation days and until now, God has graciously been restoring lost Truth; and the Reformation is by no means finished yet.

Therefore, with the corruption and division of God's people, the true meaning of the Lord's Supper has been lost. That is why Paul said to the Corinthians, rent asunder as they were with strife and heresy: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not (or, it is not possible) to eat the Lord's Supper." (1Cor. 11:20). The fact is this: the Lord's Supper, when observed in the Spirit, and in spiritual union and fellowship with the saints, is actual participation with Christ. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of (participation with) the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of (participation with) the body of Christ?" (1Cor. 10:16). Therefore, without that spiritual participation and fellowship, it is really not the Lord's Supper. True, the Corinthians partook of the elements of the Communion just the same as our churches do today--but it was not really the Lord's Supper, because in their carnality they did not understand its true meaning, and instead of appropriating Christ they became weak and sickly, and many even died.

This however, is the day and hour when God is moving by His Spirit to restore His Church, to perfect the saints, and to establish unity in the Body of Christ. This is the day and hour that God has chosen to restore the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem, and turn again the captivity of Zion. And therefore, it is beginning to become possible, once again, for the saints to eat the Lord's Supper in reality, and partake of Christ in so doing. "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1Cor. 10:17). Perhaps we have often wondered why there are so many sick and weak saints of God. But how could we have anything else with a Church filled with malice and wickedness and disunity and bitterness? Under such conditions the Church has been doing nothing more nor less than eating and drinking condemnation to itself--and consequently many have become weak and sickly, and many have died. For it is only in discerning the Lord's Body that we can expect to derive healing and health and life from the Table of the Lord. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (condemnation) to himself, not discerning the Lord's body..." (1Cor. 11:29).

THE REAL UNITY IS SPIRITUAL

This Feast is pre-eminently a spiritual Feast, and consequently a spiritual unity that God is mostly concerned about. Let us not be deceived into thinking that great mass rallies, with hundreds and thousands of people from various sects assembled together in one building, constitute the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is a spiritual Body, and the unity in that Body is a spiritual unity. In this Body, Divine life can flow from one member to another, and from Christ the Head to all members--as the various members minister one to another by the Spirit, and Christ the Head ministers to the whole Body by the same Spirit. Feasting upon the Unleavened Bread, therefore, is living in real genuine fellowship and communion with all the saints, recognizing their God-ordained ministry in the Body of Christ, and giving honour one to another in meekness and humility. May our constant prayer be, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread. Make us one, even as thou didst pray in the gathering darkness of the Cross. Purge out of

our midst the old leaven, that we might become a new lump. Rid us of all our carnal ways--from divisive tendencies, from the chaos of doctrinal disputes, from hatred and variance and emulations and strife. Restore unity to Thy people, that we may become that holy and glorious Church of which all the prophets and apostles have spoken since the world began. Give us the mind of Christ, till we all think and say and believe and understand the same things.'

And rest assured, child of God, that this prayer is going to be answered; for it is the burden--not only of the holy apostles and prophets who penned the sacred pages of the Bible, but also the prayer of the Son of God Himself, who testified concerning His Father, "I know Thou hearest Me always."

CHAPTER 4

THE SHEAF OF FIRSTFRUITS

The waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits before the Lord took place "on the morrow after the sabbath." Hence it would be on the sixteenth day of the first month. All the events, therefore in connection with the Feast of Unleavened Bread find their perfect fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Christ. The Passover event itself was on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening. That is the day of the crucifixion, which in the New Testament is called the Preparation, or the day before the sabbath. (See Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:56). Then followed the days of Unleavened Bread, beginning on the fifteenth day, and continuing for seven days. Then on the sixteenth day, which was "the morrow after the sabbath" the Sheaf of Firstfruits was waved before the Lord.

It is clear from the New Testament that Christ rose "the third day." (Matt. 16:21; Lk. 23:54-56; 24:46), and according to the generally accepted terms of the day this was equivalent to saying he rose "after three days." (Matt. 27:63; Mk. 8:31). Therefore, to fulfill the type of the Old Testament, it is clear that Christ was crucified on the day of the Passover, the sabbath followed the next day, and the Sheaf of Firstfruits was waved before the Lord on the "morrow after the sabbath."

CHRIST, THE FIRSTFRUITS

Here we have a beautiful type, therefore, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the "morrow after the sabbath." Mark tells us, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week..." (Mk. 16:9). It was the beginning of the harvest season, when the fields were beginning to show the first signs of a ripening harvest. Before there was any general harvest, however, one sheaf was garnered and waved before the Lord on the first day of the week, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And therefore in the waving of that one sheaf, Israel would be reminded of the fact that soon a great harvest was to be gathered in.

Perhaps there was not a single person in the camp of Israel who saw anything more in that ordinance than the promise of a great harvest--but in type it spoke beautifully of "Christ, the firstfruits." (1Cor. 15:20,23). And just as assuredly as the one ripe sheaf testified to Israel that a great harvest was soon to be garnered, so surely did the resurrection of Christ testify to the fact that soon after that event there would be a great spiritual harvest of souls. And so there was! Thousands upon thousands came to know the Lord in the weeks that were to follow, when God sent forth the Holy Spirit and empowered His waiting disciples to preach the Gospel. Soon the revival spread to the Gentiles, and the apostle Paul was raised up to evangelize practically the whole Roman Empire.

THE CORN OF WHEAT MUST DIE

Jesus Himself testified, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (Jn. 12:24). Except He die, there could be no harvest. And the fact that He did die and rose again was positive proof that there would be a great and mighty harvest. "Christ the firstfruits..." And if He was "firstfruits," then certainly there must be a great harvest to follow His resurrection. This explains, in part, the strange reply that Jesus gave to Philip and Andrew when they told Him of certain Greeks who desired to see Him. Incidentally it was the Feast of the Passover, when these God-fearing Greeks had gathered to observe the Feast of the Jews. Jesus' only reply was: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In other words, in His present position He had no ministry for them, for He had nothing in common with them. He must first go down into death before He could mean anything to them. If and when His death was accomplished, then He would be able to minister life to all men, irrespective of race or nationality, in the great harvest that would follow His resurrection. That great harvest constitutes the Feast of Pentecost.

CHAPTER 5

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

The Feast of Pentecost was the second of Israel's three annual Feasts. As the Scriptures reveal, the Feast is also called the Feast of Harvest, of Firstfruits, or of Weeks. Pentecost is the New Testament name, and is so called because Pentecost means "fiftieth." An examination of Lev. 23:15,16 will reveal why the Feast is called Fiftieth. It was because the Feast began on the fiftieth day after the Passover sabbath, or "the morrow after the seventh sabbath." This, of course, parallels exactly with the fulfillment of the type in the New Testament. When Christ arose from the dead, He continued with the disciples for the space of forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3). Then He departed into Heaven, and after ten days (at the time of Israel's Feast of Pentecost), He sent forth the Holy Ghost upon the waiting disciples.

THIS IS THE AGE OF PENTECOST

Pentecost! What a vast subject looms before us as we contemplate the tremendous implications of the word! Many books have been written on the power and glory of this Feast, and men who have appropriated in some measure the experience of Pentecost have proved by the Word and by experience its reality, and the Word has been confirmed with signs following. We could not begin to adequately explain the meaning of the Feast in this study, nor is it our intention to do so. Our prime concern is to prepare to ground for truth concerning the Feast of Tabernacles, which surpasses the glory of Pentecost even as the noon-day surpasses the glory of early dawn. How strange, it seems, that good men of God who have discerned by the Spirit the fulfillment of Passover and Pentecost in the Church, should now close the door to further revelation and deny that the last Feast has any application to our day and age! At the turn of this century, when God began to restore pentecost--and right up to the present time, many evangelical circles have gone to considerable trouble in an attempt to prove that Pentecost was an event of ancient history, and that its power and glory were not for present-day experience. But a large group of hungry souls have proved by the Word and by experience that Pentecost was and is for personal appropriation by faith, just as the Passover was. Therefore let us not stop at the Passover; but let us go on to enjoy the fruits for which Christ died, even the glories of Pentecost. And let us not stop at this partial restoration of Pentecost, but let us go on to enjoy the fullness of the Pentecostal experience as recorded in the Book of Acts. And even then, let us not stop at the fullness of Pentecost, but let us go on to appropriate and experience the glories of the Feast of Tabernacles--for which Pentecost has paved the way.

Even among the saints who are hungering and thirsting for more of God there is a tendency to believe that a restoration of early apostolic Pentecost is the hope of the Church, and many will be satisfied with a return of apostolic power and blessing. True, we have a long way to go yet to equal the power and glory of the early Church; but that power and glory is by no means the sum and substance of genuine Christianity. That was Pentecost in the early hours of dawn; the Church must go on to the Pentecost of the noon-day sun; and then on, and on, and on to the Feast of

Tabernacles, which will utterly eclipse the glory of any people in any past dispensation. Of course, we must enter into this glorious experience one step at a time. And we will certainly have to enter fully into the glory of Pentecost before we can hope to enter the glory of Tabernacles. Our generation has had a foretaste of Pentecost, that is true. But we have by no means seen the fullness of the Pentecostal experience, as recorded in the Book of Acts, when tongues like as of fire came down and sat upon each of the disciples, and they were given the ability to speak the languages of all nations.

But thank God, He is continuing the great work of restoration which He began in the days of Luther. The former foundations must be relaid, the gates re-established, and the walls of the Temple re-erected. "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept: line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear." (Isa. 28:10-12).

An examination of the passages concerning the typical Pentecost are most enlightening, especially in view of the real spiritual Pentecost in the New Testament. Having a historical record of the actual fulfillment of the Feast, it is comparatively easy for us to look back into the type, and see exactly what it was intended to signify.

PENTECOST WAS A NEW FEAST

"Ye shall offer a new meat (meal) offering unto the Lord." (Lev. 23:16). The Passover was wonderful--and an experimental appropriation of the Passover produces pardon and justification from all our sins. But that is really a negative experience: the old is taken away, sins are forgiven, the past life is forgotten, and the sinner is left with a clean record before God and ready to start a new life. In conformity with this happy state, therefore, the God of grace and glory invites the justified man to receive a new experience in the Holy Spirit, whereby he can offer a "new...offering unto the Lord." He is invited to drink into God's Spirit, and be baptized with the Holy Ghost. In justification he is pardoned; in this new experience he is empowered for service. The early disciples were cleansed by the Word which Jesus had spoken unto them during His earthly ministry. (Jn. 15:3). Furthermore, on resurrection day "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost." (Jn. 20:22). The original Greek of the word "receive ye" proves conclusively that right there and then the Spirit of God entered into the disciples--and that imparted life brought them into the experience which we call regeneration or new birth. Just as truly as God in the beginning breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life and man "became a living soul,"--so now the Last Adam (who had now become, by virtue of His death and resurrection, a 'life-giving Spirit'--1Cor. 15:45)--so now the Last Adam breathed into the disciples the breath of spiritual life, and they passed experimentally from death unto life.

This experience, however, was not sufficient by way of equipping them for the great and mighty tasks which lay just ahead of them; and so the Lord "commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:4,5). And so they tarried in Jerusalem for the "promise of the Father," and after ten days the Holy Ghost came down upon them, and literally revolutionized their whole concept

of life and service by transforming weak and humble vessels into the mighty apostles of truth and power and authority.

PENTECOST WAS A HARVEST FEAST

In one instance it is called “the feast of harvest.” (Ex. 23:16). It was so called because they had just completed the harvesting of their grain. The sheaf had already been waved before the Lord fifty days before, heralding the coming of the harvest; and now the harvest time had come. And what a tremendous harvest there was! Peter preached his dynamic sermon under the “dunamis,” the “power” of the Holy Ghost, and some three thousand souls were added to the disciples. A few days later there was another harvest, and we are told “the number of the men was about five thousand.” (Acts 4:4)--to say nothing of the hundreds or thousands of women and children who also must have believed at the same time. The revival continued with ever-increasing power from day to day, “And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.” (Acts 5:14). Great and mighty signs and miracles were wrought amongst the people, until--in very short order--Jerusalem, and then Samaria, and then the uttermost parts of the earth literally rocked under the mighty impact of the Holy Ghost through His anointed ministers. Truly the Day of Pentecost was a great Day...but the Day is not finished yet...that was but the dawning of the Day. We have yet to witness the noon-day splendour of the Feast of Pentecost.

PENTECOST SIGNIFIED THE FORMATION OF THE BODY

“Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.” (Lev. 23:17). The loaves of bread would speak to us of God’s people in union with Christ. “For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1Cor. 10:17). The number “two” is quite significant in that it refers to Christ in the fullness of His Body. It would be interesting to follow the meaning of the number “two” through the Scriptures. There is Adam and Eve, two and yet, one,--Eve being the complement, the likeness, the counterpart of Adam. Then there is the sun and moon--the latter being the glory of the former, having no light of its own. Then there were two rows of bread on the table of shewbread in the holy place of the tabernacle; and the two tables of stone in the ark of the covenant--the law written first on the heart and mind of the only begotten Son, and finally on the heart and mind of His people. Then there were the two trumpets that were used for the calling of the assembly and for the journeying of the camps. And so we read concerning Christ and His Body, that He died and rose again that He might “make in Himself of twain one new man.” (Eph. 2:15).

Hence in the “two” loaves of this new meal-offering we have the completion of this new Body of believers known as the Church, wherein all the believers were “made...one” by the grace and Spirit of Christ. (Eph. 2:14). The grain had been harvested, and now instead of a sheaf we have two loaves, a body of believers. The loaves were “baked with leaven” because from the time of Pentecost right until now, the Church of Christ has never been really free from division, sectarianism, and carnality. How wonderful it is to know that God knew exactly what the Church would be like throughout her long history, and made the type to fit accordingly!

PENTECOST SIGNIFIES THE GATHERING OF THE FIRSTFRUITS

Pentecost signifies a great harvest, that is true. But compared to the coming glory, it is really but a harvest of firstfruits. “The feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours...” (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:17). And so Christ as the Sheaf that was waved, was the “firstfruits” of a great harvest to follow. Pentecost is that harvest. But even the harvest of Pentecost is the firstfruits of the coming harvest of the Feast of Tabernacles! Pentecost is wonderful, as we shall discover--when the real fullness of this experience is restored to the Church. But wonderful as it is, Pentecost is but the firstfruits of great and mighty things awaiting the Church of Jesus Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles.

PENTECOSTAL POWER

If there was to be a great ingathering of souls at Pentecost then truly it would require the power of the Holy Ghost to accomplish so great a task. Therefore God imparted not only great miracle-working power, but a new language to the people--that men of all nations might hear the wonderful works of God proclaimed in their own tongue, and be won to Christ. This was a day when a “new meal-offering” was to be presented to the Lord; hence God imparted a new language. See what a great secret remained locked up in the counsels of God until the Day of Pentecost was revealed! For if it was God’s plan that the nations should at first be scattered abroad over the face of the earth by means of the confusion of languages--why should it be thought incredible that God should now restore the gift of languages to His disciples, that they might preach the Gospel in the tongues of many nations, and reverse the order (or shall we say the disorder) of Babel? And that is exactly what the all-wise God did. In the beginning He confused the languages of the disobedient, to scatter them over the face of the earth and make many nations out of one. (Gen. 11:1-9). But now in the time of the harvest, God in grace and wisdom imparts to His own disciples the gift of languages (languages which came into being because of Babel), that He might gather together a people for His name, and create one holy nation out of the midst of many nations--a nation that would serve Him in obedience and love and unity, even the holy nation and the holy priesthood of the Church. (Some would object to the statement that God gave His disciples the gift of languages to preach the Gospel to the nations. They insist that the disciples declared “the wonderful works of God,” and not the Gospel! As if there was a more “wonderful” work of God than the story of redeeming Grace!)

And so the pattern of Pentecost takes on real meaning. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come (was being fulfilled), they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind (a violent impetuous blowing), and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.” (Acts 2:1-6).

THE DISORDER OF BABEL REVERSED

Notice the contrast between Pentecost and Babel. There the Lord did “confound the language of all the earth,” but here at Pentecost harmony is restored by the gift of languages, and the people are “confounded.” At Babel the people were “confounded” because they could not understand the language of their own fellow-workmen and fellow-citizens; here at Pentecost the people are “confounded” because they can actually hear and understand the tongue of foreigners! O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Shall a God of wisdom and power bring judgment upon the nations, and shall He not bring grace? Shall He curse and not bless? Shall He slay and not make alive? And shall He not bring grace out of the midst of judgment, and blessing out of cursing, and life out of death? Should we deem it an incredible thing therefore, that in the fullness of the Pentecostal experience the saints of God shall receive a gift of languages so perfect and so real and so genuine, that just as the people of Babel were “confounded” by hearing strange languages they could not understand,—so now in the day of restoration the people of Babel shall be “confounded,” but this time even unto repentance, by hearing their own languages from the lips of foreigners?

Thank God for the truth of Pentecost, and for the hope and confidence that the Lord has implanted in the hearts of His people, that we are yet to receive and experience a real Pentecostal experience, when the saints of God shall go forth into the world preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ in all the languages of the heathen. Praise His Name!

But even then we must go on, and on, and on...on from Pentecost to the greatest Feast of the Church, the Feast of Tabernacles.

CHAPTER 6

THE BLOWING OF TRUMPETS

AN INTRODUCTION TO TABERNACLES

The Day of Trumpets was really an introduction to Israel's third Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles or of Ingathering. Like the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles is of a threefold nature. The Passover included (1) the Passover itself, (2) the Unleavened Bread, (3) the waving of the Sheaf. Then Pentecost stands alone, between the Passover and Tabernacles. And finally Tabernacles is observed, likewise in a series of three ordinances, (1) Trumpets, (2) Atonement, (3) Tabernacles.

It might be interesting to consider the three Feast of the Lord in the light of the creative work in Genesis. When God commanded "let there be light,"--light sprang forth out of darkness, and we had the beginning of the old creation, the first day. And so it was said concerning Israel at the time of the Passover, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex. 12:2). Then on the third day, God commanded the earth to bring forth her produce, "the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself." (Gen. 1:11) Hence Pentecost occurred in the third month, the time of harvest and fruitfulness, when the precious fruit of the earth was to be gathered in. And finally we come to the seventh day, when God "rested from all his work." (Gen. 2:2). So it was that the Feast of Tabernacles was observed in the seventh month. Furthermore it was not only observed in the seventh month, but it was the seventh event in Israel's series of Feasts and their accompanying ordinances:

Passover

Unleavened Bread

Sheaf of Firstfruits

Pentecost

Trumpets

Atonement

Tabernacles

In other words, it is the feast of rest for the Church--the consummation of God's glorious purposes in His people so far as this dispensation is concerned. We have much more to say regarding this rest which "remaineth for the people of God," but we will deal with it later when we consider the various characteristics of the Feast of Tabernacles.

A NEW HARVEST

From the earliest days in Israel, time was reckoned not only from the month of the Passover, but there existed what was called a Civil or Agricultural year, which began in the seventh month. It is evident from Ex. 23:16 and 34:22 that the seventh month was the end of the old and the beginning of this new year. Also, from Lev. 25:9 we discover that the year of Jubilee began in the seventh month. All this helps us to understand more clearly Joel's prophecy: "He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." (Joel 2:23). The "first month" mentioned here is not the Passover month, but the beginning of this Agricultural or Civil year. A good translation is, "At the beginning of the season..." It was the end of the year, when the corn, the wine and the oil were gathered in, but it was also the beginning of a new Agricultural Year, when the rains could be expected.

All this is beautifully significant so far as the Church of Jesus Christ is concerned--for she has now come to the end of her long--and in many ways, discouraging career, and is about to enter a New Day in the Spirit. We thank God for her beginning at the Cross--the fountain and source of every spiritual blessing that we have ever enjoyed in the Church, or shall ever enjoy in eternity. We thank God also for the great harvest which began at Pentecost and has continued in considerable measure ever since. But the real harvest is just ahead! A harvest not only of souls, but of the fruit of the Spirit in the midst of the saints. Pentecost was a harvest of Firstfruits. This Feast of the seventh month constitutes the real ingathering of God's great harvest field: "The feast of harvest, the Firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." (Ex. 23:16).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRUMPETS

"Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them..." (Num. 10:2). In the verses which follow it is clear what the blowing of the Trumpets signified to Israel:

Calling the assembly. (vs. 2)

Journeying of the Camps. (vs. 3-6)

Preparation for war. (vs. 9)

Celebration of the Feasts. (vs. 10)

We will deal with each of these later; but first, what about the significance of the "silver," and the fact there were "two" trumpets? It is evident that "silver" in the Scriptures speaks of redemption. Whenever Israel was numbered, every man was required to give by way of ransom a half-shekel, and the money thus collected was used in the service of the sanctuary. (See Ex. 30:12-16; Lev. 25:48). The number "two," as we have discovered, speaks of Christ in union with His people, the "one new man" who was "created in Himself." Hence the significance of the blowing of the two silver trumpets on the first day of the seventh month. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation." (Lev. 23:24). It is the day and hour of the fullness of redemption's story, proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit by God's people. Yes, the trumpets were blown for all the Feasts as their seasons came around; but there

was a day and an hour when the blowing of the Trumpets took on what you might call a seasonal significance, hence a dispensational significance. And that hour is upon us. From the historical standpoint the Church has enjoyed her Passover and her Pentecost--and the age of Pentecost is now about to reach her glorious climax, giving way to the Feast of Ingathering. We stand now in fields "white unto harvest," when the corn and wine and oil must be gathered in, and God is beginning to send forth his ministers as never before--for this is the Day of the blowing of Trumpets. As one age or dispensation draws to a close, and another follows, there is always that overlapping and merging of the one into the other. Thus the Law merged into Grace through the ministry of John the Baptist and that of Christ. And so it is, we believe, with the Feasts. Even as Pentecost draws to its climax, the Day of Trumpets is being ushered in. And even as the full glory of Pentecost is about to break upon us--so also the Trumpets are beginning to blow, heralding the coming of a still more glorious Feast. The Trumpet ministry, as we have mentioned, is fourfold:

1. CALLING THE ASSEMBLY (Num. 10:2)

Once again is the Lord raising up a John the Baptist ministry to declare the Day of the Lord, and the approaching Kingdom. Again there is the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Again the cry goes forth from God's anointed ministries everywhere for the saints to assemble themselves together in the unity of the Spirit, to cast aside their carnal sectarian ways, and to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. John on Patmos was caught away in the Spirit and heard the words of One like unto the Son of Man calling the seven churches, and the voice "was a great voice, as of a Trumpet." (Rev. 1:10). With clarion call is the Lord now speaking unto His people through the various ministries which He hath established in the Body of Christ, calling the assembly together that they might hear "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Not only does this refer to the seven churches of Asia, nor yet to the seven historical church periods from Pentecost until now--but it refers to the seven-fold church of this present day and hour. That is to say, He is addressing the complete Church of this day and hour in which we live, "seven" being the number of completion. With trumpet voice the Spirit calleth to His people everywhere: to patience, to love, to repentance, to endurance, to faith in Christ in the midst of Satanic opposition, to holiness of life. In this great Day of Trumpets we should all study carefully the first three chapters of Revelation, and pay heed to their trumpet-like appeal to the people of God. They constitute the burden of the Spirit to God's people everywhere, wooing them to repentance, and promising them great and mighty things if they will "overcome" the world, the flesh, and the Devil. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness..." (Isa. 58:1,2). This is no time for pretty sermons and soothing words to a backslidden and corrupt Church; this is the Day of Trumpets.

2. THE JOURNEYING OF THE CAMPS (Num. 10:3-6)

The Church has camped around this mountain long enough. Said God to Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land

which I do give them.” (Josh. 1:2). God is calling His people to go forward, as never before in the history of the Church. Only men who have ears to hear have been able to hear the call of the Spirit, but the Trumpet is blowing nevertheless, and many have heard the call. Thank God for the manna which has sustained us throughout our pilgrimage journey, even unto now. Thank God for the water out of the rock, to quench our thirst. Thank God for the Holy Spirit, the cloud that has gone ahead of us, and directed us all through this great and terrible wilderness. But there are better things ahead! We must leave the manna, and the water out of the rock, and enter into a new realm, a new experience. Instead of manna there is the old corn of Canaan. Instead of water out of the rock, there are ceaseless, perpetually flowing waters from springs and rivers and lakes of the land of rest. Instead of drought there is the dew of heaven every morning, and rain in due season. Instead of barrenness and heat there is fertility and life and blessing in the realm of the Spirit, in the heritage of Beulah. Let us go forward as we see the Ark of the Covenant crossing Jordan, with the priests the Levites bearing it.

3.PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE FOR WAR (Num. 10:9)

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth...” (Joel 2:1-3).

Joel’s prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end. In this passage he is sounding the alarm for war: calling God’s people together to prepare for battle, for the great Day of the Lord is at hand. It shall be a Day of darkness and gloominess to the unrighteous and disobedient, but “as the morning spread upon the mountains” to the people who know their God, and are therefore “great and strong.”

THE CHURCH’S FALSE HOPE

The Church of Christ is literally filled with carnal, earthly-minded Christians who sit back in ease and self-complacency and await a rapture that will translate them out of the midst of earth’s Great Tribulation at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. To this generation of world-conformers God speaks in no uncertain terms: “Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.” (Amos 5:18). In the vast majority of evangelical circles we are taught that any moment all God’s people shall be caught up, raptured, to be with the Lord in the air--to escape the Great Tribulation which soon shall visit the earth. It is not true. The saints shall be “caught up” all right; but “every man in his own order.” (1Cor. 15:23). What that order is does not concern us right now; but the fact remains, we are nowhere taught that the saints are going to escape the hour of Great Tribulation by way of rapture.

WHY WERE THE THESSALONIANS TROUBLED?

If it is true, as we are generally taught, that the Thessalonian Christians thought they had missed the rapture because of the supposed letter they had received from the apostle Paul, then how is it that the apostle Paul must have missed it too? Apparently they had received a letter bearing Paul's signature, stating that the Day of the Lord had started or was about to start. (2Thess. 2:2). And the common explanation is that they were "troubled," because they expected they would have been raptured when this Day began. Now if the Thessalonians actually thought that Paul wrote that deceptive letter--and it is clear that they did,--then why should they be "troubled," for if they missed the rapture, then Paul must have missed it too!

But no, Paul had never taught them that they should be taken away from the earth when the Great Tribulation started. What he did tell them was that they should not be "moved" by afflictions or tribulations of any kind, "for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (1Thess. 3:3,4). Knowing, therefore, they they were to go through the Tribulation, they were particularly "troubled" about this deceptive letter they received, because according to this letter the Day of the Lord, or the Great Tribulation, was just about to start. Paul therefore would comfort them again by informing them that this great and terrible Day of the Lord "shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." (2Thess. 2:3). The Day of the Lord, Paul would tell them, was not imminent, because the man of sin had to be revealed before that great Day. It is not our purpose to prove, or to disprove that "the man of sin" has been revealed. The fact remains that a "rapture" is not held out to the saints as their hope in the hour of the Great Tribulation; nor are we taught that the saints who are walking in the light are going to be caught unawares when the Day of the Lord begins. On the contrary we are told, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1Thess. 5:4).

AS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH

As for the hour of the Great Tribulation, Jesus said it would be as in the days of Noah. What happened, then, at the time of the Flood? Those who were spared the wrath of God were left right in the very midst of the wrath of God, but protected by the ark. So shall it be in the Day of the Lord. "The one shall be taken, and the other left." (Matt. 24:40). Now who were taken at the time of the flood? We read, "The flood came, and took them all away,"--all except those who were in the ark. (Matt. 24:39). In the very same way, Jesus said, would men be taken as in a "snare" at the time of the Day of the Lord. (Lk. 21:35). The powers of darkness and the wrath of God shall be poured out with such sudden fury over all the earth, that men shall be caught unawares, as if in a trap, and shall not escape. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (1Thess. 5:3).

Just in what manner this sudden destruction shall come upon men, perhaps we do not understand; but it shall be as in the days of Noah. Sudden cataclysmic judgments shall fall upon the earth, the ungodly shall be "taken" suddenly as in a "snare," but the righteous shall be "left" in a place of safety. They shall be "in Christ," hidden away in "the secret place of the Most High." With their

eyes they shall see and behold the reward of iniquity, for they shall be right on the earth; but they shall be in safety. What very few people understand is this: that this great event which shall constitute a snare and a trap to earth-dwellers or earthly-minded Christians, shall become a glory and a power and a means of victory to the one who is walking with God. Jesus promised “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” (Rev. 3:10). And if God’s people will but study the Scriptures carefully, they will discover in what manner the Lord keeps His own from temptation and from trial. One thing is sure; it is not by carrying them aloft in celestial chariots of ease to some Elysian fields--but by becoming their shelter and protection in the very midst of trouble and distress. Behold the children of Israel in the very midst of Egypt’s desolation, but protected by the glory of God and the rod of Moses. They had flies throughout all Egypt, but there were none in the homes of Israel. Frogs everywhere, but not in the humble cottages of the Israelites. Hail and pestilence on the fields of the Egyptians, but not on the fields of Israel. Darkness and gloominess throughout all Egypt for three days--a darkness so dense that it could be felt--but light in the homes of Israel. The death angel passes through all the land of Egypt, even over the homes of the Israelites, but passing or “fluttering” over the blood-sprinkled door posts of the covenant people of God. See Daniel in the lion’s den, but it is no torment to him; the very beasts became his best friends. Behold the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, but they are not consumed. Yea, the very fire which was intended for their destruction became their light and their life--it consumed the cords which bound their arms and legs, and lo the form of one like unto the Son of Man was seen walking side by side with them in the midst of the flames.

Thank God for this great and mighty truth: the day of the Lord to the wicked is “not light...but darkness.” But to the righteous, and those who have appropriated the fullness of the Spirit and are walking with God, the Day of gloom and Great Tribulation is not darkness, but a light and a glory. To the disobedient, “A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness.” But to the great and mighty army of the Lord it shall be “as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong.” (Joel 2:2).

THE DAY OF GOD’S POWER

The Church and the world are both going to be greatly surprised when they discover that the Great Tribulation, unleashed in all its fury, is nothing more nor less than the greatest display of Divine power and glory that this world has ever witnessed. (We should, perhaps, call this day the Day of the Lord, instead of the Great Tribulation; for it is only Great Tribulation to those who have not discovered “the secret place of the Most High.”) We have heard it said that Heaven would be Hell for the sinner, if he were allowed to enter its pearly gates. And that is exactly right. The unveiling of the might and power and glory of God in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation is going to produce on the one hand the Great Tribulation, and on the other hand the power and glory of the saints.

“Yet once more,” saith God, “I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven.” (Heb. 12:26). And this shaking is going to cast Satan and his principalities from their heavenly throne, while the Sons of God ascend into “the heavenlies”--first of all in the Spirit--to take upon themselves the authority which belongeth to those who are overcomers. And entering into this place of power

and authority, the Sons of God shall be able to administer protection, and comfort, and help, and deliverance, and blessing to such as are in need. All this is confirmed by the prophecy of Joel the Trumpeter, concerning the Day of the Lord.

“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope (shelter) of his people, and the strength (refuge) of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:14-18).

What can be more clear than this: darkness, the shaking of heaven and earth, judgment,--but in God there is shelter and refuge and new wine and milk, and refreshing waters from the house of the Lord! And why is this? Because the shaking of the heavens is in reality, not merely the shaking of the natural sun and moon and stars, but the shaking from their celestial thrones of the powers of darkness and the hosts of wickedness, and the rising up of the Sons of God in the power of the Spirit, to take the Kingdom which Satan has usurped and occupied for so long.

That Satan’s kingdom is situated in “the heavenlies” is Paul’s teaching to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:12). From there he rules and reigns over the world and its many religions, as “prince of the power of the air” and “god of this world.” But “the heavenlies” is also the heritage of the children of God; for God “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (in the heavenlies) in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). The child of God is therefore called upon to war against these evil hosts of wickedness who have usurped the authority of Christ and His Church. Says Paul, “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 (the heavenlies)” (Eph. 6:12).

THE CHURCH--DEFEATED

Can you see, child of God, what a tremendous heritage is ours, and how Satan has completely usurped the authority of the Sons of God? Paul says, “We wrestle...” True, Paul did so to a certain extent, along with some of the saints through the ages--but as a whole the Church of Christ has suffered defeat from the powers of darkness for century upon century. Deceived on every hand; afflicted with all manner of sickness and disease; demon-oppressed and demon-possessed; filled with carnality, sin, bitterness, bewilderment, sorrow, fear, and torment. The surging masses of humanity, including many of the real saints of God, have been taken captive by the “god of this world,” and instead of a glorious Church one needs only to visit a great healing meeting to behold a veritable Museum of the Devil displaying his exhibits: children of God twisted into the most gruesome forms; hobbling on crutches; dragging themselves; crawling on the ground; men with tortured minds; oppressed by demons; and cast into Satan’s mould of deception, fear, torment and filth. Thank God for the measure of deliverance we can see beginning to come to pass, and for the mighty healing power of God that is being delivered unto mankind through His anointed servants--but Oh, how little we have seen yet in comparison with

the tremendous need that presents itself! And yet the saints really think they are telling the truth when they stand religiously on a Sunday morning, and sing to the charming peal of the organ:

“Like a mighty army, moves the Church of God,
Brothers, we are treading, where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.
Onward, Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war!
With the Cross of Jesus,
Going on before.”

The exact opposite is just about the truth of the situation: a defeated band of slaves, divided into a thousand sects, all having different hopes and different doctrines, and knowing nothing of charity. “Bow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain...” Arise, Church of God, from the dust of defeat and desolation. Put on your beautiful garments, and the whole armour of God! The Trumpet call goes forth in this great hour, calling for a Gideon’s band who shall be “more than conquerors” through Christ that loved us. And the bank is being prepared, for which we are thankful; an army whose power is not in themselves, but in the Sword of the Lord.

WAR IN HEAVEN

The Book of Revelation is in reality, not the Revelation of John, but as John himself stated: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ...” The word “Revelation” is “Apokalupsis,” the very same word that is translated “The manifestation (apokalupsis) of the Sons of God...” (Rom. 8:19). Literally, it is the Unveiling of Jesus Christ that John was told to write about there on the isle of Patmos. It is lamentable that the Church should have become so deceived as to refuse to believe the Book is for them; so many are teaching that just the first three chapters are for the Church. However, it is enough for us that John should have said, “The Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass...Blessed 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. 1:1,3). If you want to be blessed, then, read this wonderful book and believe it is for you. God is speaking by the Spirit to as many as have “ears to hear.” If you can hear its message, then it is for you.

And so we are told in the Book of Revelation what happens when the powers of heaven are shaken: “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old (ancient) serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev. 12:7-9). The powers of heaven shaken! Yes, and that means Great Tribulation for the earth-dwellers, but glory and honour and salvation for the saints! “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night...Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. 12:10-12).

And then what happens? “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child” (vs. 13). By this time this man-child company, this group of overcomers brought forth by the travail of the Church, is in a place of power and authority in the “heavenlies;” and the Church that brought forth the man child through much pain and spiritual travail, is left in the earth. For a time she is persecuted by the Dragon who lost his heavenly throne, but soon a place is prepared for the “woman” in the wilderness, where she is nourished and protected.

THE MAN-CHILD

The whole picture is a wonderful description of the Church of this hour. We cannot deal at length with the subject here, but a few Scriptures will help us to see the picture more clearly. As we mentioned before, Satan rules and reigns over the earth from his exalted position in “the heavenlies.” That is his fortress; but it is likewise the heritage of the saints. There it is that God hath blessed the Church with all spiritual blessings, even in “the heavenlies” (Eph. 1:3), and there it is that we are called upon to wrestle with Satan, as we become clothed upon with the “whole armour of God” (Eph. 6:12,13). Now when the saints of God begin to really press into their heritage in Christ Jesus, Satan is going to object--and there will be “war in heaven.” Hence

the great “wrestling” that Paul speaks about. Michael the Archangel himself is going to enter the fray on behalf of God’s people in this great Day of the Lord, and he is going to take up their cause in this heavenly warfare. God has promised he would. “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (Dan. 12:1). Then angelic hosts are ministering spirits sent forth to wait in service upon the elect; and Michael is one of their chief princes. Consequently the hosts of Satan are cast down; the overcomer takes his place of authority in the place left vacant by these evil hosts of wickedness; and hence the triumphant shout, “therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them...” But the Dragon, having lost his kingdom, roams through the earth in great wrath, tormenting men, and attempting to persecute the Church which was responsible for bringing forth the overcoming man child. But God in mercy has a place prepared for her “in the wilderness”--some secret, spiritual hiding-place, and there she is protected and nourished. God, therefore, promised Daniel: “Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” As we shall discover later, when we deal with the priesthood of this overcoming group, they shall be in a place of power and authority with God, and shall be able to administer the help and protection and sustenance that the Church needs.

4. THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEASTS

This brings us to the fourth purpose for which the silver trumpets were made. They were also used to call the people together to observe the solemn Feasts of the Lord. Joel’s prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end--and in addition to calling God’s people to repentance, and to prepare themselves for war, he likewise call the saints to the Feasts of the Lord.

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet...Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen...Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil...” (Joel 2:15-24).

The whole passage speaks loudly of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the coming glory of the Lord when the corn and the wine and the oil are to be gathered in; and at the same time, the hour of the rain from Heaven--the former and the latter rain combined.

LAMENTATIONS OF THE PROPHETS

God’s people everywhere should pay heed to the solemn exhortations and lamentations of the prophets. Jeremiah, who lamented over the desolation of the earthly Jerusalem, cried in the

anguish of his spirit; “How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies” (Lam. 1:1,2). And again, “Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider, and behold our reproach. Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows...” (Lam. 5:1-3).

If we could but take time to examine in detail these and similar Scriptures, how clearly we would see the true condition of the Church! Once married to Christ in the days of the early apostles, now a widow. Once a great and mighty spiritual power, now a tributary to the nations--and to the denominations. Once possessors of a rich heritage in the Spirit, now Satan holds authority in the “heavenlies” where the Church should reign. Once nourished by spiritual fathers with apostolic meekness, love, and authority; now the Church is full of orphans, having very few who really cherish her children, and the children themselves being loathe to recognize God-appointed leaders and fathers. No wonder Joel blows the Trumpet, and calls for repentance and lamentation: “The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God...” (Joel 1:10-13). In other words, Pentecost has lost its meaning--because the harvest has failed. There is no Feast of Tabernacles--because there is no early or latter rain, and the vineyards and the olive trees have perished. The fruits and graces of the Spirit are woefully lacking; and the flesh practically reigns in the Church.

THE DAY OF TRUMPETS IS UPON THE CHURCH

In view of what we have seen regarding the meaning of the Trumpet, and its significance in calling the people to repentance, there is no doubt that we are beginning to see the Blowing of Trumpets fulfilled before our very eyes. Perhaps we have not witnessed much yet by way of causing an alarm: only those with ears to hear and eyes to see have been able to discern the voice of Him that speaketh with the sound of a Trumpet in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. But His voice is beginning to be heard, nevertheless, and the saints are mustering for battle.

Psalm 81 is very significant of this day and hour in which we live, for it refers directly to the Day of Trumpets. Indeed, it is thought by some to have been composed especially for the Day of Trumpets. A careful examination of this Psalm will reveal just why the Trumpet-call of the saints thus far has failed to produce any notable results.

“Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: Where I heard a language that I understood not...”(Ps. 81:1-5).

That seems to have been the trouble with those who have been blowing the trumpets of present-day revivals: the language has been a foreign language, and consequently there has been no genuine preparation for battle. Our language has been one that men have not understood.

THE UNCERTAIN SOUND

Says Paul, "For is the Trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" (1Cor. 14:8). From this verse, and the verses that follow, we find that Paul is exhorting the saints to minister in the Body of Christ in such a way that the saints shall be edified. Such a ministry is the only Trumpet-call that will work a real work of preparedness in the hearts of the saints. We must have a genuine ministration of the gifts of the Spirit if the call of God is to go forth with power. For many years now the Church has enjoyed a foretaste of Pentecost, with a partial restoration of the gift of tongues. But it has been a language that we "Understood not." And that in itself would not be so bad, were it not for the fact that no one else has understood our language either. And this is not only true concerning the "tongues" which the saints speak by the Spirit as they commune with God, the unknown tongue,--but it is also true of the language which we live before men. God's plan for the saints is that they should become the veritable "epistle of Christ...written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2Cor. 3:3). On the contrary, the Church has done everything but reveal Christ from the pages of the heart and soul. Rather do men look upon us and read a story of carnality, sin, wickedness, division, disunity, bitterness and strife. They know the Church is supposed to be God's Bible, and therefore they read it intently, but they understand not the language which they read. It is absolutely contrary to their conception as to what Christianity should really be. And consequently, they turn away in disgust. The Trumpets are sounding--but to most people the sound has been one of "a blaring trumpet or a clanging cymbal" (1Cor. 13:1, Weymouth). The Trumpet has been giving forth an uncertain sound from all the various branches of the Church, who profess to have the baptism of the Spirit, and the gifts and ministries of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit--but no one prepares himself "to the battle" because of the uncertainty of the sound.

THE CERTAIN TRUMPET CALL OF THE MINISTRIES

This uncertainty of the Trumpet is going to cease, and in the near future. God's pattern has not been observed, and therefore we could not expect much more than confusion. But the pattern is being revealed, and God is raising up His own ministers who shall sound the Trumpet with such clarity, that men will know the voice of God and the meaning of the voice, and they will prepare for battle. God said, "The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets" (Num. 10:8). Ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are being established in the Church, established moreover by God Himself, and their Trumpet-call shall not go unheeded. Their word shall be with authority, and not as the Scribes. And their authority shall not be by self-appointment, nor by human-appointment, but rather by the appointment of the Holy Spirit, and the ordination of Christ. Soon there will be a "language" uttered in the congregation of the saints which men shall understand; for it shall be the Trumpet-call of power and authority, even as the very oracles of God.

Therefore, as we contemplate the coming glory of the Feast of Ingathering, how we rejoice in what God is now doing in the Blowing of the Trumpets. For there can be no latter rain, no vintage, no ingathering of the oil and corn and wine--without the blowing up of "the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." It is the Feast of the New Moon! The new moon! Yes, it is the same old moon that God established in the heavens from the foundation of the world, but now it doth enter a new phase! The very same Church that was established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone...but the Church doth now enter a new phase of her existence. A new day is about to dawn! A new life is to be our portion! A new heritage in the Spirit looms before us! "Blow up the trumpet" therefore, ye ministers of God, sound an alarm in God's holy mountain of Zion, shew God's people their transgression, and call them to mourning and to repentance because of the desolation of God's heritage. It will not be long ere the Day of Trumpets shall have served its purpose, and the Church of Christ shall enter into her rest.

CHAPTER 7

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer and offering made by fire unto the Lord...” (Lev. 23:27).

That full and complete Atonement was made for the whole human race by Jesus Christ on the Cross, there is no doubt whatsoever. But it is only too evident, as we consider our own individual lives, as well as that of the historical Church, that we have never really appropriated any real measure of the great atoning work of the Cross. And it is this experimental appropriation of the Atonement that the Church must now enter into. As there is a historical Pentecost, as well as an individual Pentecostal experience for all who will believe for it, so it is with the Atonement. All through the ages men have, by faith reached out and appropriated some measure of deliverance from sin; but as a Body and as a Church we have never really done so. But the Church’s deliverance from sin, as a Body, is just ahead--in the fulfillment of the great Day of Atonement by way of experience. The sin and carnality of the Church’s long career must be taken away from her midst before she can enter into the full blessing and power of the Feast of Tabernacles. Thank God for the Passover, in the first month, in virtue of which God has “passed over” the saints, not imputing their trespasses unto them. But the Church has been groaning with the apostle Paul for about two thousand years: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24). God has certainly heard our cries, and soon He shall bring His people into a glorious liberty in the Spirit, wherein they shall be completely delivered from their sins and their carnal nature. This shall be the experimental fulfillment of the Day of Atonement for the Church.

ON THE TENTH DAY

The Day of Atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month. The seventh month is the sabbath month--the month of rest. Even now the saints who are entering into the unfolding plans and purposes of God for this hour, and are becoming established with gifts and ministries in the Spirit--they are experiencing a rest which they have never known in the past, despite all the perplexing problems which might arise from time to time. And we may rest assured, there will be many more problems and trials arising in the near future. The Day of Atonement will be a time of great trial and sifting for God’s people. The number “ten” signifies trial and testing. The greatest test ever submitted to man, the Law of Moses, was written on tablets of stone and comprised ten commandments. Then we find that Daniel made this request, “Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days” (Dan. 1:12). And again, Jesus promised the Church in Smyrna (which signifies “bitterness”), “Ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Then you will remember how the early disciples tarried for the Holy Spirit from the Ascension until Pentecost, a period of ten days--and what times of trial and sifting they must have been, knowing practically nothing of what they were to expect. There is no doubt, therefore, that from now till the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement in the

Church, God's people are going to be subjected to great times of testing and trial--with a view to perfecting them, and rewarding them as overcomers. The hour has come for judgment to "begin at the house of God" (1Pet. 4:17). God is sifting, sifting, sifting His people as never before, in preparation for the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

YE SHALL AFFLICT YOUR SOULS

There is no question as to what God would teach us by the Day of Atonement: it is the actual taking away from the congregation, of their sins and carnal ways. Israel could rejoice in the fact that the Passover Lamb had been killed in the first month, and the Feast had been observed according to all the ordinances of the Law. And that was their acceptance before God as a nation: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." But now, six months later, we have the Day of Atonement--the day when Israel is called to a new repentance and a humbling of themselves before God in preparation for the Great Feast of Tabernacles. Israel had to have a new Passover every year, and a new Day of Atonement every year--because their sacrifices served only to call sins to remembrance, and to revive their sin-conscience. But Christ died once-for-all, and so effectual was His redemptive work that there is "no more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10:2). And yet we are constantly giving the lie to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, by falling into sin and being hampered by the works of the flesh, and harboring a sin-conscience. We testify on the one hand that God has taken away our sins and nailed them to the Cross--and that is true--but the next moment we are beset by sin and suffer defeat. We rejoice in the righteousness of Jesus Christ which has been placed to our account--and that is true--but how little of that righteousness have we been able to reach and appropriate. How little do we know and experience of real, vital holiness of life, and purity of thought, word, and deed.

Thank God, therefore, for the pattern we find in Israel's Feasts, and for the knowledge that there is a place of real victory over sin and the flesh for the Church of Jesus Christ. We know that many have been preaching this for years, and testifying to having received it; but actually men have never experienced it to any degree of fullness. Those who have sought to go on with God can testify to having received a measure of victory, that is true enough; but real victory over sin and the carnal nature is still ahead for the Church of God. This, then, is the day and hour when God would call us to repentance, that we might receive from His hands that real, genuine victory over sin that the Bible teaches.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THIS VICTORY?

Let us stop trying to justify ourselves, and insisting on our holiness of conduct, when it is apparent to everyone about us that we do not possess it. "Living epistles" of Christ do not have to tell the world how holy they are. The world will see it and will be amazed to discover something real and genuine in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation. This victory of which we speak is the very victory of Christ Himself. When we attain to this victory, there will be no need to formulate weak excuses why the victorious Christian can again fall into sin and suffer defeat--for this place in Christ knows no defeat. We will not have to explain how Satan gained an advantage over us and planted a new seed of sin in the heart, and the victory we once had was lost; for this victory is the very victory of Christ. "Knowing that Christ being raised

from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once..." (Rom. 6:9,19). He that overcometh according to the Bible enters into the very victory and triumph of Christ--a victory which can never be lost or forfeited. It is the very victory of Jesus Christ Himself, and the overcomer is therefore "more than conqueror" through Christ that loved him.

Here again the history of the Church is positively against us, because we cannot point with positive assurance to any person in the Church age who has really appropriated this blessed condition of holiness in its fullness. However, we are not going to take the history of the Church as our pattern--for it is a sad story of defeat, and worthy of far more lamentation than the weeping prophet ever expressed over Israel. If this glorious victory is declared in the Word, that is sufficient; and thank God, it is. And it shall be attained by the overcomer--not by the flesh, but by the Spirit. The experimental Day of Atonement is at hand for the Church of Christ. The promise, therefore, is held out to us at the ends of the ages, as to no other people in any past dispensation. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart..." Let us examine, therefore, some of the Scriptures which clearly promise this victorious, triumphant, overcoming life in the Spirit.

Lev. 16:29-31. "And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever."

Matt. 5:48. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Jn. 17:21. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us..."

Jn. 17:23. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..."

Rom. 6:4. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Notice this passage: the newness of our walk is to be comparable to the very resurrection life and glory of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 6:5-7. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 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." Some would like to believe that the "likeness of his resurrection" refers to a future physical resurrection. The whole passage teaches to the contrary. God is speaking about the righteousness and life that overcomes the "body of sin" so that "henceforth we should not serve sin." It is the appropriation here and now of the fruits of Christ's death and resurrection.

Rom. 6:11. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is no suggestion here whatever of suppressing the old nature, keeping the "old man" under your feet so that he will not be able to raise his head, or constantly dying out to self. It is a finished work; and just as Christ died and rose again once for all, so those who have appropriated His death and resurrection enter into a new life, a new sphere in the Spirit, a new victory.

Rom. 8:2. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Freedom! And when God speaks of freedom, He means you are "free indeed"

(Jn. 8:36). As long as the world, the flesh, or the Devil can bring you into any measure of servitude, you are not “free indeed.”

Gal. 5:24. “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

1 Jn. 3:3. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”

1 Jn. 3:6,7. “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”

1 Jn. 3:9. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

There is no argument against the direct, plain, indisputable truths here presented. The righteousness which God has in store for us is not merely a partial appropriation of God’s righteousness, or a certain degree of attainment whereby we measure ourselves with others, and we conclude we are victorious because we have ceased from our bad habits, conquered over anger, and no longer harbor ill-feelings against another. As likely as not, such claims of holiness are a sure sign of pride rather than of meekness and contrition of spirit. This life of which we speak is a life far beyond anything the Church has yet seen in her most glorious saints. It is God’s very own: “even as he is pure,” “even as he is righteous,” “he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

THE BIRTH OF THE SPIRIT

“He cannot sin...” This is the plain Word of God. However, as God’s children we all can testify that we are born of God, and that we do sin. And therefore we present some very plausible arguments to prove that God does not mean exactly what He said. Let us forever cease trying to justify ourselves. “Let God be true and every man a liar.” The only scriptural explanation of this verse is that we are not “born again” in the fullness of this regenerating experience. Our new birth, by the Spirit, genuine as it is, has not developed into maturity. We have been reproduced after God’s likeness like the seed which is produced by the flower, or the egg that is produced by the bird. That seed or that egg is a genuine birth, containing all the potentialities of a new flower exactly like the flower that produced it, or a new bird exactly like its parent. But the full glory and the potentialities of that new life lie dormant within the seed or the egg--and are by no means manifest, or even apparent to our observation. One can see no similarity whatsoever between the tiny seed with its black crusty covering, and the beautiful red poppy which waves its petals in the breeze; no similarity between the little blue egg in the nest, and the bird that flies aloft into the atmosphere on wings of liberty. In fact, if we did not understand the mysterious processes of nature, we would consider one a fool to suggest that the seed and the poppy are one and the same thing; or that the egg and the bird are one and the same thing. And yet they are--in kind, in nature, in possibility.

So it is with the birth of the Spirit. Thank God for the seed, the incorruptible seed, in virtue of which we have become “partakers of the divine nature” (2Pet. 1:4), or “born again” (1Pet. 1:23). But that seed in the hearts of God’s people has scarcely developed beyond the germ state; it has not grown and developed to the place where we can testify, “his seed abideth” in us; and therefore we can and do sin.

A NEW MAN IS TO BE BORN

Let the saints of God who have eyes to see and ears to hear, rejoice in the plan and purpose of God which even now is unfolding before our very eyes. God is hastening the day and hour of Christian perfection. We do not have it, nor have we seen it in any person anywhere at any time. For we are not speaking merely of a life made free from this particular sin or that particular sin, from a bad temper, or a bitter spirit, or sinful habits. We are speaking, rather, of a life which is the very life of Jesus Christ reproduced in the fragile earthen vessels of this human clay. Our prayer, therefore, should be as Jesus commanded, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in Heaven." It is, first and foremost, the birth of the Kingdom of God in our own little earth, in the clay of our flesh; for the "Kingdom of God is within you..." It is the perfecting unto maturity of the Christ who came into our hearts as the Seed when we received Him as our Saviour. It is the springing forth of the water of life into glorious liberty and spontaneity--even the water that we drank when Christ came into our lives. Jesus promised it would become a "Fountain of water leaping up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14, Literal). It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory," rising up unto maturity, and being "formed within you" (Gal. 4:19).

HOW SHALL IT COME TO PASS?

This life shall not come by fleshly striving. Nor shall it come merely by prayer and repentance and seeking God's face. This, of course, is most essential, and God will hear that prayer of sincerity and reveal the channel and means by which perfection shall be attained. But prayer and repentance in themselves are not the means by which the saints are to be perfected. Neither is the rapture of the Church the plan of God for the perfecting of the saints, and their deliverance from sin and carnality. God has another plan--a far more glorious plan, and yet a very simple plan; and here it is:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in (unto) the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). The Church may proclaim an imminent rapture as much as they will, and teach that any moment the saints will be snatched away from earth to escape the gathering clouds of Tribulation. But this is not the teaching of God's Word. True, we must always be waiting and watching for His Appearing--but this is not the "Appearing" of modern evangelical theology. This glorious Appearing must first of all be manifest in the saints.

How thankful we are, therefore, that God is revealing the pattern of perfection. The Ascension gifts, the ministries in the Body of Christ--these are the means of perfecting the saints,--and as we have read, they are to remain in the Church till we all come unto unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man! Notice too, that these ministries were given "when he ascended up on high," and not when He was here on earth. He gave twelve apostles when He was here on earth; but here we find that He gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers after His ascension.

The perfection of the saints unto maturity, then, is just as mysterious as the growth and development of the members of the human body from birth unto manhood--and just as real. Spiritual gifts in the saints, exercised by the recipient in the power of the Holy Ghost, develop into ministries of the Spirit. And these ministries are vital, living spiritual faculties in the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ, therefore, shall nurture and edify itself. Just as the human body has within itself the God-given and God-created ability to grow, to develop, to heal its own wounds, and to reproduce itself; so the Body of Christ, by means of these spiritual faculties, has the God-given and God-created power to grow into holiness, to develop into sonship, to heal its own sin-wounds, and to reproduce its kind. Says Paul, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:15,16). "Unto the edifying of itself in love!" That is God's pattern.

WHAT HAPPENED ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT?

Briefly, this is what happened on the great Day of Atonement. The high priest, clothed upon with the holy garments, was designated to make the atonement for himself, as well as for the people. Besides the offerings for himself, two goats were chosen for the atonement of the people. Lots were cast upon the goats, the one being set apart for sacrifice, and the other as the scapegoat. "Scapegoat" signifies "the goat that went away." The first goat was slain, and the blood brought within the veil in the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat. Then Aaron as high priest laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, confessed over it all the iniquities of Israel, and sent it away into the wilderness.

In type the whole ordinance speaks of the Atonement which Christ effected on the Cross. In the fulfillment of a type, of course, we may expect to see a contrast as well as a parallel. In contrast, we are reminded that Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" and therefore needed not "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" (Heb. 7:26,27). Nor did He offer Himself often, as the high priest offered sacrifices year after year; for the sacrifice of Christ is eternally efficacious, and He offered Himself once-for-all.

But as there was a great contrast between the imperfect sacrifice of Israel, and the perfect Atonement of the Cross--so also is there a beautiful parallel. Here we can see what took place potentially at the Cross when Christ made an eternal Atonement for the Church. It cannot be without significance that the Passover occurred in the first month, Pentecost in the third, and the Atonement in the seventh. It is simply because the Church of Christ as a Body has never been experimentally cleansed from her sins. We may close our eyes to the age-long sin and corruption of God's people if we wish--but the fact remains, the Church did not go on from early apostolic power and blessing to really appropriate Divine life and holiness as a Body. Thank God, however, that He knew all about it, and planned a great Day of Atonement for the seventh month--this Sabbath of the Church, when she shall be purified and made white and made to cease from her own works. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you..." (Lev. 16:30,31).

And so the one goat was slain, and the blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and “without the shedding of blood is no remission.” Nor was that all: for upon the head of the scapegoat all the sins of Israel were laid (in type), and it was sent away into the wilderness. Thank God for the Day of Atonement, when God’s people shall be made free, and free indeed, from all their sins.

CHRIST, A MANY-MEMBERED BODY

We believe there is a special significance in the fact that there were “two” goats used on the Day of Atonement. As we have discovered in a previous chapter, “two” would speak of the Head and the Body, Christ in the fullness of His people. For Christ is one, but a many-membered Body. This is a great mystery, as Paul tells us, that the Church should be bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh. Christ the Head, therefore, is not complete without Christ the Body. In the “two” goats, therefore, we have (in type) Christ in the fullness of His Body. That the saints are to become thoroughly identified with Christ in His sufferings and in His Cross, is clearly taught in the Scriptures; but the mystery of it is almost too much for us to comprehend, even in the slightest degree. It is only as we can begin to see the truth of the Body, that we can in any measure comprehend the fact that when He died, we died; and that when He rose again, then we rose again with Him.

To many, of course, this truth of our identification with Christ the Head is nothing less than blasphemy. But this is to be expected. When Jesus called Himself the Son of God they said “Thou blasphemest.” And yet now we hail Him King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Man of very Man, and God of very God. And the ages to come are going to reveal, what is now revealed by the Spirit to those whose understandings have been quickened, that Christ is the Body,—the whole Body, and not just the Head. The Church is said to grow up “into Christ” (Eph. 4:15). Just as a “man” signifies a body with many members, and not just a head; so the name “Christ” also signifies a Body with many members. Paul therefore says, “For as the body is one, and hath many members,...so also is Christ” (1Cor. 12:12). Using another illustration, Christ is the Vine, the whole Vine. “I am the vine, ye are the branches” (Jn. 15:5). He is the Vine, the root, the stalk, the branches, the leaves, the fruit—the whole vine; and we are part of that Vine. The Lord does not intimate here that He is one thing, and we another. But He is the Vine, and we are part of Him. The Son of Man in Heaven is not complete without the fullness of the Son of Man on earth, even the Body, “The fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:23).

THE BODY, THE FULFILLMENT OF JACOB’S LADDER

You will recall the story of Jacob’s ladder, how Jacob dreamed as he lay there at Bethel, with his head on a stone for a pillow—and saw in his dream the heavens opened, and a ladder set up on the earth, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder. Jacob awoke out of his sleep in fear and dread, and cried: “How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17). And so he changed the name of that place from Luz to Bethel—because Bethel signifies “House of God.” Little did he realize that in this ladder-vision he actually beheld, in type, the fullness of the Son of Man in Christ and His people.

This is brought out in the Gospel of John. You will recall how amazed Nathanael was when the Lord remarked how He had seen him under the fig-tree. Actually the Lord may have been miles away and Nathanael knew that. How could this Man, thought Nathanael, be able to manifest such Divine omnipresence as to have seen him under the fig tree, when He was perhaps miles away? And so he pronounced Him the Messiah without any further questioning. But Jesus replied: "Thou shalt see greater things than these...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (Jn. 1:50,51). In other words, Jesus said: "Why that is nothing, Nathanael, comparable to what you shall yet discover about the Son of Man. That is nothing that the Son of Man should have been miles away, and yet have observed you under the fig-tree. The time is at hand when the Son of Man shall fulfill the type of Jacob's ladder, His feet shall stand on earth, and His Head shall reach even unto Heaven; and the angels of God shall ascend and descend upon Him..."

Now there is only one way by which the angels of God could ascend and descend upon the Son of Man; and that is, if the Son inhabits Heaven and earth at the same time. And such is the case. The Son of Man is the glorious and wonderful fulfillment of Jacob's ladder; and no wonder Jacob called the place "Bethel" for this is the House of God of which we speak, even the Body of Christ. The Head is in Heaven, but the Body is upon earth; and according to the Scriptures the Head hath sent forth the celestial hosts as ministering spirits, ministering to such as shall be heirs of salvation, ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, this "new Man" that Paul speaks about, "created in Himself..." It is Christ in the fullness of His people.

PARTAKERS OF HIS SUFFERINGS

"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1Pet. 4:13).

It is commonly recognized that some day the saints are to become so thoroughly identified with Christ in His resurrection that we shall be exactly like Him, having bodies like unto His own glorious body, and sharing His very own life and glory. But the corresponding truth concerning our identification with His death, has scarcely dawned upon us: that we must share His Cross so vitally that it actually becomes our Cross. This is hard to really comprehend; but God is going to bring His people into that place where they shall become actually identified with the death of Christ, so much so that with this experience we shall testify, "I am crucified with Christ..." For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5). The word "planted together" signifies "grown up with," and therefore thoroughly one with Him in His death. It is identification with Him, so vital and real, that His death becomes our very own.

We cannot comprehend these things yet, any more than the disciples could comprehend the approaching Cross of Christ. They understood not what He said to them, even though He told them plainly that He must die, and rise again the third day. Nor could they understand of what profit His death would be, when they were so anxiously looking forward to a Kingdom and a King. But Jesus explained, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). This is a great mystery, and as true concerning the Body as it was of the Son. It is only as we enter into, and appropriate, His very Cross that we are going to be of any profit to others. Inasmuch as Paul was able to appropriate

this experience, therefore, he could testify: “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church” (Col. 1:24). And again John the beloved exhorted: “He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1Jn. 3:16).

We cannot atone for their sin; the Head alone could do that; but as members of His Body we can share His suffering and His rejection, and in that way transmit its efficacy to others. We can suffer for the Truth, and in our sufferings the Truth will shine forth. We can enter into the pangs of Gethsemane, in this evening hour of Christ’s betrayal--and in so doing share His Cross for the sake of the brethren. For just as truly as Christ the Head was betrayed some two thousand years ago, so once again Christ the Body is being betrayed today. Christ the Head meant no more to Judas or the Scribes and Pharisees than thirty pieces of silver. Today, Christ the Body means no more to the ecclesiastical authorities than large, costly church buildings, big salaries, pipe organs, choirs, orchestras, creeds, dogmas, and the applause of men. And if we, as God’s people, are going to be prepared to share His betrayal, stand true to Him even unto death, and follow Him “without the camp,” then we shall share His death. The Head died on a literal Cross; the Body is being nailed to a spiritual Cross.

No man with spiritual insight can behold the Body of Christ and fail to see that it is even now being crucified, as truly as was Christ. Stripped of its clothing, even the purity and righteousness of Christ; helpless to walk, its heel bruised by the Serpent; helpless to serve, its hands bleeding from the nails of ecclesiastical tyranny; powerless to love and to shew mercy, its heart thrust through with a sword of hate; all its bones out of joint--and therefore unable to supply strength and vitality “according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.” Every imaginable device of ecclesiastical tyranny has been used against the Church, to make her completely helpless and useless and powerless so far as functioning as a Body is concerned. Every conceivable form of sin, carnality, division, schism, and sectarianism has been foisted upon God’s people--largely by men in the pulpit who have been proclaiming a lie for the Truth. As truly as Christ was betrayed by the religious leaders of His day, so truly is His Body being betrayed and crucified today.

No amount of fleshly striving can produce this Death experience within us. All we have to do to share His rejection, His betrayal, and His death, is to recognize the Body, identify ourselves with the Body, minister in the Body according to our God-given ability, and refuse to associate ourselves with anything that will injure another member of that Body. If we do this we will automatically partake of Christ’s sufferings and death in this hour of His betrayal. And we will be doing it for the sake of the brethren. Then the resurrection follows: the hour of the Church’s triumph, the spiritual resurrection of those who share the betrayal of the Body. “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Rom. 6:5).

These truths, we realize, are difficult for us to grasp. Of necessity this must be so; for as yet we see “as through a glass darkly.” But as truly as Jesus said, “Father, the hour is come...,” the time is at hand when the Body shall be able to say, “Lord Jesus, the hour is come...” Identification with Christ is a truth of infinite and eternal significance. It means much more than the fact that we are justified by His blood and saved from wrath through Him. It goes on to embrace not only the work of Redemption, but the Person of the Redeemer Himself: so that the Body becomes thoroughly one with Him in the “eternal purpose” which God hath purposed “in Christ Jesus.” Does not the apostle Paul affirm, “The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam

was made a quickening (a life-giving) spirit” (1Cor. 15:45)? A life-giving spirit! Creative power! Such is the heritage and the attributes of the Last Adamic race. And should some insist that this refers only to Christ, the Last Adam, let us continue: “As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly” (vs. 48). So thorough and real and vital is our identification with the Last Adam, that in all respects--His work, His ministry, His death, His life--we are to become like unto Him.

ENTRANCE BEHIND THE VEIL

It was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest was granted access into the Holy of Holies behind the veil. After the sacrifices, after the slaying of the sin-offering, once in the year, the high priest was permitted to go behind the veil and there commune with the Lord who dwelt above and upon the mercy seat. (Lev. 16:2). True picture, indeed, of Christ’s atoning sacrifice and His entrance “into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. 9:24). But here again, there is a glorious contrast, as well as a true parallel. Israel’s high priest entered the Holy of Holies only once a year; but Christ has entered the Holy of Holies, not just for a few moments, but to abide there forever. “By his own blood he entered in once (for all) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. 9:12). And again, Aaron alone went in, while all the rest of Israel were excluded. But Christ went in as the “forerunner”--one who runs on ahead of others who shall follow later. (Heb. 6:20). “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh...”(Heb. 10:19,20). It is this unveiling for which all creation is longing and looking forward to with great anticipation, even “the unveiling of the sons of God” (Rom. 8:19). It is having the veil removed, even the veil of His flesh, the veil of the flesh of His Body, the rending asunder of our carnal nature that the glory of Christ might be revealed. Some fear to enter...fear that this would be intruding into spheres of holiness and life and glory and power that God has not intended for us. But let us assure you, child of God, that God invites us to enter into this realm with all confidence: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest...” And why may we enter with such boldness, we who are but worms of the dust? Because of the precious “Blood of Jesus!” Let us not depreciate the glory and the power and the efficacy of the Blood. We have no right of our own to enter this wonderful sphere, this holy place, this Holy of Holies. But the Blood of Jesus has made us worthy. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Furthermore, God will never be truly glorified until His Sons believe what He has said, and reach out and appropriate this “new and living way,” this holy life behind the veil “whither the forerunner is for us entered...” God will be glorified in this wonderful experience; and God alone will be glorified. For His blood alone has made us worthy, and His Name alone shall be exalted.

This brings us now to the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of the seventh month--the culmination of the Blowing of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. These two events, in fact, are really part of the Feast of Tabernacles in that they prepare and open up the way for the glory that is to be revealed.

CHAPTER 8

TABERNACLES —THE FEAST OF UNITY

“And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, the branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days...Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths...” (Lev. 23:40,42).

In the Feast of Tabernacles we have a beautiful picture of the unity of the Saints. On this notable occasion every Israelite must leave his place of dwelling, his farm, his flocks, his place of business--and assemble together in the streets of Jerusalem or along the highways, and dwell for seven days in the humble little booths which they were to construct with branches and willows and boughs of trees. They all had one common purpose in mind, to keep the Feast of the Lord in its season, and to celebrate the ingathering of their wines and oils. And if some would fear lest the enemy would attack their homes during their absence and take away their property, God promised that obedience to this ritual would be their safeguard. “Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.” (Ex. 34:24).

If the saints of God could only see the glory of the Feast of Tabernacles which even now looms before us, they could not possibly be in doubt or fear concerning their little fenced plots of sectarianism and division; and they would joyfully assemble together in the streets of Jerusalem and keep this glorious Feast. Let us be assured of this, our only safeguard rests in obedience to the Lord and a willingness to follow in the path which He shall choose for us. And if God reveals, as He does in this present hour, that the Body of Christ is being firmly knit together by the Spirit to form a vital, living organism, operating in the power of the Holy Spirit--then obedience to that revelation is all that matters. God will look after our property; our pet doctrines, our theories, our little churches, our opinions, our ambitions, and so forth. If any of these are of God, He will preserve them for us; if not, then who is concerned about maintaining them?

What then is involved in the revelation of the Body of Christ? Briefly and simply it is this: that henceforth we must learn to minister and function as members of that Body, and not as members of a sect or a denomination. In other words, we must recognize that the Body of Christ is a spiritual organism, whose Head is in Heaven, and whose very life and being is in the Holy Spirit Himself. If any individual or group of individuals is unwilling to recognize the Holy Spirit as the life of the Body, and His ministries as the faculties of the Body, then a “sect” is born. The word “sect” from the original Greek means ‘opinion’, ‘sentiment’, ‘party’. Therefore it is quite possible to have non-sectarian sects, as well as sectarian sects. That is to say, it is not necessary to belong to a religious system in order to be a “sect.” There are many sects who loudly denounce the whole ecclesiastical system--but they themselves are the most sectarian of any. To be a member of a “sect” all one has to do is to refuse to recognize the ministries which God is raising up and setting in their place in the Body of Christ. To be non-sectarian it is not sufficient to withdraw from the maze of religious schemes abroad in the world today; but we must become a vital member in the Body of Christ, functioning according to the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the place and ministry which God has ordained for us in the Body.

IS THIS UNITY POSSIBLE?

It is amazing how unbelieving a believer can become. One might as well call Christ a liar, and his apostles false witnesses of God, as to deny that God is going to have a Body functioning in absolute unity of the Spirit, with each member in his proper place, and all members working together as one harmonious whole. Here again, there is only one reason why “believers” refuse to believe it, and it is because we have never seen it either in our own experience or in the history of the Church, and it is scarcely visible in the days of the early apostolic Church. When will the saints of God realize that the sins of Israel are recorded in the Word “to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted” (1Cor. 10:6). The story of strife and division and corruption that is recorded in God’s Word concerning God’s people is for one purpose, namely, that we should not follow in their pathway of disobedience. And the Church’s long and bitter history of disunity and strife does not prove that God’s Word means disunity when it speaks of unity. If God said it, it is going to come to pass; and if Jesus prayed for it, not all the devices of Satan can prevent the glorious fulfillment of that prayer of faith.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST

Let us examine briefly John 17, where we have the request of the Son of God for this vital union among the saints:

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are...”

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

Surely this marvelous prayer needs little comment. The unity for which Christ prayed, and which the Father is duty-bound to create, is going to be fulfilled. It is a unity both inexpressible and exquisite: “Even as we are one...” As surely as the Father tabernacles in the Son, speaking through Him, thinking through Him, walking in Him, working with Him...so shall it be in the Sons of God. They shall have “the mind of Christ,” and therefore they shall be “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1Cor. 1:10; 2:16). The many members shall function as the members of the human body, in unity and harmony of purpose (1Cor. 12:13,14). They shall “be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind” (Phil. 2:2). They shall have the mind in them “which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). Unthinkable! Yes, but God is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we can ask or think!

THE MEANS TO THIS END

It is because such a measure of unity and harmony is so positively beyond us, and almost inconceivable, that men refuse to believe it is possible. And of course, it is impossible. But with God “all things are possible.” Let us not limit the Holy One of Israel. For God has established a sure and a certain means by which this inexpressible unity is going to be brought into being, even the ministries of “apostles, ...prophets, ...evangelists, ...pastors, ...teachers.” These are given, we are told, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry,....” Step by step the work is brought to pass: the ministries perfect the saints, and they in turn are empowered “for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). Thank God the hour is at hand when this glorious unity for which Christ prayed, and for which He ascended on high and bestowed gifts unto men, is about to be manifested. Ministries are being raised up and established in the Body of Christ--and these constitute Christ’s love-gift to the Church for their perfection. Will they bring this unity to pass? To doubt it is to doubt God’s Word. It is not a case of rejecting man, because of his faults and failures; but to reject the God-ordained ministry is to reject God who gave him. Many would much rather prefer to perfect themselves through prayer, fasting, reading the Word, and so forth. These, of course, all have their place, and will do much to prepare the heart and soul. But in themselves they will not produce this perfection. God has ordained ministries in the Body by which this perfection shall come to pass. To refuse the ministries, then, is to say to Christ: “I don’t need your Ascension Gifts. I prefer to be perfected some other way.”

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CHRIST’S MINISTERS?

The sincere saints of God are being subjected to a great test; of that there is no question. For they are being called upon to receive God’s ministers on the one hand, and to refuse the false minister on the other hand. And in this great hour when God is establishing His ministries in the Body of Christ, Satan is likewise sending forth His ministers of light; and we must learn to discern the true from the false. Truly the saints are like the multitudes over whom Christ yearned in the days of His earthly ministry--for He beheld them as sheep having no shepherd. Yes, there were Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, men who loved to wear the garb of religion, and say long prayers, and receive greetings in the marketplace, and to be called “Father,” and receive the applause of men. But there were no true shepherds. Even Paul in his day was forced to testify: “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s” (Phil. 2:21). It is therefore with the greatest concern and tenderness that the Holy Spirit doth now raise up true ministers in the Body of Christ to establish the saints, and to lead them in the path of righteousness. And though it might be difficult for us to discern the true from the false, if we will pay good heed to God’s Word, and the pattern of the true minister as outlined therein, we shall not go astray. Here are a few ways and means by which we shall be able to discern the true from the false:

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL LOVE THE FLOCK

The good shepherd, Jesus tells us, will be prepared to lay down his life for the sheep. (Jn. 10:11). In this hour of comparative security and ease, there are thousands of hirelings ruling over the sheep. But let persecution come our way, or let some difficulty arise in the assembly that is apt to

prove dangerous to the minister,--and the hireling will flee because he is a hireling and careth not for the sheep. But the true shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep.

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL NOT BE COVETOUS

The size of the congregation, the amount of money one is to receive, the kind of place a man will have to live in--these will not matter to the true minister. He will as readily preach to the ones and the twos, as to the hundreds and thousands. And if necessary, he will work with his own hands to sustain himself, rather than burden the flock. Paul said, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound..." (Phil. 4:12). Very few "know how to abound." Riches have deceived many and ruined their ministry. The true minister, as a pattern of the flock, must know how to suffer hardship in times of difficulty, and to use the world without "abusing it" in times of plenty.

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL SHOW THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." We must admit there is a woeful lack of the real fruit of the Spirit everywhere; but it is beginning, nevertheless, to become manifest in those who are going on with God. And this fruit shall be the final test: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (fulness), meekness, temperance (self-control)..." (Gal. 5:22,23).

THE TRUE MINISTER SHALL NOT SEEK HIS OWN GLORY

"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true..." (Jn. 7:18). It is usually not difficult to discern whether the minister is taking the glory unto himself, or ascribing all the glory unto Christ. The true minister will exalt Christ, and Christ only; and not merely with lipservice, but from the heart.

THE TRUE MINISTER SHALL DISCERN THE BODY

He shall recognize the ministries which God is beginning, and will continue, to establish in the Church. God is going to vindicate his true ministers so that there will be no confusion in the minds of those who are really seeking to follow the Lord. The ministries will be contested, as with any ministry God ever established in Old Testament or New. They contested the authority of Moses, of Aaron, of Elijah, of Elisha, of David, of Solomon, of Jeremiah, of all the prophets, and of Christ Himself. But God vindicated them all in one way or another--and in such a manner that the people feared God, knowing that of a truth they were His chosen. The ministries will not be established by self-appointment, nor by human-appointment, but by Divine Appointment; their word shall be with power and authority, and not as the Scribes; and the servants of Christ shall recognize and acknowledge them.

CHAPTER 9

TABERNACLES – THE FEAST OF JOY

“And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates” (Deut. 16:14).

Israel continued to live in peace and prosperity as long as they obeyed God and walked in His ways. But with disobedience came drought and famine and depression--and the Feast of Tabernacles ceased to have any real meaning to them. It is just as true with the Church of Christ. And though the Church as a Body has never really observed this Feast, there were nevertheless periods in her early history when she had a foretaste and an earnest of its glory. Our testimony is therefore that of Joel:

“The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted; the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men” (Joel 1:10-12).

The new wine, the corn, the oil, the wheat, the barley, the palm, the apple: all these speak of the abundance of spiritual blessings and the joy which they impart to the saints. And because of the spiritual drought in the Church: “Joy is withered away...”

THE BLIGHT OF BABYLON

This hilarity of our modern churches is not the joy of the Holy Ghost. In most cases it is the song of Babylon. In other words, it is an attempt of the enemy to lull the saints to sleep and to cause them to forget their heritage in the Spirit. By Babylon we mean what it meant to Israel; bondage in a strange land. When Israel walked in disobedience they lost their glory, their beautiful temple, their place of worship, their prominence as a nation and kingdom. And when the Church of Christ walked in disobedience, she too lost her glory, her beautiful temple was destroyed, and from her lofty position as a “holy nation” and a “royal priesthood” she degenerated into a nation of slaves and bondservants. Her people were taken captive at the hands of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--and her joy departed.

And so the Babylonians came to the children of Israel in their captivity, and said unto them, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” Perhaps many of them consented. The Church, likewise, has been too willing to accommodate the world in this manner, and to partake of her false joy. But the godly remnant in Israel refused to do so, because they knew they had nothing to sing about. “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion...” How could they rejoice as they contemplated the desolation of their beautiful temple and city? “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” was their reply. (See Ps. 137).

We ought to have been mourning and howling for the desolations wrought in the Church, instead of trying to generate a false joy in our midst. And yet this continues unto this very hour: the

world is invited to come and hear “one of the songs of Zion.” You may read in the advertisements in the “church” section of the newspapers about good orchestras... lively singing... so-and-so will play the sleighbells, or anything else that might produce a tune. Why not? they would argue. Get the sinners out to “church” and then preach the Gospel to them. But “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” Far better that the Church should mourn and howl before God, and her priests be clothed in sackcloth and sit in ashes.

Israel did not have one percent of the glory that the Church had in the beginning, and yet her people expressed far more sorrow and repentance in their desolation than we have in ours. “The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground. Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?” (Lam. 2:10-12).

Where is corn and wine? Where is purity of thought and conduct? Where is holiness of life, and separation from the world and its charms? Where is victory over sinful habits, freedom from covetousness, from lying and falsehood, from malice and bitterness? Where is the desire to pray and seek God? To intercede on behalf of others? To deliver those who are held captive by Satan, and set the oppressed free? Where is the mind of Christ, the life that is hid with Christ in God? Where is corn and wine?

But Babylon has been good to us; so good, in fact, that we are one with them, participating in her pleasures, her politics, her wars, her earthly programs, her strife, and her religious systems. Consequently, as it was with Israel, so it is with the Church; as the cry goes forth in this hour for separation from the world and its systems, there is dismay. God says, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18:4). Babylon means “Confusion.” It speaks of this whole world-system, political as well as religious. But we have been utterly deceived by her veneer and her charm, not realizing that “her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities” (Rev. 18:5). In her there is no good thing. Satan is “prince of the power of the air,” and “god of this world,”--and the whole world-system is anti-God and anti-Christ. Her doom is sealed. “Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit...” (Rev. 18:2). “The abundance of her delicacies” have deceived all nations, including the majority of God’s people. “She hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously,” and all nations of the earth have “committed fornication and lived deliciously with her” (Rev. 18:9). Has the Church of Jesus Christ not followed hand in hand with the course of this world for centuries, befriended her in all her devilish programs, and lived as her captive slaves? “Ye adulterers and adulteresses,” says the apostle James, “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” (Jas. 4:4).

But what else could we do? We were captives in a strange land, with no power to deliver ourselves. However, the cry goes forth, “Escape from Babylon...” Let the Church arise from the dust and shake herself, and return unto her land and Temple, even “Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.” And God will abundantly pardon, and give grace to re-establish the praise, the worship, in the Temple of the once-glorious Church.

THE LORD TURNETH OUR CAPTIVITY

With the turning of the captivity of the Church, joy is once again being restored, even the joy of the Holy Ghost. Songs of Zion can be heard once again in the congregation of the saints, and the Choir of Praise has been restored to the Church. Singing in the Spirit is one sure evidence that Zion's captivity is coming to an end. Says Paul, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). Surely it is significant that Psalm 126 has now been restored by the Spirit, music included:

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
 We were like them that dream.
 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
 And our tongue with singing:
 Then said they among the heathen,
 The Lord hath done great things for them.

The Lord hath done great things for us;
 Whereof we are glad.
 Turn again our captivity, O Lord,
 As the streams in the south.
 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
 Shall doubtless come again,
 Shall doubtless come again,
 Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
 Bringing his sheaves with him."

This, then, is a time for rejoicing. "Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (Isa. 65:18,19). A faithful remnant are returning from the captivity to raise again the walls of Jerusalem and restore the gates of Zion. And God is in the midst of her to bless and to impart the joy of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 10

TABERNACLES – THE FEAST OF INGATHERING

“And the Feast of Ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field” (Ex. 23:16).

If the Passover was wonderful--and it certainly was--how much more wonderful shall we expect Pentecost to be in its fullness? And if Pentecost is wonderful, how much more shall we expect Tabernacles to exceed it in glory? In the Passover we have but the Sheaf of Firstfruits by way of harvest, and not the harvest itself. But Pentecost was the harvest. And what a tremendous harvest there was! And so now the Feast of Ingathering must far surpass Pentecost, even as Pentecost surpassed the harvest of the Sheaf of Firstfruits.

A GREAT ECLIPSE

The Cross and Pentecost--this was but the dawning of the great Day of the Church. That Day has already extended some nineteen hundred years and more, and the sun rises higher and higher and higher in the heavens of God's eternal purpose. We are not inferring that the glory of the Sun continued to grow more brilliant as it rose in the sky. It should have done so, but through the disobedience of the reapers the sun was darkened, and the moon (even the Church) did not give her light. The history of the Church is a history of darkness and sorrow and bitterness. What happened? Did the Sun of Righteousness set in the heavens, and was the Church swallowed up in defeat? Ah no! It was not the setting of the Sun, but it was a great eclipse that caused the darkness, even the eclipse of the Dark Ages.

First there was the eclipse of the moon, the Church. In her circuit about the heavens she was caught in the shadow of the earth, and the corruption of the earth transformed her beautiful glow into blood and sorrow. And then there was the eclipse of the Sun. The apostate Church in her circuit obscured the glory of the Sun, so that earth-dwellers witnessed the eclipse of Truth himself. Truth perished from the earth; and joy withered away from the sons of men. Hence the Dark Ages! A few godly saints were left, for God has always had His believing remnant; and how they must have thought the Sun had set forever upon the once-glorious Church! But no! It was just an eclipse, and in due course--according to Divine pattern, the moon began once again to take on her celestial glow, and the Sun began to shine brilliantly in the heavens of the Church Age. The Reformation had started. Light began to dawn upon the darkened understandings of men, and truth began to be restored to the Church. And the Reformation has not ended by any means. Indeed, it too seems to have gone into partial eclipse. But rays of promise are again breaking forth from the heavens. “The darkness is passing away, and the true light now shineth” (1Jn. 2:8, Literal).

“Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” (Song 6:10). She is the group known as the overcomers. She is the “undefiled,” “the choice one of her that bare her.” As we mentioned before, there are many, many groups in the Church, according to God's plan and purpose; and we are not attempting to

make any particular distinction between them. “There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one” (Song 6:9). There is a place for all God’s people in His great House; but shall we not seek after that intimate place of fellowship and communion with Him in the very “secret place of the Most High?” Says Paul, “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor...” All the saints have a place in God’s Church; but one company receiveth the highest prize. The challenge is therefore thrown out to the saints everywhere, to rid themselves of the corrupting influences of the flesh and of the natural, and to diligently seek the things of the Spirit of God. “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2Tim. 2:20,21).

THE CHURCH, THE GARDEN OF GOD

Jesus testified, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth (pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit” (Jn. 15:1,2). The Church, the Garden of God! Surely this truth alone is sufficient to establish the fact that the Church’s day must end in great fertility and unparalleled prosperity. If we constitute God’s Garden, then nothing shall prevent the great Husbandman from bringing His heritage to abundance and fruition. It is His responsibility to look after it, and to see that it brings forth a harvest for His glory. “For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody” (Isa. 51:3).

God always brings light out of darkness, life out of death, joy out of sorrow, strength out of weakness, and fruition out of barrenness. We can rejoice, therefore, as we see the desolation of Zion, knowing that her “desert” shall become like the very Garden of the Lord. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing...” (Isa. 35:1,2).

WINDS OF JUDGMENT AND BLESSING

“A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed...Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices there of may flow out” (Song 4:12,16). Both winds are necessary for God’s Garden: the blighting cold wind of the north to test and try the saints; and the warm breezes from the south, to bring forth the fragrance of the Spirit. We can be thankful, then, that in all the strife and bitterness of the Church’s history, God’s sovereign purposes have been fulfilled. For God has reserved the time of the “south wind” until now. “For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth” (Song 2:11,12).

THE LATTER RAIN

We are looking forward with anticipation for the coming of the promised “latter rain.” The saints of God are thirsting for these living streams from heaven. But how little do we realize that God is more anxious for the “latter rain” than we are! And why? Because He is the Gardener; and He is waiting for the Feast of Ingathering, when He might gather in the precious produce. “Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain” (Jas. 5:7). God is waiting for the hour when He shall bestow His latter rain, just as anxiously--and even more patiently--than we are. James says, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord,” for in a very real sense the coming of the latter rain is the coming of the Lord into the midst of His people. That is exactly what the prophet Hosea declared: “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth” (Hos. 6:3). The time is at hand when we may with all confidence expect the latter rain, for this is the last day, and God’s triumphant Church must be a glorious Church. However, it is not only the latter rain for which we are looking, but the latter and former rain! What does this mean?

JOEL’S PROPHECY

Let us refer to Joel’s prophecy concerning the former and the latter rain. This refers to the seed rain and the harvest rain. God promised that His people should have both in due season as they walked in His ways: “The first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil” (Deut. 11:14). This is what James was referring to, and it is that which Joel prophesied about:

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil” (Joel 2:23,24).

Of course, this passage did have a partial fulfillment at Pentecost, inasmuch as Peter declared: “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...,” and we have already pointed out that Pentecost is a harvest of Firstfruits. The fullness of the harvest, however, is the Feast of Ingathering in the seventh month, when the wine and the oil were gathered in. You see, Israel observed two different calendars: they had the Sacred Year which began with the Passover in April, commemorating their departure from the land of Egypt, and their beginning as a redeemed nation. But they also had what has been termed a Civil Year, or an Agricultural Year, which began in October. This, then, was the first month of the Civil Year, but at the same time it was the seventh month of the Sacred Year--the month of the Feast of Tabernacles.

What Joel prophesied then, was this: “Be glad then, ye children, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately,...” Dispensationally this was Pentecost, when God first poured out His Spirit in copious showers,... of the former rain. Peter therefore could testify: “This is that...” But it was only part of what Joel had prophesied, for he continued: “And he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain, in the first month.” The period from October to April was the rainy season. Then followed the long summer months when no rains were to be expected. The October and early November rains were called the former or the seed rains--the rains which prepared the ground for the seed; then the rainy

season ended with the latter rains of April, or the harvest rains--that which caused the grain to ripen; preparatory for the harvest.

Joel's prophecy, therefore, speaks of Pentecost--but it goes on to embrace the fullness of Pentecost, even the Feast of Tabernacles. God did give the former rain moderately--in the Pentecostal Age extending from the early Church until now. But here is something very unusual. Right here in the "first month" of the Agricultural Year (the seventh month of the Sacred year) God has promised to do something most unusual; for He would give, not only the former rain which belongs to that month, but He would give the former rain and the latter rain combined!

Can we not see from this what God has promised His people in this great hour? Not only the fullness of a great and glorious harvest, as in Pentecost. And not only the wonderful harvest of Tabernacles, the Feast of Ingathering. But all the glory and power of the early Church combined with all the glory and power which rightfully belongs to the triumphant Church of the last days! All her former glory combined with all her latter glory! Truly we cannot begin to imagine the great and tremendous things which God hath prepared for them that love Him! "And he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain, in the first month,"--Or, "in the beginning of the season." It is the promise, not only of the early and latter rain in the hour of the Feast of Tabernacles (the "first month" of the Civil Year, but the seventh of the Sacred Year)--but it is also a promise of the great day of harvest. "And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil" (Joel 2:24). The normal procedure is: the early and the latter rain, then the harvest which culminates at Pentecost, then the long summer months of dry weather, and then the final ingathering at the year's end. And that indeed is the way it has happened dispensationally in the Church: the former rain at Pentecost, but only moderately--producing only a moderate harvest, and followed by a great period of drought for century upon century. Now the Lord will do a quick work in the earth. This is the focal hour of Church history. Now we shall have not only the great and mighty harvest of the seventh month, the Feast of Ingathering, but the former and the latter rain combined! A veritable deluge of rain from the gates of Heaven! No wonder the prophet prophesied, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former..."

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

"And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil." Or, literally, "New wine and oil," beautiful symbols of the fruit of the Spirit in the saints. Said Paul, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). And the oil, as we know, is a symbol of the anointing. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you..." (1Jn. 2:27).

This great ingathering is the harvest for which the husbandman has been waiting ever since the foundation of the Church. Gifts of the Spirit are really no evidence of spiritual attainment; God bestoweth His gifts freely by His grace upon whomsoever He will. But with fruit it is entirely different. Fruit must grow; and God has never intended that the Body of Christ should ever bring forth fruit except through a continual Divine growth in the Spirit of God. The Ascension gifts that we mentioned are for the purpose of adding growth to God's Garden, that we "may grow up into Him" (Eph. 4:15). God will not come to us looking for gifts, but for fruits of the Spirit. He gave us His gifts freely by His grace, and all we had to do was to receive them and use them.

What God wants now is fruit, because that is something which He can receive from you. That is something which must grow upon you by your patient and continual walk with God and your appropriation of His Spirit. Until now the Husbandman has come into His garden, pruning, cultivating, watering--without expecting anything in return. But now the harvest time is approaching, and soon He shall visit His garden for one purpose and for one purpose only: seeking for fruit, and trusting that His tender care over the vine has produced genuine fruit of the Spirit.

Let us never forget that the fruits of the Spirit, and not the gifts of the Spirit, constitute the real test of spiritual life; for the latter are given to produce the former, and it is the fruit that is the embodiment and expression of Christ-likeness within the heart and soul. That is why Paul exhorted, "Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts..." (1Cor. 14:1). Gifts are absolutely necessary, for they are the means to the end; but Love is the end, the consummation, the fruit for which God is waiting. Love is the Ultimate, because "God is Love," and it is His purpose to conform the saints even unto "the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Love is the End: but it is an End which knows no beginning or ending, for it is God himself; and when we become thoroughly united with Him we are in a realm which is eternally progressive.

O what a grand and glorious day awaits the Church in the Feast of Ingathering! The Day of the fruit of the Spirit! Because we do not have the fruit of the Spirit in any degree of fullness, we cannot appreciate its glory. Before the gifts of the Spirit were restored to the Church we had a faint conception of what they would be like, but what a revelation it is as we see them gradually unfolding before our eyes! So with the fruit of the Spirit. We know what they are: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22). But we shall never appreciate any measure of their real glory until the fruit of the Spirit becomes visibly manifest in the saints of God.

CHAPTER 11

TABERNACLES — THE FEAST OF REST

“Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath” (Lev. 23:39).

THE SABBATH FEAST

All the Feasts of the Lord were observed in connection with sabbath days, for they were a time when Israel (in type) must cease from their own works, and rest in the work of Christ. However, the Feast of Tabernacles is the real Feast of Rest, of which the others were but the earnest and foretaste. In the first place it was in the seventh month, even as God “rested on the seventh day from all his work.” The first day of the Feast was the fifteenth, and it was observed for seven days. The last day of the Feast was therefore the twenty-first day of the seventh month, twenty-one being a triple of seven--Rest in the absolute sense, God’s Rest which “remaineth” for the people of God. Then the next day was likewise a sabbath (the eighth day of the Feast); and though it was connected in some measure with the Feast, it was not one of the seven days of their festivities. The eighth day would speak, no doubt, of the completion of God’s purposes in the Church, and the beginning of a new day.

O child of God, if we only had eyes to see and ears to hear what the Spirit would say unto the churches. God has “unspeakable” things that He would like to declare unto us by the Spirit, but we cannot receive them now. “Unspeakable,” because there is no earthly language by which He could describe them to us, and therefore we would have to be caught away in the Spirit like the apostle Paul in order to receive them. The plans and purposes of God for the Church are far, infinitely far, beyond our highest imaginations. “That in the ages to come,” said Paul, “He might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7). How we need “the spirit of wisdom and revelation” and to have the eyes of our understanding “enlightened” that in some small measure at least we may be able to grasp and understand the secret--which is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

THERE REMAINETH A REST

It is noteworthy that as we begin to read the ordinances of the Feasts in Leviticus 23, God reminds the saints of the sabbath--the weekly sabbath--“Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation” (Lev. 23:3). Then immediately He begins to give the order of the Feast, and the sevenfold events involved in the Feasts:

The Passover.

The Unleavened Bread.

The Sheaf of Firstfruits.
 The Feast of Pentecost.
 The Blowing of Trumpets.
 The Day of Atonement.
 The Feast of Tabernacles.

And so, just as the weekly sabbath was the end of Israel's week of toil and labor--so the Feast of Tabernacles is the end of the Church's week of strife and turmoil: the Feast of all Feasts, the Sabbath of all Sabbaths. The natural, weekly "sabbath" means nothing now, because the Substance has been revealed. "There remaineth therefore a rest (A Sabbath) to the people of God"(Heb. 4:9).

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

Again, we feel we should exhort the saints concerning the rich heritage that is theirs in the Word of God. So many have denied themselves the joy and glory of the Word because of the myth that has been raised around Paul's advice to Timothy, when he exhorted this young minister to "rightly divide" the Word of truth. It is commonly taught that Paul was exhorting Timothy to draw a line of demarcation between various dispensations, and not to confuse one with the other. In other words, according to this teaching, the Old Testament is practically all for Israel, and must not be applied to the Church.

In the first place, when Paul gave this exhortation to Timothy, he was not urging him to take a course in theology; but what he said was "study." In other words, "give diligence..." as he said in other place, "Study to be quiet..." Let that be your desire and ambition. And if you want to know what Paul meant by "rightly dividing the Word of truth," all one has to do is to examine his own epistles and see how he applied the Old Testament. Over and over and over again he takes an Old Testament scripture completely out of its "context" as men would say, and applies it to some glorious Church truth which he is expounding.

We could give many, many examples of this. For instance we read much of the blessing of the nations through Abraham; and until this day Bible expositors will insist that this must apply only to the blessing of natural nations through natural Israel. And yet Paul does not hesitate to quote directly from the book of Genesis, and apply these Scriptures to this Gospel Day, and to the Gentiles who are to be justified by faith in Christ. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3; 18:18). Again, men will insist that the seed of Abraham is natural Israel, and that the promises are for them; whereas Paul tells us, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Then again, Isaiah 54, speaking of the fruitfulness of Zion, must only apply to natural Israel; but Paul quotes the first verse and applies it to men of faith, Jew or Gentile: "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not..." (Gal. 4:27). And then we have Isaiah 52, speaking of the glory of Jerusalem: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; but on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city..." That means Israel and not the

Church, we are told. Strange is it not, that four of the New Testament writers apparently didn't know this, and actually made as many as twelve references to it, or quotations from it.

“There remaineth therefore a rest (A Sabbath) to the people of God” (Heb. 4:9). We could go through the Old Testament and cite many examples of God's rest, and show how they typify this heritage of the saints in the Spirit which God has prepared for this hour. But space would not permit a detailed study of them all. We could mention the seventh day of God's creative work, when He rested from all His work which He had made, and show how this rest was but a type and shadow of this glorious rest of the believer--the one who ceases from his own works and rests in the finished work of Christ. We could mention Noah, whose name signifies “repose” and show how the dove which he sent forth from the ark found no “resting-place” for the sole of her foot; and how God smelled an “odour of rest” when Noah offered up the sacrifice on the top of the mountain. We could mention Ruth, and Boaz her kinsman-redeemer who would not “be in rest” until he had completed the transaction and redeemed Ruth, that she might become his bride. We could deal at length with the ark of the covenant, and show how it typified the presence of God and the Holy Spirit, and how God would direct it on ahead of the children of Israel in the wilderness journeyings, searching out a “resting-place” for the people of God. We could mention how David prepared a place for the ark when his kingdom was established, and pitched for it a tent--and how they invited the God of glory to come into their midst. And then later, how the temple succeeded the tent of David, and how Solomon prayed on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles: “Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy saints rejoice in goodness” (2Chron. 6:41). In fact, from Genesis to Revelation we would discover how God has not only ordained rest for the people of God, but how He has called us to precede from rest to rest, from glory unto glory, even unto the very fullness of rest itself.

THE UNEXPLORED REALMS OF THE SPIRIT

Man's chief difficulty seems to be simply this: in his limited and finite understanding he does not have the vision of greater and vaster and higher and deeper and broader expanses of God's Truth. He has failed to see that God is both infinite and eternal, and therefore in finding God one must be prepared to go ever onward and upward into the vast expanses of the Spirit of God. If God is infinite, there is no limit to the experience which we might have in union with Him by the Spirit. And if God is eternal, there is no end to the measure of Truth into which He would lead us by the Spirit. When Columbus began his explorations, it was not sufficient that they should have begun his explorations, it was not sufficient that they should have taken ship and sailed for a day or two. True, they were in the ocean the day they started. But the ocean was vast--and they must sail on, and on, and on, and on,....even to the shores of America. Nor is it sufficient that a man should drill miles into the earth and discover oil, and then promptly shout, “We've found oil,” and proceed to cap its flow. It must flow, and flow, and flow, and flow...if mankind is to be profited from it.

Now God has invited us to become partakers of His Holy Spirit, and that simply means He has invited us to explore the eternal recesses of the deep things of God and infinite heights of His glory. For the Spirit of God is given to us for that very purpose: “That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God...” We cannot know these things in the natural; hence the Spirit

of God is imparted to search out and explore “all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1Cor. 2:10,12). But those depths of God are unsearchable, for God is both infinite and eternal. It is not very clear, therefore, that it is going to take all eternity for us to fully explore the immensities of the Divine attributes? “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!

THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE

We are not suggesting that God has not done much for us in the past; but we are confident of this: anything we have had in the past by way of experience has been but the foretaste and the earnest of what God would now lead us into by the Spirit. The solemn exhortations of Hebrews 4 are therefore most applicable to us in this great day of opportunity. “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached (Or, the word of the report) did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Heb. 4:1,2). The reference, of course, is to the first generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt, and crossed over the Red Sea and came into the wilderness. It did not take them long to reach the door-step of their inheritance--it was just eleven days journey from Horeb to Kadeshbarnea, the doorway of Canaan. And when they got there Moses sent forth spies to spy out the land and search out the riches of their inheritance. Twelve spies went forth into the land and explored it for forty days. As to its wealth and fruitfulness there was absolutely no question. They knew the people would not believe what they found, so they cut down a branch of grapes in the valley of Eschol, and carried it between two upon a staff; and they also brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. “Surely,” they testified, “It floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.” And they showed them what they had found. (See. Num. 13:17-33).

Now, who would suggest that the spies had taken the land just because they had explored it for forty days, and brought back a little fruit to Kadeshbarnea? And that is just exactly the position the Church of Jesus Christ is in today. We are still in the wilderness. It is true that God has given us of His Spirit; but only as a “foretaste;” only as the means by which we might search out the depths of God, even as the spies explored the land of Canaan. God has even given us a little taste of the realm of the Spirit; for in bestowing upon us the Holy Spirit we receive “the earnest of our inheritance,” or the “firstfruits of the Spirit” (Eph. 1:14; Rom. 8:23). Moses is careful to inform us: “Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes” (Num. 13:20). Wonderful, indeed, is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Wonderful foretaste and earnest of our heritage in Christ Jesus! We have actually made a little raid into Canaan, and have come back with the fruit of the land. And if the first ripe grapes and the figs and the pomegranates are good--what must it be like to literally live in Canaan, to drink refreshing waters from wells which we have not digged, to eat the fruit of vineyards and olive trees which we planted not, and to inhabit houses which we built not. That is the rest that remaineth for the people of God. It is entering into a place that has already been prepared for us by the Spirit. It is the fullness, of which the Pentecostal blessing is but the firstfruits. It is the laying hold of that for which Christ hath laid hold on us, apprehending by the Spirit that for which Christ hath apprehended us. (Phil. 3:12). It is entering into, and appropriating, this resurrection-life by the Spirit.

ISRAEL'S MISTAKE IS THE CHURCH'S MISTAKE

Israel's mistake consisted in disobedience and fear, and hence in unbelief. Had they believed in their God, they could not have feared the enemy and their strongholds. Let us notice these facts about Israel:

They searched out the land for forty days; they knew it was a good land, a land that flowed with milk and honey; they knew that God told them to go in and possess it; but they refused to obey God on the basis that they did not have the power and the authority to take it. It is not difficult for us to draw an exact parallel between this generation of Israel and the generation of the Church in which we live. For some years now God has enabled the saints to reach out by the Spirit and explore the realms of their heritage. The restoration of Pentecost at the beginning of the century opened up a new life in the Spirit, and thousands upon thousands of saints were forced out of the old religious systems because they grew discontented with the manna and the wilderness life and wanted more from God. God was very gracious and gave the grapes of Eschol and the figs and pomegranates--glorious provisions of His Spirit, to all who hungered and thirsted for the things of God. They have proved by experience that it is a good land, and one that floweth with milk and honey. They know, too, that God has commanded them to go in and possess the land. But sad to say, this same generation has refused to believe that they could take it, and God has allowed them to perish in the wilderness like their predecessors in Israel. Israel searched out the land for forty days; and so God said, according to the number of days, a day for a year, would they wander in the wilderness until they were consumed. Likewise has it happened in the Church. For well over forty years this latter day generation of Spirit-filled people have wandered in the wilderness, hundreds of thousands have gone back to the old denominational systems because their blessing did not last--(and how could it last? God just intended that it should be a foretaste), and by and large the whole movement is worse off than before, and has less success in the way of evangelism than many of our fundamental evangelical movements. We are not speaking of any particular sect, but of the whole movement of Spirit-filled people during the last forty or fifty years.

Of course God will bless them; for it is His responsibility to look after them as long as they are in the wilderness. There was daily manna for Israel throughout the whole wilderness journey; there was water out of the flinty rock to quench their thirst; God preserved the very clothes on their back and the shoes on their feet; protected them from the enemy; healed them of their diseases or afflictions when they cried unto Him; and bore them on eagle's wings throughout that long and arduous and bitter journey in the wilderness. But the fact remains, the generation that refused to take the land died in the wilderness.

How gracious and wise is our God in all His ways! Little did the children of Israel realize that in all they were doing, they were really fulfilling an eternal purpose for the instruction of the Church. These things happened unto them "for ensamples" of us. By their fall, and by their sin, and by their disobedience, God was trying to teach us the path of righteousness and faith and victory. Thank God for the type. It gives us great boldness to enter into the new and living way which God hath now opened up for us through the veil. The wilderness experience has been bitter for those who have hungered and thirsted for God. But God has had a sovereign purpose in it all, that his hungering saints might now be prepared to enter into the land of rest. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness,

to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no” (Deut. 8:2).

A NEW GENERATION ARISES

The old generation who disbelieved God perished in the wilderness. But God sustained the new generation for forty years, humbled them, proved them, and prepared them for the conquest of Canaan. And so it is that a new generation under new leadership arises out of the wilderness of modern evangelical circles, to succeed a dying generation. “Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, “Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them...” (Josh. 1:1,2). Moses must give way to Joshua. The Law must give way to Grace; and Grace must be swallowed up in the Kingdom. Joshua is the Hebrew word for Jesus. It signifies “Jah Saves.” His generation is to be a conquering, a delivering generation. The former generation said it was all right to go in and spy out the land--no doubt they enjoyed the grapes and the figs and the pomegranates immensely--but they did not want to go in and possess the land. It is all right, they would tell us today, to speak in tongues, or receive gifts of the Spirit, or heal the sick, or perhaps raise the dead occasionally, or prophesy, or sing in the Spirit--these things are all right. But they do not want to hear any of this talk about Christ appearing in the saints, and “being formed within you.” And as for the “manifestation of the Sons of God,” that is definitely not for our day and age. True, they will admit, God has it for us; it is part of our heritage; but not for now. That will take place at the rapture, or the resurrection. We cannot possess the land; there are too many obstacles. There are cities with high walls surrounding them, wooded mountains infested with giants, fearful enemies using iron chariots. It is positively ridiculous to suggest that we can take the land. It is all right to be filled with the Spirit, and enjoy the blessing of the Spirit occasionally; but it is impossible to really enter into the realm of the Spirit to such an extent that you live there constantly. You can take some grapes from the valley of Eschol, but you must not attempt to dwell in Eschol. You can receive an anointing on your mind, and receive thoughts from God that are holy, and speak His words occasionally: but you cannot have the “mind of Christ” in any degree of fullness so that you can actually think His thoughts, and say His words, and perform His works, and live His very own life. It is all right to be healed, but not to enjoy real Divine health or Divine life to such an extent that your days will be lengthened excessively, without pain or feebleness or the abatement of your natural faculties. It is all right to get free from this habit or that, or conquer your temper, but not to be so positively free from the sin nature that “sin hath no more dominion” over you. That would be perfection, and you cannot have perfection until you get to Heaven. It is all right to talk in tongues in a language that no man understandeth, but not to go out to the nations speaking their language, with their accent, and understanding exactly what you say, and what they say. It is all right if you preach the Gospel with signs and wonders, and see certain miracles performed occasionally; but we cannot be caught away in the Spirit like Philip or Elijah in this day of modern travel. It is all right to fight Satan here on the earth and cast out a few devils, but you cannot ascend up in the Spirit into “the heavenlies” and literally topple Satan from his throne, and enter into the realm of power and authority “in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.” We don’t mind tasting the grapes of Eschol, and the figs and pomegranates which the spies have brought back, but we refuse to make any attempt at conquering the whole land!

Perhaps many would not like to admit it, but this is just about the sum and substance of all the turmoil that rages everywhere concerning these great truths. The whole question resolves itself into this: Are we going to remain in the condition of those who have been saved and baptized with the Holy Spirit? Or are we going to arise from the dusty sands of this great and terrible wilderness and follow our Joshua across the Jordan into real, triumphant, overcoming power in the Spirit of God?

Thank God there ariseth a new generation that has caught the vision. A few Calebs and Joshuas have survived the blight and the dearth of the wilderness, and are leading the saints in the power of the Spirit into realms of glorious victory. For God has promised the land is ours if we can only hear His voice and voice and obey: "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 4:7). There is only one real enemy, and that is Fear. But God has promised: "Be strong and of a good courage...I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee..."

WHAT ARE THE LIMITATIONS?

What then? Are there no limitations to the measure of power which the saints may appropriate? Yes, indeed; but they are the limitations that they themselves erect in unbelief. With God all things are possible; we know that is true. But Jesus adds, "All things are possible to him that believeth." When a certain man brought his lunatic son to Christ, and the son wallowed on the ground in torment, the father said to the Lord in anguish of soul, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." But Jesus turned the whole responsibility back upon the father, and said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk. 9:22,23). The if-thou-canst is a condition which must be directed at your faith and mine; it is not a question as to God's ability or His willingness to do the things of which we speak. But the glory of it all is this: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And therefore if we, in this the greatest hour of Church history, will but hear the Word of God--that is, give it a place in our heart and life, then faith will spring up, overcoming faith, faith that will enable us to take possession of our heritage in Christ Jesus.

The extent to which we might reach out in the Spirit, and the limitations of our heritage, are very clearly taught in the Word. God said to Joshua, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you, as I said unto Moses" (Josh. 1:3). It is not a case of "How much will God give," for He has already given us "All things,"--even accounting to us a heritage with Christ "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Henceforth the question remains, "How much can I appropriate?" God says, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you..." And lest there are some fearful saints, who think the measure of our heritage must be confined within certain limits, then God tells us exactly what those limitations are:

"...And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places..."(Eph. 1:19,20). There is the measure of the power that is available to the saints! Not the power that Moses exercised in Egypt, or at the Red Sea; not the power that Elijah had when he locked the heavens for three and a half years, and then opened them again; or when he called fire down from heaven; or opened the Jordan river that he might pass over; not the power that Elisha exercised when he caused the iron to swim, the waters to be healed, the hungry to be fed, the dead to be raised; not the power that

David had over wild beasts, to slay the lion and the bear single-handed; and not even the power that Christ exercised in His earthly ministry when He healed the sick, cast out devils, walked on the sea, called the dead back--even from corruption. But even the “working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places...” And still we could go on--for Paul continues to enlarge upon the immensity of this power which Christ has, and which is ours: power and authority over all principalities and powers, both in this world and the next, power to put all things “under his feet,” even His Church, for He is the Head, and we are the Body.

O the immensity of these words! And what is more, Christ is going to remain right where He is at God’s right hand until there shall arise a group of overcomers who shall conquer over all God’s enemies. “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps. 110:1). And yet the majority of Christians are looking for a rapture any moment, when Christ is supposed to catch away a miserable, defeated, disease-ridden Church. God says Christ is going to stay right where He is until all His enemies are under His feet. And His enemies include the “last enemy,” which is Death. There must arise a group of overcomers who shall conquer and become absolutely victorious over all the opposing forces of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--before this dispensation draws to a close.

HE BROUGHT US OUT, TO BRING US IN

“And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in...” (Deut. 6:23). God’s purpose in delivering us from our sins and from wrath is that He should bring us into our heritage in Christ. The one is not complete without the other. He died that we might be delivered from death and live in the realm of the more abundant life. We thank God for what He has done for us in virtue of His Cross: nailed our sins to the tree; delivered us from sin’s wrath and punishment; accounted to us a perfect righteousness, and made us to be the very righteousness of God in Christ. Such is justification: that blessed and happy state of the man who believes in Christ, whereby God’s own life and righteousness is placed to his account. In consequence, therefore, of this blessed condition, the believer in Christ has a standing in Grace, before God and all the celestial hosts, as one who has never sinned; and he is held to be as righteous as God Himself is righteous. All this is very wonderful.

One question remains: Is this righteousness and life to avail us anything now, or are we to wait till death or resurrection in order to appropriate it? Says Paul, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” What a blessed condition! But can we appropriate it? Let Paul continue: “...By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1,2). Access into our standing! Is that not what it says? That is possessing our possessions; and that is exactly what God expects us to do. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon shall be yours. God wants us to receive that Divine ennoblement whereby we shall be “able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Eph. 3:18,19).

JONATHAN’S HONEY SHOWER

There was a time during the reign of Saul, when the Philistines were massed in great strength against Israel, that Jonathan, Saul's son, was impressed to make a single-handed raid against the enemy. So he and his armour-bearer went over to the Philistines' garrison, climbed up the sharp rocks which were in the passes, and contacted the enemy. He did not tell his father anything about it, because he knew what would happen. Just imagine what a stupid idea he had! He and his armour-bearer going over to fight a whole garrison of the Philistines--when the whole army of Israel was in utter fear, having scarcely a weapon in the whole nation because of the terrible servitude to which they had been subjected. But Jonathan knew what faith could do. "It may be that the Lord will work for us," he said. "For there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." (1Sam. 14:6). And so Saul tarried at home under the pomegranate tree, and Ichabod's nephew was wearing the ephod. He was Saul's priest. What a picture of a powerless, defeated Church, resting at ease and self-complacency, with a priesthood that is devoid of the glory, and their people in complete bondage and servitude to the enemy. They even had to go down to the Philistines to get their axe or sickle sharpened, for there was no smith in Israel. Complete dependence upon the world and its systems!

But Jonathan's faith led him into a great place of victory and fruitfulness. All he did was to start chasing the enemy, and his armour-bearer followed. One by one the enemy fell before Jonathan, and the armour-bearer did the slaying. Thank God for the Holy Spirit who stands by our side, confirming every Word of God with the sharp Sword of His mouth. Then a great fear gripped the Philistines, and there was a trembling in the host and amongst all the people, and the earth quaked. And Saul looked on in amazement, for the Philistines were melting away. There seemed to be no reason for all this: so he numbered the host to see if any were missing. Sure enough, Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not there.

First of all, of course, Saul had to know whether this thing was of God or not. If it wasn't then he would not have anything to do with it. So he called forth the ark of God and Ichabod's nephew to see if they could help him. While they argued, the Philistines continued to melt away in utter confusion, even beating down one another. Finally he could stand it no longer, and he ordered the priest to withdraw his hand. He saw that he was going to miss out on the victory if he did not get into the battle at once. So he mustered his men and started the pursuit. There was the shout of victory; the Philistines were in utter confusion; and every man's sword was against his fellow's. Whenever there is a shout of victory there are a lot of people who will join the battle. They may not know what is going on, and how the move of the Spirit started, and the purpose of it all--but there is a shout of victory, and that is about all that matters. And so Saul wanted everything God had for him, and joined the battle. It was a great victory; and of course Saul was king, so it was his victory. He was right there in the thick of battle.

The strange part of the whole thing is this, that the whole purpose and plan of God for this day and hour is completely lost and obscured amidst the shout of victory, and most of the saints do not know what it is all about. They can see healings, miracles, prophecy, laying on of hands for the bestowal of gifts, singing in the Spirit...and so forth; and they do not understand that it is God in mercy preparing His people to enter into the very heritage of Canaan. They do not realize that this is but the foretaste and earnest of their heritage, and that God would now lead them in to possess the land. And so King Saul--for he was king, and this was his battle, and his victory--he charged the people with a strange oath, forbidding them to eat any food until he was avenged of his enemies. (Just that very morning he was resting under a pomegranate tree with no thought of

pursuing the enemy at all. But he must maintain his kingdom and show his authority and keep the people under his rule and sway.)

The battle continued with ever-increasing momentum, the people pursuing the enemy, and the backslidden Hebrews coming out of their hiding places and joining the battle along with their comrades. But it was a hard struggle, and the people became faint as the battle wore on. How hungry they were! But they could taste nothing, because Saul had charged the people with a strange oath. This was no time to eat; this was a day of battle. This is no time to talk about Divine life, and freedom from sin and the carnal nature, and appropriation of resurrection blessings; those things belong to the rapture!

And so they fought; and as they pursued the enemy they came into a wood. The trees were literally flowing with honey, but they could not touch it. A curse was pronounced upon any man who would taste any food until victory was complete. Is it not strange how men in high places are constantly charging the people with strange oaths as to what they shall accept and what they shall not accept? And the people are hungry for the heritage of Canaan, but they fear the oath. Saul has made the decree, and that is enough. "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening." This is the hour of the Church's struggle, we are told, and it is no time to be talking about our heavenly heritage and trying to enter into it.

But like Jonathan there are some that "heard not" when this curse was laid upon the people. And like Jonathan they have discovered that the fruit of Canaan is to be their strength and sustenance even while they fight the Devil, and not after they go to Heaven. In fact, it is part of the spoils of victory; it is right in our pathway as we pursue the enemy and throw his ranks into utter confusion. And so Jonathan simply put forth his rod and took a little honey (for the trees "dropped" or literally "flowed" with honey), and put the honey to his mouth, and "his eyes were enlightened." Just as simple as that! The people argued with him that he was doing wrong, because the king had said so. They themselves were really hungry for the same thing, but that did not matter either. If the king said so, that was enough. Jonathan was under the curse.

God's people everywhere should know this; and all our religious leaders should know it; that if the saints are barred from their heritage in Christ and forbidden to eat of the good things of Father's table, sooner or later they are going to eat of the flesh-pots of the world. The people, we are told, became so ravenously hungry that they "flew upon the spoil." They took sheep and oxen and calves and slew them, and ate the flesh with the blood. This was a great sin, so far as Israel was concerned, for it was contrary to Mosaic law. But the truth of the matter is this: if we do not go on to appropriate and enjoy the honey of Canaan, sooner or later we will return to the ways of the flesh. After all, why should Jonathan not have partaken of the honey of the land? It was in Canaan, was it not? And had God not given Israel the whole land of Canaan for their heritage, even the land that floweth with milk and honey?

There is a Jonathan group in the Church that has believed their God, and they are determined to pursue Satan and his hosts unto the end. Perhaps they are no match for mighty Lucifer and his hosts, but they are not trusting in their own natural weapons; they are not relying upon their wisdom, their knowledge, their theology. Their trust is in God alone. For them God will cause the earth to quake, the evil hosts to tremble, and confusion to grip their ranks. It really doesn't matter what our resources are in the natural. In the wisdom of God, Satan and his hosts are going to become such fools that they will flee in utter confusion and will even destroy each other. If men will believe their God, God will send a great trembling into the ranks of the enemy; and then the victory is ours. Furthermore, these men know that their victory was through faith, and

not by the arm of flesh. And therefore they do not hesitate to stop and taste “a little honey” along the way, while others labour feverishly in the power of the flesh to defeat the enemy before sundown. Certainly the need is great; Jonathan knows all about that. But he knows also that God gave him the victory through quietness and confidence and through much waiting on God. And he can afford, therefore, to withdraw from the hustle and bustle of Saul’s battle, and take time off to enjoy some of the spoils of victory.

For many years the saints have been singing about what they are going to do after the battle is over. They are going to be with Christ, in Heaven, enjoying the peace and rest of the lands of their inheritance. They are going to drink at the eternal fountains, and eat of the tree of life. But the fact of the matter is simply this: the fruits of victory are to be appropriated here and now while the battle rages. The woods are literally “flowing” with honey; and you don’t have to go out of your way to find it either; it is right in your very pathway as you pursue the enemy.

But what about the curse? Well, God must have turned the curse into a blessing, as He is accustomed to do on behalf of those who love Him. It never did Jonathan any harm. Saul even insisted on killing him, because--according to all the signs, Jonathan was to blame for the Lord’s displeasure in Israel. Prayers were not answered any more. Saul inquired of God concerning a matter, and God refused to hear him. So he cast lots to see who was at fault, and Jonathan was taken. We may be sure that when Saul takes the pathway of disobedience, and walks in his own way, he is left open to great deception. Those who have refused to go on with God in the pathway which He has chosen, and choose the way of the flesh rather than the heritage of the Spirit, they will receive many sure signs and tokens to prove that Jonathan is in the wrong. Once a man enters the path of disobedience, and closes the door to revealed truth, he has thrown himself open to greater deception; and the most conclusive signs and evidences that he receives will be utterly false and unreliable.

Here is Jonathan’s simple explanation of his “sin”: “I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die.” At best all the saints have yet done in their attempt to appropriate the heritage of Canaan, is to “taste” a little honey. But the whole land is before us. May God help us to press in by the Spirit and possess our possessions even now in the day of battle. By His grace we are well able to overcome.

CHAPTER 12

TABERNACLES – THE FEAST OF GLORY

THE EVENTS OF THE SEVENTH MONTH BLEND INTO ONE

Let us recall how the three events comprising the Feast of the Passover all blended harmoniously together to form that first great Feast of the Church. There were the Passover, the Unleavened Bread, and the Sheaf of Firstfruits: distinct events, yet blending together to form one Feast--beautiful type of the death and resurrection of Christ, and the new life which His death made possible. So now in the last Feast, the events are of a threefold nature: the Blowing of the Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Ingathering. And again these three events blend together to form one great Feast, the last great revival of the Church age. Let us not imagine that this great revival of gifts and ministries of the Spirit is by any means the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. But it is the promise and the earnest of this fulfillment, the beginning of the end. For this move of the Spirit must rise and rise and rise (through much sifting and testing and trial), even unto the fullness of the Feast of Tabernacles itself.

And therefore, as the day of glory and of triumph begins to dawn upon the eastern horizon, we may expect to receive a foretaste of that glory as the first rays break forth upon the Church. But we dare not, we must not, settle for anything that God has yet given to any people in any age or dispensation. We must go forward to explore the infinite realms of the Spirit of God. We must pass out of the realm of the natural, and into the realm of the spiritual. We must progress from the “length and breadth” and begin to comprehend somewhat of the “height and depth” of spiritual things. The “to and fro” experience must give way to an “ascending and descending” experience on Jacob’s ladder. We must pass from a knowledge of the understandable, to a knowledge of the inconceivable. We must rise from the visible to behold the invisible. We must hear the inaudible, grasp the intangible, explore the unsearchable, and declare the unspeakable. For God hath set eternity in our hearts, and we will not rest--nor will we give Him rest, till He stablish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The Church must yet bring forth a child that shall “rule all nations with a rod of iron” (Rev. 12:5). For it is given unto the overcomer to “rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter, shall they be broken to shivers” (Rev. 2:27).

ICHABOD, THE GLORY HAS DEPARTED

We can expect that with the travail of the saints to bring forth this Son, there shall also be the travail of a dying priesthood to bring forth something to perpetuate and sustain the old order. But it shall not prosper. The Aaronic priesthood--glorious as it was in its day, must give way to a new priesthood, the priesthood after the “order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 6:20).

And so it was that Hannah stood before the temple in Shiloh and in anguish of soul prayed that God would give her a man-child, for she was barren; and she promised that if her request was granted, the child would be dedicated unto the service of the Lord all his days. God heard her prayer, and give her a child, and she called his name “Samuel,” meaning “Asked of God.” This

man-child was destined to become Israel's priest, to succeed the dying priesthood of the house of Eli. Because of the wicked way of Eli's sons, God had decreed that the priesthood should be snatched away from the house of Eli, and given to another. As a young child it was revealed to Samuel that God was going to bring judgment upon the house of Eli, and as it was revealed so it came to pass. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who were in line to receive the priesthood--were both slain in one day. At the same time the ark of God was captured by the Philistines; and as Eli heard the sad news he fell backward and broke his neck and died. The glory had departed from Israel, and he who served in the house of God was slain in battle. Then it was that the wife of Phinehas heard the sad news; and that news caused her pains to come upon her, and she travailed and brought forth a man-child. In her dying moments she named him "Ichabod," and she named him well, because the ark of God was taken. Ichabod signifies, "No glory," or "Where is the glory?"

And try as she will, this modern-day church system, this Babylon of religious pomp and splendour, will produce nothing but Ichabods. "Where is the Glory?" Where is that real, vital presence of the Holy Spirit in the congregation of the saints to work the very works of God Himself, and produce the fruit of the Spirit? Yes, the dying priesthood will bring forth its manchild, but Ichabod is the name. God has already prepared another manchild, and Samuel is the name. He was "asked for." The cries and prayers of God's people for years have prevailed upon the God of Heaven, and in answer to their prayers and travail, "a Son, a male" is to be born, for that is the literal translation of "manchild" (Rev. 12:5). Ichabod is in line for the priesthood, that is true; but God has ordained another priesthood, a priesthood of glory.

THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

The Melchizedek priesthood is a priesthood of life, and of fadeless glory. It is a priesthood of eternal fellowship and communion with Christ, and not like the Aaronic priesthood which experienced the presence of God only on a certain occasion, once in the year. It is a priesthood that is established by the word and oath of God Himself. It is a priesthood which cannot pass away, for there is no death in the fullness of this new order. It is a priesthood of royal power and authority. Gone shall be the bondage of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. For this priesthood introduces the royal-priest behind the veil, behind the flesh. The flesh is rent asunder, and the glory of God is unveiled. The Head has already entered into this priesthood--and if He has entered it means the way is open for others to follow. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. 6:20). It is a "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:20). Can you hear these words, child of God? "For us..." Not for the Church of the past centuries, for they did not hear these beautiful words, and therefore it had no application to them. But "for us" to whom the Word of God is now given. Not to men of some future dispensation or some future Kingdom: but "for us" who live in this day of opportunity, this today of hope and promise. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart..." In the fullness of this new priesthood we shall be completely glorified, like unto Christ. But even as Christ began His priesthood on earth by interceding for His brethren--so let us begin even now to possess this glorious heritage in the Spirit, the Kingdom of God within.

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people...” (1Pet. 2:9). A royal priesthood! A priesthood of kings, and a kingdom of priests! A company of overcomers, who have power with God and with men! As priests they have power with God, and as kings they have power with men. As priests they have “access by faith into this grace” of our holy standing; and as kings they have the power of God to rule and reign in all circumstances and over all opposing forces. As priests they can intercede with God on behalf of men; and as kings they can impart life and power and deliverance to the captive, and set the oppressed free. Such is the kingdom of Melchizedek. He reigns, but he also intercedes; and in fact he reigns by interceding. His very power and kingly authority is for the benefit and sake of others. Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore...” (Matt. 28:19). And again, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8). He is King! and Priest! And He has designated His kingly authority and His priestly authority to such as are of Him and in Him. In this realm the flesh “profiteth nothing.” Natural advantages, fleshly attainments, racial distinctions, educational standards, ecclesiastical success--these profit nothing. This priesthood knows nothing of father, mother, genealogy, beginning of days nor end of life. It is the sphere and realm of the Spirit of God, a priesthood and a Kingdom which the Sons of God shall enter into as they grow up into Christ.

Melchizedek signifies by his name, “King of righteousness.” He is also called King of Salem, and that means King of Peace. (Heb. 7:2). His ministry, therefore, is to establish righteousness and peace in those who are under sin’s dominion. And that, of course, is the very essence of the Kingdom of God. “The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17).

Now can we understand how the overcomer in the Day of the Lord, when Great Tribulation is upon the earth, will be able to administer help and comfort and sustenance to God’s people who are under oppression and persecution. The great tribulation itself is going to be cut short because of the Sons of God. As Moses interceded for Israel and spared them from wrath; and as Jesus intercedes for His people, and spares them from wrath; so the Sons of God, through the exercise of their royal priesthood, shall actually shorten the Great Tribulation. Jesus has declared that they would: “For the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matt. 24:22). The elect shall have entered into a new priesthood, a royal priesthood. As priests they will be able to present the needs of the people to God, and intercede for them; and as kings they will have the authority of God to dispense life and blessing to such as are in tribulation and distress. The world has had her day of kings and dictators whose passion it is to exercise lordship and dominion over a suffering humanity. This new Kingdom shall be a Priesthood,--a priesthood that “can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way” for they will remember their former afflictions. They will recall their former bondage under Satan’s cruel kingdom, and the days of yester-years when the flesh tormented them, and they cried in anguish of soul: “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me...?” They shall not have forgotten that they too were once sinners, defiled in His sight, and poured out their complaint to God in the bitterness of their sorrows. And therefore they shall reign as priests--co-heirs with the Son in the Kingdom of Grace.

“Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech. 6:13). What does this mean? “Between them both...”? “Both” refers

back to Joshua the high priest, and “the man whose name is the branch.” It is the priesthood of the Son and the many Sons. Joshua means “Jah saves,” and is the same as Jesus in the Greek. The branch, on the other hand, is said to “grow up out of his place.” It is Christ; and His place is the Church. But He is called the branch, or literally the sprout, because this Man is a many-membered Body, that grows up into maturity. We read therefore that the Body is to “grow up into...the head, even Christ” (Eph. 4:15). Hence, away back in the days of Zechariah who prophesied words of encouragement to the builders of the second temple, we have the truth of the new priesthood, a priesthood that reigns upon the throne, a priesthood comprising Christ and His people, the Son and the many Sons, with the counsel of peace “between them both.”

Is it not written, “Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”? (Rom. 8:17). And does not the apostle declare that God “hath raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus”? (Eph. 2:6, Literal).

O the depths and the heights of this glorious priesthood! It far surpasses anything we can possibly imagine in the natural; for it is an infinite and eternal priesthood, and we are yet carnal and walk as men. Only by the Spirit can we comprehend anything of our heritage in Christ.

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL, A PATTERN OF THE CHURCH

In the history of Israel’s Kingdom we have a picture of the Church of Christ throughout her long history. As a young lad on the hillsides of Bethlehem David received his Pentecost. There it was that the prophet Samuel poured the anointing oil upon his head, and he was anointed as king over Israel. So it was that the Church of early apostolic days received a mighty anointing from God, an anointing which constituted her a “royal priesthood.” Like David, the Church was anointed to rule and reign; but her kingdom was in exile much of the time; she reigned amidst much conflict and tribulation. Hunted and hounded on every hand, she dwelt in caves and holes of the earth, persecuted, martyred, tortured, tossed to the lions, burnt at the stake. Every conceivable device was used against her; but the more she was persecuted, the stronger she became. The kingdom of Saul waxed weaker and weaker, and the kingdom of David waxed stronger and stronger. Finally, by the end of the third century A.D. it is said that about one-half of the Roman Empire had been converted to Christ.

Then for a brief period it would seem that the Church entered into her “Solomon” stage. Solomon means “Peace.” The persecutions ceased, and for a time the Church enjoyed rest from tribulation, and she became a mighty and powerful and prosperous kingdom. However, it was not for long. The Church soon lost her power and her glory; for Satan had succeeded in deceiving her; and the prosperity which she enjoyed served only to lull her to sleep, and to rob her of her spiritual life. God warned Israel that when they took possession of their heritage, “Houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage” (Deut. 6:11,12). Israel did forget, and so did the Church. Solomon’s glory departed and his temple was destroyed; and likewise the glory departed from the Church, and her beautiful temple was destroyed.

Then began the captivity. Israel went into Babylonian captivity; and the Church went into her spiritual Babylon of the Dark Ages. Solomon turned away from the Lord in his old age and built idolatrous images, and the king who had received the greatest wisdom ever accorded to any king in Israel--lost his glory and turned to folly. So the Church married many strange women of idolatrous and heathen Rome, and the wisdom of God which had been displayed in mighty signs and wonders and demonstrations of the Holy Spirit, degenerated into the utmost of folly.

Then there was restoration from the captivity. After the captivity a believing remnant returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple and restore Israel's order of worship. And after the Dark Ages a spiritual remnant returned from spiritual Babylon to restore God's pattern for the Church. There was Restoration for Israel; and there was Reformation for the Church. There was great persecution for the builders of the second temple in Jerusalem; and there was great persecution for Luther and his allies as they began to restore the foundations of Truth which had been lost during the Dark Ages.

Once again there was disobedience in Israel, until we come to the time of Christ, when Israel's worship had degenerated into a meaningless system of form and ritual, devoid of the glory of God. There were Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, and great activity in the temple; but there was no real worship of the one true God of Israel. And so we have the same thing in the Church. Protestantism itself had degenerated into a meaningless system of religion, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. True there is much religion, great temples, fine orchestras and choirs and illustrious preachers; but so very little real spiritual worship of God and His Christ.

And all this brings us up to the Appearing of Christ in Israel, and to the second Appearing of Christ now at the ends of the ages. Just as Israel's temple was abandoned and left unto them utterly "desolate" because of their disobedience, and a new temple was brought into being by Incarnation; so now Protestantism has been left "desolate" because of her disobedience, and a new Temple is being born by the Spirit of God,--even the Temple of the living God, the Body of Christ. As the days drew nigh when Christ was to go to Gethsemane and the Cross, He prophesied to the people, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19). They thought He meant the temple of Herod which took forty and six years to build; but no, He referred to the Temple which He was, the Temple of His body. So once again, in this hour of His second Appearing, the prophecy goes forth that He will raise up His Temple, that the Body of Christ shall be brought together to form a holy Temple of the Lord. Many have thought that He referred to the resurrection of a dying religious system; but no, He is referring to the spiritual resurrection of a spiritual Body, made One by the power of the Holy Spirit, motivated and energized by the presence and power of Christ Himself in the midst of His people.

What we should notice particularly, however, throughout this whole pattern, is that the culmination of the old order is the beginning of the new. When the veil of the old religious order was rent in twain, a new way of access was opened up into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus; and within three days a New Man, a New Temple, came into being in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. So now once again, with the veil of the old religious order being rent asunder, a new way is being opened up into the Holy of Holies, even the way of the Melchizedek priesthood--and it will not be long ere a New Temple springs into being by the resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ, this time a spiritual resurrection. For this is the day and hour of His Appearing, the hour of His spiritual visitation within His saints. It is the day and hour when Christ shall be "formed within" His people. It is the "out-resurrection from among the dead." It is

Christ “the resurrection and the life” standing in our midst. It is the seed breaking forth into the blade, the blade into the ear, the ear into the full corn. It is the caterpillar being transformed into the butterfly, and breaking forth from the cocoon of death into the glorious liberty of the atmosphere above. It is the day and hour of the manifestation of the Sons of God, when the Son Himself shall be unveiled in the hearts and lives of His many brethren.

THE FOCAL HOUR OF GOD’S PURPOSES

We may expect, therefore, that in these end times, when the events of the ages are to be focused into one, that we shall discover the pattern of this great hour prefigured and typified everywhere in the sacred Scriptures. This is the day of the “fulness of the times.” The ends of the ages have come upon us. Not the end of the age; not the end of the ages; not the ends of the age; but even “the ends of the ages” (1Cor. 10:11, Literal). And therefore, just as the river which begins as a trickle in the top of some mountain, flows down the steeps and through the plains, and gathers into its flow the waters from all the springs and rivulets and streams along the way--and finally empties all its accumulated waters into the ocean, so it is with the stream of God’s purposes. There was judgment and there was glory with every age and every dispensation that God ever gave; but now we have come to the ends of the ages when all the judgments as well as all the glory of bygone ages are to find their focus in this great hour. Why did Jesus say of the Jews of His day: “That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation?” (Lk. 11:50). Simply because the sum and substance of all the promises of the Scriptures were heaped together and offered to that generation in the Person of Messiah; and therefore in their rejection of Messiah all the judgments which were due to all preceding generations were heaped together and laid upon that generation. And so it actually came to pass, and was fulfilled in the desolation of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans in A.D. 70.

Now we have come to the ends of the ages. Once again there is an apostate religious system, upon which the wrath of God shall descend in great fury; and then shall be fulfilled the Great Tribulation, of which the desolation of Jerusalem in the days of Emperor Titus was but a type and shadow. That was a local event, concerning only the natural Jerusalem; this shall be a world-wide event, and all the earth--especially apostate Christendom--shall feel the mighty impact of the Day of the Lord. But as we have already discovered, the Day of the Lord is the unveiled might and power of the God of Heaven, descending in wrath upon the ungodly, but in great power and blessing upon the overcomer.

The dispensation of the Law could only end in tribulation and the curse: for it is a ministration of death. But the dispensation of Grace must end in glory and victory: for it is a ministration of life. The universal Church, however, has refused to accept the dispensation of Grace, and has continued from the earliest times to live under the dispensation of the Law. Religion continues to patch that which Christ has declared useless. The veil that He rent in twain has been sewn together, and the flesh continues to rule in the place of the Spirit. Instead of the blood of Christ, there is the work of man. Instead of new birth, there is moral rearmament. Instead of the Holy Spirit, there is fleshly entertainment. The Day of the Lord is at hand, even the ends of the ages, and great shall be the display of God’s glory. It shall be light, glorious light, or it shall be darkness, gross darkness; and that will all depend upon our position before God. Just as all the

wrath and judgments which were due to all preceding generations were heaped together and laid upon the generation of Christ's day; so now, not only all the wrath but all the glory ever administered or ever offered to all preceding generations, shall be heaped together and laid upon our generation when the Day of the Lord is revealed. It shall therefore be Great Tribulation, such as was never known from the foundation of the world; but it shall also be Great Glory, such as was never known from the foundation of the world. To the one class of people it shall be a day of "darkness" and of "gloominess." But to the other, "as the morning spread upon the mountains." (Joel 2:2). To the one, the Great Tribulation; but to the other, "The Manifestation of the Sons of God."

This is the focal hour of history. The glory of Moses' day is for us; the glory of David's kingdom is for us; the glory of Solomon's kingdom is for us; the glory of the restored temple of Ezra's day is for us; the glory of Enoch's day, and the glory of Elijah's day, and the glory of Paul's day,--all this glory and much more is available to us, if we can hear His voice.

THE ARK BROUGHT TO SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

"And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto King Solomon at the feast of the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord...into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place..." (1Kgs. 8:2-6). David had previously pitched a tent for the ark of the Lord on Mount Zion. But he was not permitted to build a permanent house for the ark, because he had been a man of many wars. His kingdom must give way to Solomon's, and his tent to the permanent, glorious temple to be constructed by his son. And so finally, the temple was completed, and the ark of the Lord was brought into the oracle of the house, even the holy of holies. When this took place, and "the priests were come out of the holy place,...the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" (vs. 10,11).

All this took place on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles; a beautiful picture, therefore, of the glory which God has prepared for the Temple not made with hands, a Temple of living stones. Solomon in his great dedicatory prayer prophesied of Israel's future disobedience and their dispersion among the nations; but with that prophetic warning there was also a promise that if they returned unto God with all their heart in the land of their captivity, then God would hear from Heaven and maintain their cause. (See 1Kgs. 8:15-61). So it happened to Israel, and so it happened to the Church. Solomon's beautiful temple was destroyed; and the Church went into the millennium of the Dark Ages.

Soon, however, the Church will have received "double for all her sins," and in the hour of restoration she shall receive double the glory that she had before. A "double portion" of Elijah's spirit was promised to his successor Elisha, if he would but follow his master step by step and keep his eyes firmly fixed upon him. And Elisha got his request. Jesus has promised, "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (Jn. 14:12).

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins...and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together..." (Isa. 40:1,2,5). A greater than Solomon is here! A greater glory than

Solomon's Temple shall be revealed in this hour of the Lord's appearing in the midst of His saints.

THE STAVES REMOVED FROM THE ARK

“And they drew out the staves of the ark...” (2Chron. 5:9). Why? Because the Church's long wilderness journey shall be over, and now she will enter into her long-awaited rest. “Now, therefore, arise O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. (2Chron. 6:41). The great Church victorious is destined to become the Church at rest. Not, however, by way of the coffin. Not by living a life of defeat, and then passing on to be with the saints who have died. But by pressing into her heritage by the Spirit, and appropriating the blessedness which is hers “in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.”

And so this Feast of Tabernacles was probably the greatest in Israel's history. There was a “very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.” (2Chron. 7:8). How little did they realize that they, in their joy and gladness of heart, were merely fulfilling the rites and ceremonies of a fading type and shadow, and that one day it would give way to the unveiled glory of God in the Church of Jesus Christ, and especially in the Church of this great hour in which we live!

JEROBOAM'S SUBSTITUTE FEAST

Let us ever be on the watch for the counterfeit. God's glory is not going to be revealed without the apostate religious world trying to reproduce the same thing in the power of the flesh. Especially now in this day, with the powers of darkness mustering their forces and bringing forth their secret weapons, the saints are going to find it increasingly difficult to discern the real from the counterfeit. It is not going to be sufficient that we should see signs and wonders and miracles performed in the name of Christ; for Satan is going to empower his emissaries of light to do all the miracles that the Church will do. Jannes and Jambres worked side by side with Aaron, performing sign for sign, and miracle for miracle. But it will not always last. In due course "their folly shall be manifest," even as the wisdom of the Church shall be manifest. The time will come when Aaron's rod shall swallow up the rods of the magicians, and their power shall be broken.

Therefore, in this hour of the Church's trial and sifting, when the real and the counterfeit are going to work side by side--let us be on the alert to detect the false and discern the real. Only the walk of obedience and faith and utter consecration will deliver the child of God from the deception of Satan. Discern the Lord's Body. Recognize the ministries which He is establishing in the Body. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Not by their miracles, or by their signs, or by their wonders; but "by their fruits."

And so it is quite evident, even now in this hour of the Body of Christ, that Jeroboam the Enlarger (for so is his name by interpretation) is going to seek the expansion of his kingdom by producing a counterfeit of the real. When people are hungry for God and can see the moving of God's spirit, the adversary always tries to reproduce what the people are looking for in order to isolate them from the Truth. If there is healing, Jeroboam will heal. If there is a manifestation of the Spirit, Jeroboam will have something similar. If there are tongues in the Spirit, Jeroboam will speak in tongues. If there is prophecy, singing in the Spirit, laying on of hands for the gifts, miracles, words of knowledge or wisdom,--or any other manifestation of the supernatural which God has in store for the saints--then Jeroboam will do all in his power to reproduce these same manifestations in his kingdom. And unless the people have spiritual discernment they will be deceived.

This is what happened. Because of Solomon's disobedience God decreed that his kingdom should be broken up. And so to Jeroboam were given ten tribes of Israel for his kingdom, and to Rehoboam were given the other two tribes. Jeroboam, then, was to be king of Israel; and Rehoboam king of Judah. But Jeroboam was at a great disadvantage, because Jerusalem was in Rehoboam's kingdom--and what would happen if Israel should go up to the holy city to worship God? So reasoned Jeroboam. He was in danger of losing his kingdom if the people were to continue going up to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord and observe the Feasts. So we are told he took counsel, "and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (1Kgs. 12:28). And the people believed it! And so they went to worship at Bethel and Dan where the calves were set up. You see, Bethel means House of God, and Dan signifies Judge. We have shown how the number "two" signifies the Body of Christ, the fullness of Christ in His people. And so Jeroboam made two calves. Bethel the House of God, and Dan the Judge! A real counterfeit of the Body of Christ and the ministries in that Body! Dan will be there to judge; there will be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. And to all appearances it will be the Body of Christ. It was at Bethel, you will recall, that God appeared to Jacob when he fled

from the face of his brother Esau, and as he slept he saw the angelic hosts ascending and descending upon the ladder. We have already shown how this typifies the fullness of the Son of Man in His Body. And Jacob awoke in fear and cried: "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. 28:17). But now at the very house of God a golden calf is worshipped as the God of Israel!

Nor will Jeroboam stop at this. The saints of God in this present hour are hungry, desperately hungry for the things of God and the restoration of the Feasts of the Lord. And so Jeroboam will provide a Feast of Tabernacles for them too. "And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah... So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart..." (1Kgs. 12:32,33).

These are sad truths, and yet so genuinely applicable in our day. And the reason for the whole idolatrous system was simply this: Jeroboam did not have the real thing, and he wanted to maintain his kingdom, so he had to provide a substitute. The golden calves which he made were intended to maintain the unity of his kingdom, and to prevent his people from going to Jerusalem to keep the real Feasts of the Lord. "And this thing became a sin..." to the children of Israel. But God's judgment was upon it. Said the Lord, "They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off. Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off; mine anger is kindled against them." (Hos. 8:4,5).

Do you see, then, how subtly the enemy will work, and how easy it is going to be for Christians to become entangled in an idolatrous system and not realize it? Notice this one thing: that Jeroboam's attempt to reproduce the real thing according to the devices of his own heart--produced nothing more than an idolatrous system of worship. He followed the pattern as close as he could, but he missed the real Feast. His was in the eighth month; the real Feast of Tabernacles was in the seventh. So shall it be in our day. Any attempt to reproduce the real moving of the Spirit of God, in order to maintain and sustain a dying denominational system, will eventually lead to idolatry.

The day of reckoning is at hand, and judgment must begin at the House of God. This idolatrous ecclesiastical system is doomed. The word of prophecy has gone forth upon Jeroboam's altar: "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the House of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee..." (1Kgs. 13:2). Aaron's rod shall yet swallow up the rods of the magicians in the Day of Christ's Appearing; and the dross shall be consumed from the gold and the silver in the house of Levi. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple... And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." (Mal. 3:1,3). He comes to His temple! Even to the Church of the living God. "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them..." (2Cor. 6:16).

BY WISDOM SHALL THE CHURCH BE BUILT

When the people of God ridicule these great truths concerning the rebuilding of God's holy Temple, and the perfection of the saints into one, vital, united Body--such ridicule is not against the saints, but it is against God Himself. We know God's people do not realize this, but that is exactly what they are doing. They are not ridiculing men, but God who has spoken and declared His purpose. And they are not scoffing at fools, but they are scoffing at the Wisdom of God. Why should it be thought incredible that a God of Wisdom should do all these things and more? Was it not by Wisdom that God established the heavens and the earth? (Prov. 3:19). And is Wisdom not the gift of God, which fools may receive by simply asking God for it in faith? (Jas. 1:5). And furthermore, is not the Wisdom of God always foolishness with man? (1Cor. 1:20-25). Let us not be guilty, therefore, of charging God with folly. What device of man or Devil shall be able to withstand the Wisdom of God and prevail?

The Church and the world are both going to be literally dumbfounded and amazed when the Wisdom of God is restored to the Church in great power. Nothing shall be able to withstand the Wisdom of the Almighty. And that is exactly how Solomon's Kingdom became so prosperous and mighty, because of the wisdom which he received from God. Now if this be so concerning the natural kingdom of Solomon, how much more shall it be so concerning the spiritual Kingdom of Christ? For the wisdom that God hath in store for the Sons of God shall far outshine and surpass the wisdom of Solomon. Let us not stumble at the commonly accepted, but false interpretation of 1 Kgs. 3:12, "I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." From 2 Chron. 1:12 it is clear that God was referring to the kings of Israel, his predecessors and his successors--and it is true that Solomon's wisdom far exceeded that of any king who reigned in Israel before or after. "Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like." But Jesus said, "A greater than Solomon is here." And this "greater than Solomon" is going to reveal Himself in His people; so that the display of wisdom in God's people shall far exceed anything we have ever imagined to be possible. "To the intent," says Paul, "That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," (Eph. 3:10). "The manifold," or literally, "The many-sided wisdom of God." Solomon's wisdom was displayed before all the great kings of the earth; so that they came from all parts to hear and to behold the wisdom which he had. But this Wisdom, this very manifold, many-sided Wisdom of God is going to be displayed--not only before earthly rulers, but before the principalities and the powers of the Heavenlies!

No wonder Solomon tells us: "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established." (Prov. 24:3). So shall it be with the House of God. It shall be built, it shall be established, by Wisdom, even the manifold Wisdom of God. There was no more spirit left in the Queen of Sheba as she beheld the glory of Solomon's kingdom; and though she had heard of his fame she confessed. "Behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me..." (2Chron. 9:6). But lo! A Greater than Solomon dwelleth in the midst of God's people. And shall not His Glory exceed the fame of anything we have heard or read, even from the Scriptures? And shall not His Kingdom be established, even unto the uttermost parts of the earth?

IS GOD TEASING THE SAINTS?

God forbid! Hath He spoken and shall He not do it? Hath He promised and shall He not bring it to pass? Did He not mean what He said concerning the Holy Spirit, that He was given to search out the “depths of God,” even the things that have not entered into the heart of man? Shall the prayer of the Son of God go unanswered? And were His words falsely spoken when He declared, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them?” Shall the first Adam who brought desolation and chaos into the world be permitted to live almost a thousand years, and the sons of the Last Adam be accounted blasphemers and fanatics for preaching Divine Health and Divine Life? Shall men like Enoch and Elijah reach out and appropriate translation by faith, and the brethren of Christ be accursed for cherishing a similar hope? Shall the All-wise God account Himself a fool according to His Beloved Son, for not sitting down first and counting the cost, and see whether He is able to lay a foundation for a glorious Temple, and not able to finish it, while scoffers and passers-by ridicule His feeble architectural plans? Shall the gates of Hell continue to prevail against the Church of Jesus Christ? Shall the great Husbandman admit defeat, and thrust in the sickle before the grain is ripe and fully formed in the ear? Shall He prove the impatience of His Spirit by cutting down the grain before it receives the early and the latter rain? Shall He impart gifts of the Spirit to His people and set the ministers of Christ in the Church for the perfecting of the saints, and then rapture them all before they attain to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ? Shall He serve good wine in the beginning of the feast, and reserve the diluted mixture for the last? Shall a God of wisdom, in the unfolding of the greatest drama of the ages, make a spectacle of the saints before angels and before men, and culminate the Acts of the apostles with the tragic blunder of Modernism and present-day apostasy? Shall the Wisdom, the very manifold wisdom of God in the Church, which God intended for display even now unto the principalities and powers, degenerate into the wisdom that is earthly, sensual, and devilish? Shall demons and hosts of wickedness continue to have a free hand as they barter with the bodies and minds of God’s people? Shall God not rise up in vengeance on behalf of His elect? Is God not concerned about vindicating His great Name, while the nations rage against the authority of Zion’s King, and make His heritage a desolation? Shall the ever-increasing glory of the New Covenant give way to the transient, fading glory of the Law? Or shall the ministration of God’s power in the passing glory of the day of Moses, exceed the ministration of God’s power in this day? Shall God not restore the years that the locust, the caterpillar, the palmerworm, and the cankerworm have eaten? And shall not the glory of this latter house be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts? Shall all creation, yea the children of God themselves,--groan and travail in birth-pangs for the manifestation of the sons of God, all to no end or purpose? And if Zion travail, shall she not bring forth? Or shall the sons be brought to the birth, and God shut the womb?

No! A thousand times no! God’s Sons shall yet be manifested in this great hour of the Church’s sorrow and travail; and shall display before this wicked and perverse generation the unveiled glory of God in a manner not hitherto revealed or even imagined. The prayers of sorrow and bitterness and travail throughout this long wilderness journey of the Church from Pentecost until now--have all been bottled up in the heavenly vials, and soon they shall be poured upon the world in great Heaven-shaking events, dethroning the powers of darkness and of Satan, and establishing the overcomer in authority on Zion’s mountain.

CHAPTER 13

TABERNACLES – THE FEAST OF RESTORATION

As we have considered the spiritual significance of the glory and power and wisdom of Solomon's kingdom, so now let us consider the spiritual significance of the days of restoration, following the captivity. Both temples and both periods of history are applicable to our day: Solomon's day speaking of the glory and power and wisdom of the Church; and the days of Restoration showing in what manner the lost glory is to be restored.

As for the days of Restoration, it will be of particular interest and profit to us if we consider carefully the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah--because these four books deal particularly with the return of the remnant to Jerusalem following the captivity, and their attempts to restore the walls and the temple and the order of religious worship. Ezra was a priest; Nehemiah was the governor of Jerusalem; and both Haggai and Zechariah were prophets of the Lord who encouraged the builders in the great tasks which lay before them.

THE FIRST FEAST OF TABERNACLES AFTER THE CAPTIVITY

The remnant who had returned from Babylon to Jerusalem were determined that all things should be restored according to the original pattern. And so they kept the Feasts of the Lord also in their due season. "They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings, as the duty of every day required" (Ezra 3:4). They could not keep the feast in its fullness, for the foundation of the house of the Lord was not yet laid, but they observed the pattern as best they could, and God honoured their faith. And now as the first rays of this glorious Feast begin to appear on the eastern horizon, we have every reason to rejoice--knowing that the days of restoration are here. And little by little we can see how the pattern is being unfolded before our eyes.

THE PEOPLE ASSEMBLE AS ONE MAN

"And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves as one man to Jerusalem." (Ezra 3:1).

This, of course, is the foundational truth of this whole revival which God has given the Church, and one of the first revelations that came forth: that God would now at this time bring His people together to form one body. At the beginning it was hoped that the Christians everywhere would catch the vision, and that before long the whole Body of saints would become one vital, living organism, united together in the bonds of the Spirit unto one common purpose. But it is becoming apparent that only a remnant are returning to Jerusalem. The vast majority are content to remain in Babylon, for they have grown up in that state, and know nothing of the glory of God which once rested mightily on the Temple of God. They are prosperous enough; and the venture which a few fanatical Israelites have started upon is so utterly hopeless and fantastic that they

will have nothing to do with it. Just imagine a small group of Israelites, with no natural resources (for they were a captive people), and very little perhaps in the way of education or business and administrative ability--venturing off to a land they had never seen, to a city utterly wasted and desolate, and starting to erect a temple comparable to Solomon's! And so the majority, the vast majority, were content to remain in Babylon, with only about fifty thousand of the multitudes in Israel thinking it worth their while to go up and start work on the temple.

We know God has a great and eternal purpose for all His precious saints, and when His plan is revealed we shall glory in the wisdom of God who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." But it is becoming increasingly evident that the pattern of the remnant in Israel who returned to Jerusalem is the immediate pattern for this hour. And as then, so now, a group of people who have really seen the vision of what God is doing, have assembled together as one man. It is the vision of the Body of Christ. It is the vision and assurance that there must arise out of the dust of Jerusalem a Holy City, a Beautiful City, and a Temple not made with hands--a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem..." (Isa. 52:1,2). This whole passage speaks loudly of this day and hour in which we live, when the glory of God is about to be restored to the once-holy city of God, even the "heavenly Jerusalem." "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." (vs. 8,9).

THE FOUNDATION OF THE TEMPLE LAID

"And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord..." (Ezra 3:10).

The first feast of Tabernacles that they observed was before the foundation of the Temple had been laid. Therefore the real meaning of the Feast was lacking; but it did promise great things to come when the days of restoration were over. That was in the first year of their return from captivity. Now the second year had rolled around, and God had enabled them to lay the foundation for the temple. There was great rejoicing, therefore in the camp of Israel, to know that God had prospered their work, that the foundation was laid, and that the work was progressing. Hence there was cause for great rejoicing.

THE PRAISE OF THE MUSICIANS

"And they sang together by course (or, alternately) in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid." (Ezra 3:11).

It is not without Divine purpose, therefore, that the ministry of spiritual song and music is being restored to the Church. Actually it is the voice of prophecy. We read, therefore, “Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals...” (1Chron. 25:1). No doubt there was usually prophetic singing accompanied by the musical instruments; and together it formed this great prophetic orchestra and choir. And because it is the voice of prophecy, that is why there is a work of deliverance wrought when songs are sung in the Spirit, or when instruments of music are played in the Spirit. David, you will recall, drove the evil spirit away from Saul, as he played upon the harp. It is the voice of God; and it is a ministry, as it was in the case of the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. Asaph means Gatherer; Heman means Faithful; and Jeduthun means Choir of Praise. What a wonderful description of what is generally called the Heavenly Choir. “The Choir of Praise!” Sung by those who are “Faithful” in their ministry; and to “Gather” the saints together in the unity of the Spirit.

It is not difficult, then, for us to understand why the Choir of Praise has been restored to the Church. The Temple service is being restored. The saints are singing “by course,”--that is, “alternately” in prophecy one to one another, because once again the Lord’s Temple is being restored.

WHY THE REJOICING?

“And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.” (Ezra 3:11).

The present work of the Holy Spirit in re-establishing the Temple of God and its spiritual order of worship, has really just started. But we can thank God, nevertheless, that the pattern has been revealed, and that the foundation has been laid. Perhaps it is not too evident to some, because the building is just under construction. It is not our purpose to try to prove that the foundation of apostles and prophets has been relaid. Nor is it really the minister’s responsibility to prove any doctrine to anybody. His duty is to minister the Bread of Life to the hungry. If they can receive it, they will be nourished: if they cannot, then perhaps we could administer the sincere milk of the Word that they might grow thereby. According to every man’s ability to receive, and their stature in Christ--so may God enable us to minister the words of life. And let us realize that we are sent to feed Christ’s sheep, and nourish His people--and not to fill them with doctrines and theories which will not profit. These things, therefore, are written only for those who can receive them; and for none others.

We realize, therefore, that perhaps there are very, very few who can discern the foundation of the temple being relaid in this day. And of course it is most difficult to see a newly laid foundation, for it is usually almost obscured amidst the concrete forms and the supports and the heaps of broken stones and boards that cover the ground. But the Choir of Praise continues to exalt the Lord, and the saints continue to sing one to another in prophecy, because they can see that the foundation has been laid, and the temple is beginning to take shape.

“Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built (literally, are being built) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (Eph. 2:19,20.)

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles (I Cor. 12:28.)

The time is at hand when God will vindicate who His ministers are, and what their place is in this new Temple. For these ministries are not by human-appointment, nor by self-appointment, but by Divine appointment. Until now perhaps there has not been any great need for recognized leadership. We have been in the wilderness; and you really do not need a guide until you start travelling through strange territory. But those days are about to end. We stand on the brink of Jordan, Before us lies a good land, a great land, a rich heritage in the Spirit. But it is strange territory, As of old, therefore, God is establishing ministries which shall lead the way across Jordan; and the people must be prepared to follow.

“And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host, and they commanded the people, saying, when ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.” (Josh. 3:2,3.) This is a new way. We have not passed this way heretofore. And with this new way, there shall arise new dangers, new problems, new perplexities. Such terrible days are ahead, and such deception shall be manifest by the adversary, that the saints must know who God’s ministers are that they might follow them into this good land. Said Paul, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (I Cor. 11:1.)

GREAT OPPOSITION

It would be most enlightening if we could take time to examine in detail the opposition that was raised -against the faithful remnant who laboured on the second temple; for it is a clear picture of what is now transpiring, and what shall yet transpire, as this new Temple begins to rise into her glory, First there was the opposition of the people who dwelt there in the land. Their request was, “Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do.” (Ezra 4:2.) But Zerubbabel discerned their true nature, and refused to accept their help. No doubt he was condemned for not co-operating with this noble gesture, and this desire for fellowship. But Zerubbabel’s action was certainly confirmed in what followed: for immediately they sent letters to the King of Persia, demanding that the builders be forbidden to continue their work. Their argument was quite a modern one: “Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings.” (Ezra 4:13.) There are many “kings” in the Church today, collecting toll and custom from the people, and the restoration of the Church is going to bring about their downfall. In the first place, they were never ordained of God. In the second place, instead of shepherding the flock they are fleecing them. In the third place, when the Church is properly established there will be local elders in each assembly to guide the flock, and there will be no need for a permanently residing pastor. Every minister of God should carefully examine himself in the light of God’s controversy with the shepherds of Israel, and make his calling sure:

“Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed; but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.” (Ezek. 34:2-4.)

There seems to be very few real, genuine shepherds, who are prepared to lay down their lives for the sheep. It is no wonder, therefore, that the false shepherds do not want to see the Temple of God restored, and the gates set up! Their revenue shall be endamaged when this happens. And so they persuaded the authorities in Persia to forbid the progress of the work; and the work ceased.

THE PROPHETS ENCOURAGE THE BUILDERS

Just how long the work ceased on the temple we do not know. And just how long the work on this Temple is going to be hindered, we do not know. Perhaps God in mercy will do a quick work. Nevertheless, despite all the opposition and all the obstacles, the work shall continue. Has the Lord not raised prophets to encourage the builders, just as He did for Israel? With the builders, we are told. "Were the prophets of God helping them," encouraging them in their task. (Ezra 5:2.) Is it not the purpose of prophecy to speak unto men words of "edification, and exhortation, and comfort?" (1Cor. 14:3.) Edification! Building up! It is the work of prophecy to edify and build up the saints as they labour in this holy Temple of the Lord. The opposition will continue from within as well as from without--but the prophets of God are there to exhort and comfort the saints in every hour of trial.

Once again there were efforts to hinder the work, and the matter was referred to Darius, but permission was granted and the work continued. In fact, he even ordered that timber and salt and wine and oil be given the builders to help them in their task. And so they built and they prophesied . . ." And they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo." (Ezra 6:14.)

HAGGAI'S PROPHECY

Haggai's prophecy is most enlightening, in view of all these facts that we have mentioned. For Haggai and Zechariah were God's special prophets sent to Jerusalem to encourage the builders in their work.

His first task was to cause the people to realize that the hour had really come for the House of God to be built. The problem is the same today: "This people say, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." But God gave Haggai a simple word of wisdom, and it was enough to settle that argument. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" (Hag. 1:2,4.) You have your comfortable churches; and, of course, that is all right! You have beautiful carpets, and tapestry, and stained -glass windows, and beautiful furniture . . . there is plenty of time for that. But you have no time for the restoration of God's beautiful House, the Temple not made with hands, the Temple made of "living stones." Is it not a fact, a solemn fact, that the beauty and glory of the Church of Christ has been sacrificed for the natural beauty and refinement of our places of assembly? The people have no objection to this extravagance whatsoever. But let a group of saints declare their intention of restoring the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem and seeking God's face for a restoration of early apostolic power and glory and unity in the congregation of the saints, and there is no time for it!

"Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways." (vs. 6.) And well might the Church of Christ consider her ways. "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have

not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.” (vs. 6.) It seems almost perplexing and mysterious sometimes when we consider the ways of the Church. We read of great revivals, of mass healing meetings, of thousands getting converted or filled with the Spirit, But when the hour of testing comes, where is all this glory of which we have boasted? How many really continue to show evidences of salvation when the revival passes on to the next town? How many retain their healing when they get back home? How many keep filled with the spirit? We are not suggesting that these great Healing or Gospel ministries are not genuine. There will be the false, of course; but God has raised up mighty ministries in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring healing or salvation to the nations; and much has been and is being, accomplished compared to what we have seen in the past. But little, very little compared to what these ministries should produce. We looked for much; and then God blows upon our efforts in the great fanning-mill through which we all must pass, and where is the wheat? Does it not seem to have disappeared with the chaff? And, “Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.” (Hag. 1:9.)

The implication is clear, and the indictment against sectarianism is with no uncertain voice. If the Body of Christ is betrayed for the sake of base gain, or for one’s own Personal interest in this sect or that, then all our vaunted claims to revival and great mass conversions are empty. Is it not true, that the people assemble together to co-operate in some great mass effort for revival, and after it is all over they run “every man unto his own house . . .”? Back they go to their little sect and attempt to build it up with the new converts brought to birth by the revival effort. And God blows upon their work by His sifting, testing, trying Spirit; and “Lo, it came to little.” Hence the drought, the lack of spiritual power and blessing; the absence of any real fellowship with the saints or unity of the Spirit; and the reason there is no latter rain. God has called the drought, and therefore at His word the Heavens have withholden their dew.

ZERUBBABEL FACES THE CHALLENGE

Zerubbabel (who was in charge of the building of the second temple), and Joshua (who was the high priest), and the remnant of people, obeyed the voice of God as spoken by the prophet, and “they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts.” (Hag. 1:14.) We have already considered in some detail the story of their labours and their problems. But God was with them.

Zerubbabel means “Sown in Babylon,” and Joshua is the Hebrew for “Jesus.” Is it not true that we have all been planted in Babylon, that great city, the city of all manner of abominations, religious and otherwise? But some have heard the call, “Come out of her, my people” and have been transplanted into another land, the land of their true calling. “Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.” (Heb. 12:22,23.)

HAGGAI PROPHECIES ON THE LAST DAY OF THE FEAST

It has been assumed that Haggai was probably born on a Feast day, because his name signifies “Feast of Jehovah.” However, an amazing passage of scripture in his prophecy reveals that

Haggai gave utterance to one of the Church's choice promises on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Therefore he was truly named "Haggai," which signifies "Feast of the Lord." One might wonder why the Scriptures go into such detail at times, in giving us dates and seasons which seem to be meaningless to us. God no doubt has a great plan in it all, and as our eyes become enlightened to the riches of His Word, many delightful surprises are there to greet us.

And so we read, "In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai, saying . . ." (Hag. 2:1.) The seventh month, and the twenty-first day of the month! In other words, in the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles!

Just imagine what concern and heartache must have gripped the holy prophet of the Lord as he looked down upon this second temple, slowly rising from the dust--but so very, very incomplete, and far from being a glorious temple. And now on this great day, the last day of the Feast, when the memory of every true Israelite would naturally revert back to the days of Israel's glory and power in the days of Solomon's magnificent kingdom--Haggai would likewise be thinking of the great and tremendous heritage which they had lost because of the captivity. The magnificence of Solomon's temple was utterly unsurpassable. There is nothing in the annals of history to compare with it, past or present. How could this feeble remnant begin to erect a structure even comparable to that wonderful temple? How discouraging their work must have been as they contemplated the glory they had lost! But at that very moment, on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the word of prophecy came upon him and he cried to Zerubbabel and the remnant:

"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing! Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord: and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith Lord of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." (Hag. 2:3-9.)

Notice the repetition of the phrase, "Saith the Lord of hosts." God wants us to make no mistake about this: God hath spoken and not man. True, our feeble attempts at restoration are nothing compared to the glory of the early Church, the Temple of the living God erected in apostolic days. But God hath promised: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former . . ." Neither Zerubbabel's Temple nor the Temple of Herod could begin to compare with Solomon's Temple. But God was not speaking of the earthly house; He was speaking of the Temple not made with hands, composed of living stones. And the "Desire of all nations" would be the Glory of that Temple. And so Malachi prophesies: "And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, . . ." (Mal. 3:1.) All nations--yea the creation itself, are waiting eagerly for His appearing, even for the manifestation of the Sons of God." (Rom. 8:19.) Nor shall their hopes and expectations be disappointed.

And how shall this exceeding glory be manifested? By the very shaking of the heavens and the earth. Paul quotes this passage in Heb. 12:26 and assures us that this shall be fulfilled in the Kingdom of the saints. We dealt somewhat with the shaking of the heavens in a previous chapter. The very unseen powers of the heavenlies must be toppled from their thrones; yea, even

now are they beginning to feel the impact of heaven-tremors as the Sons of God begin to mount up with wings of an eagle to take unto themselves their God-given authority in the Spirit.

“Be strong . . . be strong . . . be strong is the threefold prophecy of comfort and encouragement to the builders of the Temple, to the priesthood, and to the remnant. For it is in the spoken word of prophecy that power and strength shall be imparted to the builders, enabling them to use the tools of their ministry in the one hand, and to fight with the Sword of the Spirit in the other. With similar words of encouragement, and with a similar purpose in mind, the apostle Paul exhorts the saints: “Finally, my brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. 6:10-12.) It is this wrestling with the spiritual hosts of wickedness in “the heavnlies” that shall cause the very heavens to shake and Satan and his hosts to relinquish their kingdom into the hands of the Sons of God. Everything that can be shaken is going to quake and fall before the Sons of God. And then into the very heavnlies shall they ascend, first of all in the Spirit, to take possession of the kingdom left vacant by the casting out of Satan. and his evil hosts. Then shall they be in a position to administer peace and life and blessing to a Church and a world that are in bondage and under oppression.

ZECHARIAH’S PROPHECY (See Zech. 4)

Zechariah likewise prophesied words of encouragement to Zerubbabel and the remnant who laboured on the temple. In what way would the Lord encourage the builders in the colossal task that lay before them? Well, the Lord would give the prophet a vision that would explain the means of their success. How helpless they were! How would the Lord encourage them? And so Zechariah looked, and what did he see? Mountains of stone and timber and mortar? Huge labour battalions marching down from Babylon to help them? Great machines to aid in their seemingly impossible task? Ah no! But he looked, “And behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon and two olive trees by it. A very simple illustration, and meaningless perhaps to many: two olive trees pouring their oil into a candlestick.

Zechariah himself did not know what it meant; and so God gave him the interpretation.

“This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” Shall anything be too hard for the Lord? By my spirit,” saith the Lord, and so shall it be. And now let us notice this great word of encouragement, which God speaketh even now to the builders of this living Temple: “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it: and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things?” Child of God, remember these words; God has pledged His Word that this Temple shall be finished. Let us never lose that vision.

But still Zechariah was puzzled; what were these “two olive trees” that he saw emptying their golden oil into the candlestick? And the angel replied: “These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” Literally, “These are the two sons of oil . . .”! Sons of the anointing! It is the Moses-Elijah company, as we shall discover in the next chapter. It is the

company of overcomers who shall go forth in the Day of the Lord working all manner of signs and wonders and miracles in the Name of the Lord; and nothing shall stand against them.

“By my spirit,” saith the Lord. This is a work of the Spirit of God. The Oil of the Spirit flowing through them: That is the secret of their power.

RESTORATION OF THE WALLS

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah cover two periods of restoration. Neither Ezra nor Nehemiah were present at the rebuilding of the Temple but came many years later: Ezra to teach the people the laws of God, and Nehemiah to rebuild the walls and the gates of the City.

And so we read that “All that could hear with understanding” assembled together “as one man into the street that was before the water gate” while Ezra the priest read from the law of God from morning until midday. This was the first day of the seventh month, the month of the Feast of Tabernacles. (See Neh. 8:1-3.) “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” (Neh. 8:8.) This is the hour of revelation and spiritual understanding. The Spirit is speaking to the churches, but only those with “ears to hear” shall understand what is spoken, The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and only men whose minds have been quickened by the Spirit shall be able to “give the sense” on the one hand, or “understand the reading” on the other. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.”

THE PEOPLE IN THEIR PLACE

“And the people stood in their place,” (Neh. 8:7.) God is setting His ministries in the Body according as it pleases Him, and the time has come when every man must know his place in the Body and serve the Lord accordingly. Ministries have been raised up for the express purpose of administering gifts of the Spirit through prophecy and the laying on of hands--and the saints are exhorted to “war a good warfare” accordingly. (I Tim. 1:18.) We realize, of course, that much harm has been done by those who are attempting to administer gifts to others through prophecy and the laying on of hands--when God has not authorized them to engage in this ministry. But the tares must always grow together with the wheat until the time of harvest. If the child of God is walking in close communion with his Lord, then the Spirit will witness as to the truth of the prophecy which goes forth concerning him. And if he is not walking in close communion with God, then the prophecy will mean nothing to him anyway--except perhaps to harden his heart or fill him with pride. This will I serve as a good test. If pride rises up in the heart, the prophecy--whether true or false, cannot be relied upon. For even a true prophecy must submit to the test of faith and obedience in one’s life and ministry. Furthermore, the purpose of prophecy is to establish, edify, comfort and exhort; and if the candidate is left in a state of confusion or turmoil and doubt--he might as well reject what has been said concerning him. “For God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace.” (I Cor. 14:33.) We merely mention these things, because we know that many are trying to engage in this ministry of prophecy, with the laying on of hands--and God has never commissioned them to do so. The ministry is real and genuine, as all can testify who have really entered in to the realities of this move of the Spirit. But as surely as the Sower plants good seed, the enemy is there to sow tares --and both must grow together until the harvest.

However, if the child of God who hungers to know God's will, and do it-has not had the opportunity of being set aside by prophecy and the laying on of hands, he need not be in the least discouraged. Let him continue in the things which God has placed in his hand to do. Choose the humble and lowly position, and you cannot go wrong. Pray, fast, intercede, shew mercy, give, help and assist God's people --do whatever the Lord enables you to do, in humility and meekness, and God will honour your efforts. And regardless of any prophecy that has been given to any man, utter consecration unto God is God's will for you, first and foremost. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:1,2.) That is the will of God for you! Take the lowly position, therefore, and God will exalt you in due course when you are able to receive it. Much better that you should be found doing some humble task, and the Lord promote you unto honour, than that he should be forced to say: "Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room." (Lk. 14:9.) If this plan is followed, God will certainly give guidance and direction. And in His own good time, when He chooses to reveal your ministry in greater fulness through prophecy and the laying on of hands, His servants will be directed your way, and led of the Spirit to set you apart unto the work for which God has called you.

SEND PORTIONS TO THE NEEDY

"Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared . . ." (Neh. 8:10.)

As the Feast of Tabernacles begins to dawn upon us, it is becoming increasingly important that the saints have something to minister to their fellow-members in the Body. They must not "appear before the Lord empty: every man shall give as he is able. according to the blessing of the Lord." (Deut. 16:16,17.) This strongly reminds us of Paul's exhortations to the Romans and Corinthians, concerning their ministry in the Body of Christ. "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering . . ." (Rom. 12:6,7.) The whole ministry of the various members is to edify the Body, and not for their own gratification. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (I Pet. 4:10.) As he ministries develop and the Body is edified, then they will go forth unto the world bringing health and gladness to those who sit in darkness, starvation, and the shadow of death.

VICTORY AND PROSPERITY AHEAD

"Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written...." (Neh. 8:15.)

No doubt all these trees are significant of one thing and another. But broadly speaking they depict the victory and prosperity and joy and triumph of the people of God. The "olive"--a true symbol of the Holy Spirit. The olive oil was used for making the holy ointment, for the anointing of prophet, priest, or king. Palm branches, you will recall, were cut down and scattered in the

pathway of the King who came riding triumphantly into Jerusalem sitting upon an ass, amidst the shouting of the people and of the children. "Hosanna" they cried, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Mk. 11:9.) And the saints who come out of the Great Tribulation clothed in white robes have "palms in their hands," as they shout the victory song and worship the Lamb that was slain for them. There is a great day of gladness ahead for the saints when the Feast of Tabernacles is observed. But they must leave their homes in the streets of Jerusalem. They must forsake their own ways, their own thoughts, their own plans and desires, and crucify the flesh--in order that the life of Christ and the joy of the Holy Ghost might be their portion.

What a spectacle this scene must have presented. Thousands upon thousands of little humble tabernacles or booths erected along the streets of Jerusalem, or upon the house-tops, or in the courts of the temple, or in the open places of the city; all assembled together with one common purpose in mind, with one heart and one soul, to keep the Feast of the Lord. The booth was nothing much to behold--just a humble, fragile hut. Says Paul, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. 4:7.) Weymouth's translation of this passage is most expressive: "But we have this treasure in fragile earthen pots, in order that the surpassing greatness of the power may be seen to be God's and not to come from us." Again, Paul says, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. 12:9.) Literally it reads, "That the power of Christ may spread a Tabernacle over me . . ." "It is the manifestation of Christ within us. It is the crucifixion of our flesh, that the very life of Christ might be revealed, in the power of the Holy Ghost.

OPPOSITION WITHIN AND WITHOUT

Nehemiah gives further light on the opposition that was arrayed against them. As they started the tremendous task, there was nothing more than mockery. One said, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." (Neh. 4:3.) But soon their mockery turned to violence. They realized that great progress was being made in spite of their tremendous difficulties, and so they began to get fearful, and tried to hinder the work by force of arms. It became necessary, therefore, for the builders to be armed with spears as well as tools; and they builded with the sword girded by their side. (Neh. 4:18.)

If we seek to restore the walls of Jerusalem, we are going to find it necessary in the very near future to put on "the whole armour of God." Mockery is giving way to violence. Satan will soon begin to use force against the saints instead of insult, because he realizes that the plan of God is being fulfilled, even if the work is slow and not any too spectacular.

Then carnality crept into the midst of God's people, and brother was ill-treating brother. Because of the hard times, some were being forced to mortgage their fields and their properties, and the rich were exacting usury from the poor. And we can be sure of this, saints, that one of Satan's sure devices against God's people is in causing internal strife and division. If he cannot conquer by outward attack, he is often most successful by causing the congregation to fall into sin. When Balaam could not curse Israel (for they were God's people and God turned the curse into a blessing)--then he advised Balak to invite the people to a great sacrifice of their gods--and Israel fell into the trap. Consequently a great plague swept through the whole congregation. (Num. 25:1,2; 31:16.)

Finally, Sunballat conceived another plot against Nehemiah, perhaps the most subtle of all. If he was unable to conquer by force, or by mockery, he would befriend Nehemiah and in that way betray him. He would propose a conference. "Come, let us meet together . . ." he suggested. But Nehemiah discerned the true intent and purpose of the proposed meeting, and he replied that he was too busy. (Neh. 6:2-8.) Failing that he hired a man to come and persuade Nehemiah to flee into the temple for safety, stating that some were after his life. But Nehemiah had no part in the priesthood, and he refused to sin against God in this manner; and again the plot failed.

Nehemiah's ministry was to govern the land, not to minister in the Temple. Perhaps Satan's most successful form of attack against the saints, is to get them to become involved in some work of the Lord which is not theirs to perform. It appears to be such an innocent thing. And perhaps the need that arises would almost demand that you submit, and take upon yourself some ministry which God has neither enabled you nor called you to perform. But God knows all about it, and he has some who are qualified to meet that need. Let every man minister according to the ability which God gives, and in the place which God has designated for him.

EVERY MAN HAD HIS JOB TO PERFORM

No man needs to be unduly concerned about his ministry if he will but minister according to the ability and power which God has given. For the ministry that you have is one that is suited to you, and one for which God has gifted you. If you are walking with God you will automatically be in your ministry. And the ministry that you have from God has constituted you a "steward," or literally, "a house-manager" of His affairs. Having received a gift from God, therefore, we are called upon to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God." And as a "steward" of God's House, only one thing is required of you, and that is faithfulness. (1 Cor. 4:1.) You are not called upon to be great, or mighty, or prosperous, or clever, or successful, or to do great things--but to be "faithful." Before God that is true greatness, and true success. The lone soldier guarding some obscure vital spot in the field of battle, even if he never sees any action, is just as much entitled to promotion as the man in the front lines. One thing is sure, the Day of Christ is going to reveal every man's faithfulness in building upon the one foundation, which is Jesus Christ. This we know: the Judgment Seat of Christ will reveal quality and not quantity. "And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3:13.) If it is "gold, silver, precious stones," it will stand the test; and if it is "wood, hay stubble" it will be burnt up, leaving the builder without the crown of glory, saved as through fire.

And so every Israelite had his job to perform. Some on the sheep-gate, some on the fish-gate. Some on this tower, and another on that tower. Some at the fountain, some at the pool, some at the stairs, some at the armories, some at the houses of the priests. But they all worked together, according to their several ability, the prophets of God encouraging them as they built--and in due course the wall was finished, and the defence of the City was made secure.

CHAPTER 14

TABERNACLES — THE FEAST OF HIS APPEARING

We mentioned in the first part of the book how the observance of the natural Feasts served to illustrate their spiritual application to the Church. Thus when the Feast was observed at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, we have a type and pattern of the Glory of the Church, and when the Feast was observed in the days of Zerubbabel's temple, we have a type of the restoration of the Church to her first Glory. Now we come to the occasion on which the Feast was observed in the time of Christ.

Let us recall how that in the plan of God Israel's Passover was the occasion that God chose for Christ Himself to die as the true Passover Lamb. And again, on that great day of Pentecost, when devout Jews had assembled from all parts of the Roman Empire to keep the Feast--then it was that God poured out the Holy Spirit on His disciples, thus fulfilling the old and establishing the new Pentecost. It is therefore with great significance that we read these words: "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest." (Jn. 7:2,3.) However, the Lord remained where He was until His brethren had gone to the Feast; and afterward went up "as it were in secret." (vs. 10.) No doubt the Lord intentionally visited the Feast of the Jews "in secret" by way of illustrating a great truth to the Church, the truth of His appearing.

RESURRECTION LIFE FOR US

There is no question as to the fact that one day "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout," and the saints shall be caught away to be with Him for ever. (1 Thess. 4:16.) And again, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:52.) This is the final victory for the Church, when mortality is clothed upon with immortality, and corruption puts on incorruption. This is the consummation of the Church's last great victorious event, for then it is that "Death is swallowed up in victory," and the "last enemy," even Death, is destroyed. (1 Cor. 15:26,54.)

We are sure of this, however, that the Church is being robbed of her glory in not knowing that there is rapture for her even now, while waiting for Rapture, and there is resurrection here and now while we wait for Resurrection. There is no doubt whatever that God holds many secrets for future revelation concerning the order of events and the nature of the Resurrection. But in this we are confident: before this cherished rapture or resurrection takes place, there is to arise a group of overcomers who shall appropriate even here and now their heritage of Resurrection Life in Jesus Christ. God has placed His only Begotten at His own right hand in the heavenlies, until all his enemies have been placed under His feet. (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25,26.) There He shall remain, in obedience to the Word of the Father, until there ariseth a people who shall go in and possess their heritage in the Spirit, and conquer over all opposing forces of World, Flesh, and Devil. We are not inferring that the saints will go about in glorified bodies. But we are speaking of the saints

reaching out and appropriating even here and now in their earthly temples the very Life of Christ, of entering into their heritage in the Spirit, of participating in the Melchizedek priesthood and kingdom, and of living the very spotless, immaculate life of the Son of God Himself in virtue of His abiding presence within.

Let us remember that God is bound by His word and His oath, but He is not bound by the dispensations, by general historical procedure, nor yet by the notions of men. "It is appointed unto men once to die . . .," that is quite true; but even though death is quite general God was free to reach down and translate Enoch "that he should not see death" when this holy man believed for it. (Heb. 11:5.) Nor did it prevent God from catching Elijah up into heaven in a whirlwind, when He chose to do so. (2 Kgs. 2:11.) Nor could it prevent the Lord from extending the life of John the Beloved for two thousand years, if He chose to do so. It was neither Peter's business, nor ours, nor was it contrary to God's Word, if the Lord wanted it that way. (Jn. 21:22.) Jesus has promised that He would raise up "at the last day" all those who would believe on His Name. (Jn. 6:40.) There is no question about that. But that did not stop Him from resurrecting Lazarus, even during His earthly ministry. (Jn. 11:44.) Nor did it prevent Moses from rising from the dead somewhat prematurely, as he must have done according to Jude 9. Neither did it prevent the tombs from bursting assunder when Christ died on the Cross, and the bodies of the saints arising and coming into the city and appearing unto many. (Matt. 27:52,53.) God is perfectly free to raise whom He will any time He chooses; to impart Divine Life to whomsoever he will, whenever one shall believe for it; and to translate any one that has the faith for it. Let us not argue with the good-man of the House; is He not free to do as He will with His own? If we have bargained with God for a resurrection at the last Day: are we going to have an evil eye if God in mercy and love imparts His resurrection life to some before the last day?

JESUS CHRIST, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

One of the most glorious facts of Scripture, we believe, is this: that the Resurrection and the Life is not a mere historic event, to take place in the distant future,--but the Resurrection and the Life is a Person, even the Lord Jesus Christ who dwells in our hearts. How He yearned over Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, and sought to inspire faith in their hearts to believe in Him. But they would insist, like the vast majority of Christians today, in believing facts about Him and about God, instead of believing in Him. "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection . . . I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God. . . ." But all the time Jesus was wanting them to believe that He was the I Am, the answer to their immediate need. A historical resurrection? Of course, they would believe in that. Christ, the Messiah? Why of course, they would believe that. But this kind of faith is not sufficient to bring one into the fulness of sonship, and to a real genuine appropriation of Divine Life here and now. They confessed their faith in the fact that Lazarus would rise again in the resurrection at the last day. But Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life . . ." Resurrection and Life, then, are not merely the attributes of the resurrection, and events which are to take place at the rapture. But the Resurrection and the Life are held out to the Sons of God even here and now.

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live . . ." That was the case of Lazarus, was it not? And did he not live, because he died believing in Christ? And then the Lord continues, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never

die. Believest thou this?" (Jn. 11:25,26.) It is certain we do not believe it. O, we might believe it theoretically but not one of us has believed it experimentally, or Divine Life would be surging through our beings. But the promise is there nevertheless, even though we all disbelieve it. "Let God be true and every man a liar." By faith all things are and shall be possible. The very dispensations themselves are but weak barriers and obstacles if men of faith are enabled by the Spirit to reach out and leap beyond them. Enoch did it. So did Elijah. And so shall the Sons of God. The Word of faith shall grip their hearts, and they shall reach out and appropriate the Resurrection and the Life even now in this life. If they do not, Christ never will return to earth. For God hath said, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. 110:1.) And the last enemy is Death!

THE COMING OF THE LORD

There has been a general misunderstanding of the Word of God throughout Christendom concerning the truth of the coming of the Lord; for it is clear as we consider all the Scriptures on the subject, that the Lord's coming is a spiritual visitation in the midst of His people, as well as a literal and bodily visitation. James therefore associates the bestowal of the latter rain with the "coming" of the Lord: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (Jas. 5:7,8.) Notice in this passage how the truth concerning the latter rain is sandwiched between these two statements concerning the "coming of the Lord."

The word commonly translated "coming" in the New Testament is "parousia," which signifies "presence," or "a being alongside." It is therefore used of the coming of men in the flesh, as well as of the coming of Christ. That the word signifies "presence" more than the act of one's arrival, is evident from 2 Pet. 1:16,17. In this passage Peter describes the glorious visitation of God on the mount of transfiguration as the "coming," the "parousia," the "presence" of Christ. Now Christ had already come in the flesh; the four men had walked together up the mountain; but here was a "coming" of the Lord not previously known. And so he says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Notice how the apostle associates the power and coming of Christ with the glory of God that appeared in the hour of Christ's transfiguration. In fact, the Lord Himself explains that this visitation of the Glory was in reality, the very Kingdom of God. In each of the three accounts where the scene is recorded the story is preceded with the remark: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God." (Lk. 9:27.) Matthew describes it as "the Son of man coming in his kingdom." (Matt. 16:28.) Mark refers to it as "the kingdom of God come with power." (Mk. 9:1.) and Peter combines the two statements in the words, "The power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE MOSES-ELIJAH COMPANY

The whole transfiguration scene is a beautiful picture of the power and coming of the Lord into the midst of His people in this glorious hour to create the Moses-Elijah ministry. Moses, and Elijah; because this is the day and hour when the old must give way to the new, when death is to be swallowed up of life, when Law must be fulfilled in Grace. And so Moses typifies the old order of Law and of death. Elijah speaks of the new order, of grace and of life. This is the hour known as the “ends of the ages” when the judgments that have been written concerning the Church and the world must be fulfilled on the one hand, and all the glory and power that is written concerning the Church must be fulfilled on the other hand. Hence the Moses-Elijah company: the fulness of God in the midst of His people, to do away with the old and to establish the new. Moses died; Elijah lived. Moses went down into the grave; Elijah went up into Heaven. Moses administered death and condemnation; Elijah in translation administered life and power--and the very mantle that he wore fluttered down upon his servant Elisha, even the mantle of power and life. This is the hour of God’s vengeance upon the earth; but it is also the hour of God’s Glory in the midst of His people.

THE DAY OF VENGEANCE

“For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” (Lk. 21:22.) Vengeance! How we shrink from the awfulness of the Day! But this vengeance is not only to administer death; it is also to administer life. When Jesus picked up the scroll in the synagogue of Nazareth and opened it to the place which spoke of the anointed Messiah bringing deliverance to the people. He closed the book just before He came to the words, “. . . And the day of vengeance of our God.” He was reading from the prophet Isaiah, as follows: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord . . .” (Isa. 61:1,2.) Thus far the Lord read, and then closed the book and gave it back to the servant. (Lk. 4:20.) Why, then, did the Lord close the scroll there, right in the middle of Isa. 61:2? Because thus far was His earthly ministry, and no further. The common explanation is that the remainder of the verse will be fulfilled after the rapture of the Church. Now it is true that the remainder of Isa. 61:2 is to find its fulfillment in the Day of the Lord, when God’s judgments are poured out. But what seems to be largely ignored is the fact that the day of vengeance is at the same time a great day of blessing. Isaiah therefore continues: “And the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” (Isa. 61:2,3.) True, it is the day of vengeance, but it is likewise a day of rejoicing--for it is the display of God’s power and glory. It is therefore vengeance upon the works of the Devil, and that will bring judgment to the disobedient, but rejoicing to the obedient. That is why we read, “Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.” (Isaiah 35:4-6.) Vengeance? Yes, but to save, to heal, to revive. Again we

read, "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come," (Isa. 63:4.) Vengeance? Yes, but at the same time the "year of my redeemed!"

THE TWO WITNESSES

Such, then, is the ministry of this Moses-Elijah company, We are told that the "two witnesses" shall have the power "to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." (Rev. 11:6.) "As often as they will."--for the simple reason that they have overcome, they abide in Christ, and their will is the very will of the Father manifested through them. They have the "mind of Christ," so that they minister judgments according to the Spirit of God. It is quite evident that this is the Moses-Elijah company from an examination of the judgments which they administer. Their power is the very same as that of Moses and Elijah: to turn water into blood, to smite the earth with all manner of plagues, and to shut up the heavens that it rain not. They have the fire of the Holy Ghost in their mouth, and that is their protection and power. They are sent forth into the earth to administer God's power. If there is repentance, there is power to bless; if there is enmity, there is power to destroy. Says Paul, "To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor Of life unto life." (2 Cor. 2:16.) It is the ministry of Christ; but it is the fulness of Christ in His people, Remember what we observed about the number "two"--it signifies Christ in His fullness, in His Body, His people, His overcomers--this "perfect man" created "in Himself" (Eph. 2:15) John further identifies the two-witnesses by referring to a prophecy of Zechariah: "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth." We mentioned these two olive trees in a previous chapter. In Zechariah we read, "What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? Then said he, These are the two anointed ones (literally, 'these are the two sons of oil'), that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zech. 4:11,14.) These were the builders of the restored temple, to whom God said, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." these are the two "sons of oil," those who live, and move, and walk, and think, and speak, and work in the very realm of the Spirit of the Living God.

ELIJAH'S TWO-FOLD APPEARANCE

The Day of Vengeance, therefore, is to be a great day of restoration. But before there can be real and genuine restoration, there must be destruction: destruction to the works of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. And so there is Moses to destroy, and Elijah to restore. It is noteworthy that in the last chapter of the last book of the Old Testament we read these words: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant . . . Behold. I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers . . ." (Mal. 4:4-6.) Of course, Christ did appear once, in one Man, in the flesh. And therefore we had a partial fulfillment of the Elijah ministry in one man, in the flesh: and that man was John the Baptist. Said Jesus, "Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed." (Mk. 9:13.) His ministry was to prepare the people for Christ's Appearing. But a great secret in God's counsels was this: Christ was to appear twice, first in Incarnation, and secondly at the ends of the ages. Now we are awaiting Christ's second Appearing, this time in power and glory in the saints, in the fulness of His Body. And therefore we can expect not only an Elijah ministry, but the

fulness of the Moses-Elijah ministry. Christ's first Appearing was in the Head only, in one Man. Hence Elijah appeared in one man, even John the baptist--for his spirit and power rested upon him. Now Christ will appear in His Church the Body. Hence the Moses-Elijah company, the fulness of Christ in many.

TRANSFIGURATION GLORY

It is remarkable that the Lord's declaration concerning the coming of Elijah followed immediately after the Transfiguration experience, when Moses and Elijah had appeared in glory on the mount. The Lord was "transfigured," we are told, and Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory" with him. (Lk. 9:31.) The Glory was Christ's Glory, and He it was that was "transfigured," but these two men appeared in His Glory. And that, in fact, is exactly what is going to happen when Christ is manifested in the saints; the saints are to appear with Him in Glory! "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4.) It is participation in the Transfiguration glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, just as Moses and Elijah appeared in His Transfiguration glory. The Scriptures teach that this Transfiguration is for us.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed (transfigured) by the renewing of your mind . . ." (Rom. 12:2.)

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed (transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.)

The open face is the "unveiled" face. The reference is to the veil which Moses wore over his eyes to hide the glory from the sensitive eyes of the Israelites, when he came down from the mountain. But when he went in to speak to the Lord, he took the veil off. Paul, therefore, exhorts the Corinthians to take the veil off. This is the day and hour of God's great Unveiling--even the Unveiling of the Sons of God! And as our eyes and hearts and minds become unveiled before God, we are going to be transfigured into the same image! These words are unmistakable in clearness. The same image! And this image is developed and manifested as we partake of His Transfiguration, with minds and hearts and eyes unveiled before the Spirit of God.

What Peter beheld, therefore, on the Mount of Transfiguration was a true picture of the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" into the midst of His people in this great hour of His power and Kingdom. But it was just a picture; and when the real meaning of the scene is fully revealed to us by way of experience, it will far outshine any attempt to describe it. The best we can do now is to behold some of these truths as through a glass darkly. We have all puzzled over Peter's strange suggestion: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Apparently Peter was so caught away in the ecstasy of the Spirit that he thought they were observing the real Feast of Tabernacles; and his immediate suggestion, therefore, was to erect a little tabernacle or booth for each of them, as they were accustomed to do at this Feast. It certainly was a foretaste of the real Feast of Tabernacles, for which the saints are looking: but coming to himself Peter realized it was but a vision, and the hour of the Feast had not really arrived.

All the events that transpired at the Transfiguration scene are no doubt very significant, and at the same time largely hidden from our view. However as the Day of His Appearing draws nigh,

and the scene is reproduced in its fulness in the Body of Christ, its Glory shall far transcend what happened on that occasion. Still it was a wonderful event, and Peter never forgot its glory. To him that was the real Coming (Parousia) and the real Power (Dunamis) of the Kingdom, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. but were eyewitnesses of His majesty . . ." (2 Pet. 1:16.) And he used the plural, we, because he was speaking for James and John as well. No wonder Peter, James, and John spoke much of the manifestation of Christ within His people, of the Day-star arising in their hearts, of abiding in Christ, of seeing Him as He is, and of being made exactly like him in the hour of His spiritual visitation in the hearts of His people. That is the hope of the Church. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him-- for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 Jn. 3:2,3.) It is the Appearing of Christ within His people, and their, consequent transfiguration after His very likeness by beholding Him as He is: not by rapture, but by the spirit! ". . . transfigured into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.)

THE SECRET-CHRIST IN YOU

It is significant, therefore, that on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles the Lord went up to the Feast "not openly, but as it were in secret." For it is in this very manner that He shall first reveal Himself to the saints. Says Paul, "Even the mystery (secret) which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery (secret) among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:26,27.) Wonderful secret! That Christ should visit the saints in the last great Feast, and minister His life "in secret" before He is openly manifested!

Christians think it a horrible thing that Christ's second Coming should be spoken of in this manner. To so many, there is no real Coming of the Lord until He comes visibly, openly, and physically. Why is this? Because to them the only things that are real are the things that they can see. Whereas Paul declares that the things which are most real are eternal, invisible, and spiritual. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18.) When a Christian comes to that place where he really appreciates and understands and enjoys Spiritual things, then he can truly rejoice in the fact that Christ is coming back again to be manifested within.

Speaking of this glorious intimacy which He would have with His own, and which the world would not understand, we are told that "Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Lk. 10:21.)

This does not seem good to orthodox religion; but it seemed good to the Father. Paul tells us that God "was pleased to make known" the glory of this mystery, this secret. For it is a secret that is shared by Christ and His intimate friends. "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." (Lk. 10:22.) Here is a knowledge of the Father and the Son such as no man can acquire except by revelation. Theology will unveil before the student all manner of facts

relative to the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, But here is a knowledge which defies any attempt of man to unravel. It is a knowledge, not about God and about Christ and about doctrines, but it is a genuine knowledge of God and an intimate acquaintanceship with Him.

UNION WITH FATHER AND SON

In John 14 we have a beautiful description of Christ's Coming unto His own by the Spirit. Let it apply to the rapture, or to Heaven, if you will, for it is our heavenly heritage, even the "heavenlies" that God has placed us in by His grace. But those who will reach out and appropriate this new life, and are initiated into this "secret" of which we have been speaking-- theirs shall be the joy and delight of exploring the heavenlies long before they get there.

"Let not your heart be troubled," said Jesus, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you." (Jn. 14:1,2.) Then after much perplexity on the part of His disciples, the Lord explained fully what He meant by Father's house of "many mansions," and the place which He was going to prepare for them. First of all He shows that it is a spiritual place of union with the Father and the Son, a union so blessed and intimate that, if the Son whom they thought they knew was really apprehended and really known--then they would be in vital union with the Father also. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should (would) have known my Father also . . ." In consequence of this glorious union, therefore, it would come to pass that the beloved disciples would do "greater works" than Christ Himself performed when on earth, because He was returning to the Father; and the vital power and life and union which was His with the Father would then be transmitted to the disciples, and it would become their heritage. So positive and so real and so genuine is this secret life in union with the Father and the Son that Jesus promised without any qualifications whatsoever, "if ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." In our carnal minds we reason that God could not mean exactly that, because if He did, then men would be asking for all manner of earthly and selfish things, and God would be dishonored, and still duty-bound to grant the request. But the fact is this: Christ has made this promise only to such as know the "secret of the Lord," and are in vital union with the Father through Him. Such a man in such a spiritual condition could ask nothing except what would please the Father, and God would have to hear his prayer. In fact, the believer's prayer would be the very prayer of the Spirit of God within him. For in this blessed condition we have "the mind of Christ," and we could only think and pray in the Spirit.

Then the matter is solved, for the Lord goes on to explain how all this shall come to pass. When He went away He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to "abide" with them for ever. And it is this abiding experience in the Holy Spirit that constitutes this new life of which we speak. "I will not leave you comfortless (orphans)," said Jesus. "I will come to you." (Vs. 18.)

Jesus said, let us notice, "I will come"--and He was referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit in the fulness of His abiding presence. The Appearing of the Lord in secret in the hearts of His disciples! "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me . . ." (Vs. 19.)

Notice this also: "Ye see me . . ." Let us remember, as we pointed out before, that the real things of God are not seen with the natural eye, but are seen by the eye of the Spirit. This Coming of the Lord, therefore, is genuine and real to those who can see Him after this manner: in fact, far more real than His physical and bodily appearance to the world. "Ye see me . . ." "See Him not in the

flesh, for henceforth we are to know no man after the flesh, not even Christ. (2 Cor. 5;16); but see him with the eyes of the Spirit, like Moses of old beholding Him “who is invisible,” That Christ is not speaking here of a literal and physical appearance it is evident, for He says, “The world seeth me no more; but ye see me.” And why? “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

Then notice once again how vital and how glorious this union becomes when we enter into the fulness of this experience. “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” What day? The day of which He has been speaking all through this chapter, the day of this abiding experience in the Holy Spirit. “I am in my Father,” He said. We cannot doubt that; we know that the Son is genuinely one with the Father, completely immersed in the celestial glory. But in the same breath He continues, “And ye in me, and I in you.” Therefore, if the union of the Father and Son is genuine and exquisite and real and vital and powerful, then the union of the Son and the many brethren is to be just as real and just as glorious.

THE SECRET OF THIS MYSTERY

What is the secret of being initiated into this secret experience? It is very, very, simple; and therefore at the same time very difficult for man to appropriate: because he must simply cast away his life in the natural, that he might find it in the more abundant life of the Spirit. He must lose his life in order that he might find it. He must consecrate Himself absolutely and entirely unto the will of God. “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him . . .” The Coming of the Father and the Son! “We will come . . .” A secret visitation of Christ in the hearts of His people. “And make our abode with him. . .”

MANY MANSIONS

When Jesus said, “We come unto him, and make our abode with him.” He used the very same word for abode as He used back in vs. 2 when He said, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” The word “mansion” and “abode” is one and the same Greek word. This, then, is the real mansion that Christ has gone to prepare for His own. Some might prefer a house of gold or of glistening white marble or pearl. But those things are corruptible; even gold and silver are described by the apostle as being “corruptible things.” They are not real. The real things are the spiritual counterparts of gold, and pearls, and sapphires, and emeralds, and jasper. In our finite and limited understanding these natural and earthly things are used to describe our heavenly heritage--because that is the only language that we can understand. But in reality, the glorious realm of the Spirit far transcends and outshines any such earthly glory.

One glorious thing about the realm of the Spirit is that here there is nothing stagnant or monotonous. Immediately one is introduced into this glorious realm. there is ceaseless progression and activity. Then you are linked up with the infinite and eternal God, whose ways are past finding out, whose depths are unsearchable, and whose heights are unattainable.

Therefore the Lord tells us there are many abodes in Father’s House, depending on the level of one’s Christian experience, and his spiritual attainment through faith and obedience. “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonour.” (2 Tim. 2:20.) There is a resting-place, an abiding-place; but in God the true rest is found in the midst of outward strife and warfare: and the true abiding-place is the one that is ceaselessly moving forward and upward into a closer and more vital union with the Father. Israel’s rest in Canaan consisted in conquering the enemy and marching forward to possess their possessions. It did not consist of crossing Jordan, and then settling down on the banks of the river and singing the victory song. Nor is it so with the abiding experience in the Holy Spirit. If we are abiding in Christ, we are abiding in a River, a River that flows on for ever.

THE KINGDOM IS WITHIN

“And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say Lo here! or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Lk. 17:20,21.) A common explanation of this passage is this: the kingdom of God in the Church is invisible and “cometh not” with observation; but when the earthly Kingdom Age begins, then it will come with observation. As a matter of fact, there is nothing intimated here about two kingdoms; nor is it stated that the Kingdom of God cannot, or will not, be observed. Of course it will be observed and made manifest in the earth in due course; and “of His Kingdom there shall be no end.” But this passage is very clear as to how and in what manner the Kingdom shall be brought into being. Not with a great burst of glory from Heaven, for it “cometh not” with observation. Rather shall it come “in secret,” in the hearts of God’s people.

“So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself: first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” (Mk. 4:26-28.) The full corn is wonderful to see; so is the ear: and even the blade is visible. But it all

started under the ground through the mysterious, secret, invisible processes of nature, we know not how.

“Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field. . .” Matt. 13:44.) The hidden kingdom! And Christ is the One who sold all that He had, and purchased us unto Himself. To do so He redeemed the whole world through His Blood. Soon will He remove the treasure from its hiding place, and manifest it!

LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE

In Christ’s day the Jews were constantly looking forward to the day when their Messiah would suddenly manifest Himself in great power, deliver them from the Roman yoke, and set up the Kingdom. No wonder the Lord was so unpopular with them, for He told them plainly that the Kingdom would not come with “intense watching” (as the word ‘observation’ means). It is strange that one generation will not learn from the mistakes of their predecessors. For practically the whole body of evangelical churches today is looking forward with that same “intense watching” for a rapture or a kingdom that will deliver them from earth’s bondage, and establish them on thrones of power and authority in the earth. True, there shall come a day when the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth “as the waters cover the sea”; when every eye shall see Him; when the same Jesus that was taken up into Heaven, shall come in like manner as they saw Him go. But first there is the Appearing of Christ in the midst of His people by the Spirit, to establish the Kingdom of God within, and that is the hope of the Church.

Says Paul, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13) Literally, it reads: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God . . .” When Solomon’s temple had been constructed, the priests and Levites set in their place, the singers and the musicians in theirs, and the vessels and furniture all properly arranged--then, “It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord . . . that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.” (2 Chron. 5:13,14.) That is the Hope of the Church!

CHRIST TEACHES AT THE FEAST

So it was that the Lord visited the Feast of Tabernacles “as it were in secret” before He revealed Himself openly. But little by little He manifested Himself to the multitudes, began teaching in the temple, and causing them to marvel at His wisdom and knowledge. Even then they did not know that this man was the one called Jesus; for He had gone there in secret, and had not revealed His identity even when He taught. They tried to take Him, but His hour had not come and they had no power against Him. They sent officers to arrest Him, and they returned without Him, and with closed mouths. “Never a man spake like this man,” they testified. Dear child of God; when the power and glory of the Feast of Tabernacles begins to dawn upon the Church, God’s people are going to be clothed upon with such power and authority that the very nations themselves will have to bow in submission. Never did any king or dictator or president speak as the Sons of God shall speak. For they shall be literally clothed upon with His Divine majesty and authority, and

they shall be the very living oracles of God to the Church as well as to the nations. Then shall they do God's will as God Himself shall direct, and no earthly power will have any power against them. When the Lord's hour of crucifixion drew nigh, then were they able to arrest Him; for His hour had come. But it was not because He was powerless to do anything about it. There was a great work of Redemption which He had to perform, and a great baptism of death which He must accomplish.

In the Lord's discourse with the Jews at the Feast we have a glorious promise of that hidden life. He told them, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come." (Jn. 7:34.) Where He was, the world could not come; but in this very hidden place the disciples would come. Did Jesus not promise the disciples concerning the coming of the Spirit, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you?" (Jn. 14:17.) They knew that the Lord was referring to that hidden life, and the manifestation of Christ within them, for they said: "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" (vs. 22.) They were beginning to see and to understand that there was to be a real manifestation of Christ in them, where they would be in vital union with the Father and the Son, a place which the world could not invade. And so this hidden place could not be found by the Jews; whereas His beloved disciples would enter into it. "Where I am, thither ye cannot come," He said to the Jews. But to the disciples, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." (Jn. 14:3).

Where is it? Jesus said, "Where I am," That is sufficient. It is a place in the Spirit which no man can invade. A hidden place for those who are in world, but not of it, in the very sanctuary of the Spirit of God. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." There shall the Sons of God be hidden as they work the works of Christ in the midst of a world of wrath and judgment. And then, in God's good time, they shall be manifested openly. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4.)

THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH

As we write these words we are very conscious of our inability to comprehend, much less to attempt to explain, this glorious mystery. Of necessity this must be so, inasmuch as we write concerning things not seen as yet. We are confident, therefore, that the glory of this heritage, when revealed, shall far surpass our feeble attempt to explain or imagine what it shall be like.

This secret place shall be to those who fear Him. It is a place in which we are shut away from the world, even though dwelling right in the midst of its turmoil and its dangers. A place where we can see the countenance of the Bride-groom, and hear His voice. "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song 2:14). Not only shall our conference with the Lord be sweet and our communion unbroken by the ravages of the Great Tribulation, but the overcomer shall know a protection and a shelter as real as, but far more wonderful than, that enjoyed by Noah's family in the ark.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome

pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday . . ." (Ps. 91:1-6).

This is the secret place of the Most High. It is His dwelling place, and it shall be ours. It is not in Heaven, nor is it by way of rapture. But it is that place of vital union with God by the Holy Spirit, which constitutes one an overcomer even in the place of death and desolation and judgment. "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. We shall be right in the very midst of earth's calamities, but in a place of rest and shelter, in this abiding experience that Jesus told His disciples about. God said, "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name" (vs. 14). "The heavenlies in Christ Jesus" which we have long talked about and admired and boasted about having, are going to be appropriated by the Spirit even now in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation.

The Overcomer, therefore, will live the very same life of the only begotten Son of God. When the authorities tried to take Him, they could not. He was right there in their very midst, walking about in a visible, physical, tangible, earthly body; but they had no power to touch Him. They sent officers to arrest Him, but they were dumb-founded and returned without Him. Why? It was during the Feast of Tabernacles, and Jesus would teach us by His presence at this Feast some of the great spiritual truths which are yet to transpire at the Real Feast of Tabernacles.

We can easily understand, therefore, how the Glorious Gospel of Christ shall be proclaimed throughout the whole earth, regardless of the opposition that shall be raised. There will not be a country on earth that will be closed to this Gospel of the Kingdom. It will be just as simple to proclaim the Truth in Communist Russia as anywhere else on earth. The authorities will send the police to arrest this strange personage that is so boldly preaching Christ, and working the works of God, and he will have disappeared; for he shall have been caught away in the Spirit like Philip the evangelist. Or perhaps they will reach forth their hands to take him, and he will disappear from their view. They may rush upon him with sword or bayonet, and their weapon will be blunted as truly as if they had charged an armored tank; for no weapon that is formed against him shall prosper. They might fire a shot, and the bullet will glance off his brow, as it would from a heavy plate of steel. They shall poison his food, but it will be like adding vitamins to his diet. They shall put the over-comer in prison, and by night the Angel of the Lord will unlock the prison doors, bring the captive forth, set him free, and then promptly lock the prison doors again - leaving the guard in a very awkward situation. They shall seek to prevent the Gospel from being proclaimed over the air; and yet even without the aid of radio or transmitter the voice of the overcomer shall be heard in the streets or in the homes, as it penetrates the atmosphere at God's command and in God's place. He shall be cast to the lions, or to fierce beasts, and the beasts themselves shall become his best friends. He shall be tossed into fiery flames of fire, and yet shall feel as comfortable as he would in a warm living room on a cold day. If there is no food, he shall call manna down from Heaven. If there is a river to cross, he shall raise his hand, and the waters shall roll back before him that he might walk over on dry land. And "nothing shall be impossible" unto the man who believes! The most powerful atom or hydrogen bombs ever invented shall be perfectly harmless to the man who is hid away in the secret place of the Most High.

Can we not see, then, how simple a matter it will be for the overcomer to administer help and comfort and deliverance to a persecuted and suffering Church? For he shall be an overcomer in the fulness of Christ's victory over the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Sin, sickness, or death

shall have no claim on him. He will be even as his Lord and Master as He walked upon earth and ministered among men. No man could take His life from Him. But He testified, "I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (Jn. 10:18). So shall it be with His "many brethren," If they lay down their life, it shall be for the sake of the brethren and for the Truth; and as surely as they lay it down, they shall take it again in greater glory and fulness, nevermore to see corruption. No man could lay their finger on Christ until His hour had come; and then He gave Himself willingly that He might finish the work which God had given Him to do. So it shall be with His many brethren. They shall be completely triumphant over all the powers of darkness that are arrayed against them--and shall in no wise partake of the world's coming Tribulation, except to fulfill the works of God on behalf of the Church. If they suffer or die, it shall be for the brethren's sake, and according to the plan of God and the power of Christ that worketh in them.

These things may sound fantastic to many Christians; but if so it is only because God's people in this modern age are so earthly-minded that they cannot appreciate nor understand the realities of the Spirit. Many, many more miracles than we have mentioned--or even imagined possible--shall be performed by the Sons of God in the day of their manifestation. They will not even require a glorified body in order to do these things. This, of course, will become their heritage when their work on earth is finished, just as in the case of Christ. But they will not require a glorified body to work the works of Christ. Daniel was human, even in the lions' den. The three Hebrew children had flesh and blood the same as we all have--and yet the fire meant nothing to them, except release from their bondage and a visitation of One like unto the Son of Man. Philip was a natural human being, with a natural body--and yet was caught away in the Spirit without the aid of any human means of transportation. Peter likewise, and yet the locked doors flew open and forth he went out of the prison by the hand of the Angel of the Lord.

These things are really all quite simple and small, compared to some of the unseen, unheard-of things that God has prepared for those that love him. Jesus meant exactly what He said when He promised: "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20).

THE LAST GREAT DAY OF THE FEAST

Perhaps we should describe in some detail the order of events which transpired during the Feast of Tabernacles in the days of Christ. This was the culminating festival of the year. The Feast began, as we mentioned, with the Blowing of Trumpets, followed by the Day of Atonement, and then culminated with the Feast of Tabernacles. It was a time of great joy and hilarity and gladness, for it was really a great Thanksgiving Festival for all Israel, when the fruit of the land had been gathered in. Hence it was called the Feast of Ingathering. The harvest was over, and now they assembled in the streets and open places of Jerusalem to observe the ordinances of the Lord, praising and thanking Him for His goodness, singing the Psalms of David, and keeping all the rituals connected with the Feast.

In the days of Christ, other ceremonies were observed in addition to those commanded in the Law. We are told that the people, at the time of the morning sacrifice, would take palm-branches and myrtle branches and willows, and with a citron or some other fruit in their hands would

make their way to the temple, and march around the altar of burnt offering after the manner of the children of Israel when they encompassed Jericho. They would do this once daily, and then seven times on the seventh day of the Feast.

Then there was the ceremony known as “The Pouring Out of Water,” which in all probability was in vogue in the time of Christ. In the fulfillment of this ordinance, the priest would take a golden vessel to the pool of Siloam at the time of sacrifice, fill it with water and carry it back to the temple amidst the blowing of trumpets and shouts of joy. Then the water would be mixed with the wine of the sacrifices and poured out beside the altar, and from there conducted by a sewer into the valley of Kidron. As this took place, there would be a quotation from Isa. 12:3, “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

Truly it was a festival of great hilarity and gladness. If there was any cause for sorrow in Israel, this was no day to make it known. If there was disappointment, hunger, thirst--it was to be forgotten on the occasion of this great Feast: the Feast of joy, and unity, and rest, and prosperity, and gladness. But Jesus was there, beholding all their demonstrations, and knowing full well that these natural, earthly celebrations were but empty and vain so far as Israel was concerned. He knew, too, that soon they would pass away, and would find their fulfillment in a new, and living Feast which He himself had come to earth in order to bring into being. He realized that their joy was only outward, and that within the hearts of every true Israelite there was that empty void which He alone could fill. He realized, also, that the hour had now come when He must give the real meaning of their festivities; and so we read these beautiful words:

“In the last day, that great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” (Jn. 7:37-39).

On that day, we are told, it was customary for the priest to quote this verse from Isaiah: “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation (Isa. 12:3). Do you see, then, what the Lord would teach us? That the time would come when men would no longer draw their experience from wells of Divine provision, but an artesian fountain of living water would rise up in the soul, and flow forth unto humanity in mighty rivers of blessing and life. It is the healing, life-giving stream that we read about in Ezekiel: “These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh” (Ezek. 47:8, 9). Jesus said, “I will make you fishers of men.” The coming revival shall utterly eclipse anything we have ever read about in the Bible or in Church history! This River of Life has been flowing ever since Pentecost: we realize that; but soon it shall empty into the mighty oceans of humanity, bringing life and blessing to a dry and parched wilderness.

As the water was poured out on the altar, it was customary for the priest to quote a portion from Isaiah twelve. In fact, it is quite possible that he would have read the whole chapter. If he did so, then he would have concluded with the words: “Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.” What irony there would be in those words!

He knew nothing of the true Messiah who stood right before him; and yet there it was written, and he may have spoken forth these words in utter ignorance of the truth they conveyed: "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee!" There He stood, the Holy One of Israel, the very Fountain of Life, and the Substance of all their ceremonies and festivities. He does the same today. He stands in secret in our very midst, waiting for admittance. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20).

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Isa. 43:19). We thank God for the taste we have had from the Fountain of living water. But Jesus has promised, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14). Sad to say, we have been like the fountain in the Song of Songs. "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (Song 4:12).

A fountain! But shut up, sealed, frozen over. Abraham digged many good wells in his day; but after his death we are told that the Philistines had filled them in. Isaac found he had to dig them again before he could take advantage of the refreshing waters that lay buried under the rocks and dirt and filth which the enemy had tossed into the wells. So it is with the Church of Christ, and the fountain which Christ has created in the hearts of His people. All the potentialities of this new life and this new experience are right in our heart, locked up like the germ-life in the seed. And therefore we profit nothing.

THE CORN OF WHEAT MUST DIE

Is it not written, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:24)? Notice the setting of this beautiful statement. Andrew and Philip had just come and told the Lord that "certain Greeks" had requested to "see Jesus." And this was the Lord's astonishing reply: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and, die, it abideth alone . . ." Strange reply! But not hard to understand, when we begin to realize that Jesus shall appear and shall be seen in His people through His Cross and Resurrection. "We would see Jesus," said the Greeks. Then they must see Him in the harvest which His death would bring into being. They must see Him in the grain that would be reproduced after His very likeness, in His very image. They would see Him in His people! And the only way that we, as the people of God, are going to manifest the life and resurrection power of Christ is by becoming identified with Him in His cross. It is not sufficient that we merely accept Christ and His finished work for us. Doing that we are saved; but "abide alone." We must share His sufferings, identify ourselves with His Cross, so that it actually becomes our very own--and then we shall rise in resurrection life to bring forth much fruit unto the Kingdom. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5).

No wonder the apostle Paul who knew Christ, had personally seen His Lord on the Damascus road, had talked with Him and heard Him reply in an audible voice--yearned in the travail of his spirit for this great manifestation: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and

the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead Or “the out-resurrection from among the dead.” (Phil. 3:10,11.)

THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN

Any true Christian would immediately rise up in arms if one were to suggest that the Old Testament was not fulfilled, or needed not to be fulfilled, in Christ. Jesus promised so definitely: “All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Lk. 24:44). And yet it seems a most reasonable and plausible thing to the whole body of evangelical Christianity that the New Testament need not be fulfilled in Christ’s Church. Let us assure the saints everywhere that the New Testament is now a part of the verbally-inspired Word of God; and Jesus has declared emphatically “The Scripture cannot be broken,” and again, “The Scriptures must be fulfilled” (Jn. 10:35; Mk. 14:49). And if this is true of the Old Testament, how much more is it true of the New Testament? Because the glory of the Old was to pass away, but the glory of the New is to remain. (2 Cor. 3:9-11).

We are confident, therefore, that if Christ must minister faithfully for many years amidst the scoffing and ridicule of men, suffer the anguish of Gethsemane, die on a Roman cross, and rise again from the dead, in order to fulfill the Old Covenant; then it is positively essential that the Body of Christ rise from the dust and desolation of her captivity, become identified with the Death of Christ the Head, and rise again with Him to manifest His glory and His power,—in order to fulfill the New Covenant.

Men will argue, What about the falling-away? What about the apostasy? Is this not to be the condition of the Church in the last days? Of course there is to be apostasy, as the apostle prophesied. And it has certainly come to pass. But we are speaking of the true Church, the Body of Christ, the Sons of God, the Overcomer, the Bride—the people of whom it was said: “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10). And this must be fulfilled if the Scriptures cannot be broken.

The apostle said, “To him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations of the age of the ages. Amen” (Eph. 3:21, Literal). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant is destined to make of God’s people, “the epistle of Christ . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God” (2 Cor. 3:3). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has decreed that its holy precepts shall be written upon the hearts and upon the minds of God’s people. (Heb. 8:10). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has provided a glory that abides, and grows ever more illustrious, in contrast to the fading glory of the Law of Moses. (2 Cor. 3:7,8). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has prepared a panoply, a complete armour, by which the saints are to be enabled to topple Satan and his wicked hosts from their heavenly strongholds. (Eph. 6:11-18). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has commanded the saints of God to have the same love, to be of one accord, to be of one mind, and to be perfectly joined together in the same judgment. (1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:2). And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has established the Church as a Body, functioning as genuinely and as perfectly as the members of the human body, with Christ as the Head. (1 Cor. 12 to 14).And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has ordained that the saints of God shall grow into maturity and unto the knowledge of the Son of God, and unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. (Eph. 4:12,13).And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has decreed that after the successful ministration of the gifts and ministries of the Spirit, the love of God shall be manifest in the saints, taking the place of the gifts. (1 Cor. 13).And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has ordained a place in Christ and a birth by the Spirit, which shall completely banish sin from the heart, and bring to pass a victory which knows no defeat. (1 Jn. 3:7-9).And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The New Covenant has declared that the earnest expectation of the Creation, and that the groans and travails of a world under the curse of sin and death--shall find glorious release and liberty in "the manifestation of the Sons of God" (Rom. 8:19-23).And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Then, saints of God, let us not be like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not behold the glory on his countenance.And well he might!For that glory was doomed to pass away!But ours is destined to become ever more brilliant, and to shine even more and more unto the Perfect Day. Let us therefore go forth ministering the Word of Life with all boldness, prepared even to die the death of the Cross in this hour of His betrayal, and knowing that as surely as God raised Christ from the dead in the power of an endless life, so surely shall we rise also with Him to walk in newness of life.

If men choose to remain where they are in their Christian experience, then this message is not for them.Thank God that they may eat of the manna that falls from Heaven, and drink of the water that flows out of the rock, and receive healing and strength for their journey.But sorry to say, they shall die in the wilderness, and shall not see this good heritage of the Spirit.

On the other hand, if some would arise and cross over Jordan there shall be tremendous obstacles to overcome, there shall be unseen dangers lurking in their pathway, and there shall be powerful enemies to subdue.Nevertheless, theirs is a good spirit which the Lord shall honor, and His Presence shall be their protection.To them God would speak words of great encouragement:

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.Have not I commanded thee?Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." (Josh. 1:8,9).

OURS IS A LEAPING FOUNTAIN

"A well of water leaping up into everlasting life (Jn. 4:14).This is Christ's promise to His people.We do not write for the purpose of settling any doctrinal disputes: but simply for those whose souls are thirsting for this living stream.If men are content with their Passover experience, this is not for them.If they are satisfied with their Pentecost experience, this is not for them.Such contentment only proves that the Rivers of Living Water have ceased to flow from their souls;

for this Fountain that Christ places within, if not cluttered up with the mire of the Philistines, is a Fountain that is constantly leaping up into everlasting life. Thank God for every measure of truth and power and glory that God has restored to the Church from the Reformation until now. But let it flow, child of God,--let it surge forward until it becomes a mighty Amazon in this desert-world of sin, sickness, and sorrow.

Said Jesus, "Out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." We are not looking forward, then, to some strange, foreign power . . . some glory or some experience that does not really belong to us. But we are awaiting the release of the Divine flow which is now locked up in the hearts of God's people. We are "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed . . ." The Church has passed through a long, cold, arduous, and barren winter. But the All-wise God has been the author of the winter; for He is working out a great and a mighty plan:

"He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?" (Ps. 147:16,17).

Yes, the winter has been upon the Church for centuries. We could not understand it; but God has intended it for the glory and the triumph of those who shall be living in the day of Spring! Already we can see the firstfruits of Spring and the banishment of winter: "He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow . . . He hath not dealt so with any nation" (Ps. 147: 18,20).

The breezes of the Spirit are gently sweeping through the Church; and with the winds of the Spirit, and the illumination of the Sun of Righteousness, there is a melting. The ice and the snow and the frost are melting, and dissolving, and flowing together--to form this living stream from Lebanon. Therefore, let us even now begin to rejoice in the New Day of Spring, as the first rays of hope arise on the Eastern horizon:

"Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away" (Song 2:11-13).

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