

ECHOES from EDEN, PART 1 'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

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KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART ONE THE GARDEN

The Book of Genesis is probably the most important book ever written. The Bible is unquestionably the one Book that has exerted the greatest influence on history of any book ever produced. The Bible, however, is actually a compilation of sixty-six books, and the Book of Genesis is the foundation of them all. If the Book of Genesis were somehow removed, the Bible would appear absurd and incomprehensible. It would be like a building without a foundation, or a bridge with no support. The books of the Old Testament, narrating God's dealings with His ancient people of Israel, would be bigoted and racist, were they not set in the context of the progressive development of God's wise and gracious purposes for all mankind as laid down in the early chapters of Genesis. The New Testament is, if anything, even more dependent on Genesis than the Old. There are at least 165 passages in Genesis that are either directly quoted or clearly referred to in the New Testament by Jesus and the apostles, having to do with the redemptive purposes of God and the principles of His Kingdom. I do not hesitate to say that the writings of the New Testament, describing the execution and implementation of God's wonderful redemptive purposes in Jesus Christ, are completely unintelligible except in the light of the magnificent revelation of God's great and glorious plan of the ages, as established in the record of man's beginnings, recorded only in Genesis.

The word "genesis" of course means "origin" or "beginning," and the Book of Genesis gives the only true and reliable account of the basic entities and conditions of the universe and of life. Genesis yields vital information concerning the origin of ALL THINGS – and therefore the meaning of ALL THINGS! Let every man know that in the whole of the universe there is no greater truth than this one sublime truth that THE FUTURE IS BOUND UP IN THE PAST. A man's belief concerning his origin will inevitably determine his belief about his purpose on earth and his eternal destiny.

T. Russell wrote: *"The incomprehensible darkened and utterly deluded mind of the evolutionist believes that out of the warm slime along the shore of some primordial sea, spontaneously and without cause or guidance, protoplasm arranged itself and evolved into a microbe, or maggot, which squirmed and twisted and reproduced its own species, and then finding use for a tail, developed one. Later on, one of its still more intelligent offspring concluded that oars, or fins, would be useful, and developed them. Another, later on, got chased by a hungry brother and, jumping clear of the water, got the idea that the fins further developed would be wings, and liked the new style, so that he stayed out of the water, and then decided that legs and toes would be a convenience and developed them. Others of the family followed other 'notions,' of which they seemingly had an inexhaustible supply, as evidenced by the great variety of animals we see about us. However, in due time one of these descendants of the first maggot which had reached the monkey degree of development, got a noble idea before his mind – he said to himself, I will discard my tail, and cease using my hands as feet, and will shed my coat of hair, and will develop a nose and a forehead and a brain with moral and reflective organs. I will wear tailor-made clothing and a high silk hat, and call myself Charles Darwin, LL.D., and write a record of my evolution!"* The fact is, however, that the probability of life originating from accident or by spontaneous generation is comparable to the probability of an unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing plant.

A naturalistic, animalistic concept of beginnings specifies a naturalistic, animalistic program for the FUTURE. But an origin at the hands of an omnipotent, holy, loving God, on the other hand, necessarily predicts a divine purpose in history and an assurance of the ultimate consummation of that purpose. A revelatory understanding of the Book of Genesis is therefore prerequisite to an understanding of God and His meaning to the human race – His dealings and purposes in OUR LIVES! Let me say it again: THE FUTURE IS BOUND UP IN THE PAST! If man had his beginnings by accident as a product of the slime of earth, then his eternal end is in the silent and lifeless dust of the ground. But if man's past is linked to the God of omniscience and

omnipotence, then his future is to be discovered in the eternal purposes of the all-wise, all-powerful and all-loving Creator!

Life does exist. No one questions this fact! No one, that is, except a few philosophers who for the sake of an argument will contend that the world might be an illusion, just a dream; and that there is really nothing that does exist. "How would one know?" they ask in idle speculation. These silly dreamers never stop to realize that it takes SOMETHING to even think the deep thoughts they think – except for the fact that they themselves DO EXIST they would be unable to even dream about the so-called "illusion," or question the world's existence! The real problem is this: Life exists. Just where, when, and how did it come into being? The Bible begins with the most simple but sublime of statements, *"In the beginning God created..."* And Paul tells us that *"He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."* (Col. 1:17) Although it is impossible for us to comprehend fully this concept of an eternal, transcendent God, the only alternative is the concept of an eternal self-existing universe; and this concept is also incomprehensible. Eternal God or eternal matter – that is the choice! The later is an utter impossibility by the scientific law of cause and effect, since random particles of matter could not by themselves generate a complex, orderly, intelligible universe, not to mention living persons capable of applying intelligence to the understanding of the complex order of the universe. A personal God, an omniscient Mind, and omnipotent Power, a transcendent Architect, is the only adequate cause to produce such effects. Your life, my friend, is an effect – therefore God's life is the Cause! It cannot be otherwise.

Paul saw that there was an allegorical teaching in the book of Genesis that paralleled the experience of spiritual birth in the earth. He stated that *"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts..."* (II Cor. 4:6) Just as God commanded light to shine out of darkness – God has shined in our hearts. What has He radiated into our minds and hearts? The "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Just as light shined in darkness, so has the invisible, unknowable, unsearchable, unapproachable, unreachable, hidden God shined in our hearts. And what has He shined? The light of the knowledge. All knowledge is not light. But this knowledge has given us light in a dark world. And you cannot know your complete identity in Christ without knowing the origin of that identity in its beginning. Go back to the beginning, for the end is the same as the beginning. We want to explore the mystery of our beginning upon this planet. When Jesus walked upon this earth, we will never understand His supernal reality apart from the understanding of the origin and true nature of all things. God is a spirit, Jesus taught.

In the beginning God proclaimed, *"Let us make man in our image and after our likeness."* (Gen. 1:26) This wonderful purpose of God to make man in His own image had been settled in the divine councils of God from eternity. The blessed Lamb had, in the determination of these councils, been slain before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8); the names of all the redeemed of earth had been written in His book of life before the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8); and all the blessed sons of God, predestinated to be holy and without blame before Him in love, predestinated to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD, were selected and chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:3-5). This is a profound and mysterious truth, impossible to fully comprehend apart from the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. The carnal minds of men cannot even begin to imagine in their wildest dreams and hopes the ineffable glory that is determined for man IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. Those appointed to the obtaining of this glory have been chosen "in Him" because Jesus Christ Himself is *"the outshining of God's glory, and the express image of His Person."* (Heb. 1:3)

The glorious Son of God is the One in whom the unapproachable and utterly incomprehensible glory of God is made manifest. As we only know the sun by the light that shines from it, so is Christ THE OUTSHINING, the revelation OF GOD'S GLORY. As the light that shines from the sun is of one nature with it, so the Son is of one nature with the Father and is Himself called "the everlasting Father." As the light that shines from the sun is of one substance with it, so the Son is THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS SUBSTANCE and is Himself called "the Mighty God." Someone may be tempted to think that these are mysteries too deep for the ordinary Christian, and not needful for our walk in God. And they are inclined to ask, Of what importance it can be to a believer to know all this. My brother, think not thus. It is all important that we know the glory of Jesus. The more the soul is filled with that glory, the more it will see with what confidence it can count upon Him to do a divine and supernatural work within us, and to lead us to an actual living out of the glory of the Son in our lives. Oh, let us not be so selfish and mean as to be content with the hope that Jesus saves us, while we are careless of laying hold upon the great and gracious PURPOSE for which He has saved us – that we may be

CONFORMED INTO HIS IMAGE. If not for our sake, then for God's sake, for the sake of His infinite love and grace, let us seek to know aright this blessed Son whom the Father has given us. Let us turn away from earth, that in the knowing of Him our own lives may be transformed, until He, who is the outshining of the divine glory, shines into our very heart, and He, to whom the Father has given such a place as Creator and Upholder and Heir of all, take that place within us too, and be to us the beginning and the center and the end of all; until He who IS THE IMAGES OF GOD so possesses our beings that we become the outshining of God's glory and the express image of His Person.

"Let us make man in our image," said the Lord, whose purposes stand forever and whose hand shall never cease from man until the very last vestige of the image of Self and of Satan has been obliterated from the universe. There is neither time nor space to enlarge on this truth at present, but hear briefly the hope God has in store when He has completed the creation of man in His image. Paul wrote to the Romans, *"In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the Sons of God coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited – yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!"* (Rom. 8:18-21, Phillips) Jesus Christ is the beginning of the creation of God. His perfection as a man was completed two thousand years ago. He is the image of the Father. Next in order come the younger sons of God, the extension and increase of the second Adam race of New Creation men. Our redemption draweth nigh and perfection in His image is even now near at hand, bless His wonderful name! And then, in due time, dear ones, the matchless and glorious image of God shall shine throughout the whole of the universe until there shall be no more night anywhere forevermore.

The glory of God is the IMAGE OF CHRIST, and we shall be fully satisfied when we awake in His likeness. Oh that the eyes of men might be opened to clearly see that back of all things and before all things, yea, in the beginning of all things, standeth God – eternal, immortal, invisible, almighty, omniscient, immutable, holy, loving, and greatest and most glorious of all, FULL OF PURPOSE! In the beginning... GOD!

Genesis means, as we have stated, "origin" or "beginning," and this, the first book of the Bible, reveals how ALL THINGS and ALL CONDITIONS and STATES OF BEING came into existence. **Genesis 1:1** reads: *"In the beginning God created..."* There is no doubt in my mind but that this marked the beginning of everything that now exists in all the unbounded heavens except God Himself who is before all things and by whom all things consist. The verse should be read, "By beginnings, God created the heavens and the earth." Farrar Fenton, in his translation of the Bible, attempts to express this truth and renders the passage, "By periods God created..." And, lest any one should question this, in the New Testament in Hebrews 1:10, it has the word "beginning" in the Greek in the plural. Anyone who knows Greek will see this, although the Bible translators fail to reflect it. It, also, should read, "and, then, Lord, according to beginnings didst lay the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the words of thy hands." There were many things begun all at the same time, as the manifold wisdom of God found expression in innumerable ways to bring forth into the realm of visibility the majestic purposes of God. It was the beginning of the UNIVERSE and of TIME (Heb. 1:2). It was the beginning of every existing life-form, even unto the principalities and powers of the heavens, referred to in the Scriptures as THE HOST OF HEAVEN. *"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all THE HOST OF THEM."* (Gen. 2:1) *"I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and ALL THE HOST OF HEAVEN standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him"* (I Kings 22:19-22) *"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of THE HEAVENLY HOST... and it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them..."* (Luke 2:13-15). It was the beginning of MAN (Gen. 1:26). It was the beginning of SATAN (Gen. 3:1; Jn. 8:44; I Jn. 3:8). It was the beginning of SIN, of CONSCIENCE, and the whole realm of DUALITY – *"good and evil."* (Gen. 1:26) It was the beginning of the REDEMPTIVE purposes of God in Christ Jesus (Rev. 13:8). It was the beginning of the outworking of God's eternal purpose to reveal the fullness of Himself, through the body of Christ, the sons of God, unto the entirety of the creation (Eph. 3:9-11; 2:6-7). There is neither time nor space to enumerate all that is included within the scope of the "beginnings" in Genesis 1:1, but surely it can be summed up in just two words – ALL THINGS. *"For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they*

be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” (Col. 1:16-17)

The first several chapters of the Book of Genesis lay a ground-plan for the entire revelation of God's purposes. As a piece of literature the story is sublime; magnificent in range, in profundity of design, and the unparalleled heights of spiritual understanding which it attains. Here in these chapters is the visual prophecy and seed-plot of the whole plan of creation and redemption. I can confidently say that every revelation of Himself and His purpose that God has ever given from the foundation of the world is contained in these opening chapters of Genesis. There is absolutely no revelation of the Scriptures, spoken by prophets or apostles, or revealed in the depths of the spirits of worshipping men who have come into holy contact with the presence and power of God, which cannot be found in SEED FORM, as type, shadow, parable, or allegory in the Book of Genesis. The entire plan of the ages is there portrayed. Each and every experience, situation, condition, capacity, potential and destiny of mankind, with all the principles and processes by which God shall bring man to perfection, in the image of God, is there set forth in awe-inspiring wonder. And nowhere is this more obviously true than in the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (Gen. 2:8-9)

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is the greatest parable in the Bible. It is supremely important because it explains the real nature of our life here on earth. It tells us about ourselves, about our state of being, and how we bring about the conditions in which we live. It is the blueprint of man's experience on earth and his destiny in God. When you thoroughly understand the Garden of Eden you will understand the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of Satan. This parable is placed at the beginning of human history, because it is the foundation upon which the whole plan of purpose of God is built. The entire revelation of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, assumes an understanding of the great principles and characteristics in the Garden of Eden.

Don't let it disturb you that I call the Garden of Eden a parable. What is a parable? Your dictionary or Bible Concordance will tell you that a parable places one thing alongside another for a variety of reasons. There are quite a number of English words which sound a little like parable; in fact they all start with the same four letters, P-A-R-A. This prefix “para” means “by the side of.” One word I would like you to think of is the very common word parallel. It's a word they use a great many times in school. In the Art Department, in the Geography Department, in the Mathematics Department, even in the Music Department, as music is written on five parallel lines, and, of course, in the English Department. If you look at the edges of this paper you'll find they are parallel with each other. If you are sitting at a table it is most likely to have parallel sides. The edges to the door of your room should be parallel; the floor and ceiling ought to be parallel; the edges of the window frames should be parallel, too! So now I've got you thinking about this word parallel perhaps it would help if we wrote the two words down like this:

P A R A B L E

P A R A L L E L

Now we can ask another question: If a parable is only a story, why not call it a story? Why use an unusual work like parable, if an ordinary word like story will do? The answer is simple: A parable is more than a story. It is a story plus, it has a bonus added to the story. It has two things that run side by side – the lesson and the reality!

So that's where a parable is different; it's more than a story – it has a story line and then a parallel line – a new idea, concept, or meaning to comprehend! Also – parables may be based upon actual events. For instance, when Jesus begins His parable by saying, “*A sower went forth to sow...*” if there were no such things as actual farmers, soil, and seed we would miss His point altogether. The natural and outward corresponds in principle

to the spiritual and inward – the one is set along side the other. That's just what makes it a parable! So do not be distressed by the representation of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden as a parable!

There is one thing about which God's people must be perfectly clear. The Bible is not primarily intended to teach history or biography. It is intended to teach THE PURPOSES OF GOD and SPIRITUAL REALITIES. It deals primarily with states of being and the laws of spiritual activity; and anything else is only incidental. Each of the principal characters in the Bible represents a kind of nature, character, or state of being that any of us may experience and walk in; and the events that happen to the various characters illustrate the consequences to us of walking in such realms of nature and character, either good or bad. Some of the Bible characters, such as Adam and Eve, Moses, Elijah, and Paul, are indeed historical figures. They were real people who lived on earth and did the deeds attributed to them; nonetheless they represent kinds of natures and states of being revealed in their varying hues as their lives unfolded. Other Bible characters, such as the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, or the Great Harlot in Revelation are, of course, fictional and never lived on earth as actual persons; but as parables and allegories they express inner conditions and states of being too, and always in a most effective and graphic manner.

You cannot with brush and canvas paint a picture of fear for instance; but you can paint a picture of a human being, and create terror on his countenance. You cannot take a pencil and draw sensuality, rebellion, hatred, or spiritual bondage as such; but you can take a pen and write about great crises in men's lives, about the emotional trauma, inner torment, and excruciating pain caused by tyranny, brutality, hatred, bigotry, immoral conduct, hopelessness, despair, darkness, and death men execute and perpetrate upon one another. You can describe the righteous judgments of God brought into men's lives by all these evils, as does the Bible, with the symbolic term "hell fire." And the carnal mind and natural understanding is certain to think that you mean a literal human body being tortured in a physical flame! On the other hand, you cannot picture a soul abiding in the perfect peace, joy and harmony of the glorious presence of God, adoring and worshipful; but you can speak of a great choir of rapturous beings playing music upon perfectly tuned harps, and again the carnally minded people will think that redeemed souls are to spend eternity literally playing harps! The Spirit of God uses this method to impart understanding to our minds and hearts. The Spirit uses outer concrete things to express inner spiritual realities. As Paul says, *"These things are an allegory."* (Gal. 4:24)

In the Garden of Eden many people seem to think that Eve symbolizes woman as a sex and that Adam somehow stands for man as a sex. The truth goes far beyond this! Adam and Eve in the Garden represent the whole of humanity in the first Adam. They represent you and me and every man and woman who has ever lived or shall live. What happened to him happens to us. What he was we are. His experience is our experience. His destiny is our destiny. May the mighty spirit of wisdom and revelation from God give enlightenment to the eyes of your understanding that you may see and know of a truth that what was happening to Adam in the Garden speaks of spiritual realities even in the beginning of history, before history, beyond history and yet in history; it is we ourselves of whom the Garden speaks, it is we ourselves who are confronted, intended, addressed, accused, expelled, instructed, and redeemed.

GOD HIMSELF is the One who blesses and curses. It is our pre-history, truly our own. It is the beginning, innocence, guilt, redemption and perfection of every one of us. What happened to Adam there is what is happening to us here! Adam and Eve stand for what man is, how man is, why man is. They stand for man as we know him, with all his capacities and potentials, under the gracious hand of God, being brought from innocence to sin, from sin to salvation, and from salvation to THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Memories of Eden, exquisite as dreams, weave their threads of light into the traditions of all peoples. There is not a nation under heaven which does not date the beginning of our race from some distant period of purity, peace, and concord with nature and with God. The hieroglyphics of Egypt, the clay tablets of Assyria, the Edda of Scandinavia, the legends of Tibet, and the bas-relief of Rome, tell the same story of primitive blessedness. All go to prove the truth of the statement that the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and put there the man whom He had formed.

When we come to the Garden of Eden it is evident that this is more than merely a piece of real estate somewhere over in Mesopotamia! No such place has ever been found, neither the angel with the flaming sword to keep men out. No wonder that men have sought for it, but they have sought it in vain. The Garden of

God is not a physical place located on this or any other planet. It is a STATE OF BEING. It is a higher existence for man than this cursed state we find ourselves in by physical birth. It is the state of being that man was in when he was first brought forth from the creative hand of God and placed here upon earth. It represents man – in the presence of God! Man with the incorruptible life of God available to him! Man as master and lord over all things! Man living above sin, sickness, pain or death! Blessed realities, one and all! And yet – the Garden also represents man together with all the factors and conditions, both internal and external, of being and environment, which ultimately were to lead to his ruin and alienation from God. In one sense, man was the Garden, and yet, man was in the Garden. The Bible reveals it as a “Garden within a Garden.” Man both in a state of being and an environment – the two corresponding. All the conditions that surrounded man were also obvious realities within the heart of man. The original man with his nature, characteristics, capabilities and potentials is what we see in the Garden of Eden. The external conditions of man’s environment corresponded precisely with man’s inward nature for either good or evil, life or death. This was man in the Garden! It is a Garden within a Garden, a world within a world. “And the Lord God planted a Garden eastward in Eden (a pleasant land).”

Some years ago Gene Edwards ministered a beautiful word on Adam and the Garden of Eden with which I heartily concur. I will share to the best of my ability the concept he shared.

In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did a most incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched - entering into union with one another. The area where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before - not heavenly and not earthly - the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time or space. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything upon this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.

Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there - just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm. He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. Out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being. That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being. All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a "breath of life" - the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's "breath of life" is not air - it is the Spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding - intelligence and wisdom! Only the light that God IS was more glorious than this exquisite creature - man in God's image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can't peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm - no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God's image. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by anything or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm. He is at home with who he is and who they are. He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, and understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within

him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth. He is the only creature which has ever been, is now, or ever shall be that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

Consider with me, precious friend of mine, What is the natural habitat of man? He is spirit - his natural habitat is the heavens! He is dust - his natural habitat is the earth! Both? No! Neither? Yes! Neither. And yet, in some strange, mystical way - both. This glorious creature God created - where is his "home"? Ah - God prepared the place for man as soon as He created man. He created a place that corresponds to man's true state for man to inhabit. The earth, dear one, contrary to all that you may have been taught, is not the natural habitat of man. And neither are the heavens the natural habitat of man! The Garden - and only the Garden - and no place but the Garden is your natural habitat. That's where you belong - that is your true world, your homeland, your motherland - that unique realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle - the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The Garden was not heaven, neither was it earth. It was a realm where God could walk, and where man could walk and talk with God. It was the dimension of the spiritual body - spirit and body, heaven and earth, visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial, blended into one. The greatest of the glories of heaven was in that Garden - the tree of life was there. And that was man's habitat. It was not merely where man was - it was what he was.

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God - which City we are (Rev. 21:9-11; Isa. 60:2,14). *"And I saw the New Jerusalem ...having the glory of God: and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever (Rev. 21:10-11; 22:1-5).*

How do you suppose the tree of life was transferred from the Garden of God to the City of God? The simple truth is - it wasn't! The Garden still exists. The Garden is in the City. The Garden IS the City. In this City two realms interface once more - the new heavens and the new earth - not two separate entities, but that place where heaven and earth are joined, the Land of the Interface! This is where righteousness dwells - the new mind and the new body. That is your world, my beloved. You and I belong to an interface. We are an interface. We are part heavenly and part earthly; part spiritual and part physical; part visible and part invisible. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place of union with God in the interface where heaven and earth overlap. We are a colony from the heavens inhabiting the earthlies. We belong to neither and we belong to both. We are of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are in the Lord Jesus Christ. He, more than any other man, is an interface of these two realms. He is the second man, the last Adam. He reveals in Himself the true purpose of God in man. Only in Christ can one understand the true nature of all things. He is of both these realms and He is in both of these realms. He is in both and He is in neither. It is a great mystery. Oh, the wonder of it! He is a MAN seated in the higher than all heavens! We who have been born of water and the spirit are of His species. We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, life of His life. We belong to His realm. We walk with Him today in the Garden of God, in the City of God, in the LAND OF THE INTERFACE, for it is the only place where we can comfortably move in both realms. And yet it is not both realms - nor is it either realm - it is a combination, a union of the two - a NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! That's what you are! You are spirit and you are body. That is our destiny - to be both in union in one! That is our habitat. And redemption progressively brings us into our inheritance in this blessed Land of the Interface. The salvation of the soul, the redemption of the body, will complete the work. Let us press on, saints of God! The full splendor and bountifulness of this precious Land lies just before us! As the crab lives in two elements - water and land - so the New Creation Man lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens!

There is, however, a significant difference between Eden and the New Jerusalem that we do well to understand. Eden is a representation of the "beginnings" of God's purposes while the City is the representation of the ultimate accomplishment of those purposes. In the book of Revelation all the dropped threads of history and type and prophecy and promise, that lie scattered throughout the earlier scriptures, are

taken up and traced to their appointed consummation. That principle alone could produce untold volumes of books, but let us note in passing that even in the opening sections of the Revelation the successive promises to “him that overcometh” make cryptic reference to all the past. In Ephesus the “overcomer” shares with unfallen Adam the right to “the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” In Pergamas he partakes with Moses of the hidden manna. In Thyatira he exercises kingly rule with the great king David. There are some contrasts, too. In Eden there is a serpent, and through the cunning of that serpent man was cast out. In the new Jerusalem there is no serpent, for through the dominion of Christ in man the serpent is cast out! In Eden there is the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the City there is only the tree of life! Eden is man on trial. The City is man purified and perfected. Eden is man faced with the processings of God through choices and experience, through testings and dealings, for his own learning and development. The City is man established in the MIND OF CHRIST having overcome all things. It is the long and tedious route between these two points with which we are presently concerned in the dealings of God in this momentous hour!

FROM GARDEN TO GARDEN

God placed Adam the first in the Garden of Eden, a place of light and beauty, where was “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” It was in this Garden that he listened to the tempter and transgressed, dragging the whole human race down with him into sin and death.

How interesting, then, to read in **John 19:41**, *“Now in the place where He (Jesus) was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid. There then because of the Jew’s preparation (for the tomb was nigh at hand) they laid Jesus.”* Of this “garden tomb” we further read, *“When even was come, there came a rich man from Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus’ disciple; this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded it to be given up. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed.”* (**Matt. 27:57-60**)

We find by the Word of God, that in the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden belonging to a rich man named Joseph. That this garden was carefully tended is implied by Mary Magdalene mistaking Jesus for the gardener. In this garden, according to a custom of those days, Joseph had hewn out for himself a tomb in the rock; and in this tomb, upon a bed of spices most fragrant and costly, Joseph laid the body of our precious Lord. Let all men take note that it was in a GARDEN, overshadowed by darkness that covered the whole land, amid the quaking of the earth and the rending of the rocks that Jesus Christ, the second man, the last Adam, died. It was amid the opening of tombs, from which rose many of the saints who had fallen asleep, that He ROSE FROM THE DEAD! And I can declare to you that when He arose on that glad morning He brought up with Him out of spiritual death all who would believe on His Name throughout all ages; and He gave unto them eternal life. Death came through the first Adam in the Garden of Eden, and eternal life came through the second Adam in the Garden of the Cross and of the Tomb.

In order to open the way into the greater Garden of the Lord, or the Kingdom of Heaven, our Lord went through two gardens. The first was the Garden of Gethsemane, in which He chose concerning the last garden, which is the Garden of the Cross and the Tomb. In the last, He finished the work which would open the Kingdom of Heaven to all who would believe on His Name. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that He chose that the will of the Father should be done and naught else. *“My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”* (**Matt. 26:39**) We sometimes think because He came to die, that there was no choice presented to Him on earth. It is unmistakable that there was a choice, and that it was made with great suffering and agony. Would He beseech God the Father to let the cup pass from Him (at the same time, choosing God’s will) if there were no choices? Would He sweat great drops of blood if there were no suffering?

The word Gethsemane means “oil press.” What a contrast – Eden the garden of beauty, pleasure, and perfection, Gethsemane the garden of the oil press! It was essential that the second man, the last Adam should pass through Gethsemane, that He might be perfected through suffering, and thus win for man the right once more to enter into the garden where blooms the tree of life. Now it became the master Himself to enter

into that awful pressure, until the last vestige of man's will had been dealt with, opening the way back into the Eden of God!

The second garden through which Jesus passed was the Garden where He was crucified and buried, the Garden of death, burial and resurrection. Truly much eternal fruit came up out of the Garden of the Tomb. It was not Jesus alone that came out of that tomb, but He brought with Him EVERY SOUL WHICH SHALL EVER RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE through Him. He passed through two gardens to open up the Greater Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in these "Gardens within a Garden" He shall plant such pleasant plants as shall bring forth glory and honor to God. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is a Garden enclosed; Salvation is the walls thereof and Christ is the door. Only through Him can any enter this Garden that Christ has set up on earth, and which will have its full fruition in that glorious age which is now at hand. It is to those that enter this Great Garden and became a part of it by being planted therein, that God gives *"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. 61:3)

Let us read what the Spirit said through the prophet in **Isaiah 51:3**. *"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."* Of course you know that apples cannot sing, grapes cannot show forth gladness, nor can orange trees rejoice in the Lord! He is talking here about His people, a people that is being comforted while in a wilderness state as waste places, and eventually brought back to a life or existence known as EDEN, the GARDEN OF THE LORD.

Look at what the Song of Solomon says about the Garden of the Lord. *"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."* (S. of S. 4:12) In the Hebrew, the word "is" is omitted, and therefore is given in italics in the King James version indicating that it is a word supplied by the translators. A better translation is: "A garden shut up, my sister, my bride." This implies that His Beloved is distinct from the "garden" in this verse, although in other portions she is spoken of as being a part of it. A garden means in itself a girded place, an enclosure, and the word that we render here "enclosed" properly signifies barred, locked or shut up. It is in fact the exact word that is used in the remainder of the same verse, "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." We all know that the Garden of God was "enclosed," "shut up," "locked," and "barred" when once the cherubim were placed before the gate in that long ago. The vision of the verse is that the King is calling His Beloved that she might come to look out upon the "garden" that He has prepared. This Garden is the same as Canaan, the Promised Land. *"A land of hills and valleys and drinketh water of the rain of Heaven, a land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."* (Deut. 11:11-12) The spiritual meaning is the Kingdom of Heaven opened up for us by King Jesus. It is Eden reopened!

Man began in a Garden. He sinned in a Garden. He died in a Garden. He was driven forth from the Garden. Jesus came. He passed through two Gardens. He opened up the third Garden. The third Garden is the first Garden. As the first Adam died in the Garden (of Eden), so the last Adam entered into death in the Garden (of the Cross and Tomb). The first Adam brought forth death out of life in the Garden while the last Adam brought forth life out of death in the Garden. But further, the last Adam now accomplishes the outworking and manifestation of His triumph over the realm of sin and death IN THE GREATER GARDEN OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN where we, the men of the Garden, have been planted as *"trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."* (Isa.61:3) Jesus arose triumphant over the power of death from the Garden of the Tomb, but now, blessed be His name! He is rising up triumphant over sin and death within the New Creation men of the Greater Garden of the Kingdom of Heaven!

It is into the Garden of OUR DEATH that He has come. Therefore we read in **Hebrews 2:14-15**, *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* It is of great importance that we see how Jesus Himself entered this valley of the shadow of death on our behalf. He became obedient unto death (Phil. 2:8), and walked its dismal valley for thirty-three years, finally ending it on the cross and passing again into life. As He knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death (Heb. 5:7), His prayer was not that He might be saved from the death of the cross alone,

but that He might be saved from the WHOLE REALM OF DEATH into which He entered for us. His dread was not simply that He would die, for He endured the cross with joy; but the terror that beset Him was the awful possibility that in some way He might miss the perfect obedience of a Son and so REMAIN IN THIS DREADFUL REALM OF DEATH and outer darkness. He had left His heavenly glory. He had humbled Himself, had taken upon Himself the form of sinful flesh. He descended from the high and holy realm of the Eternal God into the depth of totality of the human condition, into the depth of what man IS, into an identification and participation with the whole dreadful realm of darkness and death into which mankind has fallen. The death that came in Eden was far greater in magnitude than the death of a physical body. This realm of death that pertains to man includes the entire experience of man in his alienation from the life that is in God. This death is a CONDITION, a state of being. The power of death is sin, says the Word. Out of man's sin has arisen all the horrible reality of a realm of death in which is contained every sorrow, tragedy, pain, trouble, sickness, hatred, strife, heartache, rebellion, ignorance, fear and torment known to man. Jesus came and made this CONDITION His own and the only terror it held for Him was that He might not pass out of it. Thank God, His prayer was heard in that He feared, and by the cross His death was completed and by it He was delivered out of the realm of death into which He had willingly entered.

Surely now we can see plainly why it was so necessary for Jesus to come into this realm of death, for all nature teaches us that, except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. When a kernel of wheat dies, ITS LIFE IS RELEASED into the body of the plant. Therefore Jesus died and, in dying, HIS LIFE WAS RELEASED that all who believe might freely partake of it and in that life BECOME THE PLANTING OF THE LORD to bring forth in the Garden of God the precious fruit of HIS OWN IMAGE.

The quality and power of this indwelling life of Christ is spoken of in **Hebrews 7:15-17**. *“And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE. For He testifieth, Thou are a priest forever after the order of Mechisedec.”* The wonderful Priesthood of Jesus is after the power of an ENDLESS life. *We now come to what is implied by the word “endless.” This is the Greek word “akatalutos” which means indissoluble or permanent.* The power of an endless life is the power of an indestructible life – eternal life. To understand what kind of life this is we must connect it to God, the eternal One. Eternity is an attribute of God and His divine life and has its true existence only in fellowship with God's life which is the life of eternity.

It is a great and blessed fact that God is the eternal God. Transition, adjustments, change – these words seem to be constantly with us, until we fain would grasp for something that seems to be stable, solid, enduring. Much of the inner drive for change is simple evidence that man is not satisfied, has not found his completeness in Christ, for *“beloved NOW are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear WHAT WE SHALL BE: but we know that when HE shall appear, we SHALL (then) BE LIKE HIM for we shall see HIM AS HE IS.” (I John. 3:2)* Here is stability – immutability – the quality of His nature remains the same, HE IS THE ETERNAL! And this is the nature of which we would be a partaker, the fullness of which we find in Christ, and through union with Him with which we shall be changed until we become changeless in the absoluteness of that which He is. He who is eternal cannot be influenced, affected, moved, changed, altered, damaged or destroyed in any way. He cannot grow tired or old. The character of God is eternal, changeless, unaffected. The love, joy, peace, righteousness and power of God do not rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. Matters not what happens or what men or devils say or do, the love of God, the purpose of God, and the power of God are steadfast, unmoved, unquenched, unaffected, without fluctuation. The eternal existence of God is certain for He is the source of all life. Death cannot touch Him for He is not dependent upon the sustaining power of another. He is Yahwey, the SELF-EXISTENT ONE.

In God there is no change, or aging, or fading; He is all that He is in an ever-fresh, never changing youth. The eternal life is that which always remains the same, because it is always IN GOD. And when God speaks to His Son, saying, Thou are a Priest forever, it not only means that the Priesthood will never cease, but it points to what is the root and cause of this; it roots in the life and strength of God. Christ is become a Priest after the POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE. He is not a Priest in the House of God in some far-off heaven somewhere, but a Priest in the House of God WHICH WE ARE. His Priesthood acts as an inner life within us, lifting us up, not in theory or thought but in Spirit and in Truth, into a vital knowing of God. He breathes His own life in us.

And He works it in as the power of life, a life that is pure and holy, full of vitality and strength, because it is His life.

The sole object of this indwelling and inworking life is that God may reveal His Son in us so that we know and reverence and love and serve the Father, even as does the firstborn of this family of sons. And so the one thing required of all Sons is that they bow themselves and abide and live in deep dependence and humility before the Father. However clearly we see by the eye of revelation and faith the truth of the glory of this realm of Sonship to God, however earnestly we desire it, however firmly we think we grasp it by faith, all will not avail – GOD HIMSELF MUST DO IT! God Himself must admit us to His presence, and make His face to shine upon us. And as the path to Sonship, God Himself must write His law in our hearts, give us the new divine nature in such power of the Holy Spirit that it is HE that works WITHIN US both to will and to do. God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so shed abroad His love in our hearts, that to love becomes as natural to us as it is for the dove to be gentle. God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so fill us with the nature of righteousness that to be righteous becomes as natural to us as breathing. God Himself must by the Holy Ghost so clothe us with the mind of Christ, that to think the thoughts of God becomes as natural to us as are self-serving thoughts and desires to the unregenerated man.

Consider, dear brother, sister, is it not GOD HIMSELF who has faithfully directed all your steps, who has initiated every circumstance of your life, who has opened your blinded eyes and caused you to behold the majesty of His kingdom and glory? Is it not GOD HIMSELF who has led you out of the blinding traditions and bondages of Babylonian religion and has nurtured you and brought you to the stature in which you stand in Christ today? Truly do I declare to you that it was when we were without strength that God apprehended us and lifted us out of the miry pit and set our feet upon a rock. No more than you can SAVE YOURSELF can you make yourself an overcomer, bring yourself to perfection, or of yourself enter into the glorious victory of the life of Sonship.

What man by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature? What part by self-effort does a man take in secretion, in digestion of food, in the reflex actions of the body? Men need only reflect on the automatic processes of their natural body to discover that this is the universal law of Life. What does any man consciously do, for instance, in the matter of breathing? What part does he take in the circulating of the blood, in keeping up the rhythm of his heart? What control has he over growth or the biological changes producing maturity? How could any of us heal a wound, or mend a broken bone? Could we consciously direct conception, cell growth and division and instruct the developing fetus how to construct an eye or a hand or a brain cell? What man even came into the world by his own will? In point of fact man is born by the will of another, every organ of his body given him, every function arranged for him, brain and nerve, thought and sensation, will and conscience, all provided for him ready made. And yet he turns to his spiritual life AND WISHES TO ORGANIZE THAT HIMSELF! Oh preposterous and vain man, thou who couldest not make a fingernail of thy body, thinkest thou to fashion this wonderful, mysterious, subtle soul of thine after the ineffable Image? Wilt thou ever permit thyself TO BE conformed to the Image of the Son? Wilt thou, who canst not add a cubit to thy stature, submit TO BE raised by the Divine Life within thee to the perfect stature of Christ?

If any yet think that they can by thought add a cubit to their spiritual stature, let them observe the passive voice in these revelations of the Word of God: "Begotten of God;" "The new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" or this, "We are changed into the same image;" or this, "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son;" or again, "Until Christ be formed in you;" or "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." There is one outstanding verse which seems at first sight to contradict all this: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" but as one reads on he finds, as if the writer dreaded the very thought that any might misapply his statement, in the very next verse he adds: *"FOR IT IS GOD which worketh IN YOU both to WILL and to DO of HIS GOOD PLEASURE!" (Phil. 2:12-13)*

"Let us go on to perfection." "Put off the old man." "Put on the new man." "I would be a Son indeed." "I press toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus." All these are valid testimonies, but it is of great consequence that the heart should be led to see that at the back of all our believing, our desiring, hoping, walking, pressing, entering, laying hold upon, and all the rest, there is God's almighty power doing its

work – inspiring our will, taking possession of us, and carrying out its own purpose in bringing us into the image of God. “Let US MAKE MAN in our image,” is the proper order.

As the child of God enters into this, the divine side of the purposes of God, he will learn to praise and to worship with new exultation, and to rejoice more than ever in the divineness of that salvation he has been made partaker of. At each step he takes, in retrospect he will sing, “This is THE LORD’S DOING” – Divine Omnipotence working out what Eternal Love has devised. This celestial song of praise will lead him even further and higher, even to the depths of eternity. *“Whom HE did predestinate, them HE also called; and whom HE called, them HE also justified: and whom HE justified, them HE also glorified.” (Rom 8:30)* The calling in time is the manifestation of the purpose in eternity. Ere the world was, God had fixed the eye of His sovereign love on you, my beloved friends, and chosen you to Sonship in Christ. That you know yourself to now be in Christ, is the stepping-stone by which you rise to understand in its full meaning the word, “Let US MAKE MAN in our image and after our likeness.” With the prophet your language will be, *“The Lord hath appeared of old unto me: yes, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I DRAWN THEE.” (Jer. 31:3)* And you will recognize your own salvation and apprehension to the purpose of God as a part of that “mystery of HIS WILL, according to the good pleasure of HIS WILL which He purposed in Himself,” and join with the whole body of the redeemed Sons of God as these say, *“In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” (Eph. 1:9-10)*. Nothing in the whole universe will more exalt the grace and power of God, and make man bow very low before it, than this knowledge of the mystery “OF GOD in Christ.”

There is a valid reason why salvation is of THE LORD. It could not be otherwise! Man did not even choose to be. It was God who said, “Let us make man.” It was God that placed man in Eden. It was God who arranged all the circumstances and choices in Eden. It was God who planted the tree of life, but it was also God who planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! It was God who created the serpent, and drew him into the Garden. It was God who placed man under the law “Thou shalt not eat of it.” When man sinned, it was God that drove him out from the Garden! “According to the purpose of Him who worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will.” I have no intention of detracting one iota from the awfulness of man’s sin, and the absolute horribleness of the transgression is evidenced in all the sorrow and tragedy which have plagued mankind for lo, these six dark and frightful millenniums. Although man sinned, was it not GOD WHO DROVE MAN OUT OF THE GARDEN AND SHUT HIM UP FROM LIFE? *“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden.” (Gen. 3:22-23)*

This is why salvation MUST BE OF THE LORD! Since God drove man from the Garden, from life, it can only be GOD HIMSELF who opens up the way for man to enter back into Eden to be made a partaker of the divine life! No man may dare approach unto that blessed Domain to either enter or put forth his hand to take of the tree of life, for to do so would be presumption of the grossest kind. How true the words uttered by Jesus: *“No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me DRAW HIM.” (John. 6:44)* Again, *“And I, if I be lifted up (on the cross) from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” (John. 12:32)*

When you would falter, beloved ones, in your own strength and effort to attain to the glorious life of Sonship, remember, and allow the Spirit of God to burn this truth indelibly upon the tables of your heart and mind: He who drove you out of Eden is He who now ushers you in! The initiative is on His part, therefore it must be accomplished in HIS STRENGTH and victory. Would to God that saints would cease looking at their old nature, the flesh, the circumstances, the problems, and complaining of their weakness, as if God called them to what they were unfitted for! Would that they would believingly and joyfully accept the wondrous revelation of how God, in uniting them to Christ, has made Himself chargeable for their spiritual growth and development! How all sickly hesitancy and sloth would disappear, and under the influence of this mighty motive – the faith in the faithfulness of Him of whom they are in Christ – their whole nature would rise to accept and fulfill their glorious destiny!

Oh my soul! Yield yourself to the mighty influence of this word: “It is GOD which worketh IN YOU both to will and to do.” Take time to meditate and to worship, until the glorious light that comes from the throne of God has shone into you, and you have seen that the perfecting of the image of God in your life is indeed the work of the Almighty Father. Take time, day after day, and let, in all your life, with all it has of demands and duties, of

needs and desires, of pressures and claims, let, I say, GOD BE EVERYTHING. Although the work is of God, yet there is one small requirement laid upon man. We have seen that it is God who has birthed us and who is chargeable for our growth into Sonship. And yet, we find in looking at nature, that in maintaining this natural, physical life Nature has the greater share, but man has one small share. By far the larger part is done for us – the breathing, the secreting, the circulating of the blood, the building up of the organism. And although the part that man plays is a minor part, yet, strange to say, it is not less essential to the well-being, and even to the being, of the whole. Man has to take food. He has nothing to do with it after he has once taken it, for the moment it passes his lips it is taken in hand by reflex actions and handed on from one organ to another, his control over it, in the natural course of things, being completely lost. But the initial act was his! And without that nothing could have been done. This indicates that in the spiritual life man also has this one small part to play: Let him choose Life; let him daily nourish that New Creation which he is by feeding it on Hidden Manna; let him forever starve the old life, the will of the flesh, the carnal mind; let him abide in complete yieldedness as a living branch in the Vine, and the True-Vine Life will flow into his soul and body, assimilating, renewing, conforming to the image of Christ. The secret to life is in eating of the tree of life. That is the glory of the power of Eden. Hear Jesus as He speaks to you, “Abide in Me,” while pointing upwards and saying, “MY FATHER IS THE HUSBANDMAN.” And let your answer be, Amen, Lord! So be it. From eternity Christ and I were ordained for each other; inseparably we belong to each other; it is God’s will; I shall abide in Him and eat of Him as my tree of Life. And God Himself shall do all the rest! Hallelujah!

“Come unto Me!” “Abide in Me!” These are the Words of the Voice that ECHOES FROM EDEN.

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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ECHOES from EDEN, PART 2
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART TWO
IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN

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

The Bible begins with a garden – The Garden of Eden. In the morning of the world, "the Lord God planted a garden..." How exciting that statement is to all who love a garden. Come with me into a garden of luxuriant loveliness with dells of delight and paths of pleasantness. A garden planned in the mind of omniscience, prepared and planted by the hand of God. As we visit the garden together, I beseech you to walk with reverent heart and spiritual awe for the place whereon we tread is holy ground.

This is the Lord's paradise. This is man's first and perfect home. A holy environment of righteousness, peace and joy divinely ordained. This is the Garden of Eden where flowers never fade, where leaves never fall, where living streams never fail, where creatures never fear; without thorns or thistles, weeds or wickedness; without desolation, decay or death; where every prospect pleases and where there is no guile. God dipped His brush in the pot of colors and touched the flowers with a beauty outshining the glory of Solomon. And man walked there – in life and light and love – man in the image and likeness of the Lord God Almighty. God and man walked together in the same spirit, so they had sweet fellowship. Eden is God's picture of His plan for man. Eden was a prophecy in miniature. [The word genesis means beginning.](#) Thus the book of Genesis is the book of beginning. Therefore the inspired record of things that transpired all through that wonderful book concern the beginnings of God's plan. In Genesis we see in the form of a tiny seed what God's plan was to be in the age of innocence, but the depth of the meaning of things written there are revealed to those who seek as the light of the ages unfolds its mysteries. All the world was to be a Garden of Eden. To that end God gave Adam and Eve dominion over all things with the commission to subdue them – to gather all together into God! God and man were to live together in sweetest, most intimate fellowship. The family is God's ideal for us, with its home in a garden, and Himself as Father – Mother in the midst; its atmosphere, love; its music, the rhythm of our wills one with His, our purpose and work the extension of His. With the growth of the God-family the garden becomes a city, but it is a Garden-city, and finally the city becomes a kingdom, and it is a garden-kingdom where *"the wolf and the lion shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isa. 11:6)* *"The lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain (kingdom), says the Lord." (Isa. 65:25)* Truly these conditions are prophetic of that glorious age when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." It is even now true in those who are made one in Him. The prophet Isaiah tells how the Lord will comfort Zion and all her waste places. 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). O that men might see the whole plan of creation and redemption as a celestial harmony, hymning its beautiful refrain from the sun-kissed heights of the Garden of Eden to the glistening gates of the new Heavens and new Earth and spreading its mighty wings in loving care from the moment God said, *"Let us make man in our image,"* until that glad day when all things are subdued unto Him and God becomes all-in-all – everything to everyone everywhere. All mankind will be in the image of God, death will be destroyed, the ages will be no more, for time as we have known it will vanish away and we will be found to be inhabitants of the eternal realm.

In Genesis, as I have previously stated, we have the book of beginnings. To its first three chapters we are especially indebted for a divine light shining on many questions to which human wisdom never could find an answer. And yet it is the wisdom of God revealed in a mystery. There are two kinds of mysteries in the world, make-believe mysteries and real mysteries. A make-believe mystery is one that depends on its concealment;

it is shrouded in secrecy. Such a mystery relies on darkness and the unknown. So long as it remains hidden, it arouses interest, but when it is revealed, the mystery vanishes and the secret loses its fascination. Such is the secret of the trickster and the charlatan, the stage magician and the mystagogue; their spell lies in the undisclosed, the mysterious maneuvers. When the secret to the trick becomes apparent, the magic disappears. Such is not the case with a real mystery. A real mystery can be opened and apparent to everyone. All can see the matter clearly and examine it from all sides. Nevertheless, the more it is looked at and examined, the more mysterious it becomes, deep, profound and insoluble. The story in the first part of the book of Genesis is very well-known – and still it remains a mystery. And the more the extremely simple words of the Bible text are studied, the more numerous the aspects of the riddle and mystery. As greater illumination is shed upon it, new facets of inscrutability become apparent. As we approach this wonderful scene our hearts can only cry out with the great apostle, *“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!”* (Rom. 11:33) Every revelation birthed within our spirit from the lines of these inspired passages of God’s Word lead but to another intersection from which innumerable paths branch out, paths which a person can continue to tread all the days of His life. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it!

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

“Let us make man in our image and after our likeness,” was the proclamation of the Lord, and having so proclaimed His intention, the Father set in motion a plan that would span millenniums before the first Son of man, the first begotten Son of God would emerge from the inky darkness and be presented perfected and faultless as the Captain of our salvation and the Redeemer of us all. Then, after perfecting the first Son, other thousands of years would roll by while “He who has begun a good work in US” would complete and consummate it and thereby bring “many sons to glory.” “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren” “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him”.

The Father has a desire to the work of His hands, and I rejoice to be one small part of the work of His hands. In that long ago beginning Adam, the type and prophecy of man in God’s image, was brought forth from the hands of God on the sixth day of the Lord’s creative process. Why was the creation of man saved for last? Because it was the culmination of all that preceded it. Into that man God breathed the breath of life. God breathed! Although all living things have a “breath of life,” man was the only being who received his breath of life directly from God. Man’s “breath of life” is not the air of earth’s atmosphere. The breath of God is the Spirit of God – for breath and spirit are the same word in Hebrew. God breathed – God infused into man His very own life. This set man apart from the animal kingdom, for man was endowed with divine life and was fashioned in the image and likeness of God. There is great purpose here! Let me ask – was the creation of mankind an incidental event, or was it the event around which all else revolves? I believe we are perfectly safe and on God’s ground to say that the creation of man is the event around which all else revolves. Man was made in the image of God and given dominion over all things and commissioned to subdue and subject all things. That dominion is to the extent over all the works of the Creator’s hands and that includes, according to Psalm 8:3, the heavens, the moon and the stars. Can we not see by this that our earth, yea, our galaxy, is the launching pad for God’s creative, redemptive, reconstructive program on behalf of the whole creation? Let us UNDERSTAND! In man, and in man alone, was blended the reality of both the Creator and the creation! God is invisible – spirit. Creation is visible – material. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground – earth; and God breathed into him the breath of life – spirit. Man in his spirit was from God and heaven, while in his body he was from earth. Even since man has been, he has been made to live for the one purpose of giving revelation and manifestation to God, and to be ruler for God. The invisible God desired to be known by His visible creation – but then existence was on two different planes. So God put His spirit and His image into Adam, that in the visible could be seen and known the invisible. Adam is thus the connecting link between the upper and lower worlds – between Creator and creation. Man was created for the specific purpose of becoming the bridge between the celestial heights of the spiritual realm and the lowest depths of the physical world, that God might be known, experienced, fellowshiped. Man is thus the channel through which the Creator’s grace and glory and blessing and power flow from the high realm of the spirit to the corporeal world.

Scientists are probing into two unseen worlds. One is a world too vast and far away to be seen by the eye and the other is a world too small to be observed by the eye. I want to give you three words in this connection, together with their meanings. First, we find the word **MICROCOSM**. This word means a little world: anything regarded as a world in miniature: man, viewed as an epitome of the universe. This word comes from two words in the Greek. One is **MIKROS** which means little or miniature. The other is **KOSMOS** meaning world. Thus we have the meaning of LITTLE WORLD. The word **MACROCOSM**, on the other hand, means the great world, or the universe. It also comes from two words. One is **MACROS** meaning great and the other is **KOSMOS** meaning the world. We noted above that the word **MIKROS** carried the meaning of “man viewed as an epitome of the universe.” This word **EPITOME** means, among other things, A CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of something. The word **MICROCOSM** then gives us the meaning that man is a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF all the universe or man is all the universe in miniature. After the original creation, God then began to move to bring the whole vast creation into fellowship and harmony with Himself. In order to accomplish this God made man in the image of the creation, but also in the image of Himself. Man is therefore the bridge or connecting link between God in His spiritual existence and the creation in its visible and material constitution. God put both Himself and the whole universe into man in miniature – a microcosm of the macrocosm! His purpose is that by and through man all things shall be brought into subjection to the mind of the Lord. We read in Hebrews that we do not as yet see all things put into subjection to man, but WE DO SEE JESUS who was, we may safely say, as the second man and the last Adam, a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of God, the universe, and all mankind. In other words, what was done in and through the singular Man, Jesus the Christ, will also be done in and through corporate man, but on an enlarged scale, for Jesus said we would do even greater works than He did. There is no stagnation in God, for He continually moves ahead. And as He moves we move with Him, advancing according to His pre-determined plan. What wonders lie ahead of us in this majestic pathway! Adam in the Garden of Eden was the type and prophecy of man as God intends him to be, and Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God’s purpose in man. All men in Christ will be the consummation of God’s purpose – man in the image of God.

Would God that I had the tongue of angels and wisdom that could unfold to every spiritual mind an understanding of those supernal glories that pertain to the Garden of God! One thing is abundantly clear. God’s people are His garden, that which brings forth His fruit. The Bridegroom speaks in the Song of Solomon and says, *“A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.”* (S. of S. 4:12-15) To which the Shulamite replies, *“Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.”* (S. of S. 4:16) The soul is here likened to a garden. What a beautiful analogy! This is not the only place in the scriptures where this description is used, for in **Jeremiah 31:12** we read, *“Their soul shall be as a watered garden.”* And the apostle Paul expresses it on this wise: “Ye are God’s husbandry,” which is another way of saying, “you are God’s garden.” 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 it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”* (John. 15:1-2) The body of Christ – the Garden of God! 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.

Corporately we all make up God’s garden, while individually we are each a garden within. The garden often becomes a beautiful type of the “inner part” of our being, and it can be traced all the way through the scriptures, beginning with the charge that was given to Adam to “keep” or “guard” his garden. In the beginning God created the earth. The “earth” is often a symbol of man, for man was taken from the earth and formed into a physical and soulful being. *“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”* (1 Cor. 15:47-49) But now I would draw your attention beyond that “earth” which man is. Within the earth there was a smaller, but very important place called “Eden.” Eden was the region in which God prepared a still smaller entity called the “Garden.” In the midst or middle of the Garden He planted two important trees. And

above all we must notice that it was in the Garden area that the voice of God was heard. May the Spirit of the living God lay His finger of inspiration upon this scene that we may see clearly that in order to commune with God we are to enter into the deepest part of us inside of us, which the scriptures often call the “spirit.” This is where He communes with us. *“The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit...”* (John. 4:23) “In the spirit” – that is where we walk in the cool of the day and commune with our heavenly Father.

Now then, since a garden is a beautiful and fragrant and fruitful place, an attractive spot, it naturally follows that the child of God should be the same. The radiance of heaven should shine from our countenances, the fragrance of Christ should emanate from our souls – the life of God should flow out from our spirit. Just as folk are attracted to a lovely flower garden, because of its inherent beauty, and look upon it with an, “Ah!” and an “Oh!” – Completely enthralled with God’s creative ability – so we, as members of Christ’s body, are to be shining examples of the grace and glory of God, “living epistles” known and read of all men, a sweet fragrance of Christ unto all. So I would ask you to take a tour of your garden today and ask yourself this question: How many flowers can I discover? How much fruit is there on the trees? If your heart is, indeed, the garden of the Lord, then you are not growing thorns, briars, or stinkweeds; but you are producing exquisite blooms of rich and varied hues, pleasing to the eye and fruits which have an exciting aesthetic quality, delicious to the taste and nourishing to the life.

May the garden of my heart, O lovely Christ
Be fragrant with the odors of thy grace;
May sweet perfume of blooming flowers
Make pleasant, Lord, Thy dwelling place.

May fruitful vines and trees abound,
Lest tares spring up to spoil or mar;
For the beauty of Thy fruitful garden
Must waft its perfume near and far.

Send heavenly mercy drops of rain
To water off its flowers and trees,
That birds and bloom shed forth perfume
With every south wind’s gentle breeze.

Oh let the cold north wind blow, too,
That fiercer blasts may have their part
Within Thy fenced-in dwelling place,
The garden, Lord, of mine heart.

- Eldora E. Taylor

IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, saying, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil... the fruit of the tree which is IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN... ye shall not eat of it, lest ye die.” (Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17; 3:3)

Against the background of this picture of the Garden of Eden it is related how man was put into this Garden in order to live in it and how two trees stood in the middle of the Garden: one the tree of life, the other the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And upon these two trees IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GARDEN the destiny of man was to be decided. There were, indeed, three kinds of trees in the Garden. There was the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and then all those other trees denoted as “all the trees of the garden.” Man began his sojourn upon earth living in the realm of “all the trees of the garden.” But man’s future experience and destiny were to be decided by his relationship to the two trees in the middle.

Two trees in the middle. First of all there is the tree of life. It is clear from the context that man was not forbidden to eat of it. It was there, revealed, offered, and available. LIFE, abundant, immortal, incorruptible, eternal! For this reason the tree of life is mentioned very casually in Genesis 2:8-9. It was IN THE MIDDLE – that is all that is said about it! It was right there in man’s consciousness, in man’s nature. The life that comes forth from God is in the middle. This means that God, the source of life, is in the middle. In the middle of the world which is at Adam’s disposal and over which he has been given dominion is not Adam himself but the tree of God’s eternal and incorruptible life. Adam’s life was to come from the middle which was not Adam in his self-consciousness, but in his God-consciousness. This means that with God as his center man would have life. It means that man was created and formed with the wonderful capacity to LIVE IN THE SPIRIT and WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT. *“For ... to be SPIRITUALLY MINDED is life and peace.” (Rom. 8:6)* One of man’s inherent potentials was to know God within as the source and center of his life.

But, like the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil also stands in the middle of the Garden! To this tree is attached the command not to eat of it upon penalty of death. Death in the middle. Within. In man’s very nature. Thus is it declared with unquestionable certainty that man was formed with the capacity to LIVE IN THE FLESH and WALK AFTER THE FLESH? *“For to be CARNALLY MINDED is death.” (Rom. 8:6)* One of man’s inherent potentials was to know Self as the source and center of his life. But alas! Self would not bring life, it would bring death. Man could make the world of appearances, the physical realm, mortal consciousness, the bodily senses and appetites his center but death would be found to dwell in that center. Life and death were in the middle. Two trees, two realities IN THE MIDST of the Garden of man’s experience and being. Both realities are in the middle – within man. One or the other is every man’s center, the plane of his consciousness, the sphere of his existence. But mark it well – both cannot be the center of any man’s life! He who eats of the tree of life will find that the death realm will come to have no more dominion over him. And he who eats of the tree of death will discover that he becomes alienated from the tree of life. Thus, both trees, both realities are in the center of man’s life but both cannot be the center of his life! *“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13)* *“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:16)* How simple! God would at once be the limit and the middle of our existence.

But how could Adam grasp these mighty realities? How could Adam, living as he did in the “soul realm” of “all the trees of the Garden” understand what divine life is when he had not yet tasted of the tree of life? How could Adam comprehend what death is when he had never yet experienced anything of its dread power? How could Adam even know what difference there is between life, good, evil, sin, and death, living as he did in the unblemished innocence of his child-like beginning? As well explain the mysteries of biology or astronomy to a new-born infant! Could all of this really mean anything more to Adam than empty words? No, Adam could not be expected to understand such awesome things, but under the gracious and skillful hand of God he would be instructed and taught. To this end man was placed on earth in a Garden with two trees in the middle – and with both God and a Serpent walking and talking with him!

THE TWO ENVIRONMENTS

It will help us in our understanding of the two trees in the middle of the garden, and man’s relation to them, to look at the order of life and death in the realm of nature. Every day in the year, about 200,000 babies are born in the world. All have tiny faces and usually the same number of ears, fingers, arms, legs, and toes. All are little humans, quite alike in size, and with the same needs for food, love, protection and learning. Each also has his or her own special features. Each is like every other baby and also unlike any other baby born on that day, or on any other day in history. Now, if these same 200,000 people were to meet on their 25th birthday, their specialness would be even more obvious than at birth. Some would be very tall, some very short, and the rest would be somewhere in between. They would vary from very fat to very thin. Skin color would be yellow, brown, white, reddish, black, and all kinds in between. Equally different would be the many types of personalities, mental abilities, talents, and life-styles in these 200,000 people. All were born on the same day and at that time were similar in many ways. Within 25 years, each had grown up into an individual who is like other human beings, but who is also very different from other humans. Some would like Mexican food, others American food, and others Chinese food. Some would speak English, others French, and others Russian. They would dress differently, think and act differently.

There are two strong forces in nature which influence human life and determine what a person will be. These two forces are HEREDITY and ENVIRONMENT. Neither alone is sufficient to mold a full and useful human life. Heredity is a word used to mean the way in which certain inherent characteristics are passed from parents to children, generation after generation. Because of heredity, each baby is born with human characteristics which make him distinctly human. Environment is a word used to stand for all the external conditions and influences which become a part of a person's life and affect his development. Included in a person's Environment are the food he eats, the liquids he drinks, the air he breathes, the place he lives, the home he is brought up in, the diseases he may have, and the ideas, people, and education he is exposed to. Thus it can be seen that Environment is altogether as important a factor in what a person will be as is heredity. Perhaps even more so!

It needs to be very clear in our minds that the NATURE of man is received through HEREDITY, but the sustenance and development of that nature depends entirely upon the ENVIRONMENT. The first and primary purpose of our Environment is to sustain life. The Environment is that in which we live, and move, and have our being. Without it we would neither live nor move nor have any being. Within every living organism is contained the principle and power of life; but in the Environment is the power to SUSTAIN AND DEVELOP that life, the CONDITIONS of life. Every living thing normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, water, and food. When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and when we further bear in mind that the food-supply is contributed by the Environment, we shall realize at once the importance of the meaning and the truth that without Environment there can be no life! Almost three-quarters of the human body is water. Other important substances in the body are calcium, phosphorus, and carbon. These substances are called "elements" – they are among the hundred or so basic substances of which everything in the visible universe is made! Your physical body is composed of some of the same elements as is the world around you, and only by being in harmony with that world, only by intermingling what it is, with what you are, do you have life. For instance, through the pores of your skin two pounds of water are evaporated daily from every healthy adult. That water has to be replaced. And from where does it come? From the Environment! Meanwhile you are breathing, taking in air you can use and sending out air you cannot use. From the air you breathe in, your lungs take oxygen. You must have it to live. Matters not how much life you have in you, you must assimilate your Environment to live! The Environment is really AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. We and it must be one. We and it are one. Life depends upon that UNION – the organism united with its Environment. An organism in itself is but a part; its Environment is its complement. Alone, cut off from its Environment, it is not. Alone, cut off from my Environment, I am not. Without food, I am not. Without air, I am not. Without water, I am not. I continue as I receive. My Environment may change me, but first it has to sustain me. Its secret transforming power is directly molding body and mind and is sustaining the very life itself.

This is a great truth in the physical world. It is but a wonderful picture of the (GREATER) REALITIES in the SPIRITUAL WORLD! This is a truth of so great importance in the Spiritual World that we shall not mis-spend our time in pursuing it. In the Spiritual World he will be among the enlightened and wise who understands this one great truth: Without Environment there can be no life! I speak of course of the spiritual Environment of the Spiritual Realm of the Kingdom of God. What does this amount to in the Spiritual World of God and His Sons? Is it not simply the grand and glorious truth spoken by the first-born of the New Creation when He said, *"Without ME ye can do nothing."* (John. 15:5) Through the mighty work of regeneration we have been birthed into the Kingdom Realm of God as SPIRITUAL ORGANISMS, spirit beings, begotten of God, the off-spring of our heavenly Father. There is now within us a new principle and power of life – God's very own divine life, the life of heaven. But let every man consider this that I now propose: even in this, our New Creation Life, we require A SECOND FACTOR, a something IN WHICH to live and move and have our being – an ENVIRONMENT! The Kingdom of God has an Environment. The Spiritual World has an Environment. The whole universe is a type and shadow of this glorious truth. Every star has its gravity. Every planet has its Environment. Every living organism has its Environment. Without the Environment of the Spiritual World we cannot live divinely as Sons of God or move or have any spiritual being. Without the Spiritual Environment of the Kingdom of God the life of sonship within us is like the body without air, the fish without water, the eagle without its nest.

The great Pattern Son, Jesus, walked in the full and enlightened consciousness of this inter-relationship between Organism and Environment. He did not live independent of that Spiritual Environment which surrounds and envelops the sons of God. Jesus declared, *“Believe Me that I AM IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME.”* (John. 14:11). It was not only the Father IN THE SON; it was also the SON IN THE FATHER. The Father was the CENTER of Jesus’ life. That blessed Christ also prayed for the younger sons who were to afterward follow in His steps, saying, *“Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, are in Me, and I IN THEE, that they also may be one IN US; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.”* (John. 17:11, 21) Christ knew that as a son He was the Organism and His Father was the Environment. The Father was that IN WHICH THE SON LIVED AND MOVED AND HAD HIS BEING. And what is the Environment of the sons of God? It is God in Christ. God in Christ is our Environment in whom we live and move and have our being!

Multiplied thousands of God’s precious elect saints have been lifted into new and wonderful realms of understanding and experience as the great truth of “Christ in you” has been quickened to their believing hearts; but I declare to you today that altogether magnificent is the marvelous fact of our being “in Christ.” To know “Christ in you” is to know the reality of your inward spiritual life, but to know yourself as being “in Christ” is to know the reality of Christ as your Environment, your sphere to existence. By translation into the Kingdom of the Son we have been raised up into a new and altogether different Environment in the heavenlies of which Jesus spoke when He said: *“As the Father hath loved Me, so I have loved you. ABIDE IN MY LOVE, even as I ABIDE IN MY FATHER’S LOVE.”* (John. 15:9-10) In the light of Christ’s union with the Father, our union with Him becomes clear. His life in the Father is the law of our life in Him.

Our present thought is a very simple one. We seek to show the boundless range and scope of one brief phrase of two or three short words: in Christ, or, in Christ Jesus. These three short words are, without doubt, the most important ever written, even by an inspired pen, to express the relationship between the sons of God and God in Christ. This term appears over one hundred and thirty times in the New Testament. When, in the Word of God, a phrase like this occurs so often, and with such manifold applications, it can not be a matter of small importance; there is a deep design. God’s Spirit is bringing a truth of the highest importance before us, compelling us to give heed that the Spirit of revelation may unfold its marvels to our believing hearts. Paul wrote that if any man be in Christ Jesus He is a NEW CREATION. The things, the Environment of the old creation have passed away and ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. The New Creation is IN CHRIST JESUS. Every created thing has its Environment. Every created organism has to live and move and have its being in its particular Environment. The Environment of the NEW CREATION is CHRIST! A new life living in Christ. Jesus Himself clearly and forcibly expressed it in John 15:4: *“Abide IN ME and I in you.”* The organism is composed of the very same elements as its Environment, but it cannot live in separation from its Environment!

This phrase “in Christ Jesus” means that He is to the true believer THE SPHERE OF THIS NEW LIFE OR BEING. Let me emphasize – a sphere rather than a circle. A circle surrounds us, but only on one plane; but a sphere encompasses, envelops us, surrounding us in every direction and on every plane. If you draw a circle on the floor, and step within its circumference, you are within it only on the level of the floor. But, if that circle could become a sphere, and you be within it, it would on every side surround you – above, below, before, behind, on the right hand and on the left. Moreover, the sphere that surrounds you also separates you from whatever is outside of it. This is ENVIRONMENT! Again, in proportion as such a sphere is strong it also protects whatever is within it from all that is without, even as our atmosphere protects us from the deadly rays in space. And yet again, it supplies, to whomsoever is within it, whatever it contains, as our atmosphere supplies all that is needed for our physical life.

Christ is here presented as THE SPHERE OF OUR LIFE AND BEING, and in this truth are included these conditions: First, Christ surrounds us in His own life; second, He separates us in Himself from all hostile influences; third, He protects us from all perils and foes to the new creation life; fourth, He provides and supplies in Himself all that is needful for us sons of God. Without Christ as our Environment, therefore, there is no life, no thought, no energy, nothing – “Without ME ye can do nothing!”

The most common error in the lives of many of the Lord’s people is the attempt to live without knowing Christ as their Environment, failing to make HIM the absolute CENTER of their existence, the SPHERE of their life. We have seen that any organism contains within itself only one half of what is essential to life; the second half

is in the Environment. It follows that the one supreme condition for life is UNION BETWEEN THE ORGANISM AND ITS ENVIRONMENT. No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me" (Jn. 15:4). The word here, it will be observed is cannot. It is the irrevocable law. Fruit-bearing without Christ is not an improbability, but an impossibility. As well expect the natural fruit to flourish without air and heat, without soil and sunshine. God is our refuge and strength. *"He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, DWELLETH IN ME, and I in Him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live BY THE FATHER: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."* (John. 6:56-57)

As the natural man must have sustenance from his Environment, so the spiritual man. The spiritual man must come to know how to live by his Environment. After he has got life you must give him food. Now, what food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with doctrines, or with experiences? No; there is a rarer nutriment than all these – so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich, that they who have will never live on other fare again. It is this: *"My meat IS TO DO THE WILL of Him that sent Me."* (John. 4:34) To do God's will! That is what a son lives for: but it is also what he lives on. MEAT. Meat is strength, support, nourishment. The strength of the life of sonship is drawn from the Father's will. Man has a strong will. But God's will is everlasting strength – Almighty strength. Such strength he who lives by the will of the Father receives. He grows by it, he assimilates it – it is his life.

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of God." (Matt. 4:4) Nothing can satisfy the son's appetite but this – he hungers to do God's will. Nothing else will fill him. Every one knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. It has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. It has pleasures, and gaiety, and excitement; but there is no food there for the immortal craving of the spirit. It has the theatre and worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate flesh and soul.

The Church-world is hungry too. Starving, in fact. Oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has rituals, and stirring programs, and impressive ceremonies, and external ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and incense, and temples and cathedrals, and priests and preachers, and organization, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved "in the work," and committed "to the work," and "giving to the work." They do and do but in all this something other than CHRIST has become the central factor. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the ministry, or the experience, or the method, or the personality or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate, and millions of Christians are drunk with them and in their distorted hilarity think they know the living Christ. There is no SUBSTANCE in them! So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing. *"My meat is to do the Father's will."* To do God's will! No possibility of starving or suffering malnutrition on this fare. God's will is eternal. It is eternal food the sons of God live upon. In spring-time it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. Oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

The truth of these words is simply this: the strength of life for a Son of God is to do God's will. Now that is a great and surprising revelation to many. No man ever found that out. It has been before the world these two thousand years, yet few have even found it out today. One will tell you that life is in keeping the commandments, another that life is in attending meetings, another that life is in taking communion, another that life is in winning souls, another that life is in water baptism, another that life is in speaking in tongues. One will tell you it is to do good, another that it is to get good, and another that it is to be good. But life is none of these things. It is more than all. Life is not to have an experience, or do this, or that, or the other – just to do what God wills, whether that be working or waiting, or winning or losing, or suffering or recovering, or living or dying.

We feel helpless beside a truth so great and eternal. God must teach us these things. Like little children we must sit at His feet and learn. If Adam would have realized even this, he would never have touched of death. There, at the very outset is the key to life. Any one of us can tell in a moment whether we are living by this Environment of God's will. Are we doing God's will? We do not mean, Are we doing God's work? - Preaching, or teaching, or prophesying, or collecting money, or winning souls, or healing the sick – but God's

WILL. A man may think he is doing God's work when he is not even doing God's will. And a man may be doing God's work and God's will as much by hewing stones, or sweeping streets, as by preaching or prophesying. So the question just means this – Are we working out our common every-day life on the great lines of God's will? Is no THING the CENTER or our lives, nothing but CHRIST. This is the tree of life in the middle of our garden, Christ our sphere of life. In this living union with Christ is brought to naught every work, every religious activity, every tradition and commandment of men, that only that which springs from the Spirit of God shall be wrought out, be it much or nothing.

There is another tree in the middle of our garden, the tree of death. Another potential center other than Christ. This is where the second kind of Environment enters in. Let it be perfectly clear to all who read these lines that the tree of death in Eden is nothing more nor less than the whole bestial system of this physical, temporal world, the entire fleshly realm of soul and body with its roots in the CARNAL MIND. The word "carnal" is the Greek adjective "sarx" meaning "fleshly." Therefore when the Bible speaks of the carnal mind, it simply means the fleshly mind, or the mind of the body realm and the vanity of the world which it touches. The carnal mind is never concerned with the things of God or the things of the Spirit. The carnal mind is always concerned and only concerned with the things of the flesh and the world. It is always working to satisfy the physical flesh man or the ego of the soul. It is ever planning some unspiritual thing that it can lavish on the SELF. It is significant, then, that Paul begins his list of THE WORKS OF THE FLESH with the words adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred etc. for, these being the cravings of the physical body and the ego of SELF, the carnal or fleshly mind seeks to satisfy its every desire and fancy.

Also listed are rivalry, factions, heresies... How much of this we see in the so-called church-world! Churches competing against one another, who can have the most in Sunday School, who can build the most impressive building, who can win the most souls, what evangelist can draw the biggest crowds, each one pointing to the success or importance of their ministry, glorying in the size of the outreach or work, stressing how much more could be accomplished with MORE MONEY, advertising personalities WITH POPULAR (fleshly) APPEAL: a Spirit-filled millionaire, Spirit-filled entertainer, Spirit-filled Senator, Converted member of the Mafia, Catholic Priest, or perhaps a Prophet or Miracle Worker! Brethren must watch how they advertise and announce their meetings and ministries, lest the promotion of the ministry become the promotion of SELF rather than Christ. Selfishness is the nature of Self and there can be a selfish and hence a sinful ambition to attain even great spirituality. Are we furthering "our ministry" or simply doing the will of the Father? I can assure you that doing the will of the Father will many times not promote "our ministry"! How Self desires to build an image even in the area of the things of God!

The carnal mind does not always think of evil things. There is nothing particularly evil about eating food, or drinking drink, or resting in sleep, or driving a new car, or living in a mansion, or being a minister in a "thriving Church," or having a well-known ministry, or doing a great work, or helping a great many people. But what we want to point out is that the carnal mind is called the carnal mind because it is first and foremost concerned with the things of SELF whether those things be good or bad. The man who robs a bank is centered in SELF no less than the preacher who uses his "gifts" to fleece the people so that he can fill his coffers and live in wanton luxury or build a name for himself. The carnal mind never thinks of any spiritual thing, it always considers things from the standpoint of NATURAL ADVANTAGE. The things of the Spirit are nothing to it. It is always contrary to the SPIRITUAL MIND which could not care one whit whether there is any advantage to self, for the Spiritual Mind is only concerned with the things that belong to the Spirit and man's relationship with God. These two trees, the tree of life and the tree of death, the Spiritual Mind and the Carnal Mind, stand in the middle of the garden, in the middle of man's nature and existence. Every desire and activity of every single man and woman upon the face of the globe is found in one tree or the other. One or the other becomes the CENTER around which men orbit, the SPHERE of their life.

THE DEFINITION OF ETERNAL LIFE

I am indebted to the wonderful, but long-out-of-print, book *Spiritual Law in the Natural World* for many of the thoughts in this section. One of the most startling achievements of modern science is a scientific definition of Eternal Life. Science has produced a description of what, biologically, are the exact conditions necessary for an organism to live forever. For the first time science has come forth with a scientific basis for Immortality. Science does not pretend that it can fulfill these conditions. Those who understand the principles involved in

the scientific definition of Eternal Life make no claim to be able to produce such a life. It simply speculates about the necessary conditions without concerning itself whether any organism should ever appear, or does now exist, which might fulfill them.

In the book **PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY** we find the following: *“Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the Environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet, and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and eternal knowledge”* (Principles of Biology, p. 88). To put this definition in language we can all understand, what it means is that if you could find or produce an absolutely PERFECT ENVIRONMENT, and, if you could find an organism which could respond and adapt 100% to that Perfect Environment, then that organism would LIVE FOREVER. The only conditions are that the Environment be absolutely Perfect and that the organism be able to fully respond and adapt to that Perfect Environment. If the Environment is not Perfect, if it is not the highest, if it contains any element of change, or imperfection, or pollution, or weakness, there can be no guarantee that the life of the organism would be eternal. On the other hand, if there is any single thing within the organism which cannot, or does not respond and adapt to the Perfect Environment then there would be a dis-harmony and the organism would die.

It is obvious that science knows of no such Perfect Environment, neither can it produce one, neither does it know of any such organism which could meet the necessary conditions of a 100% adaptation to such an Environment. But I have no hesitation in saying that SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT EXISTS! Yes, there really is a PERFECT ENVIRONMENT, and, furthermore, there has already been at least one living organism which has met all the conditions, has responded and adapted 100% to that Perfect Environment, and has already been raised up into the realm of ETERNAL LIFE, spirit, soul AND body! The Perfect Environment is the incorruptible spiritual realm of God’s divine life. The holy realm of God’s Spirit is the realm outside of all change, all imperfection, all corruption. If any organism, any man, can come into perfect harmony, perfect response, perfect adaptation to the holy and divine life of God, then that man would possess fully the Eternal Life. He and his Environment would be perfectly unified in perfection!

There has been one. His name is Jesus! He is the One who said, *“For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.”* (John. 6:38, 30) *“Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.”* (Heb. 10:9) This bespeaks complete adaptation to the life of the Father. Not one jot or tittle of Christ’s mind will or actions failed to respond fully to the Father. These words, uttered through the Holy Spirit by the mouth of one of God’s prophets long ages before Christ’s birth, are the key to His life on earth. At Nazareth in the carpenter’s shop, at the Jordan with John the Baptist, in the wilderness with Satan, in public with the multitude, in living and dying, it was this that inspired and guided and gladdened Him; the glorious will of the Father was to be accomplished in Him and through Him.

This is where Adam in the garden fell short. For, lo; tempted by the devil, man committed the great sin of doing his own will rather than God’s will. Yes, rather his own will than God’s will! In this is the root and the wretchedness of sin, and in this is the power of death! The power of death is in an imperfect organism responding and adapting imperfectly to an imperfect Environment. Since there is no perfection of life, death is the inescapable result.

When Peter speaks to the multitude in **Acts 2:23** he refers to Jesus in these words: *“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”* Peter then declares, *“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: BECAUSE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT.”* (vs. 24) This reveals that Jesus rose from the dead for a most remarkable reason: It was simply IMPOSSIBLE for death to hold Him! Death COULD NOT hold Him. Why? Long before that glorious resurrection morning the Lord had declared, *“For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.”* (John. 6:38) Jesus lived and walked and breathed in the fresh air of the Environment of the Spiritual World of His Father. Nothing could motivate or control Him except the will of the Father. He had absolutely no correspondence to the desires and lusts and passions and demands of the fleshly realm of this world’s bestial system. Nothing in the whole world could hold Him! Sin could not hold Him, for He was *“tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.”* (Heb. 4:15) Satan could not hold Him, for when Satan tempted Him He answered, *“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of God.”* (Matt. 4:4) His mother could not hold Him. His friends

could not hold Him. The Pharisees could not hold Him. The traditions of the Elders could not hold him. His own personal desires, His own will could not hold Him. The hatred of His enemies, the plaudits of His friends could not hold Him. So it was a natural thing that DEATH COULD NOT HOLD CHRIST, because nothing else could hold Him! He was not from beneath, He was from ABOVE. He did not live by the polluted Environment of the earth realm, His life was IN GOD who was ALL to Him. It is my deepest conviction that herein lies the secret to the OVERCOMING LIFE OF SONSHIP, the key to the manifestation of the sons of God. When NOTHING ELSE CAN HOLD US except the nature and mind and will of the Father, then every enemy shall be under our feet – including the last enemy which is death!

Long before science came along with a scientific definition for Eternal Life, Jesus had already laid down this definition. With Him it was not theory, for He lived it, tested it, and DEMONSTRATED and PROVED IT! Let us place Christ's definition alongside the definition of science, and marks the points of contrast. Perfect and complete correspondence with a Perfect Environment is Eternal Life, according to science. *"THIS is Eternal Life," said Jesus, "that they may KNOW THEE, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent."* **(John. 17:3)** Life Eternal is to know God. To know God is to "correspond" with God. To correspond with God is to correspond with a Perfect Environment. And the person who attains to this, in the nature of things must live forever. The whole purpose of God in redemption is to bring man into that perfect correspondence with HIM. To bring men to this perfect correspondence involves a process. From glory to glory. Already, in our spirit, this perfect correspondence has been accomplished. In the area of our spirit we are NOW ONE WITH GOD. *"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."* **(I Cor. 6:17)** It is now our soul and body which must be dealt with, brought low before Him, in submission unto death that our whole being may be brought to that perfect correspondence with the Father. Jesus is the Pattern. Overcoming is the process. Eternal Life fully wrought in spirit, soul and body is the result.

Let us return for a moment to the two trees, the two Environments. Life is in correspondence with the Environment of the Spiritual World of God, the tree of life, while death comes through correspondence with the Environment of the natural, physical world, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There is an impassable gulf between carnal mind and the spiritual mind, for the spiritual mind is concerned only with the things of God and all the things that concern the Spirit, which things lead to life and immortality. But the fleshly or carnal mind is concerned only with the things of the physical realm of soul and body, Self, which things lead only to death and corruption because there is NO LIFE IN THEM. For this very reason the Scripture says, *"If ye live AFTER THE FLESH, ye shall die, but if ye THROUGH THE SPIRIT do mortify the DEEDS OF THE BODY, ye shall live."* **(Rom. 8:13)** What other result could there possibly be, for there is no life in the physical world. Therefore, to live for the sake of the body with its earthly desires must end in death. The whole Environment is impregnated with death and to correspond with that Environment means swift and certain death. But the Spirit is eternal, immortal, incorruptible; therefore, TO LIVE AFTER THE SPIRIT IS LIFE. Thus Paul says, *"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life."* **(Rom 8:6)** Science today is discussing WHAT DEATH IS. "To be carnally minded IS DEATH." That is the correct definition of death. What is death? To be carnally minded!

The point we must see above all other is that if we live after the flesh we will die, the reason being that there simply is NO LIFE IN THE FLESH or in any of its manifestations, neither is there LIFE in anything it can do, accomplish, or design. Therefore, when Paul says, *"If ye live after the flesh YE SHALL DIE,"* the reason for this death is most obvious. It is because you are living after a realm that has no life in it. To get life out of the fleshly realm is like getting blood out of a turnip. You cannot get what isn't there! You are trying to find life where there is only death. Therefore, if a man sees God with the EYES OF HIS SPIRIT, he will LIVE. But if he looks upon the man-made IMAGES OF GOD with the eyes of his flesh, he will die. If he drinks the water of life with his spirit, he will live forever; if he drinks water from a well, or eats soda crackers and drinks grape juice with his body, he will die. There is no external, physical ordinance, ritual or ceremony that can give man life for it is only in WALKING AFTER THE SPIRIT that life can be found. If a man HEARS THE VOICE OF GOD with the EAR OF HIS SPIRIT, he will live; if he only hears the voices of earth, even of creed and doctrine, with the ear of his body, he will die. If his spirit touches God, he will live; but if his flesh touches the things of earth, both he and they will die.

To understand the things written above is of eternal importance, for until we do understand them we will continue to place great emphasis on the things that concern only the realm of the natural man, a realm which

consumes all our time and effort from the crib to the coffin, yet a realm that the Scripture describes as grass, a realm that is of no more true value than dung, a realm that profits not one whit those who take their complete fill of it. The Bible asks the question of the fleshly life: "What is your life?" There lie scattered throughout the Bible no fewer than seventeen answers to this question. Let us run over their names. "What is your life?" It is: A tale that is told, a pilgrimage, a swift post, a swift ship, a handbreath, a shepherd's tent removed, a thread cut by the weaver, a dream, a sleep, a vapor, a shadow, a flower, a weaver's shuttle, water spilt on the ground, grass, wind, nothing. Generally speaking, the first thing to strike one about these images is that they are all QUICK things – there is the suggestion of brevity and fleetingness about them. Centuries ago, Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit made this remarkable statement: *"For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."* (II Cor. 4:18)

When you go to the grave, my friend, you will be stripped of all that is temporal, and all your five physical senses will be no more. Choose the eternal, then, and let it never slip from your grasp. Hold with a loose grip all things which belong to this present life, for they are swiftly passing away and withering into nothingness before your eyes.

We spend our health to gain our wealth;
We sweat and toil and save.
We spend our wealth to gain our health,
And all we get's the grave.
We live and work for things we own;
We die, and only get a stone.

Little wonder, then, that the beloved apostle John penned these important words: *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER."* (I John. 2:15-17) It is IMPOSSIBLE to walk after the flesh and to mind the things of the flesh and at the same time possess Eternal Life. And why? Because those who walk after the flesh depend upon and correspond with an Environment which is not eternal. Their correspondence is established with that which passes away. We find then that man, or the Spiritual Man, is equipped with two sets of correspondences. One set possesses the qualities of everlastingness, the other is temporal. Here, within man, in the center of man's nature and existence, are the tree of life and the tree of death in the middle of the garden. But unless these two are totally SEPARATED by some means the temporal and fleshly will continually impair and hinder the eternal and spiritual. The final preparation, therefore, for the inheriting of the fullness of Eternal Life, and adoption, the redemption of our body, must consist in THE ABANDONMENT OF THE NON-ETERNAL ELEMENTS. These must be unloosed and disassociated from the higher elements of the Spirit. And this can only be effected by the DEATH TO SELF and all the desires and cravings of the fleshly mind. *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it UNTO LIFE ETERNAL."* (John. 12:25) Death persists in man because certain relations in his being are not adjusted to certain relations in the Eternal Perfect Environment of God's Life and Nature.

This is why death is associated with the CARNAL MIND, with IMPERFECTION. Death is the necessary result of Imperfection, the necessary end of it. Science has shown that a PERFECT ORGANISM in a PERFECT ENVIRONMENT would necessarily live forever. To abolish death, therefore, all that would be necessary would be to abolish Imperfection. Paul put it this way: *"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to PERFECTION."* (Heb. 6:1) Of the result of such Perfection he said: *"But whatever former things I had that might have been gains to me, I have come to consider as one combined loss for Christ's sake. For His sake I have lost everything and considered it all to be mere rubbish in order that I MAY WIN CHRIST, and that I may be found... IN HIM. For my determined purpose is that I may know Him... and that I may in some way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection: and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed to His death, that if possible I may attain to the resurrection THAT LIFTS ME OUT FROM AMONG THE DEAD EVEN WHILE IN THE BODY. Not that I have now attained this ideal OR AM ALREADY PERFECT, but I press on to lay hold of and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me and made me His own."* (Phil 3:7-12, Amp. Bible)

Thank God that He is changing us! Each and every change and transformation, each and every victory and triumph brings our being more and more into correspondence with the realm of His divine life. Like Him! Blessed hope, this is. More like Him today than yesterday. MORE LIKE Him tomorrow. More weaned away from earth's polluting Environment of self-centeredness and fleshiness. More able to breathe the atmosphere of the pure and perfect realm of the Kingdom of God. Death is being swallowed up. Jesus is leading us on!

Having seen, then, the great and important issues at stake IN THE MIDST of our garden, let us no longer spend our lives as men of this world, vainly striving to satisfy that which is passing away, for this serves only to bar our progress to the realm of true reality which is the realm of the Spirit, but, counting soulish and bodily pleasures and pursuits as nothing, let us WITHOUT THESE HINDRANCES, lay hold on immortality where all our spiritual senses operate in the realm of reality and life.

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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**ECHOES from EDON, PART 3
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED**

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART THREE
IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN
(Continued)**

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17)

It needs to be perfectly clear and forever settled in our minds that God makes no mistakes, because He is omniscient. He is never taken by surprise nor is He ever forced to alter His plan, for He is immutable. He never fails in His purposes, because He is omnipotent, glorious in power, fearful in praises, doing wonders. It is only foolish and ignorant men who picture God in heaven taken by surprise at Adam's sin, pacing up and down Hallelujah Boulevard wringing His hands, hastily trying to concoct some new scheme by which to rectify an unforeseen and unfortunate situation. I find nothing but pity for those preachers who purport to be the ministers of Christ yet possess no more spiritual understanding than to teach that Adam's sin took God by surprise, upset His apple cart, destroyed His wonderful conceived plan, and aborted His magnificent purpose. God didn't plan it that way, they say, but that's how it turned out! If this be so, then God is not omniscient, God is not omnipotent, and God is not immutable.

Such foolish prattle is repugnant to the spiritual mind, for it leaves us in the unenviable position of having to believe that Satan is wiser and more subtle than the Omniscient Himself. It causes men to believe that lie that God was tricked by a creature of inferior wisdom. H.G. Wells portrayed it vividly for us when he said that the world is like a great stage production produced and managed by God, and as the curtain goes up, all is lovely to behold. It is fantastically beautiful and the characters are a delight to both eye and ear. All goes well until the leading man steps on the hem of the dress of the leading lady, who falls over a chair and knocks over a lamp, which pushes over a table into the side wall, knocking this over into the back scenery, which brings the whole thing down in chaos on the heads of the actors! Meanwhile, behind the scenes, God, the producer, is running frantically to and fro, pulling strings and shouting orders, desperately trying to restore order to the chaos, but... ah!... alas!...unable to do so! This is the God of the modern church, a very little, very weak, very limited God. As one unbeliever put it, “Either God is not good, or He is not powerful; otherwise the world could not be in the mess that it is in.” And since most people are unwilling to believe that God is not good, they conclude that He therefore is not all-powerful; He's doing the best He can in the face of Satan's subtlety and man's rebellion, but the “best He can” is just not good enough!

Many people see this world as a world that is running loose, like a chariot which has thrown off the driver, the horse running wild, the reins flapping in the wind, knowing not whither it goes, and about to plummet off the edge of the road into the abyss. But the scripture presents a God who has the reins of this world firmly in His hands... who is absolutely in control of all things whatsoever shall come to pass... who is working out His perfect plan for the world, and has been doing so from the very beginning. The Lord God Almighty says, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure... yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, and I will also do it.” But as always, the preachers and teachers are convinced that such a One as He could be outsmarted and outwitted by such an one as Satan. This childish nonsense has been upheld as truth by the church systems for centuries and even today is shouted from practically every pulpit and proclaimed over radio and television to untold millions of impressionable listeners.

The usual idea preached in this dark and confused hour is that redemption is God's plan for repairing the damage caused when Satan slipped up on God's blind side, when He wasn't around and didn't know anything about it, and instigated the tragic fall of man, causing God's Kingdom to tumble down. God, so the world has been taught, had completed His work of creation – man was a finished creation – spiritual, immortal, perfect in character, wisdom and power. Then along came Satan, and by cunning wrecked God's beautiful handiwork, thwarted God's purpose, caused man to fall into sin, darkness, and death, ruined God's perfect creation! Poor God! Then God is supposed to have looked down upon this unforeseen and unfortunate smashup, and to have thereupon thought out THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION as a means of repairing the damage. But His success seems limited. He brought forth a plan by which He would actually be able to salvage only a small part of mankind from the fearful dilemma into which he was fallen. The devil was destined to make off with the vast majority of God's creation and they would all end up in eternal hell and damnation, while an elect few would make it to some beautiful Isle of Somewhere and find the golden streets. I do not hesitate to tell you that this ridiculous story is a monstrous lie and a gross and blasphemous misrepresentation of the character, purpose, wisdom and power of God almighty. God was not found napping when man sinned. He was not taken by surprise by what the serpent achieved in the Garden. He had foreseen it all; yea, He had planned it all! *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* (Acts 15:18) Yes – the serpent was successful in Eden. But his victory, foreseen and foreordained, was already being woven into the pattern of the redemption of the Son of God. In the final consummation, it would be made to serve the glorious purposes of the Most High God, out of which would come a family of redeemed men fashioned after the likeness of Christ – a New Race springing from the second man, the last Adam, that should forever triumph over "that old serpent the devil", and fully vindicate and truly glorify the God of Heaven.

It was the Mighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of ALL THINGS, who in the beginning proclaimed, *"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion."* (Gen. 1:26) This wonderful purpose of God to make man in His own image had been settled in the divine councils of God from eternity. The blessed Lamb had, in the determination of these councils, been slain before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8); the names of all the redeemed of earth had been written in His book of life before the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8); and all blessed sons of God, predestinated to be holy and without blame before Him in love, predestined to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD, were selected and chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:3-5). This is a profound and mysterious truth, impossible to fully comprehend apart from the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, but it does show us that God is omniscient, that nothing took Him by surprise, that the fall of man was not an accident, that GOD PLANNED IT FROM ETERNITY before the worlds and ages were ever framed.

Paul speaks plainly of this predetermined purpose of God to bring forth sons in His own image, saying, *"Blessing be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm! Even as He chose us – actually picked us out for Himself as His own – in Christ before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and blameless in His sight... for He foreordained us (destined us, planned in love for us) to be adopted (revealed) as His own children through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His good pleasure which He had PREVIOUSLY PURPOSED and set forth in Him, He planned for the maturity of the times and the climax of the ages to unify all things and head them up and consummate them in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth... so that we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of His Glory!"* (Eph. 1:3-5, 9-12, Amplified Bible)

It is very essential that those who walk with God in this hour should keep this truth of God's ETERNAL PURPOSE ever uppermost in their thoughts. If we fail to comprehend the certainty of God's very first statement concerning mankind, *"Let us make man in our image: and let them have dominion,"* we will undoubtedly lose our way in the frightful nightmare of sin and darkness that has followed on the heels of that inspired proclamation. The entrance of sin in Eden's fair garden neither destroyed nor aborted this, wondrous plan to bring forth human-divine sons in the image and likenesses of God Himself. Did not God take to Himself all responsibility for the fall of men when inspiration penned the words; *"For the creation was subjected to frailty – to futility, condemned to frustration – not because of some intentional fault on its part, but BY THE WILL OF HIM Who so subjected it. Yet with the hope that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children."* (Rom. 8:20-21)

God has some great and magnificent plans for those who become His sons. *“He that overcometh shall INHERIT ALL THINGS; and I will be His God, and he shall be My Son.” (Rev. 21:7) “And if children, then HEIRS, HEIRS OF GOD, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Rom. 8:17) “It has been solemnly and earnestly said in a certain place, What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You graciously and hopefully care for and visit and look after him? For some little time You have ranked him lower than and inferior to the angels, for You have put EVERYTHING IN SUBJECTION under his feet. Now, in putting everything in subjection to man, He LEFT NOTHING OUTSIDE OF MAN’S CONTROL. But at present we do not yet see all things subjected to man. But we are able to see JESUS CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR...” (Heb. 2:6-9, Amplified Bible) “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit WITH ME IN MY THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” (Rev. 3:21)*

In these verses we catch but a flickering glimmer of the glories the Spirit intended to convey when he by inspiration guided Paul's hand to pen these sublime words: *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us, and conferred on us!” (Rom. 8:18, Amplified Bible)* We see God's purpose – to bring many sons to glory, a family of Sons brought to their highest conceivable destiny as co-sons and co-heirs of the universe with His own Son. He had this in mind before the creation, from before the foundation of the world, and this meant one thing – that the sons must be mature, capable sons, not a bunch of irresponsible little children, but knowing who they are as sons, knowing how to function as sons, and thus knowing their destiny and able to fulfill it. That means training and development from innocent little children to sons, and this to sons who can represent their Father and share His business with Him. And this is the history of the human family! Herein lies the grand purpose in the fall and redemption of the race!

God never meant that first Eden to be man's destiny. He knew that Eden would never give Him an Abraham, a David, or a Paul. There are lessons that in order to learn man must go into the wilderness of temptation, into the crucible of crisis and battle. There are graces which can only be obtained in the midst of sore suffering. There is an obedience which can be learned only by the things that we suffer. If man had always stayed in Eden, he must have become a human jelly-fish, without muscles and fiber, and there would have been no room for those deeds of heroism and faith which have brought out faculties otherwise unknown. Eden could only be a starting point, not a goal. Through the process of sin and redemption, and by the mighty working of the Spirit of God, men have received a power which the first Adam, in his innocence, never could know. If anyone thinks that redemption is nothing but restoration of innocence, as was found in that first paradise, then he is sadly mistaken. God let Satan rob man of this in order to give him His own righteousness instead. And if man was not to exalt himself in the high estate to which he was called, he had first thoroughly to learn the misery and wretchedness of any course other than the wisdom and righteousness of God.

There is one facet of mature experience which is often missed, yet it lies at the roots of capability on any level and none can be sure of himself and his proficiency in any profession without it. Learn this one truth and a great secret thou shalt surely know! Glorious and perfect was Adam our father in Eden's lovely garden, yet one thing was missing from his glory and perfection without which no man could ever fulfill the wonders and potentials inherent in being in the image and likeness of God. Adam for all his wisdom did not know good and evil. For that very reason he fell prey to the shattering calamity of his temptation. Because he did not know evil, he did not know good either, for nothing in this world is either big or small, beautiful or ugly, hot or cold, black or white, up or down, alive or dead, good or evil, except as it stands in contrast to that which is opposite to it. He who lacks the knowledge of both good and evil will fall an easy prey to the devil and this vital knowledge, alas! Can ONLY BE GAINED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL. Innocence is beautiful, indeed, but innocence, knowing nothing of experience, falls an easy prey to every harm and danger before it. How we all love the simple innocence of little children, but how swiftly do they in their innocence stick their finger in a light socket, or dash out into the street in front of the speeding traffic! Innocence is sweet but it is fraught with all kinds of dangers. Because of this very thing the beloved Paul wrote in wisdom that *“strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:14)* Thus in making man in the image of God, the first great step must be to bring him to the knowledge of both good and evil. For this reason the Spirit of the Almighty has recorded these significant words: *“And the Lord God said, Behold, THE MAN HAS BECOME AS ONE OF US, to know how to distinguish between good and evil, and blessing and calamity.” (Gen. 3:22)*

The business world is always looking for people who are proficient. Proficient means: Highly competent; skilled; an expert. No one is born proficient in any field. Proficiency is attained through training and discipline, through experience that comes through trial and error. Proficiency does not come by ignoring that there is a WRONG WAY of doing a thing, still less in denying that there is a wrong way. Proficiency comes by having known the wrong way, having tried it out, having learned and proven once for all that that way doesn't work at all. Then the RIGHT WAY can be established AS BEING RIGHT when the wrong way has been proven to be wrong. An electrician, to be proficient, must know that you don't connect the wires together that way, but this is the way it must be done. If he does not discern the good and evil in wiring up a thing he may be electrocuted. No chemist can be confident in his laboratory until he knows that you don't mix this chemical with that chemical lest you create a poisonous gas or a destructive explosion. You must know the wrong way and have it proved wrong, before you are secure and confident in the right. There is no room for innocence here in proficiency!

And here we have God's perfect wisdom in the birth of the human race, and in the placing of them in a garden, in a condition, in a state of being, in which BOTH LIFE AND DEATH, good and evil were set IN THE MIDDLE. Through this interplay of good and evil God would bring His vast company of sons to maturity. They must discover that to be in the image and likeness of God they must be conscious that there are alternatives and make their choice – and ultimately their right choice through having first made the wrong one, and having tasted the consequences. And the wonder of our all-glorious God is that He knew this was the way His predestined family of sons must take, from wrong first and then to right; and He knew the anguish and suffering that entailed for them. He knew it, but He could not turn from it, so we find our first parents in their garden, and placed in the midst two trees, the one to give life and the other death. Why did not the Father just put them there conveniently with only one tree? It doesn't seem very kind of Him to put the two! Why could we have not just eaten of the tree of life and lived forever in the incorruptible life and nature of God? Because we would have been holy without knowing WHY we should be holy! God not only wants us to know who we are but WHY WE ARE WHO WE ARE. God could have left us in innocence protected from evil and sin, but we could never have inherited ALL THINGS and reigned with Him upon His throne in that condition. Who would make an untrained, undisciplined man pilot of a 747 jetliner? We would have been a crowd of helpless babies who knew nothing and could do nothing! No, Adam and Eve must first discover themselves, learn their potentialities for both good and evil, life and death, misuse themselves – and then they are ready to become reliable ones.

And at that tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle, the deceptive voice of that "old serpent, the devil" came to them, and what it did for them was to awaken them to discover what it is to be a Self. Enormous awakening with its vast potentialities. Through those tempting suggestions to have what she would like, Eve discovered that she was a SELF. Suppose there were just God and you in the universe and you were good and, we know, God is good; how could there be two things to choose? There certainly could be, and both of them seem pretty good too. You could choose yourself, and that usually seems good and might not seem so very bad before there was a fall. When God originally created man he was good; but mankind could not develop in wisdom and stature unless they had the power of choice. The choice was simple: they could choose God or themselves first. The instant they chose themselves that was selfishness and self-will, because the highest good and life was promoted by the choice of God and sin and death entered by the choice of Self. Selfishness is the root of all sin; it is in every sin that there is. You cannot name one that does not have selfishness as a root, and yet it looks so innocent to choose one's Self! There can be a selfish and hence a sinful ambition to attain even great spirituality. Evil is always mixed with some element of good, and that is why it is so deceitful.

The whole world system today is the product and manifestation of SELF and SELFishness of man. As fire depends on fuel and as man's breath depends on air, so also does the whole system of this world live on the self-centeredness and carnal desires of men. I can truthfully say that every industry on earth, all the technology, every war that has been fought, and even the years of learning in schools and universities have in mind the ultimate benefit of Self. Frail man not only wants to gather things about himself for his own comfort and security, but he wants to be the center of his own little universe. The more things and power he possesses, be it on the job, in politics, or in the church, the greater his universe seems to be and the greater his desire to add to it. He never discovers that he has enough, but because he finds that what he does have does not bring him the satisfaction he thought it would, he seeks to add more and more to it, hoping the extra

he adds will bring contentment and fulfillment. Why do men who possess millions in earthly possessions go on adding more and more millions and billions to them? Why do men who have power seek more and more power? Simply because there is NO LIFE IN SELF. Life is only in God and things possessed apart from God cannot ever satisfy. The wages of sin is death, says the Word. It could also be said that the wages of Self is death. A consciousness of Self apart from God is a mistaken identity. Man has made HIMSELF the center and there is death in the middle of the garden.

THE ECCENTRICITY OF SONSHIP

The following is adapted from an article by an unknown author from the 1800's.

“And they (Jesus and His disciples) went into an house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself.” (Mark. 3:19-21)

From the world's standpoint the most pathetic life in the history of the world is the life of the Lord Jesus. Those who study it find out, every day, a fresh sorrow. Before He came it was already foretold that He would be *“despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3)*, but no imagination had ever conceived the darkness of reality.

It began with one of the bitterest kinds of sorrow – the sorrow of an enforced silence. For thirty years He saw, but dared not act. The horrible wrongs He came to correct were there. The holiest religion ever known – a mere piece of acting – was being palmed off around Him as the religion of the living God. He saw the poor trodden upon, the sick untended, the widow unavenged, His father's people backslidden and scattered, His truth misrepresented, and the whole earth filled with hypocrisy and violence. He saw this, grew amongst it, knew how to cure it. Yet He was dumb, He opened not His mouth. How He held in His breaking spirit, till the slow years dragged themselves out, it is all but impossible to comprehend. Then came the public life, the necessity to breathe its atmosphere: the temptation, the contradiction of sinners, the insults of the Pharisees, the attempts on His life, the dullness of His disciples, the Jew's rejection of Him, Gethsemane, Calvary. Yet these were but the more marked shades in the darkness which blackened the whole path of the Man of Sorrows.

But in the Scripture already quoted from **Mark 3:19-21**, wherein we read, *“He is beside Himself”*, we are confronted with an episode in His life which is not included in any of these; an episode which had a bitterness all its own, and such as has fallen to the lot of few to know. It was not the way the world treated Him; it was not the Pharisees; it was not something which came from His enemies; it was something His friends did, yea, something His kinsmen, His very own family did. When He left the carpenter's shop and went out into His sonship ministry, His friends and family were watching Him. For some time back they had remarked about a certain strangeness in His manner. He had always been strange among His brothers, but now this was growing upon Him. He has said much stranger things of late, made many strange plans, gone away on curious errands to strange places, has gathered around Him a motley group of men, performed many strange miracles, and now, when He should be eating and resting, he gives no thought to Himself, but turns to minister to the multitude pressing into the house. What did it mean? Where was it to end? Were the family to be responsible for all this eccentricity? This sad day it culminated. It was quite clear to them now. He was not responsible for what He was doing! It was His mind, alas! that had become affected. He was beside Himself. In plain English, He was mad! The Amplified Bible says, *“And when those who belonged to Him, His kinsmen, heard it, they went out to take Him by force, for they kept saying, He has got out of His mind – beside Himself, deranged!”*

An awful thing to say when it is true, a more awful thing when it is not; a more awful thing still when the accusation comes from those we love, from those who know us best. It was the voice of no enemy; it came from His own home. It was His own mother, perhaps, and His brethren, who pointed the terrible finger at Him – He was beside Himself – He was mad. There should have been one spot surely upon God's earth for the Son of Man to lay His head – one roof, at least, in Nazareth, with mother's ministering hand and sister's love for the weary Worker. But His very home is closed to Him. He has to endure the furtive glance of eyes which once loved Him, the household watching Him and whispering one to another, the cruel suspicion, the laying

hands upon Him, and finally, the overwhelming announcement of the verdict of His family, “He is beside Himself.”

What makes it seemly to dig out this harrowing memory today, and emphasize a thought which we cannot but feel lies on the borderland of blasphemy? Because the significance of that scene is still so intense. It has a peculiar lesson for us who profess ourselves to be followers of Christ – Sons of God – a lesson in the counting of the cost. Christ’s life, from first to last, was a dramatized parable – too short and too significant to allow even a scene which well might speak to the younger Sons to pass by unexplored. When Jesus announced to His disciples that when the blessed Spirit of truth should come “He will show you things to come,” He did not mean simply that the Spirit would reveal to men that California will fall into the ocean or that the oil in the middle East will be seized by the radical Muslim Fundamentalists. He was patiently pointing out to His disciples that when the Spirit of truth should come in blazing glory into their lives He would TAKE THE THINGS OF CHRIST and show them unto them, for He continued, *“He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.”* (John. 16:14) The “things to come” would not be such earthly things as the rise and fall of empires, wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, economic collapses and the like, but rather the glories of the REALM OF SONSHIP in which Jesus Himself walked, of which His disciples understood so pitifully little.

As I have walked with the Lord for many years and the ever increasing wonder of the glory of God’s Christ has unfolded to my wondering spirit, I have come to realize that not only did our Lord speak in parables, but His whole life from the time of His birth in Bethlehem to His ascension into heaven was in itself a parable and a mighty sign of wonders which were to come in the lives of those apprehended to live and walk in that blessed realm of sonship to God. His glorious life was a heavenly life and those who have been born of His Spirit and washed in His blood are called upon to walk even as He walked all the way into the fullness of God. In the light of this truth I now declare that the wonderful life of the first-born Son was in itself a parable, expressly prefiguring the life and walk and experience of all those Sons of God who should follow after Him.

In this marvelous parable of parables, the life of the Son of God, is found this remarkable story of how His own family seized upon him to take Him away by force because, said they, “He is mad!” And I declare to you that from the world’s standpoint, the charge is true. It is useless to denounce this as a libel, a bitter, blasphemous slander. It is not so – it is true! There was no alternative. Either He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, or He was beside Himself. A holy life is always a phenomenon. A life which lives and moves after the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven is always a wonder. The world knoweth it not. It is either supernatural or morbid. For what is being beside oneself? What is madness? It is eccentricity – ec-centr-icity – having a different center from other people. Webster defines eccentricity as: Not having the same center, as two circles; not having the axis exactly in the center; out of the ordinary; deviating from the norm, as in conduct; unconventional. Here is a man, for instance, who devotes his life to collecting objects of antiquarian interest, old coins perhaps, or old editions of books, or perhaps nothing more sensational than stray dogs or cats. His center is odd, his life revolves in an orbit of his own, his center is different from those around him, therefore his friends say, he is eccentric.

Ray Prinzing once commented on this word, *“Some folk differ from the norm of society, filling their life with numbers of cats, or dogs, their house is full in every room, and their yards are full of them, for they are centering their lives in animals. Some thus view them as being ‘eccentric’, for their center is odd, different than those about them, their life revolves in an orbit of its own.”*

Or here is an engine with many moving wheels, large and small, cogged and plain, but each revolving upon a central axis, each turning in a perfect circle. But at one side there is one small wheel which does not turn in a circle. Its motion is different from all the rest, and the changing curve of its motion is unlike any ordinary line of the mathematician. The engineer will tell you that this is called “the eccentric,” because it has a peculiar center.

Now when Jesus Christ came among men, He found them nearly all revolving in one circle. There was but one center to human life – Self. Mattered not whether it was the merchant peddling his wares, the king in the palace, the thief by the road, or the priest in the temple. Man’s chief end was to glorify himself and enjoy himself forever. Then, as now, by the all but unanimous consensus of the people, this present life and this present world were sanctioned as the legitimate object of all man’s effort and energy. By the whole gravitation

of society, Jesus – as a man – must have been drawn to the very verge of this vast vortex of self-indulgence, personal ease and pleasure, which had sucked in the populations of the world since that fateful day in Eden. But He stepped back. He refused absolutely to be attracted. He put everything out of His life that had even a temptation in it to the world's center. He humbled Himself – there is no place in the world's vortex for humbleness. He emptied Himself – gravitation cannot act on emptiness. He became of no reputation – there is no place in the world for namelessness. So the prince of this world came, but found nothing in Him. He found nothing because the true center of Christ's life was not to be seen. It was with God. The unseen and the eternal moved Him. He did not seek His own happiness or gain, but only THE WILL OF THE FATHER. He went about doing good. His object in going about was not gain, but to do good.

Now all this was very eccentric to this world system. It was living on new lines altogether. He did God's will. He pleased not Himself. His center was to one side of Self. He was beside Himself. From the standpoint of the world and the flesh it was simply madness. Think of this idea of His, for instance, of starting out into life with so visionary an idea as that of doing good with no price attached – no offering plate, no books for sale, no monthly news-letter telling about all the needs of the work, no gadgets offered to those sending in an offering of \$5.00 or more, no special blessings or prophecies pronounced on those who "obeyed God" in contributing \$20.00 to the Kingdom, no brochure on how to make out your will and leave your estate to the Lord's work. Jesus did not operate in worldly methods and techniques. Man was not His center, money was not His center, means and methods and programs were not His center, GOD was His center. His trust was not in God's people, His trust was in GOD. God was His source of life and supply.

Yes, Jesus was eccentric. He had a different center from other people. From the world. From the world's viewpoint He was beside Himself, mad. Think of this absurd notion that He had come into the world to usher in a Kingdom in which God's will would be done on earth as it is done in heaven and that God's mind would direct all things and bring every nation under the blessedness of heaven's perfect order; the simplicity of the expectation that the world would ever become good; this irrational talk about meat to eat they knew not of, about living water; these extraordinary beatitudes, predicating sources of happiness which had never been heard of – Blessed are they that mourn, the meek shall inherit the earth, blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness" sake, if a man shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Madness! Then these paradoxical utterances of which He was so fond, such as that the way to find life was to lose it, and to lose life in this world was to keep it unto life eternal. What could these be but mere hallucination and dreaming! It was inevitable that men should laugh and sneer at Him. It was unusual.

He wanted nothing of the religion of the Pharisees. He held nothing but contempt for the religion of that day, for the blinding traditions of the learned and prestigious Rabbis, the distorted and false doctrines of the Pharisees who walked about with the most imposing and pretentious titles, clothed in elaborate and gorgeous vestments, loving the chief seats in the Synagogue, and binding upon the people heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, with all sorts of rules and regulations. Because he was a SON, Jesus' center was in nothing of earth, nothing of the physical world. Unlike other religious teachers He gives us no detailed instructions about what we are to do or not do; He does not tell us either to eat or drink, or to refrain from eating or drinking certain things. He does not tell us to carry out various ritual observances nor to keep certain days and seasons. He built no church buildings nor did He initiate any building programs, but He did say, *"The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father... the hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH."* (John. 4:21-23) He did not set up any form of ecclesiasticism, of any hierarchy of officials or any organizational structure, but He did say, *"Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are BRETHERN. And call no man your father upon earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters (leaders): for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."* (Matt. 23:8-10) The blessed realm of Sonship is an UNSTRUCTURED REALM for it is not of earth, but of heaven; not of physical things, but of the Spirit and the Truth.

Jesus never concerned Himself with external structures of organization, hierarchy, buildings, programs, ceremonies, nor any other carnal thing. He ministered LIFE, REALITY, SPIRIT, AND TRUTH. Period. He was unusual. He would not follow the methods and techniques of the world. He would not go with the

multitude. And men were expected to go with the multitude. What the multitude thought, said, and did, were the right things to have thought, said, and done. Anyone who thought, said, or did differently, his folly be upon his head, he was beside himself, he was mad! It never ceases to amaze me how deep-seated and deep-rooted within the masses of Christendom are all the things which Jesus denounced, and how scarce are the REALITIES which He spoke and manifested in the world. Because the average Christian today has been brought up with a CENTER OTHER THAN CHRIST he is totally unable to think except in terms of established orders, sects, denominations, creeds, assemblies, doctrines, meetings, communions, baptisms, programs, campaigns, pastors, choirs, rituals, ceremonies, offerings, drives, conferences, elections, board meetings, committees, invasions, Sunday Schools, Bible Schools, church buildings, fellowship halls, stained glass windows, robes, special numbers, special speakers, and etc. etc. etc. etc... But after they have spent a whole lifetime of this feverish "church activity," how many people are there who have ever taken time to wait on God long enough TO HEAR HIM SPEAK AND DIVULGE HIS WILL TO THEIR SEEKING HEARTS? I declare to you of a truth that any man or woman who will take the time to seek God and God alone, hungering and thirsting after God's mind and God's eternal will – that man will find himself drifting away from all these aforementioned things and from there on THE MIND OF CHRIST will be his program, his quest, his eternal joy.

I can tell you of a certainty that every man who lives like Christ produces the same reaction upon the world as did the first-born Son. This is an inevitable consequence. What men thought of Him, they will think of you and me. The servant is not above his Master. If they persecuted Him, they will persecute you. A son is simply different from other people. Time has not changed the essential difference between the spirit of the world of a people who live out the very same LIFE OF CHRIST that Jesus lived. The LIFE OF CHRIST is not the historical story of a man who walked the earth two thousand years ago. The LIFE OF CHRIST is the Spirit of Jesus lived out in those who are members of His body. This is what makes the sons of God eccentric. There is no sanctioned place in the world as yet for a life with God as its goal, and self-denial as its principle.

Let all who would be followers of the Lamb upon Zion's holy hill know that sonship is no milk-and-water experience. It is a fire. It is a sword. It is a burning, consuming heat, which must radiate upon everything around. The change to the Christ Life is so remarkable that when one really undergoes it, he cannot find words in common use by which he can describe its revolutionary character. He has to recall the very striking phrases of the New Testament: "A new man, a new creature, a new heart, a new birth." His very life has been dissolved and re-crystallized 'round a new center!

Let a man depart from iniquity, let him depart from the myriad traditions of religion and make CHRIST AND CHRIST ALONE the center of his life and he will soon discover that the impression his friends receive from him now is the impression of eccentricity. The change is bound to strike them, for it is radical, central. They will call in unworthy motives to account for the difference; they will say it is a mere temporary fit, and will pass away. They will say he has shown a weakness which they did not expect from him, and try to talk him out of his novel views and curious life. This, in its mildest form, is the modern equivalent of "He is beside himself." And it cannot be helped. We have a different center.

LIVING BY THE TREE OF LIFE

"These are in the world." "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "Even as He is, so are we in the world."
(John. 17:11,14, 16; I John. 4:17)

If Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it, and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed world to which He belonged? The answer is, The Father had sent Him into the world. In these two expressions, "In the world" and "Not of the world," we find the whole secret of His work as the God-man, the Son of the Father.

He was IN THE WORLD in human nature, because God would show that this nature belonged to HIM and not to the god of this world, that the human nature was created to receive the divine and incorruptible life of God and in this divine life to reach its highest glory. He was IN THE WORLD in fellowship with men, to enter into loving relationship with them, to be seen and known of them, and thus to lead them back to the Father. He was IN THE WORLD to struggle with the demonic and fleshly powers which rule the world, to overcome them

and open up the way for those who should follow to overcome; to learn obedience, and so perfect and sanctify human nature.

He was NOT OF THE WORLD, but of heaven, to manifest and bring nigh the life that is in God, from which man had become alienated through wicked works, that men might see it and long for it. He was NOT OF THE WORLD, founding a Kingdom entirely heavenly in origin and nature, entirely independent of all that the world holds desirable or necessary, with principles and laws and a spirit the very opposite of those that rule in the world. He was NOT OF THE WORLD, witnessing against its sin and departure from the Spirit of God, its impotence to know and please God. He was NOT OF THE WORLD in order to redeem all to Him, and to bring them into that new and heavenly Kingdom which He revealed in His Sonship.

This glorious life of Christ on earth, "In the world" but "Not of the world," is the very essence and reality of the TREE OF LIFE in the Paradise of God. *"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."* (Gen. 2:8-9) This Tree of Life was in all reality "In the world" but "Not of the world." It was accessible to man but had absolutely nothing to do with the realm of earthiness, for it was heaven's own divine life made available to man. In the Tree of Life, God invited man to find Him as the source and center of life that in union with Him, God would live, and move, and have his being. In the Tree of Life, man would be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit and shining in the image of God. The fruit of this wonderful Tree would indeed make man radiant with the resplendent glory of God as was Jesus, the second Adam, at the transfiguration, whose face shone as the sun and His raiment was as the light. In this Tree of Life the effulgent perfumes of the heavenly realm would be fragrance and life to man's nostrils. He would taste spiritual realities and touch spiritual things. The wisdom and power of God Himself would be wide open to him and he would walk in the presence and glory of celestial realms. The gates of that realm would never be shut by day or by night. Man would need to eat of no other tree nor drink of any of the waters of earth. Man would have "meat to eat" that no other creature in heaven or earth knew of and "water to drink" that none other had ever tasted. The heavens would be opened over his head and he would walk in the glory of the presence of God the Almighty.

THIS was the glory of the Tree of Life in Eden! And what was that glorious Tree? *"In the beginning was the WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... in HIM WAS LIFE; and THE LIFE was the light of men."* (John. 1:1, 4) This life-giving Tree, THE LIVING WORD OF GOD, Christ, was from the beginning "In the world" but yet "Not of the world." When Eden's gates clanged shut behind our banished foreparents, that blessed Tree of eternal life was never again seen by the wondering eyes of mortal man until the day in which Jesus stood upon the earth and declared: *"I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the LIFE OF THE WORLD"* (John. 6:51) The reason Jesus came forth as the visible expression of the Father, the Tree of Life re-planted, was so that there might be a focusing, a manifestation which would become a MEETING PLACE for us to come to know God, and become one with Him, as it was in the beginning. It is IN CHRIST JESUS that GOD AND CREATION MEET, COME TOGETHER, AND ARE MADE ONE. Christ WHO IS OUR LIFE has come and has been planted in the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, that all may come and eat and drink and have life.

There is a most wonderful statement made concerning Christ in the Song of Solomon. The Shulamite proclaims of Him: *"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the Sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."* (S. of S. 2:3) The word, "apple," in this place, means orange, pomegranate, citron, as well as apple, and is applied in the Hebrew to this entire family of fruit trees. Though one searched through all the forests of earth, he would not find one fruit tree; and though one searches through the whole forest of unregenerated humanity, there is not one tree there that can bear any fruit excepting that which is poisonous and bitter. Before the Shulamite found that one fruitful Tree, Christ, she searched throughout the forest, seeking life, seeking food, seeking fruit; but upon no tree did she find anything but leaves.

With intense desire she searched through the forest to find a tree that had fruit on it! With determination she looked here and there for a tree that could give and sustain life. Weary and exhausted, discouraged and

hungry, she looked for peace, but she found it not; she looked for fulfillment, but she found it not; she sought for a true “husband” among the forest of men, but she found none. Neither in man’s creeds or doctrines, nor in their sacraments, programs, traditions, or forms, did she find that which her soul longed for. Neither in her own works nor in those of any other did she find contentment or spiritual advancement. How she traveled and looked for reality and could not find it!

At last, by the guidance and purpose of God she came to Him who is the only “Apple Tree” in the whole forest of humanity; the tree bearing the richest and most nutritious of all the fruits of earth. She came and tasted and found that in HIM there is life more abundant! She has partaken of Christ, the one and only Tree of Life; she has found fruit, refreshing and sweet, both nourishing as food and transforming in power. She has found the tree with the most complete and energizing fruit, and fruit all the time. It is the fruit of eternal life and glory! There is righteousness, peace, joy, knowledge, wisdom, and power!

Ah, precious friend of mine, have you come to the one Apple Tree and partaken of His glorious and eternal reality? Is your soul longing for the full nourishment of His holy life and nature? Do you want the love of God to be perfected within your life? Do you desire above all else to put on His mind and to be conformed to His glorious image – a mature son of God? Then come and feed upon this Tree, Christ. This is the Tree that was planted on earth when Jesus came at Pentecost in the power of the Spirit. God planted that Tree, the Tree is Christ, and only by the spirit do we have access to it. And we find that it is all that we need! With unutterable loathing we turn from every bitter and poisonous tree, from every tree bearing naught but leaves. With haste we flee from every tree of man’s theories, philosophies, creeds, and religious works, for they are empty and powerless.

Many precious brethren are perplexed that we no longer find any desire to fellowship with them in their religious ceremonies and rituals, in their so-called “holy days” and festive seasons, in their carnal ordinances and pitiful programs, in their static creeds and petty doctrines, in their fleshly board meetings and organizations. They wonder why we don’t run from meeting to meeting, from seminar to seminar, from campaign to campaign, to hear every preacher, and teacher, and prophet, and healer, and miracle worker who passes through town. I do not want to beat about the bush in what I am saying, but I want to speak my earnest convictions with clarity and assurance. I find that even the Christian bookstores with their endless shelves of books filled with spiritual Pablum, if not with spiritual nonsense, have become a stench to my spirit. I tell you of a truth that I find the vast majority of the Christian radio and television stations, with their religious racketeers, showmanship, Jesus rock and confusion of tongues to be nothing more nor less than ambassadors of the kingdom of Babylon. Those things satisfied once, but now I have tasted of the fruit of a tree more delicious, satisfying, and life giving than all – CHRIST HIMSELF!

Paul had revelations so great he could not even hint at what they were about, so startling and glorious that he fell as dead before the wonder of them, but he still cried out with deep desire, *“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM...”* **(Phil. 3:10)** It is that FULL, inward revelation of HIMSELF that we follow after. This is an imperative MUST, and it is this very thing that is causing us to turn from the chambers of Babylon, yea, and to lay down our own lives also, that we might know HIS LIFE in fullest measure. It is this which, as the parable states, *“is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”* **(Matt. 13:45-46)** Ah, yes, we gladly offer up all that we have, that we might receive HIM, and all the fullness of redemption which is resident in Him, our Tree of Life.

It is not only to find the one Apple Tree, but it is to take up our abode under its shadow. It is not only to taste of its fruit, but it is to eat and be filled with all the fruit that grows upon this divine Tree; it is to feed upon Him continually until we are filled with all the fullness of Christ, until we are strong in Him and in the power of His might. Oh wonderful Tree that dwelt in the bosom of the Father from eternity! Oh marvelous Tree planted of old in Eden’s lovely garden! Oh precious Tree planted among men as the Son of the Father, planted by the power of the eternal Spirit, of whose fruit millions have partaken, and whose fruit is ours as we partake of it through faith! Oh eternal fruit, gathered for the eternal Kingdom, as He brings many sons to glory and brings them home to His Father’s house! How sweet is this fruit to our taste, how satisfying is every morsel of which we partake! And we can feed to the full for the fruit is ever growing, ever being revealed to us, always perfect, and never passes away.

How we rejoice that we have proven there is fruit upon Him; and by feeding upon Him and Him alone, we too bear fruit to His glory. He is our Storehouse, He is the only fruitful Tree, and we can get nothing outside of Him, but we can get everything in Him. The more we feed upon Him, the more we abide in Him. The more He feeds and nourishes us, the more He becomes manifested in our lives to the glory of God.

There is none other like Him among all the sons of men, neither among the archangels in heaven. And we are made ONE IN HIM, blessed be His name!

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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ECHOES from EDEN, PART 4
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART FOUR
THE TREE OF LIFE

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the of the knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. 2:8-9)

In this world we live by symbols. We use either written symbols or sound symbols to express every thought or feeling, to identify every person, place or object. Words are only symbols. Names are only symbols. Numbers are only symbols. Our alphabet is only a group of 26 small symbols that can be organized into words - then words into sentences - sentences into thoughts - and thoughts into knowledge. God claims the title of the "Alpha and Omega," or the "A" and the "Z" of the alphabet which includes all the other letters in between and can contain and express all knowledge.

Symbols only represent the things for which they stand, not the reality itself. Money is considered the most important factor in human life by many because it represents power and security. Of itself, money has no value whatsoever more than the paper or metal it contains, though through it, it is possible to purchase the comforts and luxuries of earth. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the letters of alphabet and the great thoughts that can be woven into tangible form through those tiny little letters. There is as much difference between the symbol and the reality as there is between the money in your pocket and the actual things that money can buy.

It is important that we understand clearly that God has spoken to us predominantly in the scriptures by symbols. Symbolism in its spiritual application means that an object, animal, tree, mountain, person, action, form of words or whatever else is involved has a deeper spiritual meaning than a simple literal interpretation would suggest. A symbol, unlike a type, is usually not prefigurative, but rather represents something that already exists. Without a clear understanding of this great truth the Bible would be the most ridiculous book ever written. Consider the implications if Jesus had meant it literally when He 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." (John. 6:53)* If this statement had been intended literally Jesus would have become the founder of the world's most bizarre religious cult: cannibalism! But beyond these physical figures lies the glorious REALITY of which He spoke, the reality that His flesh means His Word and His blood means His Spirit Life.

The apostle John begins the book of Revelation with these words: *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it unto His servant John." (Rev. 1:1)* The word "signified" is the Greek word (semaino) which is a derivative of the word (semo) meaning a mark or sign, or to indicate by signs or symbols. The English word could be written "sign-i-fied" - demonstrating that it means to communicate by means of signs and symbols. We understand, of course, that this is exactly how the Revelation was communicated to John and the whole book is a book of pictures and symbols. The candlesticks are Churches (Rev. 1:20), the stars are ministries (Rev. 1:20), the beasts are governments, the horns are kings and dominions (Rev. 17:12), the bowls of incense are the prayers of saints (Rev. 5:8), the great dragon is Satan (Rev. 12:9), the waters are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues (Rev. 17:15), the New Jerusalem is the bride of Christ (Rev. 21:9-10) etc. etc. etc. Armed with this understanding let us look at another important symbol employed by the Spirit in the Book of Revelation. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:7)* In harmony with the symbolic language of the Book of Revelation it becomes crystal clear that the tree of life is not a literal, physical tree but a SYMBOL standing for a spiritual LIFE-GIVING-REALITY.

THE TREE OF LIFE

At the beginning of man's existence we are shown man in a relationship with three classes of trees. To understand God's plan, we must be completely clear about these three classes of trees and what they represent. The three classes of trees are set forth in **Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17**. *"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."* Here are the three classes of trees which could be experienced by Adam: (1) all the trees of the garden, (2) the tree of life, (3) the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

There is a clear distinction made between a grove composed of "every tree that is good for food" on the one hand, and the two trees which were in "the midst of the garden" on the other hand - the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. "All the trees of the garden" may be spoken of as a grove, but these taken collectively are not the "tree of life," nor the "tree of knowledge," as shown plainly in **verse 9**: *"And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is... good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."* Thus, all the trees of the garden are distinct from either the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. The tree of life was not of the same nature as "all the trees of the garden" and the tree of knowledge, likewise, was not the same as those trees.

After God created man He placed him before these three classes of trees, and man's whole life was pictured as a matter of feasting upon one tree or the other. How man would live and walk after his creation depended entirely upon his relationship with these three classes of trees. God told man plainly, *"You may freely eat of ALL THE TREES OF THE GARDEN."* He also said, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."* What original command, the only command, was given Adam? To eat! Eating is receiving, and receiving is the basic function of the human self. It is most striking that here at the creation of man this was the only command given him, EAT! Receive! Take something into you! And this is still the only command to man! *"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." (John. 6:53-54)* *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God." (John. 1:12)*

What is the significance of the first class of tree called "all the trees of the garden"? It is of the fruit of these trees that man lived from the moment of his creation and they therefore represent the realm of life in which man lived before he fell. The record states: *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a LIVING SOUL" (Gen. 2:7)* Man did not come forth from the hand of God upon the earth as a glorious shining spirit-being, neither did he begin his existence as the depraved, sensual, animalistic creature he is today. Man was formed upon earth neither a beast nor a god, but a LIVING SOUL. The realm of perfect human life, the living soul, was a plane of life which far transcended the realm of corruption and death which passed upon man through the eating of the tree of knowledge. But it was also a plane of life which was lower than, and inferior to that glorious realm of DIVINE LIFE which was available to man in the tree of life. Thus, "all the trees of the garden" signify the realm of man as a perfect, sinless, LIVING SOUL. Adam, as a living soul, feasted upon the fruits of "all the trees of the garden." These trees had no power to impart to him either the DIVINE NATURE or the INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE of God. The divine nature and incorruptible life were contained only in the tree of life. The important point here is that Adam, in the beginning, did not walk in that transcendent life and glory typified by the tree of life. The tree of life speaks of that realm of DIVINE SPIRIT LIFE, incorruptible God life, and Adam had been living in the reality of the tree of life He would have been a QUICKENING SPIRIT, INCORRUPTIBLE in both nature and being, and therefore incapable of falling into the ensuing nightmare of sin, darkness and death. It is impossible for that which is incorruptible to be corrupted, for that which is immortal to die, and for that which is divine to become depraved!

Most assuredly the tree of life bespeaks a realm of life beyond what Adam already possessed. Adam was a living soul so it was not necessary for him to eat of the tree of life to be a living soul. The life offered to man in the tree of life is a HIGHER KIND OF LIFE than the life Adam originally knew. It imparts more than the never-ending human life which Adam could have retained simply by refusing to eat the tree of knowledge. This tree of life lifts man up from the realm of humanity, from the earthly, from the physical, from the natural, and infuses him with eternal life, divine life, the very life of GOD. This life is offered us in Christ. According to the revelation

of the scriptures Christ is not only our life today, but He has ever been, from the very beginning, the life of God made available to man. *"In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was God. The same was IN THE BEGINNING...IN HIM WAS LIFE; and the life WAS the light of men."* (John. 1:1-4) *"That which WAS FROM THE BEGINNING, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of THE WORD OF LIFE, for the LIFE WAS MANIFESTED and we have seen it, and show unto you THAT ETERNAL LIFE which was with the Father."* (I John. 1:1-2) This tree of life was known in the beginning, not as the man Jesus Christ, but as THE WORD OF GOD. A little less than two thousand years ago *"the WORD was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us."* (John. 1:14) The Word made flesh was Jesus, but in the beginning He was known only as THE WORD: God breathed, God expressed, God revealed, God available to man!

THE TWO GLORIES

One of the most significant ever uttered by Jesus was made in prayer on that dark and sorrowful night before the crucifixion. He said, *"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self WITH THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS."* (John. 17:4-5) Who can begin to comprehend this? Generally, when people think of the glory of Christ they think of the glory He had while on earth: His holiness of life, the miracles, the teachings, the love, humility, meekness and mercy that flowed forth from His ministry. Those things indeed characterize a great glory. Jesus spoke of it. "I have glorified Thee on the earth" - on the earth plane. But now the blessed Son speaks of another glory as high above the glory He revealed on earth as are the heavens high above the earth. With the most intense desire He petitions the Father, *"And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS!"* Come and hearken to what this divine message has to tell us of the eternal glory of the Son, in whom the Father speaks to us. Come and see how truly He is one with God, and dwells in a glory beyond that which can be either seen or known in the earth realm! To be glorified WITH THINE OWN SELF is to be one IN THE FATHER; to be not merely the Son, but God. The deeper our insight into the true Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more confident shall we be that He will, by divine power, make us partakers of His very own glory.

We find arrayed before us here TWO GLORIES. Both glories are uniquely the glory of Christ. The one, the lesser, is His glory as He walked upon earth as a man revealing the Father on the earth plane, in a body of flesh; the other, the greater, is the glory which He had before the world was, and which, having passed through death and into resurrection, He now possesses once more. What is the difference between these two glories and what do these mean for those apprehended unto sonship to God?

The glory of an object is, that in its kinds intrinsic worth and excellence answers perfectly to all that is expected of it. That excellence or perfection may be so hidden or unknown, that the object has no glory to those who behold it. To glorify is to remove every hindrance, and so to reveal the full worth and perfection of the object, that its glory is seen and acknowledged by all. The highest perfection of God, and the deepest mystery of His Godhead, is His holiness. In it righteousness and love are united. As the Holy One He hates and condemns sin. As the Holy One He also frees the sinner from its power, and raises him to communion and relationship with Himself. His name is, *"The Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer."* (Isa. 54:5) The song of redemption is: *"Great is the Holy One of Israel is the midst of thee."* (Isa. 12:6) In the union of the two words in the name of the Holy Spirit, we see that what is HOLY and what is SPIRITUAL stand in the closest connection with each other. God is spirit and God is absolutely holy - these are the two basic elements of His being and nature. For this reason the two words are so often found together. So in the song of Moses: *"Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness"* (Ex. 15:11). So in the song of the Seraphim: *"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."* (Isa. 6:3) And so in the song of the Lamb: *"Who shall not glorify Thy name? for Thou alone art Holy."* (Rev. 15:4) As has been well said: "God's glory is His manifested holiness; God's holiness is His hidden glory."

The one work of Christ on earth was to glorify the Father on the earth plane, in a body of flesh and blood, to reveal what a glorious Holy God He is. When the Lord Jesus had glorified the Father on earth, the Father glorified Him with Himself in heaven. This was not only His just reward; it was a necessity in the very nature of things. There is no other place for a life given up to the glory of God, as Christ's was, than in that glory. This principle holds good for us too: a heart that yearns and thirsts for the glory of God that is ready to live or die for

it, becomes fitted to LIVE IN IT. Living unto God's glory on the earth plane is the gate to living in God's glory on the heaven plane. If with Christ we glorify the Father, the Father will with Christ glorify us too. Yes, we shall be like Him in His glory! Herein are the two glories of sonship.

To help us better grasp a knowledge of the two realms of glory in sonship let us look at a most important aspect of God's being and nature as revealed in **James 1:13**. *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted He any man."* God is not only holy by choice, He is holy by nature. The Greek in this verse is very strong - God is simply INCAPABLE of being tempted! One translation says, "God is unversed in evil." The nature of God is a nature of such absolute holiness that it cannot be tempted. The nature of God is UNTEMPTABLE! No wonder He is called the HOLY ONE! The nature of God is therefore incorruptible and cannot be influenced, affected, altered, changed, or ruined in any way. Thus we can see that the divine nature contains, among others, these three distinct characteristics: it is untemptable, eternal and incorruptible. To be truly GODLIKE is to be in nature and being untemptable, eternal and incorruptible. In any portion of our being where we fall short of being either untemptable, eternal or incorruptible, in that area of our being we have not yet become like God - we fall short of His glory. *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* (**Rom. 3:23**) Herein lies the glory Christ had with the Father before the world was: Christ, the eternal Word of God, as Divine Spirit, dwelt only and fully in the eternal, untemptable and incorruptible nature of Godhead! *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (**John. 1:1**)

THE GLORY OF THE SON IN FLESH

Let us turn to **Phil. 2:5-9**. *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him..."* The Amplified Bible is so expressive here: *"Let this same attitude and purpose and mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus - Who, although being... one with God and in the form of God, possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God God, did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained; but stripped Himself of all privileges and rightful dignity so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born a human being. And after He had appeared in human form He abased and humbled Himself still further and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore God has highly exalted Him..."*

In this wonderful passage we have a summary of all the most precious truths that surround the person of the Son of God. There is first His wonderful Divinity: "in the form of God," "equal with God." Then comes the mystery of Him laying aside that glory in that phrase of deep and inexhaustible meaning: "He stripped Himself," "He emptied Himself." The humiliation follows: "The form of a servant," "made in the likeness of men," "found in fashion as a man." Then comes the atonement with the humiliation, and obedience, and suffering, and death, whence it derives its worth: "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." And all is crowned by His glorious exaltation: "God hath highly exalted Him!" Christ as God, Christ becoming man, Christ as man in humiliation revealing the glory of the Father in a body of flesh, and Christ in glory as Lord of all: such are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge this passage contains.

The two glories of sonship are here: **firstly**, the glory He had with the Father before the world was; **secondly**, the glory He had on earth. Then follows the glory to which He has now been exalted which is one with that glory which He had from eternity.

The great truth we want to grasp here is that Christ (the Word) dwelt from eternity in the form, the essence, the nature and the being of God. In that divine nature He was eternal, untemptable and incorruptible. But when He laid aside that glory, emptying Himself of it, taking upon Him the form and nature of man, He, the ETERNAL ONE, subjected Himself to the dread power of death, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. When the Christ laid aside His eternal heavenly glory, the UNTEMPTABLE ONE took upon Himself all the frailties and weaknesses of human nature so that the One who cannot be tempted was found in a nature that could be tempted and indeed He was in all points tempted like as we are. The inspired apostle James says that *"every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath*

conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” (James 1:14-15) Was Jesus truly tempted in all points like as we are, or did He have some mystical advantage over us, some inherent quality of divinity, some unique spiritual power which enables Him to be oblivious to the cravings and demands of the flesh? Anything, to be a temptation for us, must excite something within us that responds to the temptation. That for which we have no desire, can never tempt us. I used to think, as many do, that Jesus was so high and holy that He could not be affected by the base things that allure us. He was indeed high and holy, but not to the extent that He could not be touched by the same infirmities, weaknesses, and feelings that touch us. While some may still find it hard to believe, because of our superstitious religious view of Christ, He knows exactly how the person feels who is tempted to lie, cheat, curse, steal, murder, or commit adultery. There had to be the desire in His flesh, the inclination in His nature to answer the temptation, but, blessed be God! HE OVERCAME IT ALL! He was tempted in every point as we are, YET WITHOUT SIN. As we have the indwelling Holy Spirit, so He had the indwelling Father and by that overcame all temptation and in the one instance of his intense desire to go His own way, He resisted even unto blood. He was the first to do this and HE ENTERED INTO IMMORTALITY AND INCORRUPTION.

Sharing our humanity, being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, He had the same sinful nature we have. Now do not mistake what I say! I do not say that Jesus had the same fallen condition of Adam – I say that He had the same sinful nature Adam has and had from the beginning. The question is just this – when did Adam receive his sinful nature – before he sinned, or only after he sinned? A sinful nature is simply a nature that sins or that is liable to sin. If Adam had not been created with a nature capable of sinning, how, I ask, could he have ever been tempted? How could he have sinned? The correct answer to these questions reveals to our spiritual understanding the amazing fact that the sinful nature had to precede the first sin, not follow it. Can we not see the simple truth that it was not the act of sinning that gave Adam the sinful nature – rather, it was the sinful nature that caused him to sin! It was therefore necessary for Christ Jesus to come in exactly the same state as the first Adam was in before he sinned and plunged the race into death. He could not have been tempted otherwise, but He was subject to all the temptations man is subjected to. “He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” The suffering was not suffering surrounding the cross. In order to be a perfect sacrifice He had to be perfected before He went to the cross. It was through the years that He lived as a man that He suffered through temptation. You and I haven’t suffered much this way, because when the temptation gets too severe we just yield to it and sin! He couldn’t sin, for if He had, He could not have been our Capricorn’s, our goat, our perfect sin-offering required to redeem the race. So He had to resist and overcome all temptation, and this must have been excruciatingly difficult for Him to do many times, for He had all the desires and inclinations of the human, sinful nature to battle with.

There is something diabolical about temptation, something satanically bewitching and bewildering. It stirs up our senses and excites our emotions and passions. For the time being the forbidden thing seems more important than anything else in the world. It weakens our powers of judgment, both moral and spiritual. People who are otherwise very intelligent and self-controlled will in a brief season of temptation commit wholly unthinkable follies – which they often live to regret a whole lifetime afterwards. It paralyzes our will. Our many good resolutions melt like wax in the hour of temptation. All this temptation frequently does simply by being permitted to press in upon us. It is like chloroform. If it gets too close to us, it will deprive us of the very possibility of offering resistance. But, praise God, *“God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (I Cor. 10:13)* May God in His great mercy give us a true insight into the glory of what is offered us in this truth – that our great HIGH PRIEST, whom we have in the heavenlies, is One who is able to sympathize with us in each and every circumstance, because he knows, from personal experience, exactly what we feel and face. Yes, that God might give us courage to draw nigh unto Him, He was placed upon the throne of heaven One out of our midst, of whom we can be certain that, because He Himself lived on earth as a man, he understands us perfectly, is prepared to have patience with our weakness, and give us just the help we need to overcome and enter into His glory. May God give us eyes to see and hearts to understand the depth of the mystery of which I now write. Had the Logos, the Word of God remained in that bright glory world above, in that spiritual dimension detached from this realm of flesh and corruptibility, He might have been ever so desirous to help us and lift us up to godhood: but, if He had never tasted death, how could He allay our fears as we tread the verge of Jordan? If He had never been tempted, how could He succor those who are tempted? If He had never wept, how could He dry our tears? If He had never suffered, hungered, wearied on the hill of difficulty, or threaded His way through the quagmires of weakness and grief, how could He have been a merciful and

faithful High Priest, having compassion on the ignorant and wayward? But, thank God, our High Priest is a perfect one! He is perfectly adapted to His task, and is able to lead each and every member of God's elect out of this valley of the shadow of death over into the victory and glory of perfection and incorruptibility!

A rich king, who lives every day in luxury, can he, even though he hear of it, - can he fully realize what it means for the poor sick man, from year to year, never to know where his daily bread is coming from? Hardly. And God, the glorious and ever blessed, can He truly feel what a poor mortal experiences in his daily struggle with the weaknesses and temptations of the flesh? God be praised! Jesus knows. As Adam could never have brought us under the power of sin and death, if he had not been our father, communicating to us his own nature, so Christ never could save us, except by taking our nature upon Him, doing in that nature all we would need to do, had it been possible for us to deliver ourselves, and then communicating the fruit of what He had effected as a nature within us to be the power of a new and eternal life. As a divine necessity, as an act of infinite love and condescension, the Son of God became a partaker of flesh and blood. So alone could He be the second Adam, the Father of a new race of God-men.

The point I want to make crystal clear is that when Christ left the eternal glory of the Father to take upon Himself the glory of the Son in human flesh, He EMPTIED HIMSELF of all His prerogatives as Deity and willfully, yea, deliberately subjected Himself to the finite restrictions and debilitating limitations of this physical, material world. As God He had been infinitely rich, while as man He became inconceivably poor. As God He had been the Omnipotent One, but as man He could do absolutely nothing more than any mortal man except as the Father worked through Him. As God He had been eternal and incorruptible, but as man He grew tired and weary, weak and faint, and died an ignominious death upon a cross. As God He could not be tempted with any evil, but as man He was tempted in every point as is common to men. As God He was Omniscient, possessing all wisdom and knowledge, but as man He *"increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."* (Luke. 2:52) As God He had been the Omnipresent One who filled all things, but as man He lay as a helpless infant in a manger and throughout His life could never be in more than one place at a time. As God He had been PURE DIVINE SPIRIT, but as man He was a physical flesh and blood human being.

Christ's glory as the Son of man was thus a far lesser glory than the glory He had in the Father realm before the foundation of the world. He had faithfully glorified the Father on the earth plane, making Him visible through a body of flesh, but, when He prayed that He might be glorified with the glory which He had before the world was, He was asking to be released from the earthly, material, physical form He had assumed, with its human nature and limitations and restrictions, back into the untemptable, eternal and incorruptible realm of DIVINE SPIRIT LIFE. His yearning was to be forever freed from the whole dreadful realm of physical limitation and confinement. This was to shortly take place through His RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD AND HIS ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN.

THE GLORY OF THE SON IN RESURRECTION

When we speak of the resurrection of Christ, we enter a new and glorious realm entirely, for no man other than Christ Jesus our Lord has until now experienced the glory of such a resurrection. In the glory of this resurrection is seen not only the glory which Christ now has in His exaltation but also that marvelous glory which He has before the world was. Let us consider this glory.

There are three key words translated "immortality" in the Greek New Testament. (Athanasia) appears three times, (Aphtharsia) appears eight times, and (Aphthartos) appears seven times. These three terms are translated severally in the King James Version as "immortality," "incorruption," "sincerity," "incorruptible," "immortal," and "not corruptible." These renderings make it quite evident in English that the basic idea deals with that which does not perish, cannot be ruined, or that which will never be corrupted in any fashion. The first term, (Athanasia), is derived from the Greek word for "death" (Thanatos), so that it speaks of that which is opposite of physical death; namely a resurrected body which is spiritual rather than carnal. (Aphtharsia) and (Aphthartos) are derived from the Greek word for "corruption, ruin, destruction" (Phtheiro) which is used of corrupted meat, ruins of ancient cities or sunken vessels, or destroyed armies whose dead bodies litter the earth. Like (Athanasia) the alpha prefix indicates that the word "immortality" speaks of that which cannot be corrupted, which cannot be ruined in any manner, and which cannot be destroyed!

I do not hesitate to say that only solitary person is now "Immortal" according to the Word of God. By this I mean that there is only one man in the entire universe who is a life-giving Spirit resident in an indestructible body. That man is our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. When Paul writes to young Timothy of the appearing of Christ in the blazing, unapproachable light of the Shekinah, he declares Him to be *"the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only (who alone) HAS IMMORTALITY..." (I Tim. 6:15-16)* Please observe! Jesus only has what the Bible calls "immortality." He, and He alone, of all the men who have lived and do live, resides in the divine spirit realm in a glorified, resurrection body. As the first-born Son, the God-man, only Jesus is immortal at present. Jesus is the only man now dwelling fully and completely in the divine nature and being of God, far beyond all temptation, sin, sickness, limitation, change, decay and death.

When Christ our Lord rose from the dead, He was raised not in corruption but in incorruption. That which is incorruptible is forever beyond the power of corruption, decay or death. God Himself is said to be incorruptible and we are said to be born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God that liveth forever. This incorruptible life now resides in our spirits, but has not yet been manifest in our bodies. Death has no power over the incorruptible. Thus of the resurrection body it is written: *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (I Cor. 15:42-44)* Paul declares that this corruptible must put on incorruption. The body of the corruptible man is the body of death, but the body of the incorruptible man is the body of the resurrection, a body beyond the power of death. When Jesus rose from the dead, He arose incorruptible. He had no blood as we know blood. He had forever laid aside that blood which had been the life of His corruptible flesh and was now quickened in His flesh by the life of God, life incorruptible and eternal.

Many precious saints have claimed that they have already put on immortality, that they have by-passed the grave and will never die. I would overthrow the faith of none, for we are now living in the generation that shall see the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God, but I do say that the body of glory and incorruption is the body of the resurrection. When the kingdom of God comes in power and glory on the earth, the sons of God will be manifest to the world and to every nation, tribe, tongue and people on the face of the whole earth in the glory of their RESURRECTION. Being children of the resurrection, they will be seen as INCORRUPTIBLE BEINGS and they will rule the world and bless all the nations of earth as resurrected and incorruptible men. Just as Jesus had power after His resurrection to appear and disappear, to pass right through a wall or locked door, to disclose Himself or to hide His identity, taking various forms, to ascend to heaven and return to the earth, to issue instructions concerning the Kingdom of God, even to eat and drink if He wished, so also shall the glorified and incorruptible sons of God have power. All that Jesus was in His resurrection and glorification the sons of God shall be in their resurrection and glorification, for they are destined to share His glory.

The glory of the resurrection discloses even that glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was. The glory He had and the glory He has are the same glory of INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT LIFE.

MINISTERS OF INCORRUPTION

Jesus was the firstfruit of the resurrection. *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept...for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end (of the resurrection)." (I Cor. 15:20-24)* Paul tells us in **Rom. 8:19-23** that the whole of creation is in travail to know the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creation itself SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption (placement as sons), to wit, the redemption of our bodies."*

This glorious realm of incorruption which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death belongs to the children of God, but, blessed be God! it is also the hope of all creation. One of the fundamental laws of nature is that one cannot give what he does not himself possess; one cannot minister that of which he has not himself been made partaker. I therefore declare to you that although the glory of the Sons of God on earth throughout His three and a half years of ministry and manifestation was truly marvelous beyond words to describe, yet, it was a glory which was limited in the extreme. When Christ took upon Him a body of flesh and the nature of man, He willfully subjected Himself to the limitations and restrictions of that

which is earthly, material and mortal. Jesus did not walk upon earth as the incorruptible God, but as mortal man. It was as a natural, physical, mortal man that He was tempted; He hungered; He thirsted; He could be in only one place at a time; He knew weakness; He wept; He slept; He suffered; He died. The incorruptible life of the Father resided in His inner spirit, but that life was confined, limited and restricted by the bounds of the material world which He had taken upon Himself. It is manifest that His body was not an incorruptible body, else He could not have died though He were nailed to a thousand crosses! His own human nature was not the incorruptible nature of God, else He could not have been TEMPTED in all points like as we are. Truly He emptied Himself, yea, stripped Himself of that incorruptible glory of the Father realm and, as man, as flesh, HE COULD NOT, even as a Son, MINISTER THAT WHICH HE DID NOT HIMSELF POSSESS!

It is remarkable that during the three and a half years of Jesus' earthly ministry He never performed one act, not even one miracle or wonder on the higher plane of incorruption. Every miracle Jesus did was in the realm of mortality. Jesus raised a number of folk from the dead, including Lazarus and the widow's son, but every person raised from the sleep of death was merely raised up again INTO MORTAL LIFE to continue their lives in their same old corruptible bodies. Each and every one of them DIED AGAIN! Not one single person was raised up out of a corruptible body into an incorruptible body. It would be impossible for the world to even contain all the books that could be written about the marvelous signs and wonders performed by the Son of God on earth, yet, all those works, wonderful though they were, were entirely restricted to the plane of the physical, material and mortal. Jesus cleansed the lepers and healed every manner of sickness and disease among the people, but I declare to you that each and every one of these good people got sick again and eventually died! These were miracles within the realm of mortality, not ministrations of INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE. These deliverances were in all reality but short new leases on the corruptible existence of this body of flesh and blood, this body of death. Though Christ blessed men with healing and health and these were permitted to remain on earth for long series of years, yet He merely lengthened out the period of their mortal existence and none could escape the final catastrophe.

Jesus did many other types of miracles. He turned water into wine. But what kind of wine was it? Very good wine, indeed. But just wine, nonetheless. It was composed of the same chemical elements as is all good wine. It was material, physical, earthly. It was consumed by flesh and blood bodies, digested, and a portion eliminated from the body as waste. Nothing incorruptible or heavenly here! And yet it is written: *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY; and His disciples believed on Him."* (John. 2:11). Yes, He manifested forth His glory, but it was not the glory He had had with the Father before the world was, but the lesser glory of manifesting the Father on the earth plane, in the world of the physical and material, the mortal.

Jesus fed five thousand people from five little loaves and two small fish. How we stand in awe before the glory of such a miracle, but remember, dear ones, that even a wonder so marvelous as this was but a wonder on the physical plane. Bread and fish. Nothing more. Multiplied! And what have you? More bread and fish. Earthly bread. Earthly fish. Perishable, corruptible elements, both. The multitude ate of it and had their bodily hunger satisfied momentarily, their mortal bodies strengthened for a few fleeting hours and then all the old hunger and weakness returned. Nothing of eternal value there, nothing of incorruptible life! On one occasion Jesus caused the boat in which He and His disciples were sailing to move from the middle of the sea to the shore with a speed swifter than any modern rocket. Wonderful! you say. Yes, wonderful on the earth plane, wonderful to the fascinated eyes of poor finite mortals in their limitation and confinement to natural law, but still no ministration of the higher life of incorruption. Following this miracle the creation was still groaning as it had been groaning for ages - to be DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE TO CORRUPTION! Without doubt that same boat which made such a fantastic trip across the sea has long since rotted into the earth or lies ruined on the bottom of the sea. And the creation goes on groaning...

"For even the whole creation waits expectantly and long earnestly for God's sons to be made known - waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship. For...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children." (Rom. 8:19, 21) When Paul by inspiration penned these blessed words of hope he did not have in mind a manifestation of the sons of God on the same plane on which Jesus was manifested while on earth. Jesus glorified the Father on the earth plane, and so do we, but this is not the glory that we anticipate, neither is it the hope for which the whole of creation is in travail. The creation is not groaning for another revival, or for another evangelistic campaign, or

for another healing campaign, or for a New Testament Church, or for more apostles and prophets, or for more signs, wonders and miracles, nor yet for 144,000 flaming evangelists just like Jesus in His earthly ministry. For 2,000 years we have had revival after revival, healing after healing, miracle upon miracle, and none of them has ever brought in the Kingdom of God, not one of them has ever delivered the creation from the bondage to corruption. Mankind continues to sin and die. The creation continues to groan in its bondage and we ourselves, groan within ourselves, as we wait for the redemption of our bodies. It is not another "patch-up" job that we want but a full and complete and eternal deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of corruption.

Jesus clearly understood that He could never deliver the creation from the bondage to corruption so long as He remained Himself subject to this realm of mortality. He simply could not minister to men that which He had laid aside in coming to earth. Though He would have walked on earth for a million years in His physical body of humiliation, gaining in favour with the people and power over the nations through all those years, He still would have not been able to raise even one poor mortal up out of corruption into incorruption. It was necessary that He be resurrected Himself by the power and glory of the Father that He might be able then to minister even that resurrection life to a first-fruit company, that they, in turn, might minister it to the rest of creation. For this creation waits expectantly. The law is that one must first POSSESS INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE before He can MINISTER INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE.

Let us give ear to Peter as his lips speak of the resurrection life of Christ in his tremendous sermon on the day of Pentecost. Notice that his message did not center in the Christ of the manger, nor in the Christ of teaching, or in the Christ of signs and wonders, nor only in Christ crucified, but above all else CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD. *"Ye men of Israel," he cries, "hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: WHOM GOD HATH RAISED UP, having loosed the pains of death...for David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my hearts rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life."* (Acts 2:22-25, 31)

How we praise God and bless Him unceasingly for every temporal blessing provided for us by His bountiful grace. We rejoice exceedingly in the provision of finances for our daily needs, for those healings which have preserved our bodies alive unto this day, for every sign and wonder which has quickened our faith and given assurance of His wonderful love, faithful care and gracious presence. We do not minimize the blessedness of any of these things, yet are aware that none of these are that for which the creation, and we ourselves, is groaning. We cannot - dare not - be satisfied until we AWAKE IN HIS LIKENESS! The glory to which we are called as sons of God is not the glory He had on earth, but the glory for which He prayed when He said, *"And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."* *"The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them."* Paul wrote, *"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear WITH HIM IN GLORY."* (Col. 3:4) *And Peter declared, "But the God of all grace...hath called us unto HIS ETERNAL GLORY by Christ Jesus."* (I Pet. 5:10)

Therefore the Spirit saith, *"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and REDEMPTION."* (I Cor. 1:30) Here we have the top of the ladder, reaching into the celestial realm - the blessed end to which Christ and life in Him is to lead. The word redemption, though sometimes applied to our deliverance from the guilt of sin, here refers to our complete and final deliverance from all its consequences, when the Redeemer's work shall become fully manifest, even to the redemption of the body (compare Rom. 8:21-23; Eph. 1:14; Eph. 4:30). The expression points us to the highest glory to be hoped for in Christ. The word invites us to look upon Jesus, not only as He lived on earth, teaching us by word and example, as He died, to reconcile us to God, but as, sitting at the right hand of God, He takes again the glory which He had with the Father, before the world began, and holds it there FOR US. It consists in this, that there His human nature, yea, His human body, freed from all the consequences of sin to which He once had been exposed, is now admitted to share the eternal divine glory. As Son of Man, He dwells on the throne and in the bosom of the Father: the deliverance from what He had to suffer from limitation, sin and death is complete and eternal. The complete redemption is found embodied in His own Person: what He as man is and has in the celestial realm is the complete redemption.

As our fellowship with HIM becomes more intimate and intense, and we let the Holy Spirit reveal Him to us in His eternal glory, the more we realize that the life in us is the life of the One who sits upon the throne of the heavens. We feel the power of an endless life working in us. We taste the eternal life. We have the foretaste of the eternal glory! The resurrection of the body is no longer a dead doctrine, but a living expectation, and even an incipient experience, because the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in the body as the pledge that even our mortal bodies shall be quickened (Rom. 8:11-23). This faith exercises its sanctifying influence in our willing surrender of the sinful members of the body to be mortified and completely subjected to the dominion of the Spirit, as preparation for the time when the frail body shall be CHANGED and fashioned like unto His body of glory. Think you have seen some great miracles? Our bodies are going to be the objects of the most astonishing miracle of Divine transforming power!

I can assure you, beloved friends, that this is the hope of all creation. We rejoice in the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, in prophecies, visions, healings and miracles, but I must confess that I am saddened to see men continually following after mere TEMPORAL SIGNS and PHYSICAL, MORTAL BLESSINGS. I would not depreciate for one moment, or in any measure, the manifold blessings and gracious provisions of God on this earthly realm of mortality. I, above many, perhaps, can testify to God's absolute and unswerving faithfulness to supply every need in this earthly, temporal realm in which we dwell as He provides daily sustenance for my family and the finances to mail out tens of thousands of pieces of literature each year. It is all the LORD'S DOING and I can bear witness that He has never once failed, bless His name! And yet it brings distress to my soul to see my sick brethren healed by the power of God only to behold them smitten again later on with some other debilitating disease. What sorrow it brings to the human hearts to see the precious men of God who have walked in the Spirit and have so mightily blessed the Lord's people, finally become old and pass from our midst into the silence of the grave. I grow tired of healing the sick only to see them sick again. It is frustrating to have to pray for the same saints over, and over, and over again for the same kinds of problems and weaknesses. I am tired of seeing the dead raised (I personally know several people who have been raised from the dead) just to watch them grow old and die again. I tire of signs and wonders which only minister to the physical man on the level of mortality: food, raiment, money, jobs and all the rest of the corruptible things of earth. I am weary of that which blesses men in the natural but then leaves them to carry on their lives in corruptible natures and bodies. What an apt word the Spirit selected when He inspired the apostle to write: *"For in this (our earthly house) we GROAN, EARNESTLY DESIRING to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven...that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* (II Cor. 5:1-5) Paul says that the whole creation GROANS. He says WE ALSO GROAN. That mortality might be swallowed up of life. *"Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who hath given unto His pledge of the Spirit."* (II Cor. 5:5)

Christ shall minister His eternal glory to a first-fruit to company of sons who shall in turn minister that same eternal glory to the creation. Do not think, dear saints, that the ministry of the manifested sons of God shall be a ministry of holding great salvation-healing campaigns, of merely emptying out hospitals as the sick are healed, or raising some dead people back to life again as Jesus did. What Jesus WAS is not the pattern for the manifested sons of God. The pattern is what HE IS IN HIS ETERNAL GLORY. He has planted within an incorruptible SEED which shall in due time produce an INCORRUPTIBLE PEOPLE. The ministry of the sons of God will be to minister INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE so that ALL THINGS may be raised up out of the realm of limitation and death in the glorious liberty of the ETERNAL SPIRIT. Glory!

"HE is made unto us REDEMPTION." Beloved brethren! Let us lay aside all presumption and purge ourselves of every form of deception. I admonish you - do not allow any man to deceive you into believing that he can in some way minister immortality to your mortal body. Some have professed to have already put on immortality, to have already passed over the grave, but I declare to you that the wrinkles in their skin, the bags under their eyes, the gray in their hair and the unchecked ageing in their bodies give the lie to their confession. Some have tried to teach people into immortality, some have tried to meditate into it, others have had a scheme for baptizing people into it while others have foolishly hoped to live forever by eating health food. Without any fear of contradiction I can tell you that all the fruitarians and vegetarians and food faddists of all previous generations are now lying silent in their graves along with all who subscribed to any other method or technique for the putting on of incorruption. There is a TRUTH in physical immortality! But the reality of its outworking is resident IN OUR LORD – and HE controls both the process and the time element, for HE is the One that shall change us, we cannot change ourselves. Jesus pointed out the impotency of man's fleshly efforts, when He

asked, *"Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"* (Matt. 6:27) Our change is not a do-it-yourself project. The word can not be broken: "HE is made unto us REDEMPTION!" How can corruption impart incorruption? *"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE PARADISE OF GOD?"* (Rev. 2:7) Let me present this Tree of Life: Christ, risen, glorified and exalted above all heavens! Christ, in the glory He had with the Father before the world began. HE is the tree of life in Eden's lovely garden! The leaves of this tree are for the healing of all the nations of earth. The Church in its hour of corruption has been claiming to do the "greater works" of which Jesus spoke, but this is not so. The greater works will appear when this corruptible puts on incorruption and the sons of God are manifested in their resurrection glory. When we consider how marvelous and powerful this glory of the resurrection unto incorruption is, it seems to be but little wonder that these mighty sons will bring to pass a world wherein dwelleth righteousness!

With what anticipation do we wait for this glorious manifestation! Meantime we are taught to believe: "Of God are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This is not meant merely as revelation, to be left for the future; for the full development of our life in sonship we must seek to enter into and appropriate it. We do this as we learn to triumph over death on every level. We do it as we learn to look to Christ as the Lord of our body, claiming its entire consecration, securing even here victory over the terrible dominion sin has had in the body. We do it as we allow the powers of the coming age to possess us, and to lift us up into a life in the heavenly places, to enlarge our hearts and our views, to anticipate, even here and now, the things which have never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Sons of God! Seek to know Christ as your redemption. Let this be the crown of your life in sonship. Do not seek immortality for your body first, or only, apart from the knowledge of Christ in all His other aspects. But seek it truly as that unto which they are meant to lead you. Nothing will fit you for incorruption but faithfulness in every step of the putting on of the MIND OF CHRIST. Seek Him as your wisdom and the wisdom will lead you into the mysteries of complete redemption. Seek Him as your righteousness and dwell clothed upon with Him in that inner sanctuary of the Father's favor and presence. Seek Him as your sanctification; the experience of His power to make you holy, spirit, soul and body will quicken you to a power of holiness that shall not cease its work until the bells of the horses and every pot in Jerusalem shall be holiness unto the Lord. Seek Him as your redemption, and live, even now, in the light of that glory. And as you seek to experience within yourself to the full, the power of His redeeming grace, your heart will be enlarged to see the position man has been destined to occupy in the universe, as having all things made subject to Him, and you shall for your part be fitted to live worthy of that high and heavenly calling!

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ECHOES from EDEN, PART 5
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART FIVE
THE TREE OF LIFE - (Continued)

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. 2:8-9)
"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the TREE OF LIFE, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden." (Gen. 3:22-23)

The wonderful Tree of Life in Eden was, as it is said of Christ, "in the world" but "not of the world." The life-giving fruit of this tree was accessible to man but had absolutely nothing to do with the realm of earthiness, for it was heaven's own divine life brought into man's world and made available to him. In the Tree of Life God invited man to find Him as the source and center of life, that in union with Him God would be at once both the indwelling power of life and the environment in which man would live, and move, and have his being. By eating of the Tree of Life man would be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit and shining in the image of God. The fruit of this wonderful Tree would indeed make men radiant with the resplendent glory of God as was Jesus, the second Adam, at the transfiguration, whose face shone as the sun and His raiment was as the light. The mighty power of this Tree would raise man up beyond any possibility of sin, corruption and death into the incorruptible divine life demonstrated by Jesus when He arose from the dead in a body of glorification. In this Tree of Life the effulgent perfumes of the heavenly realm would be fragrance and life to man's nostrils. He would taste spiritual realities and touch spiritual things. The wisdom and power of God Himself would be wide open to him and he would walk in the presence and glory of celestial realms. The gates of that realm would never be shut by day or night. The heavens would be opened over his head would walk in the glory and presence of God Almighty.

THIS was the glory of the Tree of Life in Eden! Let me present this Tree: *"In the beginning was the WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...in HIM WAS LIFE; and THE LIFE was the light of men"* (John. 1:1, 4) This life-giving Tree, the LIVING WORD OF GOD, Christ, was from the beginning "in the world" but yet "not of the world." when Eden's gates clanged shut behind our banished fore parents, that blessed Tree of eternal life was never again seen by the wondering eyes of mortal man until the day in which Jesus stood upon the earth and declared: *"I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread which I will give is MY flesh, which I will give for the LIVE OF THE WORLD."* (John. 6:51) Christ WHO IS OUR LIFE has come and has been planted as the Spirit of Life in the garden of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, that all may come and eat and drink and have life.

In this article we want to take a look at some of the principles of life. For three hundred years the scientific community has been rent with discussions about the origin of life. Thus far only two theories have been advanced by science in order to explain the origin of life. One theory is that matter can spontaneously generate life; the other that life can only come from pre-existing life. The first theory is called by scientists Spontaneous Generation. The theory of Spontaneous Generation teaches that life is capable of springing into being of itself; that at some time in history, billions of years ago, the necessary synchronization of chemical elements accidentally took place and life spontaneously generated itself. The second theory is called by scientists The Law of Biogenesis. This law demonstrates that during all of recorded history life has only come from pre-existing life.

Today, as in former times, people are asking the questions, "What is life? How did life on earth originate?" The United States government continually spends a considerable amount of money in order to study this question. Nearly all of our space probes are concerned with the question, "Does life exist out there?" During our Apollo

flights, science was interested in looking at the moon to determine if it might contain some form of life. Even now, as further Mars investigation is taking place, the question is still being asked, "Will life be found there?" Yet all the evidence that science has received to the present time indicates that no physical life, as we know it is present anywhere in our solar system except here upon earth. One might ask the question, "What is life? Is it possible to define life?" At the present time the scientists tell us that the answer concerning the origin of life is not available, yet most scientists still emphatically deny that life came to earth through a creative miracle of an all-powerful God. Instead, they declare that natural law produced the first life. To believe this, one would have to admit that Spontaneous Generation produced the first life, whereas the great principle of biology, the Law of Biogenesis, teaches that life comes only from life. That natural law could produce life is a violation of all the known facts of biology today. Many indications today point to a time when life was not present on earth - when the earth was only a mass of some 100 inanimate elements. According to scientists, certain combinations of these elements had to be QUICKENED in order for life to become present on earth. But if one begins with dead matter, life must appear by quickening dead matter, whereas biology postulates that life had to come from some other life. We know that life is not now being originated on earth and that all the life forms today spring from pre-existing life forms of the same kind.

No human power has as yet been able to produce life out of inorganic chemical substances. One of the famous attempts that was hailed by the press as a success, was the attempt of a young Russian biologist. He succeeded in producing, or rather, organizing five low forms of life in his test tube. The fact that they were of the lowest forms known did not damage the wonders of his accomplishment, as that is just what the scientists would expect to get from inorganic substances. He arranged his chemicals in a certain order in the test tube, subjected them to considerable heat, and eight hours later he had a group of very small one-celled animals (infusoria) living in the tube.

His announcement startled the world of biology, and his formula was revealed, many other biologist tried to follow his experiments. But, alas, nobody except the discoverer seemed able to make it work. All that the others got was a mass of chemicals, no more alive than they had been when they were in containers on the laboratory shelves. So they suggested that the discoverer repeat the experiments under observation so the rest could watch and see what mistakes they had made, if any. The young scientist suggested instead that they go through with the experiment while he watched them, and he could then correct any error they made. The last stage of the technique was to impregnate the mass with a gas before the mass was subjected to heat, and as the experimenters proceeded to do this, the inventor of the method said, "There is your trouble, gentlemen; you are using chemical carbon dioxide. You must use gas that has been generated by rotting vegetation!" That, of course, pricked the bubble; the balloon collapsed. Gas generated by rotting vegetation is simply teeming with the spores, or eggs, of a multitude of living creatures, and all this fellow had done was to incubate them in his test tube. He had created life no more than the farmer does when he puts eggs in his incubator to hatch out by artificial heat! So we see that all attempts to get the living out of the dead have failed. And it is now recognized on every hand that life can only come from the touch of life. There is no other way!

THE UNCROSSABLE GULF

May the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God seize upon our hearts and impress indelibly upon our minds the wonderful truth that all the things that are seen in the Natural World are but pictures and images of the GREATER REALITIES in the Spiritual World. And in this understanding of the impassable gulf that exists in the Natural World between the inanimate and the animate, the dead and the living, lies the revelation that in the Spiritual Realm there is also a great uncrossable gulf between the realm of Spiritual Death and Spiritual Life, between the Carnal Mind and the Spiritual Mind.

For the background material concerning the passage from the Natural World to the Spiritual World presented in this article, I have leaned considerably upon Henry Drummond's book (out of print), NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

Let us at this point fix vividly in our minds the picture of two great Kingdoms of Nature, the inorganic and organic, the dead and the living, as these now stand in the light of the Law of Biogenesis. What exactly is involved in saying that in the Natural World there is no such thing as Spontaneous Generation of life? It is meant that the passage from the mineral world to the plant or animal world is hermetically sealed on the

mineral side. It is simply impossible for the mineral to produce any life or raise itself up into the Kingdom of the Living. What is the difference between a stone and a plant? They have much in common. Both are made of the same atoms. Both display the same properties of matter. Both may be very beautiful. But besides possessing all that the stone has, the plant possesses something more – a mysterious something called Life. This life is not something which existed in the stone only in a less developed form. There is nothing at all like it in the stone. The plant is possessed by something new, an original and unique possession added over and above all the properties common to both. When from vegetable life we rise to animal life, here again we find something original and unique. It is an entirely different quality of life as high above the plant life as the plant is high above the dead stone. From animal life we ascend again to SPIRITUAL LIFE. And here also is something new, something still more unique. He who lives in the Spiritual Life has a distinct kind of life added to all the other phases of life which he manifests – a kind of life infinitely more marvelous than animal life. The Spiritual man is, in fact, living in a realm of life more distinct than is the animal from the plant or the plant from the stone.

The natural man belongs completely to this earthly order of things. He is endowed simply with a high quality of the natural animal type of life. He has flesh as the animals have flesh. He has blood as the animals have blood. He has a heart and circulatory system as the animals have hearts and circulatory systems. He has a digestive system, as do the animals, feet for walking, a brain, nervous system, etc. etc. The natural man lives and dies, as do the animals. Paul pointed out the contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man in Romans chapters six through eight. In Rom. 8:5 he exposed the yawning gulf between those who live after the body realm (which is the flesh) and those who live after the spirit. He taught that "they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit." It all depends what we are AFTER. When I was a young man I met a beautiful young lady by the name of Lorain Walker. I decided that I wanted her to be my wife. For a year and a half I dated her, pursued her, spent every moment I could with her, proposed to her – and got her! At that point in my life she was what I was AFTER. This is the idea Paul has in mind when he speaks of being AFTER the flesh and AFTER the Spirit. We manifest whether we are a natural man or a spiritual man by what we are after, what we are actively pursuing in our lives.

The man who is forever worrying about the welfare of the physical man will always have in mind ways and means of catering to him – how he can provide a better old age pension, how he can get a better home, newer car, fancier clothes, how he can provide more to see and hear and taste and feel and smell. He expends all his energies to try to make sure the physical man will never be in need. He is always mindful of the physical flesh and all that does is for the physical flesh. He does nothing more than the animals do. He lives his life out on the same plane as does the animal kingdom. He pursues the corruptible things of earth, the things that make for bodily comfort and pleasure, and does not mind the things of the spirit. A man or woman who cares much about the pleasures of the body such as eating and drinking and sexual passion, holding in high esteem such corruptible things as houses and lands, fine clothes, bodily adornments, bank accounts, and luxuries of all kinds, will never, as long as his life is wrapped up in the pursuing of those things, attain to the glory of sonship to God. It is not that such things are wicked or abominable before God, for He has promised to add "all these things" unto us as we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. But I declare to you that to the natural man who is pursuing all these things they are enemies of the spirit because they never give you leave to seek God without distraction. Carnally minded men, whether they be people of the world or professing Christians, are filled with delusion that those who hold in low esteem the corruptible things of earth, turning instead to the eternal values of the spirit, are living lives that are not worth living. But such persons do not know that the opposite is true, for *"she who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."* (I Tim. 5:6)

The moment we grasp the meaning of the scripture, *"They who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh,"* at that moment we can understand what the carnal mind is. The carnal mind is the fleshly mind and the flesh mind minds fleshly things and none of the fleshly things of earth have one iota of LIFE in them! *"To be carnally (fleshly) minded is DEATH."* (Rom. 8:6) Not only in his relation to that spiritual man, but to the whole Spiritual World, the natural man is regarded as DEAD. He is as a stone compared to an organism. The Natural World is to the Spiritual World as the inorganic to the organic. *"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art DEAD."* (Rev. 3:1) *"To you hath He given life which were DEAD in trespasses and sins."* (Eph. 2:1) It is not possible to know God or experience God through any of the physical senses of the body, or through any earthly thing. Those who dwell in the earth realm and live unto the physical world abide in death.

The man who has set his heart and affection on things ABOVE has come to the place where he not only holds in low esteem the things of the earth and of his own body, but he despises them as well, even hating them, for he has learned that these are barriers to his quest after LIFE and REALITY. Jesus knew this great truth when He said that a man could not be His disciples unless he hated his brothers and sisters and father and mother and even his own life also, being willing to forsake all to find CHRIST. In the world today there is a small minority who spend their lives minding the things of the spirit. The welfare of the inner Spiritual man is foremost in their thoughts, for they seek to partake of THE MIND OF CHRIST. They esteem the realm of the flesh as less than nothing, as common dung, seeking always to be one mind with the Father. These, being after the Spirit, mind the things of the Spirit. The Spiritual man has partaken of a life that transcends the physical - a new and distinct and supernatural endowment. He is no longer of this world. He is of the timeless state, Eternity. He is, even now, a son of God and it doth not yet appear what he shall be. The difference then between the Spiritual man and the Natural man is not a difference of development, but of generation. It is a distinction of the quality of life. The life of the Natural man is of so poor a quality that it is not even life at all, for it is filled with the corruptible mind of the flesh and the power of death. And he is absolutely helpless to do anything about it!

The inorganic world is staked off from the living world barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, no chemistry, no electricity, nor any form of energy, nor any evolution can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. Only by the bending down into this dead world of some living form can these dead atoms be gifted with the properties of life, without this direct contact with life they remain fixed in the inorganic sphere forever. It is a very mysterious law which guards in this way the portals of the living world. And if there is one thing in nature worth pondering for its strangeness it is the spectacle of this vast helpless world of the dead cut off from the living by the Law of Biogenesis and denied for ever the possibility of resurrection within itself. Here we stand in the presence of the uncrossable gulf – the gulf of all gulfs – the gulf between death and life.

CROSSING THE UNCROSSABLE GULF

The Word of God contains an explicit and original statement of the Law of Biogenesis as it applies to the Spiritual life. In the vision of the Spiritual World presented in the scriptures, the first thing that draws the attention is a great gulf fixed. The passage from the Natural World to the Spiritual World is hermetically sealed on the natural side. In the Natural World the door from the inorganic to the organic is shut, no mineral can open it; so, the door from the Natural to the Spiritual is shut, and no man can open it; the door from the earthly to the heavenly is shut, and no power of earth can open it. This world of natural men, of carnal minds, is staked off from the Spiritual World of God by barriers which have never been crossed from within. No organic change, no modification of environment, no mental energy, no moral effort, no improvement of character, no religious exercise, no ritual or ceremony or tradition can endow any single human soul with the attributes of SPIRITUAL LIFE. The Spiritual World of God and His sons is guarded from the world next in order beneath it, the world of the carnal mind, by a Law of Biogenesis - *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God... except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."* (John. 3:3-7)

It is not said, in this statement of the Law, that if the condition be not fulfilled the Natural man will not enter the Kingdom of God. The word is, cannot. It is not that God arbitrarily shuts out the Spiritually dead from the kingdom of the Spiritually living. There is a scientific Law involved here. Paul by inspiration pointed out this Law: *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* (I Cor. 2:14) It is not simply that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, but he cannot. It is as utterly impossible for the carnal mind to know Spiritual things as it is for a stone to spontaneously generate life. The entrance of the Natural man into the things of the Spirit of God is simply a scientific impossibility!

The Law is: Except a mineral be born "from above" – from the Kingdom just above it – it cannot enter the Kingdom just above it. And except a man be born "from above," he cannot enter the Kingdom just above him. There being no passage from the lower Kingdom to the higher, whether from inorganic to organic, or from natural to Spiritual, the injection of a LIFE is a necessity if a stone or a plant or an animal or a man is to pass from a lower sphere to a higher sphere. So long as wheat is wheat it is can never be anything more than wheat. But when man makes bread out of the wheat, the bread rises up into man and is transmitted into man,

becoming man. The man eats the wheat and gains two pounds of human flesh. Whence came the two new pounds of humanity? Why, from the wheat! Yet wheat no longer pertains to the vegetable (plant) kingdom, it is now raised up into the human (animal) kingdom. It is human. The wheat now walks, acts, and thinks on the human plane. The earth will never possess the Kingdom of God so long as eternity shall endure. It must be the other way about. The Kingdom of God, the higher Kingdom, must possess the earth. Though the Kingdom of God is within me, yet I cannot possess it. It must possess me, or it will never been known. If I try to possess Christ, I will be as barren in the future as I have been in the past, but if CHRIST POSSESSES ME, then I will be hid with Christ in God and God will raise me up to find my existence in the realm of His divine life and glory.

As we consider these thoughts may God Almighty grant that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. Let us open wide our hearts and minds before the Lord that He may reveal the eternal truth of this subject to our hearts. The principle by which, in nature, the inorganic is raised up into the organic, and, in like manner, in God's economy, the natural man is raised up out of death into the life of the Kingdom of God, is stated simply by the Lord Jesus in **Matt. 13:31-32**: *"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs."* Let us UNDERSTAND! How are the inorganic, non-living mineral elements of the earth raised up into the organic Kingdom of living things? You begin with a seed. Within the seed is a germ of life. The seed containing the life is planted in the earth, in the Kingdom of the dead. Once buried in the earth, with all the right amounts of water and air, and the right temperatures, the seed germinates and the life within the seed begins to grow. Finally the shell of the seed bursts and there takes place a release of the life from the seed. As the life is released it immediately seizes upon the chemical elements in the earth, converts them into food, and then builds up living tissue out of matter that never lived! The inorganic chemicals become organic tissue! The dead is converted into the living! The lifeless elements of the earth are transformed into the substance of the living plant. This is one of the most amazing facts in nature, though it is happening every minute all around us! Now we can see clearly what the Lord Jesus meant when He said that the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, but when it is sowed in the field, and becomes grown, it is the greatest of herbs. The plant stretches down to the dead world beneath it, touches its minerals and gases with its mystery of life, and brings them up ennobled and transformed to the living sphere. In like manner, the breath of God, blowing where it listeth, touches with its mystery of divine life the dead souls of men, bears them across the bridgeless gulf between the Natural and Spiritual, endows them with its own holy and eternal and divine qualities, and produces within them these new and marvelous faculties, by which those who are born of the Spirit are said to see the Kingdom of God and enter the Kingdom of God.

How futile in the face of such truth as this is any form of self reformation! How worthless and unprofitable the empty rituals and the vain and lifeless traditions of Babylon's religion! Place a lifeless rock in the dead earth and nothing will happen. Administer lifeless ceremonies and dead doctrines to a man dead in trespasses and sins and likewise nothing will happen. However thorough the self reformation may be, however beautiful the traditions and doctrines of religion, however impressive and inspiring to the soulish nature of man the rituals and ceremonies, the music and the programs, it leaves us without life and hopelessly dead to the glorious realities of the Spirit of God. Well did faithful Paul bear witness to the life-giving work of the Spirit in the lives of the Ephesians when he said, *"You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...but God, who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, hath QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST... and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* (Eph. 2:1-5)

LIVING BY THE TREE OF LIFE

What is this wonderful and mysterious quality which constitutes Spiritual Life? What is this strange new power which can raise us up out of the realm of darkness and death and give us eternal life and glory as sons of the living God? The answer is brief – it is Christ! *"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."* (I John. 5:12) Yes, beloved brother, sister, Christ is our life and He is the only Tree of Life in the Garden where we have been planted by faith. "The Garden," which always has the significance of the Kingdom of Heaven, has been re-established on earth by the redemptive work of Christ Jesus. When Jesus rose from the dead and sent forth His Spirit into the hearts of men on the day of Pentecost, the Garden of Eden was re-established in the earth and the Tree of Life was once more planted on earth in the midst of the Garden. The life of Christ by the Eternal Spirit was again made accessible to man by faith. Is it not sadly true

that there hangs over our lives that ominous and gray cloud of our own mortality? It frustrates all of our plans; it dampens our hopes; it diminishes our joy. And yet, Jesus, by His tremendous resurrection, blasts through that darkening cloud and lets in the glorious blue sky of eternity. He would have us know that we shall live forever. I want you to know that is a blessed thought. How it fills my heart with excitement to think that when we look up into the night sky and see the magnificent galaxies, that we can know that when these galaxies have turned to blackened embers, we who have been seized upon by the resurrection life of Jesus Christ, shall not yet have begun to live. We shall live fully and forever.

How this higher life of God reaches down into the earth which we are, seizing upon the earthly elements of our natural life, quickening, changing, transforming, raising us up into the blessed Kingdom of the Spirit, is first to be seen in the life of Jesus as He came into this earth realm. In the very beginning God formed man of the dust of the ground, made him a living soul, and placed him in a garden, in a condition and state of being, with the Tree of Life set before him. God's distinct objective was to infuse man with His own divine and eternal life, lift him up by quickening and transforming power into union with Himself that he should become like Himself. Man was to be a body for God to dwell in. The closest and most intimate union, the indwelling of love: this was what the Holy One longed for, and looked forward to. What was very feebly set forth in type in the temple in Israel became a divine reality in the person of Jesus of Nazareth: God had found a man in whom He could rest, with whom He could enter into union, whose whole being was opened to the rule of His will and nature and fellowship of His love. In Him there was a human nature, and a body of flesh, to be possessed by the Divine Spirit. The Divine Spirit would enter into that human nature, that body of flesh, and so possess it that it would be quickened and raised up into union with God in His very own plane of life and glory. His Sonship on earth was the planting of the Divine Seed of the Father's life into a human body and nature, to seize upon it, to bear it across the bridgeless gulf between the Natural World or men and the Spiritual World of God, to perfect the Son of man and bring His humanity into perfect fellowship and unity with Himself. His resurrection was the entrance of human nature, free from all the weakness of the flesh, into the life of Deity, the Divine Spirit-life. His ascension was admittance as Man into the very glory of God; the participation by human nature of perfect oneness with God in glory in the unity of the Spirit. All this was fulfilled in the first-born Son, and yet, with all this, the work was not yet complete. Something was still wanting. Such God would have all men to be! And such all would be, as they accepted of this Jesus and His Spirit as their life. Man is powerless to carry himself across the impassable gulf between corruption and incorruption, the carnal mind and the Spiritual mind, death and life. But, blessed be God! Jesus has opened up the way.

To bring a dead natural man with his carnal mind of death up into the higher Kingdom of Divine Life necessitates the implantation of the incorruptible seed of God into man's earthiness. The point I want to make very clear is that the New Creation is more than the eternal and incorruptible life of God from heaven. The New Creation is that life planted in the earth, seizing upon the earth, changing and transforming the earth, raising it up to find its existence in the higher Kingdom of Divine Life. Jesus is the pattern. We know how the Word, who had from eternity dwelt in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended up into the Father realm from whence He had come, He was still the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of man, the first begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself. In His resurrection and ascension He was no longer only the Mighty God, but He was the Mighty God who's Divine Life and Nature had laid hold upon the humanity of man and had raised it up into identification with Himself. The Son of man became the Son of God. The whole wonderful work of Christ in redemption was not merely to deliver man from the law and its curse of death, but to BRING HUMAN NATURE ITSELF UP INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DIVINE LIFE, TO MAKE US PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. This is the work of the Tree of Life. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field."

Even now at this very moment the life that we live is this body of flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God; and that faith assures us fully that the incorruptible seed, sown by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit, shall issue forth in incorruption, immortality and eternal life. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Death is corruption and Life is incorruption. As the rush cannot grow without mire (Job. 8:11), as the reed cannot grow without water, as the mustard seed cannot grow without earth, so, in a manner beyond my understanding, the incorruptible Christ seed, planted in the corruptible earth which we are, bears its fruit in immortality, incorruption and eternal life; the NEW CREATION. The seed cannot

become a tree without the earth and the earth cannot become a tree without the seed. The tree is neither the life in the seed nor the elements of the earth. The tree is the elements of the earth QUICKENED AND MADE ALIVE by the transforming power of the life in the seed! Such is the New Creation. The New Creation is neither the eternal God nor is it man. The New Creation is CHRIST, the God-man, humanity admitted into the full glory of the Divine, human nature received up into union with the eternal Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is composed of redeemed men who are putting on the divine nature and the incorruptible life of God.

Even now at this very moment the divine life is at work within us, changing, transforming, lifting us up into the higher Kingdom. The life of Christ is not something outside ourselves. I am wearied a little because so very often I hear God's precious people singing such songs as "Oh Lord, Send the Power Just Now," or "Jesus is Passing This Way." I rejoice that there are indeed those special "times of refreshing" that come from the presence of the Lord but I can assure you, beloved brother, sister, that you will never know the glorious reality of sonship to God so long as you live in that consciousness and mentality of "times of refreshing." The consuming desire within my heart in this the end of the age is that God's chosen people might with me become aware of the abiding presence of God. The message of life and triumph that even in this dark and evil hour reverberates through the yielded spirit of every saint separated unto God by His Holy Spirit is this: It is possible for saints here and now to live with the constant and full assurance that even as the almighty Father indwelt and continually permeated the life of Jesus of Nazareth, so does the Divine Spirit of Christ live and abide within those who are separated unto the Lamb to follow Him whithersoever He goes. As the years have passed since I first heard the call of the Spirit unto the blessed realm of sonship to God, there has come to me an ever increasing assurance that I am dwelling and walking in HIS PRESENCE, for He is not momentarily passing my way but has been impregnated into my earthen vessel as the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and ABIDETH FOREVER.

God is no longer far away; He is no longer without; He is here. No longer need saints say, "Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring Christ up again from the dead?" The Word (Christ) is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. How exceedingly wonderful are the words of scripture: *"Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you?" (II Cor. 7:5) "Your bodies are the members of Christ." (I Cor. 6:15) "At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." (John. 14:10) "We will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John. 14:21-23) "I am the vine, ye are the branches." (John. 15:4) "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. 2:20) "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whose eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; for My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him." (John. 6:53-56)*

I would say to you again that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which many babes in the Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable (plant) life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth now and then when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is in every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and substance, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism. Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the Spiritual Life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of the spirit of man. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a... seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field." The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He "passes this way," nor from the weekly reviving or refreshing that comes to our weary souls as we gather together in our church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship and encouragement of those of like precious faith, but I declare to you that the life of sonship can only be known as we become sensitive to the reality of CHRIST ABIDING WITHIN, conscious of His Spirit speaking, His hand guiding, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the mind and the body into the image of Him who created them. With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ's indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you. Nevertheless, I can confidently assure you that, the moment the

grand and glorious fact of His indwelling life grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life. Yea, and I shall further add that the knowledge of His abiding life will also begin to change your mind, quicken your emotions, and renew your body as well.

As speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are the evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, so the redemption of our bodies from the power of decay and death is the evidence of the manifestation of the sons of God. *"We ourselves too, who have and enjoy the first-fruits of the Spirit - a foretaste of the blissful things to come – groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, which will reveal our adoption, our manifestation as God's Sons."* (Rom. 8:23, Amp. Bible) This change in our bodies shall not come by the mighty working of Christ crashing down through the clouds over heads, but by the divine inworking of His indwelling life. Centuries ago the apostle Paul penned these wonderful words of consolation and faith: *"If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive, immortally) your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU."* (Rom. 8:11)

In Phil. 3:21 Paul says that Christ *"shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."* The Amplified Bible reads: *"Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty."* This phrase, body of humiliation, is a more correct rendering of the Greek. I must confess that it is indeed humiliating to be found in a body like this! It is humiliating to find it necessary to chew mints to keep the breath from offending those around us. It is humiliating to be so weary from traveling and ministering that at times it is difficult to sit up and fellowship with God's precious saints. It is humiliating to get laryngitis in the middle of a Convention where hundreds of saints have gathered to receive the teaching of these glorious kingdom truths. It is humiliating to be bald at twenty-four years of age and gray at thirty! It is humiliating to sense weakness, to feel the labors of years taking their toll, to see new wrinkles in the face, flabbiness of skin and muscle here and there, reminders, one and all, of the earthiness and mortality and corruptibility of these fragile bodies. I will never forget an incident in Canada some thirty years ago when I had traveled day and night for two days to get to a Conference where I was scheduled to be one of the speakers. When I arrived my clothes were disheveled, I need a bath and my eyes were bloodshot. The Conference had already started, and not knowing where I was to stay, I slipped into the building to find someone to direct me. I later learned that when I entered the building a number of saints, not knowing who I was, thought a drunk had staggered into the meeting! Body of humiliation! "Who shall transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty." Glorious anticipation, this!

Paul tells us again in I Cor. 15:51-52 how this marvelous change shall come about. *"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."* The Greek word for the "moment" is ATOMOS. This passage is the only place in the Greek New Testament where this word is used. ATOMOS is the word from which comes our English word ATOM. The word carried the meaning in the Greek of that which is UNCUTTABLE or INDIVISIBLE because the Greeks believed that the atom was the smallest particle of matter that existed, therefore it could not be divided, cut, split, or reduced in any way. The translators have taken this to mean that our bodies shall be changed in "an atom of time," that is, in an instant of time so brief that you could not make it any quicker, or reduce the time in any measure. But does not this word ATOMOS indicate that we shall be changed in the ATOMS of our bodies, in the very structure and substance of our physical being, in the ATOMICAL STRUCTURE of our bodies? "We shall be changed in ATOMS, in ATOMICAL STRUCTURE, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump!"

Truly we yearn for this change, yea, groan inwardly for the transformation to take place. I continually meet up with brethren who believe that they have already put on immortality and incorruption, that they have already passed over the grave and cannot or will not die. I must be very honest and frank with you, my beloved brothers. I have not one whit of a desire to live forever IN THIS BODY OF HUMILIATION. There is no more repugnant thought, no more frightful possibility, than the idea that I might live forever in this body of humiliation! The thought of such limitation, the suggestion that I might have bathe, brush my teeth and use Scope throughout eternity, the hint that I may retain this same form, that I might be as I am unendingly, falls as far short of what I comprehend of a body made like unto His body of glory and majesty as does hell fall short of heaven! The body of the resurrection shall resemble this vile body no more than does the mustard tree

resemble the chemical elements of the earth which were raised up into the substance of the tree by the mighty working of the subtle and mysterious life-force sown in the earth as a seed.

Son of God! If we would be fashioned like unto Him, co-sharers of His glory and power and wisdom as the God-man, we must not simply rest content with the faith that trusts in the cross and its pardon; we must follow on to know the fullness of the New Life, the life of glory and power in human nature, injected into man through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, of which the Spirit of the glorified Jesus is the witness and the source. Now, practically everything in relation to our sonship depends upon the clearness with which this great truth that I have stated is recognized. The Holy Spirit of God inspired the message of these words in **Rom. 5:9-11**: *"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE... and... we joy... in our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement."* The double provision of Christ is here clearly set for: reconciled by His death; saved by His life. Christ's death is the atonement, reconciling men to God, granting a full and free admittance back into Eden's lovely garden from which our disobedient fore parents were once banished. But Christ's life is the Tree of Life in the garden, the source of the life which shall work in us the complete transformation into the divine nature. Sin, sickness, sorrow, fear and death are all part of a power in our life; let us fully understand that it can only be met by another higher power. The power of sin and death works all through our life. The death of Christ, which is the atonement, reconciles us to God, but only the life of Christ can come against the power of sin and death and deliver our life from destruction. Reconciliation places us, in God's eyes, back in Eden's garden; but the Tree of Life is the power that delivers my life from the dominion of sin and death. He redeemeth my life, by His life, from death! Christ's life, not His death, living in our life, absorbing it, impregnating it, transforming it causes us to live. This is the meaning of that profound sentence in which Paul records the first great work of salvation and pointedly distinguishes it from the second great work of salvation, saying, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

"We shall be saved by His LIFE," says Paul. Paul meant no disrespect to the atonement when he said, *"We shall be saved by His life."* He was bringing out one of the great facts of salvation. If God gives atoning power with one hand, and power to save the life from destruction with the other hand, there is no conflict between these. Both are from God. If you call the one justification and the other glorification, God is the author of them both. If Paul seems to take something from the one work and add it to the other, he takes nothing from God. Atonement is from God! Reconciliation is from God! Power to conquer sin and death is from God! Christ is all in all, the beginning and the end. When the thing we want is deliverance from the guilt of sin, condemnation, let us appropriate the gift God has given us to remove our guilt – the DEATH of Christ. *"In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins."* (**Col. 1:14**) When the thing we want is power to redeem our life from sin, corruption and death, then let us apply the gift which God has given us for our life, the LIFE of the Son of God. "He that hath the Son hath life."

When an Israelite was bitten by flaming serpents in the wilderness, he never thought of applying manna to the wound. The manna was for his life. But he did think of applying the brazen serpent. The manna would never have cured his snake bite; nor would the brazen serpent have kept him from starving! Suppose he had said, "Now I am healed by this serpent, I feel cured, and I need not eat this manna anymore. The serpent has done it all, and I am well." The result would have been, of course, that he would have died. The man, to be sure, was cured, delivered from the judgment of his rebellion against God, but he has to LIVE, and if he eats no manna his life must languish, go to destruction, and die. Without going to any trouble about it, simply by the inevitable processes of nature, he would have died. The manna was God's provision to redeem his life from destruction, after the serpent had redeemed it from judgment. And if he did nothing to stop the natural progress of corruption, in the natural course of things, he must die. Now there is no contradiction between these two things – the manna is from God and the serpent is from God. But they are different gifts for different things. The serpent removed the judgment, but could not sustain life; the manna gave life, but could not deal with the sentence. To apply this to the case in hand: The death of Christ, on the one hand, is the brazen serpent. *"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (on the cross)."* (**John. 3:14**) Christ's life, on the other hand, is the manna – the bread of life. *"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down*

from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John. 6:50-51)

Of all the wealth of scripture truth nothing is more certain or clear than the fact that our sins are not forgiven by bread, nor are our lives nourished and supported by death. Our life is not made incorruptible and eternal by Christ's death, nor transformed from day to day from the power of sin and death by the atonement. Our life is not redeemed from destruction by the crucifixion of Christ, nor is it brought to perfection from day to day by the death of Christ. But we are saved, as the Holy Ghost saith, “by HIS LIFE.” We cannot live upon death. And after, by the atonement, we are forgiven, and have entered by faith through the gateway into Eden's fair garden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, having acceptance before God, we shall then be saved, delivered, changed, transformed, perfected and fully glorified BY HIS LIFE. The atonement gives us the right to enter back into Eden, but only the tree of life can make us live! To sum up, therefore, it is one thing to be reconciled by the death of Christ, and quite another to be saved by His life. If reconciliation and justification could make men to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD then all the baby Christians in all of Babylon's harlot religious systems would be well on their way to sonship. The death of Christ can make one a justified believer, bringing him to life, but only the mighty working of the indwelling life of God's Christ can enable us to put on the mind of Christ and be transformed in thought, desire, emotion, nature and body into His likeness. He redeemeth my life from destruction. How? By His life. This is the power of a full and complete salvation! Unspeakable are the blessings of the high and heavenly realm of God's incorruptible life which flow to the soul from the union with Jesus in His glorified life.

There may be serious differences of opinion about the promises of Christ's coming again. To one it is plain as day that He is coming very speedily in person to reign on earth, and that speedy coming is his hope and stay. To another, loving the Lord and His eternal purposes no less, the coming of Christ bespeaks the full and glorious revelation of Christ in and through His glorified many-membered body on earth. There is much interest in the study of those things which must shortly come to pass in the earth: The coming of the Lord, the great tribulation, the manifestation of the antichrist, the mark of the beast, one-world government, the World Church, the millennial kingdom, the two witnesses, the place of the United States, Russia, China and the European Common Market, etc. etc. etc. How often God's chosen ones get more caught up in the understanding and exposition of all these things than in the putting on of the mind of Christ in union with HIS INDWELLING LIFE. It is by abiding in Christ the Glorified One that the believer will be quickened to that truly spiritual looking for His coming, which alone brings reality within. It is not our analyzing of the schedule of so-called end-time events, nor the correctness of the views we hold, nor the earnestness with which we advocate them, that will prepare us for the momentous things that lie ahead, but the abiding in Him, the heavenliness that shows that the Coming One is indeed already our life. Thus only can our being manifested with Him in glory be what it is meant to be - a transfiguration, a breaking out and shining forth of the INDWELLING GLORY that had been waiting for the day of revelation.

Blessed life of the ages! We have the possession within our earth of its hidden power, and we have the prospect before us of its fullest glory. May our daily lives, in all we think and say and do, be bright and blessed proof that the hidden dwells within, daily preparing us for the glory to be revealed. May the eternal and incorruptible fruit of our redeemed life within be our power to live to the glory of the Father, our fitness to share the glory of the Son.

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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ECHOES from EDEN, PART 6
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART SIX
THREE TREES IN THE GARDEN

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow EVERY TREE THAT IS PLEASANT to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL." (Gen. 2:8-9)

One of the many Oriental symbols which, when understood, opens the door to a storehouse of marvelous truth is the word TREE. It has pleased God, on the unveiling of His great plan and purposes to couch His truth in Semitic symbols which are so natural to the Asian mind. Both the Old and the New Testaments are full of a pictorial symbolism which, when understood, is far more expressive than a thousand words in many instances. However, the symbolisms of Scripture also force those who would understand to plunge far beneath the surface to see its more profound meanings. Two things are absolutely essential to the understanding of the great truths of God contained in symbols. One is to search out and understand Asian customs and the characteristics of the Hebrew mind. The other is the SPIRIT OF REVELATION from God!

Jesus employed this method of teaching – using symbols. In fact, the scripture says: *"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in PARABLES, and without a parable spake He not unto them."* (Matt. 13:34) The word "parable" is translated in the Old Testament from the Hebrew word (mashal) which means "a similitude or likeness." In the New Testament it is translated from the Greek word (parabole) meaning "a pithy and instructive saying, involving some comparison and having perceptive or admonitory force." Another Greek word translated "parable" is (paroimia) which is "a symbolic or figurative saying which shadows forth some didactic truth."

It is interesting to note exactly when Jesus began to use this method of teaching. So abrupt was the change in His form of teaching that His disciples asked Him why He did this. Jesus answered, *"Because it is given unto YOU to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to THEM it is NOT GIVEN."* (Matt. 13:11) It has pleased God to set forth much of His deeper truth – the mysteries of the Kingdom – in such a manner that it becomes revealed to the Spirit-anointed mind while at the same time remaining concealed from others. And so it was that Jesus often closed His public teaching with this statement: *"He that hath ears to hear, let HIM hear!"* May God give us ears!

TREES REPRESENT MEN

Trees are used to represent men all through the Scriptures. In **Isa. 61:1-3** the trees represent God's chosen ones at the end of this age. *"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me...to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give 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."* In **Ps. 1:1-3**, speaking again of God's elect people, the Spirit declares: *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly...but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a TREE planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."* Again in **Ps. 92:12-13**: *"THE RIGHTEOUS shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be PLANTED IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God."*

Pointing to the day when the Lord shall come forth to deal with all the nations and bring His glorious Kingdom to pass in all the earth, the Spirit says: *"Say among the nations that the Lord reigns; the world also is established, that it cannot be moved; He shall judge and rule the people righteously and with justice. Let the*

heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice... THEN SHALL ALL THE TREES OF THE WOOD (the people) sing for joy before the Lord!" (Ps. 96:10-13)

Of wicked and impious men David said, *"I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree."* (Ps. 37:35) Jude described certain apostates in the early Church in these terms: *"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness ... these are spots in your feasts... TREES WHOSE FRUIT WITHERETH, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."* (Jude 1:4, 12)

FRUIT AFTER ITS KIND

The word "tree" makes its first appearance in the Bible in **Gen. 1:11**. *"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind...and it was so." At first glance it would seem that this is simply a declaration that God is the creator of fruit trees, but such is not the case. It is true that God is the creator of all things, including fruit trees, but this verse has much more to it than merely a declaration of origins. The statement of particular interest is that the FRUIT TREE is to yield fruit "after its kind."* This is, of course, a statement of scientific fact and natural law. Apple trees produce apples and orange trees produce oranges and so on. But if we stop there we fall short of what all this means in the symbolic language of Scripture. For this "after its kind" law is a fact not only in the physical world, but in the SPIRITUAL WORLD as well!

Jesus spoke of this "after its kind" principle when he said to Nicodemus: *"That which is born of the flesh IS FLESH, and that which is born of the Spirit IS SPIRIT."* (John. 3:6) Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God human beings have to be born again – becoming the offspring of a NEW STOCK.

James has a great commentary on this principle in the third chapter of his epistle, as he comments on the unbridled tongues of men: *"Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives? Either a vine, figs? Neither does a fountain yield both salt water and fresh! Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good life his works with meekness and wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. Such wisdom is descended not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish, for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easily entreated, full of mercy and GOOD FRUITS, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. The FRUIT of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace."*

Finally, Jesus says, *"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM."* (Matt. 7:16-19)

THREE TREES IN THE GARDEN

It is abundantly clear that different kinds of trees are used in the scriptures to represent different kinds of men. It is, therefore, of special interest to examine a little further the significance of the three kinds of trees in Eden. I have explained in previous articles that these three kinds of trees are: (1) all the trees of the garden, (2) the tree of life, (3) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The three kinds of trees stand for THREE KINDS OF MEN. Now, we know that in the beginning there were not three kinds of men, for there was only one Adam. Then came Eve, but she was one in substance and nature with Adam, so we still have only one kind of person. However, in the one man Adam we do have three POTENTIAL kinds of men! Adam was a particular kind of man, yet he had the POTENTIAL to become an altogether different kind of man – either a higher and better kind, or a lower and worse kind. So in Eden, while we have only one man, we have three potential kinds of men in that one man.

It is plain to all who see with spiritual eyes that the tree of life represents CHRIST who IS our life. Christ has been manifested on earth as a man, the second Adam, and Christ is THE TREE OF LIFE KIND OF MAN! *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away; behold, all things*

are become new." (II Cor. 5:17) All of those who make up that blessed company of men and women who are "in Christ" are the TREE OF LIFE KIND OF PEOPLE, the kind Adam could have been if he had appropriated his POTENTIAL upward in God.

When Christ comes into us, He comes within as the all-sufficient Spirit to make us all that we must be as God-men. Soon, now, there shall come that long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God to this sin-cursed world. Creation shall be set free from its bondage to corruption. We shall behold the glory, wisdom, and power of the Son of God manifested in all fullness in a many-membered body right here upon this earth. These sons are even now putting on the fullness of His divine life in spirit, soul and body. They are being transformed into His image, filled with His wisdom, quickened by His life. How the whole creation groans and travails for this! The work of preparation is even now in full swing; Paul tells us that this is when Christ shall come *"to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."* (II Thes.1:10) Let us believe it, beloved; for He comes to be glorified in all them that believe (for it) in that day! Hallelujah!

Here I would share some inspired and challenging words from a brother we labored with some years ago. He began with the beautiful text from the Gospel of **John, chapter six**. *"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst ... it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."* In order to understand the great mystery that Jesus is seeking to reveal to us in these verses, you need to understand the word, "quickeneth," that is used in the King James translation. It is an old English word that the King James translators used to describe the original wording in the Greek scripture, which meant "to give life," or "that giveth life," or "that is the source of life." So what Jesus was really saying here is, *"It is the Spirit that giveth life,"* or *"It is the Spirit that is the source of your life."* The next thing we need to understand in order to comprehend this great mystery is that when Jesus said, *"It is the Spirit that giveth life,"* or *"is the source of your life,"* He was not talking about the Holy Spirit of God alone, but He was talking about your own spirit, for, *"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."* (I Cor. 6:17) Your own quickened, regenerated, recreated, born-again spirit – which is the Son of God dwelling in you – is the source of your Life.

The next thing we need to understand, to comprehend this mystery, is the meaning of the word "profit" Jesus used here when He said, *"The flesh profiteth nothing."* Now the profit on any investment is always the increase. It is that which was not, which is created out of the investment's creative powers of that which one starts with. If I invest a thousand dollars, and it brings back two thousand dollars, then the second thousand dollars is the increase, the profit, that is literally brought forth out of the creative powers that were in the first thousand dollars to increase itself, to double itself, when properly invested. Therefore, this word "profit" is a creative word. It implies the power to create, to increase one's self, or to reproduce one's self. Therefore, when Jesus said, "The flesh profiteth nothing," what He was trying to get over to us is that there is no creative power in the flesh — in anything that is physical and material in this earth. It cannot increase itself, it cannot reproduce itself; in fact, it can't even sustain the life that it has, for if our spirit was to depart from our flesh body, it would immediately begin to deteriorate and go back to the dust from whence it came. When Jesus said, *"The flesh profiteth nothing,"* He was revealing to us that every visible, carnal, natural, material, physical thing in this world, including our own flesh body, is not creative. It has no power to increase itself; it doesn't even have the power to sustain its own life. All it can ever be is the visible manifestation or expression of the Life of Spirit, and of the creative power that is in Spirit.

On the other hand, when Jesus said, *"It is the spirit that quickeneth,"* or *"It is the spirit that giveth life,"* or *"is the source of your life,"* what He was seeking to reveal to us is that the spirit is creative, that our regenerated spirit has creative power. Therefore, the great mystery and the great truth that Jesus was seeking to reveal to those who can receive and understand it is that it is our own spirit that is the source of our life, that we carry the source of our life around in our own beings; and therefore, our own spirit being the source of our life we are not dependent on anything outside of our own being for our life. For you see, when you are a source, you are the beginning. A spring from which a river comes out of the earth and flows into the earth is the beginning of that river. It is the source from which the water of that river comes. And therefore that's what Jesus was trying to get over to us – that since we have been born of the seed of God, and since Christ, who is the beginning and

the end, is that regenerated, recreated, born-again spirit that is within us, it is your spirit that giveth life, or that is the source of your life, and being a source within itself, is therefore not dependent on anything outside of itself for its life. For when you are a source, you are the beginning; therefore you are not dependent on anything before you or anything after you, or anything outside of you for your life. The truth that Jesus teaches us is that we carry the source of our life within our own spirit and we are not dependent on any fleshly thing outside of our own spirit for our life. It is because Jesus came to the revelation of this truth and the reality of it within Himself that He could step out into the world and say, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." Knowing that He carried the source, the beginning of His life within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the beginning." Knowing that the creative power that was in His spirit to bring forth His final destiny, and that that destiny was under the control of the creative powers that were within His own spirit, He could say, "I am the end."

When Jesus said, "*The flesh profiteth nothing – it is the spirit that quickeneth, that is the source of your life,*" He was revealing to us the great truth that the source of our life is not in the flesh, not in the visible, not in the carnal, physical, material things, or anything that is of this natural world; but all those things are but outward manifestations of the creative powers that are in the life of Spirit, and that the source of our life is in our own spirit. Now the problem with all of God's people, you see, is that they have not known this great truth. They have thought that they are dependent for their lives on the carnal, material, physical things of the flesh of this world – natural money, natural housing, natural clothing, natural food, natural body, natural abilities, the laws completely dependent upon them that if we were cut off from them – if we lost our job, lost our money, lost our housing, lost our food – we thought that we would die! For you see, this is the great life that the devil deceived man with through the fall. When man lost the consciousness of his spiritual nature, and degenerated down into the consciousness of the carnal, natural nature, the devil convinced man that he was dependent upon the visible and the physical and the natural for his life – natural money, natural job, natural business, natural body, natural housing, natural clothing, natural possessions, natural food – natural, natural, natural! We have been so convinced that that is the source of our life that we have been scared to death that if we were cut off from that source of life, we would die.

Jesus, in our text, when He was out in the Wilderness with his people, and needed bread, by-passed the natural resources, by-passed the wheat field, by-passed the flour mill and sat down on the ground, and through the operation of that spiritual law of faith, drew right out from within His own spirit enough bread to feed five thousand people. For you see, beloved, there is a source of life, and all that pertains to life, including bread that sustains life, which is not dependent on the natural resources of this world. It is the original source of life – SPIRIT. The Bible makes it very clear that all life, and every manifestation of life that is in this universe, originally came right out of Spirit. Thus the apostle Paul says in Heb. 11:3 that through faith we understand that the worlds were framed, by the Word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Therefore, the Bible says that everything in this world which is visible and physical – in the beginning, originally, was not made of something visible or tangible already existing – which does not appear – but was made of the resources that came originally right out of Spirit, by the spoken word of faith. Therefore, you see, Jesus, as who was not subject to the laws of nature, neither underneath them; and therefore not dependent on the natural resources for bread, but could by-pass them. He was a spiritual Son of God who was sovereign over all physical laws, and therefore could go right back to the original source of bread and draw it right out of His own spirit.

Do you notice how easily Jesus did this? The scripture says that Jesus instructed His disciples, "*Make the men sit down.*" You see, when you get bread from this source, you don't have to get it standing up, with a plow or a sickle in your hand, laboring and sweating, as men have for six thousand years, since they've been under the curse; but you can sit quietly down and bring forth all things sitting down. The men sat down, and Jesus sat quietly down with them. The record states that Jesus just quietly took the loaves of bread, and when He had given thanks, he distributed it to the disciples – as much as they would. You see there was no shortage here. Everyone got to eat as much as he wanted, as much as he would! And Jesus did it so smoothly and so easily – He simply sat down, gave thanks, and began to hand it out. He didn't have to go through all the soulish and natural things that we do today, in order to work up a little faith. He didn't have to go through a thirty-minute praise service, dance around in the spirit for ten or fifteen minutes, speak in tongues, prophesy, and then say, "In the name of Jesus, let there be bread!" This great truth that we're seeking to share with you,

that it is the spirit – the Spirit of Christ in your own spirit – that the source of Life, had become so real to Him that, moving in the spiritual law of faith, He could draw it, effortlessly, right out of His own spirit.

Out of the experiential knowledge of this great truth Jesus declared, *"I am the bread of life."* Simply because He knew that through coming into the world and shedding His blood to cleanse us of our sins, and make us clean vessels, so the Holy Spirit could recreate us, regenerate us, birth us again, restore us to the consciousness of our true identity, grow us up in the Spirit to that place of manifested sonship that He was at, whereby through Him in us, we might go back to the original source of Life, and of Bread, and of Reality, for He is the Bread of Life to us; not this natural world system, neither the natural resources of this natural world system. It is the Spirit that createth Life, the flesh profiteth nothing. Jesus said it this way: *"That which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the spirit is spirit."* He set before us two ways of life. You can live your life in the flesh, or you can live your life in the Spirit. You can walk in the flesh, or you can walk in the Spirit. You can draw your existence out of the natural realm, which passes away, or you can draw your existence out of the spiritual realm, which liveth and abideth forever. You can live your life according to natural law, or you can prepare your mind and heart to live your life according to Spiritual Law. To you today, as to men of old, Jesus says, *"Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but labour for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life."* You see, beloved, the problem with us is that we have spent all of our life laboring for the meat that perishes; working in business and labor for the natural meat, wearing ourselves out, growing old and weary, our hair turning gray, sweating and toiling always for the meat that perishes, and often have not spent a balance of time and effort laboring for the spiritual meat that will endure when all the natural meat has perished. Yes, the bread that Jesus fed the five thousand was natural bread, although he drew it out of the realm of Spirit. But by learning and knowing and moving in that realm of the truth source of Life He was able to go on and by the same law of faith overcome all natural things and, finally, conquer even the last enemy – death – and stride victoriously out of the tomb! Therefore it is time for all who have received the call to sonship to begin to labor for the Spiritual Meat that shall endure into everlasting life, when all the natural meat has passed away! (end quote). That Spiritual Meat is Christ – the glorious Tree of Life!

"All the trees of the garden" represent the realm of life, the living soul, in which Adam lived before the fall. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man become a LIVING SOUL." (Gen. 2:7) Man did not come forth from the hand of God on earth as a glorious shining spirit-being, neither did he begin his existence in Eden as the depraved, sensual, animalistic creature he is today. Man stood in Eden as neither a beast nor a god, but a LIVING SOUL. The realm of perfect human life, the living soul, was a plane of life which far transcended the realm of corruption and death which passed upon man through the eating of the tree of carnal knowledge. But it was also a plane of life lower than, and inferior to that glorious realm of DIVINE LIFE which was available to man in the tree of life within.

Christianity today has no need greater than the need to know the power and glory of the CHRIST WITHIN. CHRIST is the image of God, the scripture says. I know these words may seem to be incredible but they are truth – the very first mention of the "image of God" is applied, not to Jesus Christ, but to our forefather ADAM. *"And God said, Let us make MAN IN OUR IMAGE, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ... so God created MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, in the IMAGE OF GOD created He him." (Gen.1:26-27)* As we consider the wonderful advent of man created "in the image of God" we can only conclude that this is a SPIRITUAL MAN brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God Almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power, and attributes. The image of God is the nature of God reproduced in man. Thus, man is the true image of God. The divine nature was best and fully expressed in the man Christ Jesus who shed upon mortals the truest reflection of God and lifted man's sights higher than their poor thought-models would allow. Jesus revealed to men their true origin, heritage and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption shall be – THE IMAGE OF GOD. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning and as he ever shall be world without end – THE IMAGE OF GOD. Of Him it is written, *"He is the expression of the glory of God – the Light-being, the out-ricing of the divine – and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature... (Hebrews 1:3, Amplified).* Christ, and humanity in Christ, is like a ray of light which comes from the sun – man the outcome of God, reflects God.

Contrary to popular teaching man has never LOST the image of God, although the image has been obscured, distorted, marred and corrupted by the usurpation of the carnal mind, the outer man. A lost image is NO image.

The true likeness cannot be lost in divine reflection. It would be like fire without light. The out-raying image of God is like the Word of God. To destroy the Word of God you would have to destroy God Himself, for God and His Word are ONE. To destroy the image of God would necessitate the destruction of God, for God and His image are ONE. The apostle Paul confirms man 'I', as God's image in his remarkably significant words to the saints in Corinth: *"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he I-S THE IMAGE AND GLORY OF GOD."* (I Cor 11:7)

After having created the SPIRITUAL MAN (man in God's image) in Gen. 1:26, we find a further work wrought upon this man in **Gen. 2:7**. *"And the Lord God FORMED MAN OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND, and breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life; and man BECAME a living soul."* Reading this passage we have the definite assurance that, as man has first been "created" on the sixth day a spiritual man, the image of God, a further work is being carried forth by the same almighty Creator and the man is now being "formed" into another expression: "FORMED of the dust of the ground," and so BECOMING a "living soul" -- manifest in the earth realm. The first is the "created" man, the second the "formed" man. The first is a "spiritual" man, the second a "physical" man. The first bears the image of the "heavenly," whereas the second bears the image of the "earthly." The first is known unto God in the SPIRIT, the second is manifest to creation in the MATERIAL WORLD. But I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, that both of these men are but aspects of the very SAME MAN!

The next point we have to note is the nature of the fruit that Eve ate. Over the years various interpretations have been given as to what kind of fruit the innocent couple partook of. There is a popular notion first spawned by the Hebrew Sages that it was an apple that Eve ate. Others maintained that it was the grape, the potent fruit of the vine. Others were convinced that it was the fig. And still others argued in favor of the bread-providing grain, while some even believed they could prove that it was the pomegranate. Indeed, with the spread of the Bible to exotic lands, there were those who claimed the banana to be the only conceivable fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But the Bible knows nothing about any of this childish prattle!

Gene Edwards once dramatized the encounter with the tree of knowledge in this way. *"Adam's teeth were just about to pierce the skin of the fruit of the Tree of Life when he heard his wife call out to him, 'Adam, come here; I've discovered something wonderful. I have found the most wonderful tree in all the Garden.' Adam walks toward his wife who is a distance away, but yet very near to the center of The Garden. There stands this beautiful, black, brackish, glowing tree that glows in light that's dark. It radiates – as the sun radiates light this tree radiates darkness. Wonderful, beautiful, glowing dark radiates out from it. There is something sensuous that causes one to swoon in the presence of this tree. Just to be near it is to be intoxicated and there is a sense of the quickening of the mind. Out of the glowing darkness the serpent appears, dancing melodiously, his body swaying hypnotically back and forth. Looking to the right and to the left, then drawing near to Adam, he says in a haunting melody, 'If you eat of this tree you will not die, but rather you will be AS G-O-D!' Adam understand now why he has been forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – for he will be as God. Adam picks up the fruit. It becomes more radiant. Its sensuous odor permeates the whole atmosphere. Even without eating it Adam is intoxicated by the fragrance. He looks into it and seems to see all understanding of all things. A strange power moves through him. He lifts it to his mouth in the most tragic act of universal history the last moment of sanity this earth will know for eons disappears as Adam buries his teeth in the fruit. The juices, the intoxicating exotic nectar flow into his mouth and quickly enter his bloodstream.*

"They are standing there in the midst of the Garden. Adam has eaten. He feels the hypnotic power of the fruit pulsating through his body – and truly the serpent hasn't lied – he now understands and knows as God knows. He knows evil as God knows evil – except that Adam knows it instinctively and experientially, whereas God knows it by His omniscience. Adam is not capable of handling such knowledge, whereas God has power over all things. Adam knows good as God knows good – God knows good because he IS GOOD; Adam knows good by contrast because he has discovered its opposite. Adam's eyes have glazed over and become milk-white, glowing with a mystical translucence. He is as one drugged, he has lost all touch in this moment with the spiritual, heavenly realm. And in his mad delusion he dreams that he is God. Great, compelling thoughts course through his mind that seem so legitimate and reasonable – and yet in the light of another day will be totally meaningless. Thoughts spiral, his mind chases off into places he has never been; it is free now to roam through all kinds of conjectures and rationalizations.

“Whereas man had always moved by revelation he now moves by logic. He had always understood by spiritual perception; he will now live by natural rationalization. He had always been guided by deep intuitiveness; now he will have to use his intellect. His emotions which were totally balanced and harmonious have now gone wild. His mind has gone, by any previous standard, mad. His will has grown stronger and it has grown weaker – much more self-will, but less concern for creation and less will to resist evil. His love has turned to lust. Need is turning to greed. Joy has turned to pleasure. Fellowship with God has degenerated into religiousness. He has become unresponsive to the spiritual realm and his understanding of spiritual things has been turned to superstition. Death is turned loose in the universe. Sin now reigns supreme in a fallen world. You may think you have just heard the saddest story ever told, but it is about to become far, far sadder. The story intensifies in its tragedy. Man’s genetic code has been infected, altered, fractured. Out of his loins will come a mutation, a degraded, fallen, biologically different species, and will fill this planet.” – end quote

The fruit that Adam and Eve ate that fateful day in Eden was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Note this very carefully. What kind of tree is specified? It is the tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil; and so the meaning is obviously allegorical. No such tree grows literally on the earth, even as no such literal trees as the “tree of life” or the “tree of the living soul” grow on earth. The truth of the matter is Adam and Eve did not eat an apple or a pear or whatever kind of fruit that grows on natural trees. What kind of fruit, then, did they eat? What they ate was the fruit of the tree of the KNOWLEDGE of good and evil. If an apple tree produces apples and a peach tree produces peaches, is it not then reasonable that this particular tree called the knowledge of good and evil would produce good and evil? What think ye? This was no tree like we know of trees today. When Adam and Eve partook of the produce of this tree it thrust them immediately into the throes of the dreadful conflict between good and evil.

Ray Prinzing wrote: *“With the partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil man entered into a state of duality and conflict which would last for ages, until Christ has subdued all things to His control. God had warned them against partaking of this ‘mixed fruit,’ but man, in his own self-will, yet under the purpose of God, proceeded to eat of the fruit of the tree, and found himself in the midst of the conflict from that time onward. Producing his Cain and Abel, his Jacob and Esau, his Ishmael and Isaac – and out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing (James 3:10). Such duality produces conflict, and conflict destroys our inner rest.”*

Not only did the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent a state within man, it represented a message, a word, a knowledge. The KNOWLEDGE or WORD or UNDERSTANDING or TEACHING or MESSAGE or REVELATION of good and evil! The fact that it was knowledge of good and evil bespeaks its composition. It was a message that Adam received, wisdom from a realm within his consciousness that caused him to be enlightened in an area he had never experienced. It was the tree of natural understanding. Natural understanding is a realm of incredible darkness and deceit. The voice of the serpent spoke words of death concealed in deceit. The deceit was all in the interest of Self-knowledge. The fruit of this tree also contained a seed. It was by the knowledge of good and evil that the original corruptible seed was planted in Adam’s heart. The knowledge of good and evil was not all bad. It was pleasant for food, delightful to look at, and was desired to make one wise.

In contemporary terms it would run something like this. When we look at the fruit eaten by Eve, it is described in Hebrew in purely positive terms. “*Ki tov ha-etz L’ma’ achal*” – the fruit was good for food, ridiculously low in cholesterol, calories and fat content. “*Ta’ava hu L’einayim*” – lustful for the eyes – it was beautiful packaged, an esthetic delight, worthy of a gourmet’s table. And finally, “*Nehmad ha-etz L’haskil*” – it was good for the mind, probably protein-rich to strengthen brain cells! It is very difficult to deceive someone if the message being taught is not attractive. The items that we purchase in the stores, we most often buy because of the attractiveness of the package or the allure of the taste. The fact is, the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is being offered week after week across the pulpits of the churches! There are vast multitudes today who are not conscious of the fact that they are eating of the same tree Adam and Eve partook of in the garden. And it has been much too recent, beloved brother, sister, that you and I have eaten of that tree!

Adam's sin in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil lay in his walking after the flesh (sense realm) instead of the Spirit. It consisted in his making the outer, physical, material, sensual man his center, identity and existence rather than the inner man of Spirit. The remarkable thing is that he perceived not that all

that pertains to the material world is illusory, transitory, and corruptible. Sensual treasures are laid up "where moth and rust doth corrupt." Mortality is their doom. Death breaks in upon them, and carries off their fleeting joys. The sensualist's affections are as imaginary, whimsical, unreal and short-lived as his pleasures. Covetousness, fleshly passions, gluttony, drunkenness, immorality, fame, fashion, vanity, worldly wisdom, political power, military might, envy, hypocrisy, revenge, hate, and so forth, pass away with the works thereof. Stripped of its coverings, what a mocking spectacle the flesh is! When the almighty Creator counseled the first man and his wife, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"* He gave precisely the same instruction in wisdom and prudence that the apostle Paul offered long millenniums afterwards when by inspiration he wrote, *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live!"* (Rom. 8:5-6,] 3) Life is in the SPIRIT WITHIN, and with what joy and satisfaction do we now entertain the precious promise, *"therefore brethren we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, YE SHALL LIVE. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ..."* (Rom. 8:12-17)

George Hawtin has eloquently expounded on this thought, and I share a few of his valuable insights. *"Well did the apostle Paul know that the vast mass of humanity was 'at home' only in the REALM OF THE BODY. They belonged entirely to an earthly realm where things are visible, audible, and touchable. Their minds seldom mounted higher than things physical, and when for a few moments they did rise to walk upon a spiritual plane, they were not really 'at home' there, but waited for the moment when they could LAPSE BACK to the NATURAL AND NORMAL, for that is where they were 'at home.' So, while men are 'at home' in the body, they are 'always absent from the Lord' (II Cor. 5:6-7), absent from the spiritual world of true reality. HEAVEN IS CLOSED TO THEM. Their minds dwell in the realm where men buy and sell, plant and build, marry and are given in marriage. They dwell in a realm of eating and drinking, of finding pleasure for the body, amusing their minds with silly things of the world, absorbing, listening to, or looking at some fictitious thing that serves only to amuse the natural man, keeping his heart away from the realm of eternal reality."*

My heart burns within me and my spirit is flooded with joy unspeakable and full of glory as these sacred and wonderful truths find lodging and substance within my consciousness. With what clarity I see that when Adam stood between the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in that long ago Eden, his future condition was to be shaped by the tree-identity (consciousness) he pursued. *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit."* (Rom. 8:5) It is all a matter of what you are AFTER! These are the two trees: spirit and flesh, life and death, truth and error. Every man who ever lived has had his center, his identity and his existence in one of these two trees. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are not fossilized relics from some ancient age. They are living, breathing, enduring, ever-present realities throughout all generations, and each of us in God's great today is living by one or the other of these two trees in every thought, word and deed. The tree of life (spirit) invariably ministers incorruption and immortality, whereas the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (flesh) unfailingly leads to death.

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

felt by the body. The soul now begins to think that these things which belong to the body are real and therefore becomes fleshly minded. The carnal or earthly mind is an enemy of God and an enemy of all things spiritual.

"It is small wonder then that the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; for all things connected with the natural belong to time and change, while all things belonging to the spiritual are eternal and changeless. So then all who would come to know the WISDOM OF GOD, and the REVELATION of the Lord, must turn their spirit from the realm of the physical and changing, the corrupt and mortal, and fly away into the realm of the pure, eternal, unchanging, and immortal. It is only there that rest and truth are found, and, abiding there in the Spirit, even the body itself begins to be lifted from corruption to incorruption and from mortality to immortality. We said a moment ago that when the soul comes into the realm of the flesh, it becomes carnal and fleshly minded because it is dragged into the realm of the body. Inversely then, when the soul and spirit dwell in the secret place with God, they lift the body till it also becomes incorruptible, immortal, and eternal. While the spirit and the body are united and dwell together, one must always be in subjection to the other. Either the body will be servant to the spirit or the spirit will be servant to the body. One will be the servant and be ruled. The other will be the master and rule. We cannot avoid this conclusion. Either the flesh will rule the spirit, or the spirit will rule the flesh. Since, however, the flesh is like the mortal and changing, and the spirit is like the immortal and unchanging, then the spirit is the one who should be the master. If the spirit is the master, it will save the flesh by lifting it to the realm of God and immortality, but if the body is master, it will ruin the soul by dragging it to the realm of the carnal, the mortal, the changing" – end quote.

When the Lord God lowered man into this gross material realm man possessed, by the spirit, the divine potential to overcome the flesh, sanctify it, transform it, infusing it with the qualities of Life--holiness and incorruption. Jesus, the last Adam, came and demonstrated for us this very principle. This potential in man to rule the natural by the spirit is shed forth in Jesus' mighty works--by His healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, forgiving sins, and raising the dead--He transcended by His life, words, and actions all the so-called laws of the material, mortal realm. The great significance of Jesus' mighty works will never ring clear in our spirits until we understand that He did not perform as a unique, different kind of man--all His wonderful works were the teaching of what is NORMAL FOR MAN IN HIS TRUE STATE AS THE IMAGE OF GOD. As the last Adam Jesus demonstrated all that the first Adam lost--mankind's heritage as the sons and daughters of the Most High. Little wonder, then, that He confidently and joyfully proclaimed to His disciples, *"The works that I do shall YE DO ALSO; and greater works than these shall YE DO."* (John. 14:12, Paraphrased)

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a tree, whose fruit, if man ate of it, would cause him to live in the consciousness of good and evil. Good and evil was one tree, not two trees. Mankind has made the terrible mistake of thinking that good and evil are not of the same tree that being evil is different than being good. However, both good and evil are the knowledge and wisdom of that one tree. We are still operating in the same tree, whether we are a little good or very good, a little evil or very evil. So people either do not care that they are evil, or else they try to be good. At that point they get into an even greater delusion for they think that because of their good they have gained some merit or are in a right standing or state of acceptance before God. They would not do that if they understood the great truth that both good and evil are in the realm of death. Both are of the tree of sin and death, in a knowledge of God that has to do with good and evil, but nothing whatever to do with REALITY AND LIFE.

As someone has written, "Man is a horns-and-halo personality. He is capable of killing or curing, hurting or healing, maiming or mending, bludgeoning or blessing. From his lips flow forth both lies and truths. His hands are equally skilled at cracking safes or setting bones. His feet have scaled the highest mountains, but they have also taken him to the lowest depths of depravity. His imaginations have soared to the heavens, as in the case of Handel's 'Messiah,' or Milton's 'Paradise Regained,' or they have scraped the pits of the nether world in vulgarity, pornography and sexual deviancy." Pick up any newspaper any day in the year and the headlines will read like this: "Prominent Physician Kills Wife," "World War Threat Seen by Statesman," "Murder of Ten Children Sent to Electric Chair," "Bank President Emblezzles Millions," "Hollywood Star Divorces Ninth Wife," "Police Break up Drunken Orgy," "Two Children Murder Infant," "Prominent Government Official Commits Suicide," "Two Killed in Teenage Gang War," or, to change the tempo: "Steel Magnate Leaves Millions for Peace Foundation," "City Purchases New Recreation Area for Underprivileged Children," "Thousands Pack Arena to Hear Evangelist," "Doctors Find Cure for Cancer," "Record Number of Citizens Attending Church," "Thousands View Remains of Noted Humanitarian," "Religious Film Breaks All Box Office Records."

Earth is clearly a battlefield between the forces of good and evil. Each of us in his appointed place is an active participant in that battle on one side or the other. And most of us have, at one time or another, been on both sides! There are people outside the Christian community today who have very high ideals and moral standards. They live exemplary lives, far above the lives of many who profess to be Christian, and even above some who claim to be Spirit-filled. Then there are those in this world who live a degraded life; they appear to be the dregs of humanity. But there is an amazing paradox in all these things. There are lofty lines and noble thoughts in both prose and poetry that have been expressed by men who were as immoral as it is possible to be. Some of the greatest talent in the arts is in people who lead immoral and dissolute as well as undependable lives. But through those miserable and perverted lives shone through thoughts and works which were beautiful beyond compare. Good and evil! This is the knowledge and state of all mankind. It is impossible to find a wholly wicked person; some good necessarily clings to him. On the other hand, it is difficult to find an entirely good person, for somewhere deep in his or her life lurks the darkness of a wicked heart waiting only for the right conditions to suddenly erupt in some sordid expression, which catches everyone by surprise.

God told Adam and Eve that in the day they ate of it they would surely die. There was death in the tree. The spiritual mind has no trouble whatever in understanding that Paul was speaking of that very same tree when he wrote to the Roman saints, saying, *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is DEATH; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God... if ye after the flesh YE SHALL DIE: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."* (Rom. 8:5-13) Ever since that fateful day in Eden man has been feasting on the tree of the flesh and the carnal mind. When our foreparents were banished from Eden's fair portals they were cut off from access to the tree of life and for four long millenniums mankind trudged through the slime of corruption and death without hope and without life until the day which Christ stood again upon the earth declaring, *"I am the LIVING BREAD which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever!"* (John. 6:51) But nowhere does the Scripture indicate that man was ever cut off from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The fall of man is more than an historical event in the past, it is a constant and present reality. The past is absolutely meaningless unless it relates to the present.

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

Seeing, then, that the three kinds of trees in Eden represent three potential kinds of men, I want to point out that they also represent the three potentialities WITHIN MAN. Adam once walked as a living soul when he abode in the undefiled life in which he was created. Man now walks in the corruptible realm of the carnal mind as he follows after the lusts and desires of his flesh. Men are able to walk as spiritual men only after Christ's life has been impregnated within by the renewing of regeneration. These three states of being are the three trees of Eden, and all three are INNER POTENTIALITIES and INWARD REALITIES. The man who is born of God is a tripartite being - spirit, soul and body. The spirit (which is dead or unresponsive to God until regeneration) is the realm of GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, the soul is the realm of SELF CONSCIOUSNESS, and the body is the realm of SENSE CONSCIOUSNESS. These three parts of man, indeed, these three kinds of men, are revealed in the three kinds of trees in the garden.

When one understands that the man who is born of God is a triune being, then it is easy to see that such a man possesses a set of THREE of ALL HIS FACULTIES. This is a most wonderful truth, not generally understood. For example, let us look at the heart. The scriptures give almost endless detail concerning the heart. The Bible makes the heart to be the secret of life and expression. *"AS A MAN THINKETH in his heart, so is he,"* is a widely quoted proverb (**Prov. 23:7**), but few there be who actually know what is meant by the word "heart." This saying, like "Let Jesus come into your heart," is used again and again by persons who have not the slightest idea where the biblical "heart" is located. Yet, if we compare scripture with scripture, it is quite clear that the word "heart" is a Hebrew word picture for the inward soulish nature; the seat of the volition, emotions, and intellect which we might call the "control center" of the inner being. It signifies the center or inner part or seat of thing. Therefore the Holy Spirit says, *"My son, attend to My words; incline thine ear unto My sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thine with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"* (**Prov. 4:20-23**) The heart is used to describe that area of man's soul life which determines how he will think, what he will do, or what he will become. The heart is thus the nature, the genetic code contained in the soulish life. In man's soul the heart is the central power. As the heart is so the man. The desire and the choice of the heart prove what a man is already, and decide what he is to become. Just as we judge of a man's physical character, his size and strength and age and habits, by his outward appearance, so the heart gives the real inward man his character; and the hidden man of the heart is what God looks to when rendering a judgment in regard to man.

THE THREE HEARTS

Man does not have more than three main parts in his whole being. As human who have been born of God's Spirit we have a spirit, soul and body. We do not have a fourth and separate part such as the heart. However, each of our three main parts has a heart! I do not hesitate to tell you that it is a fact that you actually have THREE HEARTS! **Firstly, within your body you have a biological heart.** This heart is the hollow pear-shaped muscular organ located in the left of the middle chest that pumps the blood through your body. It is about the size of your fist and weighs from ten to twelve ounces. The life of the flesh is in the blood, therefore all the physical senses are dependent upon the faithful work of the heart. When your biological heart stops beating your body is dead.

Secondly, within your soul you have a psychological heart. Psychological comes from the Greek word "psyche" which means "soul" or "mind." In looking at this psychological or soul heart, let us bear in mind that the soul of man is now polluted because of the fall. When Adam transgressed the satanic (fleshly) spirit possessed him so that the whole nature of man became defiled and took on a satanic character. God, by His indwelling Spirit, reproduces Himself within the regenerated man "after His kind." It is equally true that Satan has reproduced himself within the unregenerated man "after his kind." The spirit within a man is revealed by his words, actions and mental attitudes. The seed of God is known, and the seed of Satan, which is "The Spirit of Disobedience," produces another kind of fruit whereby the child of the devil is recognized. While God is omnipresent, filling all things with Himself, yet He is perfectly formed and expressed as a life and nature through His children in whom He dwells. Likewise, Satan is perfectly formed and expressed as a life and nature through his children in whom he dwells and is revealed to be *"the SPIRIT that now worketh in the children of disobedience."* (**Eph. 2:2**)

The fallen man and the serpent are today so ONE that you cannot distinguish between them. I will go into this in detail in future articles on THE SERPENT, but suffice it to say that it is most enlightening to read the words of Jeremiah who said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that *"the heart is deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (**Jer. 17:9**) We should not find this so amazing a passage of Scripture if it were not for one important thing. Jeremiah did not list an exception, saying, "The heart is deceitful above all things, PERIOD! Since Jeremiah spake by the Spirit of God this could not possibly have been a slip of the tongue or something uttered before it was thought through. If the heart is deceitful above all things, it naturally follows that there is nothing more deceitful. The heart of man, then, is the MOST DECEITFUL THING IN THE WORLD!

A friend has shared the following inspired observations: *"There is no doubt whatever in my mind that Jesus had this very scripture in mind when He spoke the words recorded in Mark. 7:15-23. 'There is NOTHING,' He*

said, 'from WITHOUT A MAN that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man.' Having said that, He uttered the statement that so often followed His teachings when there was contained in them a MYSTERY. 'IF any man have ears to hear, let him hear.' If we will be honest with ourselves, we will have to admit that we have fostered and taught for generations a concept that directly contradicts the words of Jesus Christ, for we have, indeed, declared that there IS something from without a man that can enter into him and defile him. We have called him Satan (an adversary), and so he is! We have called him a murderer and a liar, and so he is! We have had much truth about him – but the one thing we have NOT known about him is his LOCATION! We have said that he was without – Jesus said that he is within! If there is NOTHING from without a man (and in the Greek that reads: 'not one thing') that entering into him can defile him, then we must conclude that Satan's activity is not primarily without but within.

"As we continue to read this passage, we hear Jesus say, 'For FROM WITHIN, OUT OF THE HEART OF MEN, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come FROM WITHIN and defile the man.' Every sin category imaginable is contained in this discourse. Everything that a man could ever think or do that is evil is said by Jesus to come - not from outside of man but from within! In our consideration of this passage, there is one all important phrase that we must be careful to note, for it is the key to the true nature of Satan and the heart of man. Jesus said, 'For from within out of the HEART OF MEN...' It is imperative that we notice the grammatical number of the two words here. The word 'heart' is singular being in the Greek in the genitive SINGULAR case. The word 'men' however is plural being in the genitive PLURAL case. We have, then, ONE HEART – but many men! This heart is the heart of the corruptible soul life, the self, the inward nature of man inherited from fallen Adam, one great nature shared by all the inhabitants of the earth, the very heart of Adam shared with his many-membered body!" – end quote

There is nothing holy or God-like about this soulish heart. There lie scattered throughout the Bible no less than forty titles for this heart. Let us run over their names. It is: a stony heart, a trembling heart, a hypocritical heart, a deceitful heart, a proud heart, a backslidden heart, a fearful heart, a deceived heart, a rebellious heart, a whorish heart, a spiteful heart, a bitter heart, an uncircumcised heart, a beast's heart, a hard heart, an obstinate heart, a presumptuous heart, a warring heart, a fretting heart, a haughty heart, a desolate heart, a despairing heart, a discouraged heart, an erring heart, a hating heart, a mischievous heart, a mad heart, a fainting heart, a divided heart, an exalted heart, a veiled heart, a blind heart, a naughty heart, a lying heart.

Over the soulish heart of every unregenerated man or woman there hangs an impenetrable veil of outer darkness that keeps men blinded to the glory of all spiritual thing. Even in reading of the scripture the veil is over their eyes, and they sit in blindness and outer darkness until a totally NEW SPIRIT and NEW HEART is given them. Then and only then does the light shine upon them. This is what Paul was saying to the Corinthians when he wrote of unregenerate Israel that *"their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."* (II Cor. 3:14-18)

Thus far we have seen that the body of man has a heart known as the biological heart and the soul of man has a heart that can be called the psychological heart. There is yet the third kind of heart, the spiritual heart, which resides within the spirit of every man, although in a state of spiritual death or unresponsive to God until our spirit is quickened by His spirit.

The heart is the organ of our inclination and affection toward things. All our inclination, affections, delight and desire are functions of the heart. Before we were regenerated, our soulish heart was inclined toward sin, loved the world, and desired the things of the flesh; toward God, however, it was cold and hard, without inclination and without affection; toward the things of God and spiritual things, it had no delight and was void of any desire.

The prophet Ezekiel, foreseeing the days of this remarkable regeneration, prophesied, saying, *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."* (Eze. 36:26) When a man is regenerated by the Spirit of the Almighty he receives both a new spirit and a new heart. The new heart is contained within the new spirit, for it is the heart

of the Spirit, which Spirit is the Spirit of the Lord. God Himself is Spirit and God Himself has a heart. The Spirit of God spake through Jeremiah, prophesying of these last days, saying, "And I will give you pastors according to MINE HEART, which shall feed you with understanding and knowledge" (Jer. 3:15). On another occasion the Lord said to Israel, *"And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which thing I commanded them not, neither came it into MY HEART."* (Jer. 7:31) These verses show that God has a heart. His heart is a SPIRITUAL HEART, the seat and center of His own divine nature from which precede all His thoughts, attitudes, desires and actions. When we are born of God's Spirit we inherit GOD'S HEART. This is the spiritual heart, a heart of the same nature and quality as God's own heart and becomes the heart of the NEW CREATION MAN. This is an altogether new heart, one that we did not possess before. The new creature which God has created in Christ Jesus is a new creature because the Lord has given him a new Spirit and a new heart! Glory!

THE NEW COVENANT AND THE NEW HEART

The new spirit and the new heart bring us into a new covenant relationship with God. The object of a covenant is to define and settle the relationship between two parties who enter into it, and to secure the fulfillment of their commitments to each other. Hear now what the Lord says about the new covenant and the new heart: *"But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel...not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead out of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."* (Heb. 8:6-11)

Let us meditate deeply upon this new covenant and its wonderful provisions. The fault, weakness and unprofitableness of the old covenant stood in the fact that it was merely an external law given to men with desperately wicked hearts who were completely without strength to perform that which was demanded of them. Here is the difference! The new covenant stands in the power of an INNER LIFE. The former is impotent, the latter is mighty. The promise of the new covenant is to convert the external law into an inner life, to put it so in the heart that it shall be the inmost life, so that, as naturally as the heart wills and lives and acts on earth, it shall will and live and do what God demands. Why does an acorn so spontaneously grow up into an oak? Because the law of the oak is written in the heart of the acorn. The life of every creature on earth acts with delight in accordance with the law of its creator, that is, its inner nature. God and His holiness, Christ and His Holy Spirit, if they belong to us, must be as near to us, as essentially within us, as truly inherent in our own life, as our own thinking, willing, and doing. And so God promises that He will put His Law in our minds and write it in our hearts, in such a way that it shall be our inner nature, our very life, and we shall act according to it as naturally as we think or live. Yes, He will do it! So that we can say, even as His first-born Son said, *"Thy law is within My heart; I delight to do Thy will, O God."*

God does not change His laws to suit man's wicked heart. He gives man a new heart which is in harmony with His law so that the heart of the converted man loves the law of God. Yea, he so loves the law of God that he need no longer receive the command, *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,"* for his regenerated heart already overflows with love for his Lord, and such a command would be both superfluous and dishonoring to him. Therefore the law is said to be done away. No longer need he be commanded to love his neighbor, because the love of Christ in his new heart causes him to love all mankind. Such a man need not be told, "Thou shalt not steal," because the very thought of robbing those he now loves is repulsive to his pure heart. He would freely give and give again that his neighbor might be blest, but he could take nothing from him by stealth or guile.

In these evil days, when all the world and most Christians are eagerly making the lusts of the flesh their plaything, it is my heart's desire and earnest prayer to God that those elect saints who read these words will lay hold of them by faith. The Holy Spirit, through the power within your NEW HEART, will conquer that old heart of deceitfulness and wickedness and change you from glory to glory until you reach that same image of Christ if you earnestly walk in the life and power of the new heart. How easy it is for any of us to reveal in the

glory of this blessed hope of sonship that shines before our eyes like a diamond in the sun, only to turn around and become absorbed with our business, our toil, our earthly pursuits and pleasures, thus neglecting the hope and failing to ENTER INTO the promise! If we are hearers of the Word only and do not experientially lay hold upon the promises and make it part of our very existence, we are deceiving ourselves as James has pointed out: *"For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."* (James 1:23-24) Such a man is a forgetful hearer, and I see no promise that such a sluggard will ever attain to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus. Look into your new heart, my brother, my sister, and you shall see the image of Christ. Let us continually yield ourselves to the PURPOSES OF THE NEW HEART (Acts 11:23; Heb. 4:12).

WALKING IN THE NEW HEART

It is the spirit that quickeneth. It is the spirit who overshadows our being, forming the Christ-life within. At the time of our regeneration THE CHRIST LIFE, planted within by the creative energy of the Holy Spirit, is the only pure and holy and undefiled thing within our beings. The body is still flesh and the soul is still corrupted. The body is yet mortal and the heart of the soul is yet deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The most zealous saint on earth will have to admit, if he be honest, that though he has become alive unto God in the spirit, this wonderful new life is concealed within a womb of flesh and carnality. Simple proof of this fact is easily gained by observing some of the thoughts and desires that pass through your mind and emotions in unguarded moments. The object is to bring the soulish heart to death so that the soul may live solely as the expression of the spirit. The body, likewise, must become the temple of the spirit as we are admonished in I Cor. 6:15-20.

It is a great truth I declare to you when I say that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, all these things without exception will be found in the new spirit and in the new heart. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," He was not speaking of carnal heart changed by some scheme of self reformation into a good heart. The only change that can come to a man is TURN FROM the soulish heart UNTO the spiritual heart, for the only heart on the face of the whole earth that can be pure is the spiritual heart! Some translators have changed the word "pure" to "clean" - that is, "clean in heart." But the word "clean" is not adequate. It is wonderful to have a clean heart, and the spiritual heart is a clean heart, but a pure heart is something more than that. We may be clean, but mixed, and therefore not pure. To be pure means not only to be clean but to be single - unmixed. You can take a cockapoo dog, which is a cross between cocker spaniel and poodle, wash him and groom him and he will be "clean," but he can never be pure. He is clean, but he is mixed in his nature. To be pure in heart means to not only have a clean heart but to have an "unmixed" heart. To be mixed does not mean just to be dirty, but to have more than one aim and goal.

This is the problem with many of God's precious people. They think they have nothing wrong with their hearts because they are clean and without condemnation. But they are not truly pure, because they have more than one goal, more than one aim. Yes, they are aiming at God, but at the same time they aiming at several other things. They may be aiming at God and the prestige of a doctor's degree. They may be aiming at God and the building of the largest or most beautiful Church building in town. They may be aiming at God and material prosperity with its luxury of fine home, cars, clothes, etc. They may be aiming at God and the promotion of "their ministry" with the recognition it brings. Our hearts, brethren, must be purified until we have only one purpose and quest in life - the Lord Himself! Only then can we stand among that blessed company of the pure heart who SEE GOD.

No greater tragedy can ever overtake a man than that, after he has been saved by God's grace, cleansed by the blood of Christ, made a partaker of God's Holy Spirit and given a new heart, he should then mingled his affection with things on the earth and not set them entirely on things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. What a tragedy that he should forget that his old self, yea, his old heart is to be reckoned as dead, and his true life is hid with Christ in God to appear and become manifest as Christ becomes manifest in his believing heart! Listen, my brother, and hear, my sister! The children of God are so busy! They are running here and there as though the Lord could not get along without their officious help. One would think

that the Lord is not as interested in His own Vineyard as they are. They are organizing, and bringing together all kinds of machinery to run the Lord's business; they are inventing intricate and clever systems to get men saved, and to entertain them so that they will remain saved (?). Everybody feels that they should be "doing something for God." This sounds reasonable to the natural mind; so men mingle the thoughts, schemes, ideas, plans, purposes and ambition and zeal of the SOULISH HEART with the new inclinations and affections of the SPIRITUAL HEART; consequently Christians rush about in every direction like ants on an ant hill, doing this and doing that, going here and going there, organizing this and organizing that, promoting this and promoting that, praying, preaching, planning, toiling, giving their money, working themselves into nervous wrecks, even neglecting their families and homes, cultivating the vineyards of others and letting their own experience remain on the surface. They find no time to wait upon God in earnest prayer, to sit at His feet in yielding submission and sweet communion, to learn of Him. They spend no time in learning to KNOW the Lord of the Vineyard!

There is clearly a difference between what is related to the human soul and what is truly spirit. The word the Bible uses for flesh is PSYCHE which is also the word for soul. What is soulish is fleshly. The "sins of the flesh" are the mental/emotional things such as anger, jealousy, hatred, pride, selfish ambition, emotionalism, etc. What we have to remember is that many of the so-called "spiritual" things that we do are in fact fleshly and sensual. Listening to Handel's Messiah may be just as fleshly and sensual as drinking beer in front of the television set. Multitudes attend religious concerts and programs to be entertained and experience sensual enjoyment – they aren't worshipping God at all. And in worship services, the "inspiration" we get from stirring songs, the beat of instruments, clapping hands and rousing sermons can be just as sensual and self-centered (soulish) as the inspiration we get from a football game. Some religious sects deliberately attract the overly emotional. In religious meetings their preachers work on the emotions of their congregations, encouraging outbursts of emotional response. "Is this alright? Is this good preaching? Somebody say something! Come on, help me now! Somebody say Amen!" They "work it up" – generate increasingly energetic and noisy displays of soulish emotion. But Jesus Christ set no such example. Nor did any of the early apostles.

Religion today is THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH. If you have watched the T.V. Evangelists, have you ever wondered what is taking place? **Eldon Purvis** explained it this way: *"The stadium, or auditorium, fills up with people, then the minister comes out with his silk suit and flashing rings and starts walking back and forth. He will start with a word from the Bible, then with the Bible in his one hand, he will walk or run, waving his hands, from one side of the platform to the other. He will get everyone singing and finally he shouts, 'Say Amen, brothers and sisters.' They all shout 'Amen' and 'say it again' is his response. The suggestion is made to hold hands and pray for whatever he suggests – don't forget Uncle Joe in the hospital. The time comes for the silver and gold while something is working on the SOULS OF THE PEOPLE. The standard conclusion is... the spirit is moving... but what spirit? Oftentimes the above reminded me of a rock concert where the crowds go mad and wild. Put that same preacher in a room with ten people and he finds himself powerless."* – **end quote**

No man can walk this path of sonship apart from the cross. When the blessing of God comes, when the power and glory of God arise upon us, what happens? We speak either out of the life of God with no self-consciousness, or self takes the credit for what we have received and struts about like a peacock, with its tail all spread out, parading flesh before men. Self will assume the title of "Reverend," "Head Elder," "Senior Pastor," "Bishop," "First Apostle," "the Prophet," "General Overseer," or "God's man of faith and power for this hour," subjecting the people to his dominion for prestige, power or gain. I do not hesitate to tell you that men who have never denied self and who know nothing of the work of the cross have been blessed by God with gifts and self has usurped these gifts and used them for its own ends – building vast empires of flesh in the name of the Lord. These men of reprobate minds presumably serve God but are dedicated to material gain. They promote what they term a "faith message" or a "life message" with joy, peace, miracles, blessings, healing, prosperity, glory, fame, power, and anything else you can invent which would appeal to the lusts of the flesh, and make life on earth one continuous glorified "Disney World" experience. In the name of Jesus Christ, and under the banner of spiritual ministry, they separate the simple, God-fearing saints from their money. These religious racketeers, wearing the masks of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, promise blessing, healing, miracles and prosperity – BUT NOT WITHOUT A PRICE. Their "prayer request" forms are attached to their "offering" forms, subtly suggesting that if you GIVE you will GET. Their clever promises and adroit manipulations have led tens of thousands of distressed and needy souls to send in their meager incomes in hope of a miracle in return. The apostle Paul bluntly describes these crafty promoters of

greed and warns the godly against their message and methods in these forceful words: “. . . *men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that GAIN IS GODLINESS: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain . . . and having food and raiment let us therewith be content. But THEY THAT WILL BE RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND A SNARE, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL: which while some have coveted after, they have ERRED FROM THE FAITH, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, FLEE THESE THINGS; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*” (I Tim.6:5-11) Again, “*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose GOD IS THEIR BELLY, and whose glory is in their shame, who MIND EARTHLY THINGS.*” (Phil. 3:18-19) The flesh, the soul, the self is the greatest enemy of the spirit and all that is spiritual.

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

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

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

“*God does not leave you in a dry land for long if you are bound to be one with Him. Should my life be very long on earth, I shall never be able to forget the glory, the awe, the reverence, the holiness, and the power that came to our classroom as we waited on God that glorious 13th of February, 1948, when God began to do a new thing that was destined for a time to shake the church all over America. How we sang the songs of deliverance! How the praises of God echoed down the corridors of the soul and re-echoed among the battlements of heaven! Music of heavenly choirs on earth went sweeping up the sky steeples while angels stood*”

at heaven's gates and swept their harps of gold. Day after day, month after month the celestial wonder continued. Heaven came down our souls to greet and glory crowned the mercy seat. People came for thousands of miles to drink at the ever flowing fountain of life and it looked for a time as though the walls of Babylon were to be broken down and the whole church would come marching to Zion.

"But the Babylonian captivity was not over yet. As I look sadly in retrospect now, I can see with great clearness that the great and blessed move of God was not two years old before the sectarian spirit began to show its ugly head and men began to hide the Babylonish garment in their tents together with the silver and the wedge of gold. The old Babylonish garment was well hidden deep beneath the earth of the tent, but it was there nonetheless, and the whole move was becoming more and more enfolded by another tentacle of the great octopus. Stricter and more rigid became the teaching and the discipline. There was to be no fellowship with anybody who was not within the confines of our ever narrowing circle. We were the true church. We were the elect. We stood on the foundation and all other men stood on sinking sand. No man must cast out a devil unless he followed us. No teaching was worth the time it took to tell it unless it originated with us. We were the most spiritual people in the world. We were going to reign in the kingdom and even now we were beginning to reign. We had the gifts of the Spirit, and we were going to 'call the shots' in the tribulation. The elders were no longer fathers, but men who were to carry out the will of those who were lords over the heritage of God. Everything was cut and dried and firmly enfolded in the arms of another of the harlot daughters of the Babylonian system. We boasted of the gifts of the Spirit, but what had become of them? Where were the healings? Where were the miracles? Where was the faith, the gift of languages, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge? The only thing that was left was prophecy and it became a weariness to the flesh, flowing continually from the mind of man and scarcely ever having any fulfillment. Prophecy that has no fulfillment comes from one of two sources: from the mind of Satan or from the mind of man, but never from the mind of God. How often I have listened to people fumble for words as they prophesied thus giving the lie to their words having been inspired of God. How is the faithful city become a harlot!" — end quote. To this faithful testimony I would add — again the sons of God came and presented themselves before the Lord, and how clearer can it be that SATAN CAME ALSO AMONG THEM!

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

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

and humility, what has begun in the Spirit, very early and very speedily passes over into confidence in the flesh.

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

Child of God, if you feel that something is lacking in your life, if there seems to be a barrenness, if you yearn to be filled with more of God's fullness and to put on the mind of Christ, do not try to work harder for the Lord than you have ever done before; do not try to occupy your time in self-appointed tasks in His Vineyard, or in caring for all the needs around you. Let the conviction sink deep into your heart that your greatest need is for GOD to do something for you. YOU are the one who is in need of having something done, and not God. He is not in need of your sacrifices, for every beast of the forest is His and the cattle on a thousand hills. If He were hungry He would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are His. It is the sacrifice and service of surrender, of communion, of thanksgiving and worship which alone are acceptable to Him. It is not in the life of someone with whom you think God is using you, that something needs to be done; but in your own life there is dire need and shortage, which only God can remedy as you enter into the secret place of the most High to sit and receive at His feet.

Without exception, this barrenness and void in our lives is a sure proof that we are in great need of God's dealing hand. Therefore, let us leave everything that we can leave; let us drop the busy overseeing of those about us, and let us get still before God that He may speak to us and work in us, and for us, to His glory. Then shall we go forth with the presence and power of God upon us, and while we shall be used of Him with those around us, we shall have learned to watch for His movings and dealings upon our souls, and to always yield for Him to work in us first. Thus shall our hearts become truly pure, unmixed with the carnal zeal and scheming of the soulish heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall SEE GOD - at work!"

What a marvelous and incomprehensible potential, this: to see God! Now, we know, of course, that God has no corporeal form. *"No man hath seen God at any time."* (John. 1:18) Therefore, there is no question of "seeing" God in the ordinary physical sense in which one might see a human being or a mountain or an airplane. If one could see in this way, He would have to be limited, and, therefore, not God. To "see" in the sense referred to here, signifies spiritual perception, and spiritual perception means just that capacity to apprehend the true nature of GOD'S SPIRITUAL BEING which most Christians so sadly lack. We live in God's world, but we do not in the least know it as it is. Heaven lies all around us – it is not a distant locality afar off in the skies, but all around us now – but because we are lacking in spiritual perception, we are unable to recognize it; that is to say, we are unable to experience it; and, therefore, so far as we are concerned, we may be said to be shut out of Heaven. We do contact a tiny fragment of it, and that tiny fragment we know as the spiritual experiences we have received, but even that little bit, we see for the most part, all awry, distorted by the dimness of tradition and the outer darkness and wearisome senility of doctrines and methods of the Babylonish Church system.

Heaven is naught but the biblical name for the REALM OF GOD'S SPIRIT, the invisible and omnipresent realm of Spiritual Reality. And it is all around us. We are one with it by virtue of our Spiritual Life. We touch Heaven as we touch God, we dwell in Heaven as we dwell in God and we experience Heaven as we experience God. Heaven is eternity, but what we know here and now, with our spirits imprisoned within these walls of carnal minds and bodies, we know only serially, in a sequence called "time," which never permits of our comprehending an experience in its entirety. All true Christians have touched Heaven when they touched God, but all of our experiences have been limited by this physical world. We have known and seen God through experiences, but no limited by experience can enable us to SEE GOD AS HE IS or to know Him as He is. Men

speak of the experience of salvation, the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the experience of healing, or of a vision, or a dream, or a miracle, or a revelation. We rejoice in each of these blessed experiences, each one bringing an "experiencing" of something of the life and glory of God, yet in none of them do we truly see God AS HE IS in the unbounded fullness of His glorious and eternal reality.

Remarkable, the words penned by the beloved apostle John: *"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."* (I John. 3:2) He than hastily adds: *"And every man that hath this hope in him PURIFIETH HIMSELF, even as He is pure."* (vs. 3) The pure in heart shall SEE GOD, and every man that hath the hope of SEEING HIM AS HE IS purified himself. To purify oneself is to "unmixed the heart" so that there is no mixture of that which is soulish and that which is spiritual. It is to depart from every goal and aim in life except the Lord Himself, to cease all activity except that which is produced by the spirit, to have an eye single to God's glory and the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. All things must bow before the will of God.

So many saints are very much in the position of a blind man in a beautiful flower garden. All around him are glorious colors; but he is quite unaware of them. If we suppose him to be also devoid of the sense of smell, we shall see what a very small part of the glory of the garden exists for him. And if we further suppose him to have no hands, we shall see how the garden practically does not exist for him at all. Yet it is all there, if he could but sense it! Have we not all been condemned to a far greater tragedy in that we have been planted by the power of a new spirit and a new heart inside the very portals of the Kingdom of God and have walked in the very midst of the eternal glories of Heaven, but our hearts have been so mingled with the clatter of this world that our eyes have not been able to see them, our ears have been dead to their sounds of joy, our nostrils unable to smell their fragrance, our hands unable to lay hold upon the eternal glory.

The closer we come to the Kingdom, the more will those destined sons of God know what it is to be lifted beyond the pale of natural things to behold the glory of the realm where God lives in the Spirit. *"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."* (James 4:8) The mixture is even now being removed from the hearts of a first-fruit company and many are being enabled to SEE HIM in a new and living way. It is beholding Him that changes us from glory to glory, from corruption to incorruption. The new spirit and the new heart are THE TREE OF LIFE, for they are naught but Christ living within. It is the glory of His presence that transforms the ragged garments of our mortality to raiment which is white and glistening. Fantastic changes lie ahead for all who separate themselves unto God. Tremendous changes will transpire as soul and body come under the dominion of Christ, for mortality shall be swallowed up of life. This corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality. Oh glorious victory! The sons of God shall arise into that blessed realm beyond time, and space, and matter, and the carnal mind, and realize and walk in the fullness of God's glory forevermore. Oh glorious and wonderful realm! It is the realm beyond the veil where we may enter and tread the highways and fields of our heavenly citizenship. It is the realm of the Son of God. It is the inheritance of the sons of God. It is REALM OF THE TREE OF LIFE. The sons of God are the tree of life kind of men, and these are they who shall become the government of the world in the blessed age and ages before us, a government of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. From the life of those who enter that realm shall flow forth such glory and blessing that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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ECHOES from EDEN, PART 7
'END-TIME' PROPHECIES – TRUTH REVEALED

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

PART SEVEN
THREE TREES IN THE GARDEN (continued)

THE THREE SETS OF FACULTIES
THE THREE MINDS

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow EVERY TREE THAT IS PLEASANT to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL." (Gen. 2:8-9)

It is abundantly clear that different kinds of trees are used in the Scriptures to represent different kinds of men. It is, therefore, of special interest to examine further the significance of the three kinds of trees in Eden. I have explained in previous articles that these three kinds of trees are: (1) all the trees of the garden (2) the tree of life (3) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The three kinds of trees in Eden are three kinds of men, three potentialities within man, or three kinds of life that may be seen in every person: spirit life, soul life, and body life. According to the revelations given later in the Bible, the tree of life signifies the life of God in the spirit, all the trees of the garden signifies the human life of man in the soul, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies the realm of the body with its five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling. The spirit is the realm of GOD CONSCIOUSNESS, the soul is the realm of SELF CONSCIOUSNESS, and the body is the realm of SENSE CONSCIOUSNESS. The spirit is spiritual, the soul is emotional and intellectual, and the body is sensual. Since the fall of man in Eden man's spirit life has fled far from him and his soul and body have become united in such a way that in many instances they are referred to interchangeably in the Scriptures as "the natural man," "the flesh," or "the carnal mind."

In order to understand clearly the three parts of man which are the three lives of man, it will be necessary here to consider at length the functions of these three parts. The body is the outermost physical part and is therefore visible and touchable. It includes all the members of our body and has the five physical senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling to contact the physical world around it. These, without exception, belong to the realm of the physical. They are the five senses of the body or the five senses of the flesh. The function of the body, therefore, is a BIOLOGICAL FUNCTION. Deep inside of every man there is a private sanctum where dwells the mysterious essence of his being. The deepest part of a man is what it is apart from any of the external parts of either body members or soulful expression. It is the man's "I Am," a gift from the I AM who created him. The I AM, which is God is underived, eternal, and self-existent; the "I Am" which is man, is derived from God – breathed into Adam in the day when He was formed. *"God... breathed into his nostrils the breath (in Hebrew: spirit) of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7)* The innermost and deepest reality of man is called in the scriptures the spirit of man. *"For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (I Cor. 2:11)* As God's self-knowledge lies in the eternal Spirit, so man's true being is in his own spirit.

The spirit includes all the attributes, characteristics and abilities of God, from whence it came. This part of man is only caused to function through the process of re-generation. Without regeneration we have not yet begun our experience of spiritual life. This is why Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh IS FLESH; and which is born of the Spirit IS SPIRIT. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again." (John. 3:5-7)* The apostle John spoke this truth very simply when he wrote, *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not*

the Son of God hath not life." (I John. 5:11-12) Regeneration is the obtaining of God's divine life to quicken or fructify our spiritual life in addition to our own soulish and bodily life. The moment we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit is the very moment God's life enters into us and it is also the birth of Christ within us. The birth of Christ in us means that Christ is born once more. Christ was born two thousand years ago in the body of the man called Jesus, but every time a man is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, Christ is born once more in humanity. Hence, regeneration is the birth of Christ within us. It was the very truth of this that prompted Paul to triumphantly declare, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH WITHIN ME." (Gal. 2:20)*

The spirit is that aspect of God by virtue of which He is able to individualize Himself. The word "individual" comes from the Latin "individuus" which means un-divided. Most people seem to think that it means the exact contrary. It suggests separateness to them, as though being separate or divided from every other human being makes one an individual, but they are mistaken. Individual means un-divided, showing that each human person is undivided from humanity in that he is a perfect expression of what humanity is. Thus, in the higher realm of Spirit life God has the power of individualizing Himself, that is, the bringing forth another expression of WHAT HE IS without, so to speak, breaking Himself into parts. God individualizes Himself as the new man within us, Christ, and so when you are regenerated you are actually an individualization of God. God can individualize Himself in an infinite number of distinct beings, or units of consciousness and expression, and yet not be in any way separate or divided. Only God can do this because He is SPIRIT. Matter cannot be individualized. It can only be broken up. Thus, if you were to tear off half a page of this article, and then tear that into small pieces you would have divided up the page. The remnant of the page would be smaller by the amount of paper torn off; and the whole page would be the sum of all the fragments. This is division; it is not individualization. Spirit, however, can be individualized, and this capacity of God is the process by which He is bringing forth a vast company of sons in His very own image! So your see self, the Christ within, the spiritual man, the new creation, is in all truth an individualization of God. This does not, of course, mean that you are an absurd little personal god. You are person an individualization of the one and only God who was first individualized in the person of Jesus Christ. The new creation life of Christ within you is not "another Christ" or "another God," but the manifestation of the life, mind, will, nature, power and glory of the one and only true God - our Father! God is neither one person, nor is He merely a Trinity of persons – He is a vast family in and through whom He is individualizing Himself, reproducing Himself, extending and projecting Himself.

Regeneration is the beginning of the new man within us. All our experiences of spiritual life are matters of the new man within us, for this life is an entirely new element, not of earth below, but from heaven above. This life gives us the wonderful capacity to communicate and fellowship with God. It is the spirit that causes us to be able to sense God and spiritual things and to contact God. The senses of the spirit are SPIRITUAL SENSES and are, therefore, the gateway to the spiritual world of the Kingdom of God.

The soul, which is situated between the spirit and the body, is our inner, psychological part which includes our human desire, emotion, will and mind. The desire is the organ for fancy, lust, inclination, drawing and aspiration; the emotion is the organ for pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy; the will is the organ for formulating opinions, making decisions and inciting actions; and the mind is the organ for thinking and considering. The senses of the soul are PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSES and comprise man's ego or self, giving him self-consciousness and enabling him to contact the psychological world around him. The soul thus refers to sensation, knowledge and conscious experience. The Greek word for "soul" is PSUCHE. It is the root word from which we get all our English words dealing with the psychic – the mind, the mental life. Words such as psychoanalysis, psychology, psychiatry, all have the same basic root PSUCHE in them.

The soul is the seat of SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS. The soul, when divorced from the life and dominion of the spirit, is SELF-centered and SELF-ish. Have you ever noticed the advertising campaigns of some of the most successful fast food restaurants? McDonald's proclaims, "You deserve a break today," while Burger King advertises, "We do it your way." Both of these are what the super salesmen call the "you" approach. The advertisers tell you that you are important. You are going to get what you need. You are going to get what you want. They are going to make you beautiful or handsome; they are going to cure your aches, pains, halitosis, or get rid of your wrinkles or your obesity. You see, advertisers motivate us by telling us what we want most to believe: that not only are we important, but we are right! Perhaps nothing is so appealing to our human nature as the commercial that promises, "We do it your way." After all, we really want things done our way, don't we?

Yes, the “you” approach sells a great many hamburgers, and many other products as well. Why? Because as humans, we are born with the mentality to envision the world as revolving around ourselves. The appeal is so the soul – the very same appeal made by the serpent in Eden long millenniums ago! Oh, yes – the serpent was a master – salesman!

On another plane, in these days on increasing mental and emotional conflict and strain, many people, including Christians, have been encouraged to turn to psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis for the solutions to their emotional problems. This is a dangerous trend for at least **three reasons: First**, because the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis are highly speculative, radically experimental, and anti-biblical, and anti-spiritual in their basic theoretical suppositions. All the great pioneers in these fields have been godless, humanistic men who rejected the Word of God and devoid of any life in the Spirit. They accepted authorities in all these fields start from the unscriptural theory of evolution, denying man’s spiritual existence and need. **Second**, these programs, including so-called “Christian Psychology,” invariably result in giving the changing theories of men precedence over the testimony of the scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit. **Third**, it leads people to seek the solutions to their problems within their own souls apart from submission to the Word of God and the life of the Spirit, leaving them with a false hope and a rude awakening. Self’s trickery and treacherousness is responsible for the fact that psychiatry and psychology have evolved into such complex mazes of pseudo knowledge. Those theories are like a house with many rooms added on haphazardly here and there to take care of all the different situations. Psychiatrists and psychologists, while believing that they are gaining more knowledge, are only being led further and further into the maze of the deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart, which is endless. Their attempts to untangle the secrets of the old nature are like trying to find the end of a piece of string which is tangled into a huge ball, without knowing that the string is in fact a loop. There are no ends. We can trace things in our self forever, but we will only get more lost. And if we mistake the manifestations of the soul for demons, we will then find an endless supply of them to cast out and an equally endless stream of more incredible explanations for why they keep coming back and why more are always showing up. Psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis are but flimsy fig leaves to cover the exposure of the flesh-nature activated as a result of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Each leaf is a facet of our self-image, and when we identify with self, we feel the need to hide from the true God (the Spirit) behind our soulical images.

THE THREE SETS OF FACULTIES

When one has a clear understanding of the three parts of man it becomes increasingly obvious that man possesses a set of THREE OF ALL HIS FACULTIES. Each part of man is a potential kind of man, complete on that level within himself. In our last Study we considered three kinds of hearts: the biological heart which is the physical heart of the body; the psychological heart which is the emotional and intellectual heart of the soul; and the spiritual heart which is the regenerated heart of the spirit. These three different hearts can act on three different levels at three different times and the child of God can act as three different kinds of persons and live out three different kinds of lives. For example, a brother can lie in bed in the morning and the only evidence of life will appear on the biological level: slow, rhythmic breathing and a pulse - the arterial indicator of the functioning of his biological heart. When he awakes and rises to wash his face and dress he may seem very affable as a person. At noon, this same brother gets angry with his wife, shouts at her, slaps her, with the sudden thought that he hates her and wishes he could divorce her and marry someone else. These actions and thoughts are products of his corrupted psychological heart, and this heart, according to the prophet Jeremiah is *"deceitful above all things, and DESPERATELY WICKED."* (Jer. 17:9) Who can say they do not possess such a heart? This brother who in the morning seemed so congenial now resembles a demon! In the evening, the same brother is convicted of his earlier conduct by the dealing of the spirit within and sees that he has shamefully wronged his wife. He confesses his sin both before God and his wife, asks for and receives their forgiveness, kneels and prays with his wife and together they rejoice and commence to bless and praise God in the Spirit. These are now actions of the spiritual heart. Thus, within one day this brother acts as THREE DIFFERENT PERSONS, living out three different kinds of life which are, potentially, three different kinds of men. In the morning he is affable as a man, at noon he is fierce as a demon, and at night, after dealing with his sin, he manifests the likeness of God. Within twelve brief hours, man, the devil, and God are all manifested in his living. The reason he can act in such diverse ways is that within him there are the realities of three trees of Eden and the three lives of man - body, soul, and spirit. When he lives according to the life of man, he is like a man; when he walks according to the devilish life, he is like the devil; and when he acts according to the life of

God in the spirit, he manifests the likeness of God. Whichever life we live in accordance with, regardless of the life, that life determines what we will live out. The tripartite situation of man which existed on that day in the Garden of Eden exists also in us today. We can say that within us is a miniature Garden of Eden with Adam, the serpent, and God – all three – present. Therefore, the Garden concerns us today!

I cannot over emphasize this wonderful and little understood truth that each part of man's being contains a complete set of faculties. For example, let us consider the WILL of man. Within your body you have a biological will which is physical, bodily will. This will is seated in the glands, brain and nerves of the body. This is the will that causes you to breathe and move, to jerk your hand away when you inadvertently touch a hot stove, to shiver when the temperature drops, to sleep at night and awaken in the morning. None of these things are functions of either the will of the soul or the will of the spirit. They are all physical reflexes and functions of the will of the body.

Within your soul you have a psychological will which is an ego will. This is the self-conscious and self-seeking will which is ever opposed to God and His will. This is the will Jesus brought to the cross when He said, *"Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless NOT MY WILL, but Thine, be done."* (Luke 22:42) Within this psychological will is the wretchedness of sin and the power of death, in that man would do his will rather than God's will!

Within your regenerated spirit you have a spiritual will which is naught but God's will. This is the will of which Jesus spoke when He said, *"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."* (John 6:38). The location of God's will is settled in Phil. 2:13 where we read, *"For it is God which worketh IN YOU both to WILL and to do of His good pleasure."* Jesus Christ became man to bring us back to the blessedness of doing God's will. The great object of redemption was to make us and our will free from the power of sin, and to lead us again to live and do the will of God. In His life on earth He showed us what it is to live only for the will of God; in His death and resurrection He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He has done. It is this life of obedience, wrought out by the Lord Jesus in the flesh that is not only imputed to us, but imparted through regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Through His death the Lord Jesus has atoned for our self-will and disobedience. It was by conquering it in His own perfect obedience that He atoned for it. He has thus not only blotted out the guilt of our self-will before God, but broken its power in us. In His resurrection He brought from the dead a life that had conquered and destroyed all self-will. And the believer who knows the power of Jesus' death and resurrection knows that His resurrection life gives us power to live as He lived. Jesus Christ enables us, through the indwelling of His Spirit as our new spirit life, to walk not after the flesh, but according to the will of God. This wonderful potential lies within us!

Every child of God has also three sets of emotions. Within your body you have the biological emotions of hunger, thirst, pain, health, sickness, sex drive etc. Within your soul you have the psychological emotions of sorrow, hatred, greed, lust, pride, strife, fear, envy, selfishness, jealousy, aggressiveness, pleasure, etc. Within your spirit you have the spiritual emotions of love, joy, peace, righteousness, meekness, faith, worship, praise etc.

Man also possesses a three-fold conscience. Within your body is the biological conscience which distinguishes between things which are cold or hot, painful or pleasurable, bitter or sweet, pretty or ugly etc. Within your soul is the psychological conscience which judges whether things are good or bad, legal or illegal, honest or dishonest, profitable or unprofitable etc. Within your spirit is the spiritual conscience which determines WHETHER A THING IS OF GOD OR NOT OF GOD. The natural man is guided entirely by his biological and psychological consciences, making all judgments upon the basis of good and evil. The spiritual man, however, discerns whether or not a thing is of God. We have learned a great truth when we learn that many things in this world may be called "good" but yet not be of God.

Let me put it this way – you can know God or good and evil, but not both! Knowing God and knowing good and evil are mutually exclusive. God is known only by the tree of life – good and evil are known only by the tree of death. It is not a matter of right or wrong, yes or no, good or evil – it is entirely a matter of God, a matter of life. Therefore, no matter how much mankind tries to be good, and tries not to be evil, and no matter how much good a man does, even religious good – he is still living off the fruit of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is not until life and truth come spiritually, that we see there are two different trees. Not only is there

a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but there is also a tree of life; and good and evil do not belong in the realm of life! Good and evil are simply a knowledge while the tree of life brings life, and reveals life. There is a world in which all that exists is LIFE and neither evil nor good has meaning. This world lies beyond the frontiers of good and evil. It is the realm of Living Reality – the Kingdom of Heaven.

Today most people and church are teaching and living from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Every thing that is "good" is not according to God's will or a product of His life. The fleshly religious systems of our day are ever seeking after some "good" tactic or method by which to "promote" the Kingdom of God. Their methods are "good" alright, the only problem being that generally they are NOT OF GOD! The entire religious world today is walking after the psychological conscience of the soul, choosing between "good" and "evil," always choosing the "good" and thus walking in fleshly wisdom which seems so logical to the carnal mind. Fleshly wisdom always seems to make more sense than does the wisdom of God! Satan causes carnal wisdom to prosper because it is a denial of the life of the spirit and the will of God by the spirit, so that many times Christians and churches operate contrary to the spirit with the argument that it is "good" or that "it works!" Their method of evangelism is contrary to the spirit, but since it "works" they continue in it. The "program" of the church, the "organization" of the church is contrary to the ways of the spirit, being built generally around flesh-appeal activities of concerts, social activities, ball teams, Sunday School contests, puppet shows, or movies, speakers, ceremonies, rituals, drives, etc. etc., but they continue in it because it all seems so "good" and "it works," causing the "church" to prosper in numbers and finances, while their spirits remain dwarfed and hideously shriveled and stunted, if indeed they have been quickened at all! The soulish conscience will always make decisions and direct a course of action based in a knowledge of good and evil. The spiritual conscience, on the other hand, will always DISCERN THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT and choose to WALK IN THE MIND OF CHRIST. The soulish conscience will judge upon the basis of the external form of works, whereas the spiritual conscience will discern what is behind the works, whether self-effort or the working of the Spirit of God. This explains the admonition in Hebrews where the writer says. *"How much more shall... Christ... purge your conscience from DEAD WORKS to serve the LIVING GOD."* (Heb. 9:14)

After the end of World War One, the famous desert fighter, Lawrence of Arabia, brought several Arab leaders to Paris to represent their interests at the Versailles Peace Conference. These sons of the desert were filled with astonishment at the sights of Paris, but nothing intrigued them quite as much as the running water in their hotel rooms. In the desert water was such a luxury, and here in their rooms it seemed to be free and never ending, at the turning of a tap. When it was the time to leave Paris, Lawrence found those Arabs removing the faucets, believing that those magic instruments would give them water at will in their native Arabia. Only with great difficulty did he finally convince them that their faucets were no good if detached from the water supply. "No good if detached!" What a striking picture that is of all our good, of all the forms, rituals, ceremonies, traditions, creeds, means, methods, and works of religion – all that is not of the tree of life is empty, powerless and void. They are but disconnected faucets, one and all.

The Spirit-substance that nourishes our spirit is the life of the Father within. When we live out of SPIRIT we walk in GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS and SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS has no place. If any man speaks, let him speak as the oracle of God -- out of his innermost being. When one speaks the truth, when one speaks and performs what he hears from the Father, it is GOD IN MANIFESTATION, and self is there crucified upon the cross in God's heart. God is raising up a people today, sons who no longer are self-conscious. The secret of Jesus' sonship was that He paid no attention whatsoever to Himself. *"Whatsoever I see the Father do, that is what I am doing, whatsoever I hear the Father say, that is what I am saying."* The Father said, "You are the way, the truth and the life," so He said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* He did not say it with His eyes turned to the outer man, thinking how important He was, how vital He was to the situation. He said it because His heart was set on the Father. He said, *"The Father has given Me the words I should say."* And He spoke the words the Father gave Him with no self-consciousness at all.

The higher we go in God the more refined become the testings. God is causing us to take positions and stands, not against the BAD simply, but against things that are GOOD. Of course, if you take a stand against things that are good and were started by God, formed by God, ordained by God, it will appear as if you are an instrument of the devil out to destroy the work of God. But God said once, *"That which I plant, I will pluck up"* (Jer. 1:9-10; 18:6-10) I rejoiced for years because I saw that *"every tree which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."* (Matt. 15:13) Now, as we move on in God, we must rejoice when we see God

pluck up that which HE PLANTED. God says, "That which I built, I will destroy." We are to rejoice when we see God destroy that which He built. Unless God has done a work in our spirits by the power of the Holy Ghost, we cannot believe that. Our own concept is that if God built it, the only one out to destroy it is the devil. But God says: "I will destroy." May this decade be a decade in which we are prepared to lose the good as well as the bad, prepared to see God pluck up that for which we have given our life to see it planted, where we see God break down and destroy that for which we have sold ourselves out.

Most of us have no problem as to our bad; we know the flesh and all that it represents must go to the cross. But all of us have areas in our life which we think are good: a devotion, a commitment, a consecration, a faith, a prayer life, a knowledge, a ministry, but which are as much SELF as the bad temper, the lust, and the rest of it. God is saying that everything must go. That which is left will only be CHRIST HIMSELF formed in us. Why is this? Because when God has planted something, after a while we become idolatrous about it. Idolatry is really the self-life projecting itself into the things of God so that they turn into idols because they become the thing which is produced by our consecration, our prayers, our dying. But we do not want it to die, because it has cost us too much, and it represents a work of God in our life. We have given our whole life to see this thing come into being, and anyone that comes along to destroy it is destroying all our consecration, the prayers we have prayed, the reputation we have lost, the deaths we have died. After God has established it, you are telling me that it has to die? But that is exactly it! If it lives we will do what Israel did with the brazen serpent. We make an ephod out of it and go after it to worship it. I know people today who instead of worshipping God, worship worship. It is not the Lord they delight in, but the soulish sensation they get out of "worship." Others worship a message – the faith message, the sonship message, the Kingdom message. Many worship experiences and ministries. Wherever God has brought us in previous dealings, God is progressively moving forward. Today He says: "Build it," tomorrow He says, "Destroy it." Today He says: "Plant it," tomorrow He says, "Pluck it up." Today He says: "Get a harvest," tomorrow He says, "Let the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die." He who has a right to build has also the right to destroy when He is through with a thing. And, woe! unto that man who cannot discern the times.

The cross must strike not only at our carnality and sin, but at all our blessings and experiences and attainments in God. While we praise God for all His mighty acts on our behalf, in and through us, it must all be slain by the cross until we no longer talk about the work of God wrought in us, for that is duality --- God and me. When men saw Jesus, the salvation of God, they saw more than a work of God; they saw the PERSON OF GOD, for, *'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'* (John 14:9) Ultimately God's purpose is that when the cross has done its work Christ will be so formed in us, so expressed and revealed through us, until he that sees us sees the Father.

The woman represents THE SOUL
That was taken out of man
The man the SPIRIT BEING Son
Who came forth by God's own Hand.

For man was FIRST a Spirit
THEN he became "a soul"
And if you'll hearken to these words
The Truth will soon unfold.

The soul, outside the Spirit,
Is easy to deceive
But the soul that's IN the Spirit
A lie will soon perceive.

So let our souls be subject
To the spirit of the Lord
For if we do, we'll rule our flesh
And not lose our reward.

Now the serpent was a TARE SEED

That blew in from THE FIELD
And settled in the garden
The Truth of God to steal.

The GOOD SEED is The Word of God
Sown in man's side along the way
But she no sooner heard it
Than the serpent came to say:

"Yea, hath God said he shall not eat
Of ALL trees in His garden?"
And when the woman heard this "ALL,"
Her heart did start to harden.

"Why, God said we could eat of all, but one,
And here's the reason why...
If we should eat it – even touch it –
We would surely die.

"Surely die? Of course you won't!
You must be kidding me!
He simply knows that if you eat
You'll be as wise as He!"

"Why, yes," said she, "it's plain to see
He's holding back on me...
To keep the best part for Himself...
The WISDOM of this tree."

"This glorious tree must be the key
To His prosperity...
He doesn't want Ad-AM and I
To live as well as He."

The soul that's IN The Spirit
Other voices will not hear
But the soul that's independent
Has an ever-itching ear.

She did not ask her husband
But like a ship did yaw
And as she stood there looking,
This is NOW the tree she saw:

"... not only is it food for food,
And most pleasant to the eyes,
But, best of all, this wondrous tree
Will surely make me wise."

Thou shalt not eat the cursed thing
Nor cover with its leaves
The FIG TREE that the Lord Jesus cursed
The Holy Spirit grieves.

Its root is dry, its limbs are bare;
It only brings forth leaves

There's not an ounce of cure in them...
Just sickness and disease.

For all man's works are filthy rags,
An apron of confusion,
A garment of unrighteousness...
The source of man's delusion.

But there is a Tree that God did plant
Its leaves shall heal the nations
A righteous tree, The Tree of Life,
Its fruit... God's new creations.

The devil had inspired in her
The PRIDE OF LIFE, poor girl,
And the wisdom that he offered
Was but THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD.

Man has to learn the folly
Of living solely by his SENSES
For against the serpent's cunning
They are pitiful defenses.

The soul did HEAR the serpent's lies,
Did SEE their worth and merit,
The soul did TOUCH the unclean thing,
Did TASTE, and then did share it.

She SMELLED the sweet smell of success
In the promise of the lie
That she would be as wise as God
And thus be lifted high.

Now the senses are the gifts of God
To help us in this realm
But they cannot function as they ought
If God's not at the helm.

– Lora Huston

THE THREE MINDS

Not only do saints have three kinds of hearts, wills, consciences, eyes, ears, feet, hands, and emotions, they have also three kinds of minds. Within your body you have a biological mind called the brain. It consists of a mass of nerve fibers, in the form of thin, white strands, at the top of the head. These nerve fibers connect with other nerve fibers that stretch from the brain to all parts of the body. They carry messages to and from the brain in less time than it takes to bat an eyelash. This "computer system" of nerves enables a man to think, have consciousness, and relate to the physical world in which he lives. Special centers inside the brain control our bodily senses, such as sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Every other member of the body is controlled by the brain so that if the brain is damaged some parts may be paralyzed, or the body members may not be able to function, bringing death. The one thing you will notice about all this is that of the brain is the biological organ that controls the physical sense of the flesh.

Within your soul you have a psychological mind. Paul calls this mind the "carnal mind," for it is ever minding the things of the body and the soul. The carnal mind is an insane mind. There are many species of insanity. All sin in insanity, in different degrees. The carnal mind is an insane mind given wholly to destructive

delusions. The natural man is mentally ill beyond comprehension. The carnal mind is spared from this classification in our world, only because the vast majority of the inmates in this vast asylum called "society" is equally mad and in consonance with the delusion. There is a universal insanity of the so-called "wisdom" of the world, but the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God – the Spirit. The mortal, sinful, sick, warring, confused, sorrowing, imperfect, carnal children of men are counterfeits, to be laid aside for the pure reality – man in the image of God. This mortal, this deranged mind of old Adam, must be put off, and the dispensations since the garden of Eden men have been walking after their carnal minds. They have proudly imagined that they could understand the things of God with the human mind. But this can never be. All through the ages there has been a small number who by the grace of God were able to crucify the flesh, put off the carnal mind, and become partakers of the mind of Christ. **Rom. 8:6-8** says, *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."* It is very striking that the carnal mind is equated with death. According to this verse the carnal mind and death are not two separate things - they are the very same thing. "To be carnally minded IS DEATH!" It will aid our understanding of what is meant by death if we first understand what life is, for death is the opposite of life. In the natural world we know that a dog which runs and barks is alive. Usually we can tell by its actions if a thing is alive. A stone does not act. Things happen to a stone. A stone does not of itself make anything happen, either to itself or to its surroundings. If something moves and changes and acts by itself it is alive. There are some things which are not alive that seem to act as if they were alive. The wind blows. The rain falls. The river flows. Fire burns. Each of these have movement, change and action. But these things move only when they are caused to move by some external force or law. Life, on the other hand, is an internal power that does not depend upon some other cause for its movement, change or action. Life moves, changes and acts out of its own inherent power.

When anything ceases to function – can no longer move, change or act out of its own energy - it is DEAD. Death may be either partial or complete. Part of the organism may no longer function in life, or all of it may cease to function. Suppose the case of a man who by disease or accident has been deprived of the use of his ears. The deaf man's ears, in virtue of this imperfection, are said to be "dead." That part of him is no longer functioning. If we suppose that this man then loses his sight, the beauty of the sea and sky, the forms of cloud and mountain, the features and gestures of friends, are to him as if they were not. They are there, solid and real, but not to him; he is still further "dead." Next, let it be conceived, the subtle finger of cerebral disease lays hold of him. His whole brain is affected, and the sensory nerves cease altogether to acquaint him with what is happening in the outside world. The outside world is still there, but not to him; he is still further "dead." And so the death of parts goes on. He becomes less and less alive. Finally, the lungs can no longer breathe, so the heart can no longer pump the blood and the blood can no longer transport the oxygen – the thing, for it is now a thing, is dead.

Next it will be manifest that every living thing lives and functions on a particular level, and while it is alive on its own level it is, a true sense, "dead" to those things on all other planes of existence. A tree, for example, while it lives on the plane of the vegetable kingdom, is "dead" to the higher realm of life of the animal kingdom and all kingdoms above that. It has neither eyes, nose, ears, mouth nor hands and so does not see, smell, hear, taste nor consciously touch the whole world around it. It is alive on one plane, but dead to all others. So far as consciousness is concerned, we should be justified indeed in saying that it was not alive at all. The murmur of the stream which bathes its roots affects it not. The marvelous insect-life beneath its shadow excites in it no wonder. The tender maternity of the bird which has its nest among its leaves stirs no responsive sympathy. It cannot relate to those things. To stream and insect and bird it is insensible, numb, dead. This is DEATH, this non-functioning, this irresponsiveness.

This brings us to a most wonderful and momentous realization of truth as stated by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* Jesus stated the same truth in different words, saying, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God"* (**I Cor. 2:14; John 3:3**) It cannot be said of the unregenerated man that he is living in contact with the spiritual world of God. Since that fateful day in Eden's garden when man was banished from the glories of the Tree of Life the natural man has been dead to all spiritual things and has positively no communion on the plane of divine life. The natural man functions and knows in this present material world of corruption and death while being completely dead to the higher realm of God and spiritual realities. That does not mean that the natural

man has no spirit – it means that his spirit resides in the state of sleep or death, that is, unresponsiveness to God. A corpse is still a body, a man, and has all its members but it has no consciousness or responsiveness to the world about it. And so, until the spirit of man is quickened by the Spirit of God – the Spirit of God is that which KNOWS – it is impossible for him to have any understanding, either of God, or His Word, or His ways.

The Holy Spirit who knoweth all things has taught us in the simplest and most beautiful words that *"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 thing which are not seen: are ETERNAL."* (II Cor. 4:18) All the things which can be seen, heard, tasted, touched or smelled by five physical senses or discerned by the psychological senses of the soul are TEMPORAL and are passing away. This was already a fact in Eden's fair garden, for where is the scripture, O man, that tells us that in distant beginning the plants were immortal, or that the beasts of the field possessed eternal life, or that the roses never faded, that the leaves of the trees never withered, or that no tool in the hand of man ever wore out? I declare to you that not only today are the things that are seen TEMPORAL, but the things that can be seen HAVE ALWAYS BEEN TEMPORAL since the day they came fresh from the hand of the Creator. The awe-inspiring wonder of the Tree of Life in the midst of God's creation is that God held out to His creation the potential to be transformed and transferred out of the realm of the natural into the Kingdom of the Spiritual. I John. 2:17 has always been true: *"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God ABIDETH FOREVER."* Can you think of any visible thing that is not passing away? Every form of life upon the earth is passing away, and even the earth itself shall pass away. The visible universe of suns and moons and planets and stars and innumerable galaxies will one day be rolled up like a scroll (Rev. 21:1) and the magnitudes of time and space shall be no more.

We know that God is Spirit but what does that mean? Well, Spirit is that which cannot be destroyed or damaged or hurt in any way. Spirit cannot deteriorate. It cannot grow tired or old. It is the opposite of matter. Matter is always deteriorating. While you sit reading this page, the paper is actually wearing out. The clothes on your back are wearing out. The building in which you are sitting is wearing out, and your body itself is wearing out - and some day all these things will be dust. True, it will take a long time according to our ideas for these things to happen but happen they will. There was a time when great cities filled with imposing buildings and splendid monuments flourished in Africa and Asia, cities of which every trace has now disappeared, for they have become one with the desert sands. This is inevitable because matter is always wearing out! *"Man who is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."* (Job. 14:1-2)

This is really a splendid thing because it means that the world is constantly being renewed. It is splendid that old imperfect things should disappear in order that newer, cleaner, and better things may take their place. If clothing did not wear out, many people would continue wearing it for many years until it became out of style and saturated with dirt, instead of which we get new clothes at frequent intervals. If automobiles did not wear out we may still be using the primitive models of fifty years ago. Who would want to eternally preserve something that is imperfect, soiled, ruined, or insufficient? Because everything of the material realm IS IMPERFECT God has, in His great wisdom and goodness, arranged it so that all things of this realm ARE TEMPORAL and are passing away.

Matter wears out, but the Spirit of God does not wear out because the Spirit is eternal substance. Our fleshly bodies of humiliation are composed of matter, whereas our spirits are the offspring of God's divine Spirit. Herein lies the folly of those who presume that they have already put on immortality in their physical bodies and cannot die. I have known many precious and sincere brethren who believed that they had passed over the grave, but I can tell you that today all of them are both dead and buried except those who have not yet reached the age where death is a certainty. Harken, my brother, and hear, my sister, the words of wisdom and understanding from God: *"The things which are seen ARE TEMPORAL; but the things which are not seen ARE ETERNAL."* The Spirit here reveals the great truth that there simply is no such thing as INCORRUPTIBLE MATTER. There are no IMMORTAL MATERIAL BODIES walking around anywhere on God's earth! If they are composed of matter and visible then they are not eternal and endure. It is a contradiction of terms. Nothing that is seen by the mortal eyes of natural men can be eternal. There must be a transformation, a transferal from one kingdom to the other.

The incorruptible body of the resurrection is not a material body at all, it is a SPIRIT BODY. The words of Paul to the Corinthians must be made very real to our hearts: *"There are celestial (heavenly) bodies, and bodies terrestrial (earthly): but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of terrestrial is another. So...is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown NATURAL BODY; it is raised a SPIRITUAL BODY. There is a NATURAL BODY and there is a SPIRITUAL BODY."* (I Cor. 15:40, 42-44) It is plain to see that our present bodies are "natural bodies." The "spiritual body" supersedes the "natural body" and is called in the Greek a "spirit body." The natural body and the spirit body belong to two entirely different kingdoms. The former is visible, the latter is invisible. The former is temporal, the latter is eternal. The former is of the earth, the latter is from heaven as Paul explains: *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building (body) of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."* (II Cor. 5:1-4)

Our "earthly house," our physical body, is characterized as a "tabernacle" or a better translation would be "tent-house." The transient character of the earthly body is thus revealed by this symbol. This house is to be "dissolved." "Dissolved" comes from a Greek word meaning "loosened down," as the ropes of a tent are loosened and the tent is taken down. The "spirit body," on the other hand, is described as a "building of God, eternal in the heavens." The metaphor changes, interestingly, from a "tent" to a "building," from that which can be "dissolved" to that which is "eternal." My beloved brethren! I have absolutely no desire whatever to have God embue with any eternal qualities this poor, imperfect, limited, restricted, humiliating, earthly, animal body! My hope of sonship does not rest in preserving forever a body that must be washed and clothed, fed and rested, groomed and manicured, and powdered and deodorized. There is another body, thank God formed of the Spirit of the resurrected and glorified Christ of God and this marvelous body is from heaven even as my present body is of earth. I declare to you that as a man puts on Christ he puts on not only the Spirit of Christ but also the RESURRECTION BODY of Christ and this body is our house from heaven. Even as our earth body has come from Adam, and is Adam's body, so our spirit body comes from Christ and is the body of His resurrection. As the pure and holy life of the Son of God is formed within us God shall also give us bodies worthy of such divine life, bodies capable of expressing all the wisdom and power of that blessed realm beyond sin and death, yea, beyond time and space and matter!

It must forever be settled in our hearts that there is no true reality any of the things that are seen, for how can we say that things which are always changing and passing away are realities? The only eternal things in the whole universe are the things which are not seen, and yet it is not that they are really invisible, for they are merely invisible to the kinds of eyes we mortals have. Eternal things are only inaudible to the ears of the natural and can be perceived only beyond the senses of the soulish man. The Holy Spirit has faithfully recorded of Moses, that grand hero of faith and spiritual vision, that *"by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."* (Heb. 11:27) In this verse we have from the history of Israel, on their way from Egypt to Canaan, the truth confirmed anew that in all God does in His great and eternal purposes; on man's part faith is the beginning and the ending. Faith is an attribute and faculty of the NEW HEART and the NEW MIND, and the one outstanding feature of this spiritual faculty of faith is its ability to SEE THE INVISIBLE! Moses "endured, as SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE." This was done by faith – which sees the invisible One. Here is the mighty power of the new creation: it sees what others cannot see! It sees, amid the thousand things natural men see and are guided by, something infinitely greater and more real – it sees God. No wonder it leads a man to think and act differently from other men. On everything it looks at the bright light of eternity is shining. No wonder that under the inspiration of that vision it can do mighty deeds, for it sees God its helper and strength. Let me here say to every believer that just as, in any pursuit, the eye can be trained to see what others cannot see, so the spiritual eye of the new creation can be trained to see God everywhere. Abide in His presence until the heart is filled with it. You will begin to recognize HIM in everything that happens. Seek to walk in the light of His countenance. Seeing the INVISIBLE will make it easy to forsake the world and do the will of God!

Just as there are five natural senses in the natural realm, so also there are five spiritual senses in the spiritual realm. The five senses of the body and soul are able only to see, hear, taste, touch and smell natural things, but these same five senses in the realm of the spirit are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell all spiritual

things which are invisible and incorruptible, as Paul explains: "... *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (by any natural sense of power or perception) the things which God hath in reservation for those who love Him - but God HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US by His Spirit; for the spirit searcheth (out) all things, yea the deep things of God.*" (I Cor. 2:9-14) When we are born of the Spirit the five senses of God become resident and operative within our spirit. Gradually, as we are quickened to become aware of these senses, the EYES of our understanding open wider and wider to the things not seen by the natural eye; by degrees the HEARING of faith increases until every good promise of God established as truth within; in time we come into TOUCH with the Lord and His invisible presence and powers; little by little we TASTE and see that the Lord is very gracious; after a time we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense-prayers and praises and graces, which are a SWEET ODOR to the Lord. As the natural senses can be cultivated, so can the spiritual; and the cultivation of these spiritual senses constitutes marks indicating our growth in grace, our development as sons of God, to the completeness of our new selves in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature.

When one walks by the spiritual senses of the new creation He, like Christ, has meat to eat that others know not of and drink to drink of which those around him have never tasted. Under the curse of death and separation from God man was banished from entrance into this blessed realm of reality in the Spirit. The heavens became shut up from him. He could not see eternal things. He could see only natural things. He could not hear spiritual and eternal things. He could hear only the lower sounds of earth. He could not taste spiritual things but only such things as he could eat with his physical mouth and take into his soul of the spirit of this world, none of which contain one iota of life or reality. He could not smell the more glorious fragrance of the heavenly realms, but only those perfumes which issued forth from things of earth. Neither could he feel the glory of God's presence, but his feeling was confined to the tangible and corruptible things of earth. He was condemned to live after the flesh, for the gate of the spiritual world was closed to him.

Jesus has opened the gate, blessed be His name! He now bids us come to the place of feeding upon heavenly manna, for He says, "*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) The first taste we have of the Lord's table, is when we enter into our secret closet and close the door; shutting out everybody and everything, all our thoughts and desires, all sounds from the world, and all the six hundred sixty six voices of Babylon's religious systems. It is upon the door of this closet of communion in the SPIRITUAL REALM, that He comes and knocks; it is there He enters; and when we have shut the door, He spreads a table before us, and we sup with Him and He with us. He spreads this table with heavenly viands; and we not only taste of the hidden manna, but we learn to feed upon it ONLY and CONTINUOUSLY; we drink of the living water more abundantly.

We cannot sit at this table with our voices clattering and every avenue of our being filled with unrest. We cannot abide at His feet and hear His voice when our opinions are rampant, and our thoughts wandering to and fro like the tramps in the alley that feed upon the refuse in the garbage cans. We cannot eat of this table while the wine of Babylon's doctrines and spirit is filling our stomachs and defiling our breath. We must turn from it all, from tradition, from the world, and from self to seek Him diligently and yield to Him in quietness and confidence. We must follow every direction He gives us if we would find this table and abide there; for we can only sit at this table of the Lord when we have commenced to partake of the grace of silence within and without. When the Lord was on earth, He told His disciples that He had meat to eat that they knew not of; and He added: "*My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me.*" The Sons of God will be known first of all by the fact that they make the WILL OF GOD to be their meat and drink. And it is only as we get still before HIM, that we learn to know and do His will. Body and soul must be silenced! The sooner the better. The body man shall pass away. The soulish man shall likewise pass away. But HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER. He that doeth the will of God is THE TREE OF LIFE KIND OF MAN. This hidden feeding upon Christ, the tree of life; this hidden table of communion, at which none ever sits with us but our Lord, is the King's table. Only when He is King of our lives can expect He will reveal to us His secrets, or take us into His confidence, or share with us wisdom and power. If Christ were sitting upon the throne of our lives continually, we would be sitting at His table continually.

The natural man cannot smell the more glorious fragrance of the heavenly realm, but only those odors which issue forth from the things of earth. In the Song of Solomon it is written prophetically of Christ: "*Thine oils have a goodly fragrance; Thy name is as oil poured forth.*" (S. of S. 1:3). The very name, "Christ," means the

"Anointed One." When the wise men came from a far country to search for the Messiah, they brought to Him gold, frankincense and myrrh. It did not just happen that the wise men brought these gifts to Him. Nothing ever happens; for our God is over all things. They brought to Him the gold, which symbolizes His divine nature; they brought to Him the frankincense, which is an emblem of His glory, together with the praise toward God which came through Him. They brought to Him the fragrant, but bitter myrrh, which is a symbol of His fragrance of joy, obedience, confidence and victory even in the bitterness of the suffering and death through which He would pass. Those who brought these gifts perhaps saw no significance in them; but the meaning is very clear to one who sees the symbolism in the metals, the sweet spices and gums were used in the worship of Israel.

We hardly realize how ill-smelling our own fleshly attributes are, and how many flies have gotten into the oil which the great Perfumer has commenced to put within us, until we have drawn close enough to HIM to discern the fragrance of His pure oils. It is when we smell the goodly fragrance of His humility that we begin to detect the offensive odor of our pride. It is when the sweetness of His purity and holiness, His love and longsuffering, breaks in upon us, that we smell the vile odors of our flesh, our stiff-neckedness and willfulness, our lack of love and short-suffering. It is when we smell the perfume of His patience and forgiveness toward us, that we get the real offensive odor of our impatience and unforgiving spirit toward one another. It is when we sense the fragrance of His joy and peace and righteousness that our own confusion, temper and carnality seem so putrid and unclean. How sweet and altogether delightful are the fragrances of the heavenly realms! How beautiful the sights! How delicious the taste! How entralling the sounds! How transforming, heaven's touch!

In the tree of life, Christ, the heavenly Father showed us in Jesus' earthly life what the life of heaven would be like when it came down into the conditions and circumstances of our human life. In His death and resurrection He took all that heaven's life is and poured it out that we might partake of its fullness. When the high priest, who, with the holy anointing oil upon him, had been ministering before God in the Holy of Holiest, came out and passed among the congregation of Israel, the fragrance of that holy oil enveloped him. No oil like unto this could be made by any man or be put upon any flesh; it could be only upon those who ministered before God, and only upon them did this holy perfume linger and ascend before God. So with those who draw close to their Head, Christ, as members of HIS BODY, the body of the High Priest, having boldness to enter into the Holiest by a new and living way which He hath consecrated, through the veil, drawing near to minister before HIM; His oils are upon them, His likeness and fragrance surround and emanate from them; and all who come near them know that they have been abiding in the presence of the Lord. It is only to those who have seen their own vileness and have turned to Him to be washed in the fountain of His blood that His name is as ointment poured forth. It is to those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; it is to the virgins who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; it is to that blessed company of the sons of God who overcome all things to sit with Him upon His throne; to those who love Him above all else, that His name is as oil poured forth. Do you long to be fragrant, dear child of God? Hasten to HIM whose oils have the goodly fragrance of heaven's divine life and glory; call upon Him whose name is as oil poured forth; put off all the attributes and weakness of self, and put Him on. Put off all the Babylonish garments of man's religious exercises, and put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Put Him on! Clothe thyself in HIM, let God forevermore hide thee away in Him. Then shalt thou be a Son, then shall those about thee smell such fragrance as has never been discerned upon thee; and they shall know that His good oils have a goodly fragrance, and that His oils are upon thee.

The very nature of our walk in the Spirit as sons of God requires the most drastic change in ourselves. It is impossible to walk as a son until this great change has taken place in us. We cannot hope to enter into this high and holy realm with any hope of walking in the Christ life until a whole new set of faculties has been given us and we, like children, have learned to use them and abide in them. When our minds begin to comprehend how completely the natural man is locked out of the Kingdom of God and barred from all spiritual experience because of the death that has come upon him, then we are able to understand more clearly why it was that Jesus said, *"Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God."* There is far more to that statement than any religionist has ever understood, for just as death deprived Adam of any possibility of the sight and presence of the eternal spiritual things of God's Kingdom so also does the new birth bring them back into view. The same heavens that were closed on that day in Eden so long will once again begin to open to us that we, being born again, might live in the light and reality of the Kingdom of the Lord.

That Kingdom is one with which the natural man has no correspondence at all, with which he naturally has no power of communication. Take a walk around the garden. Walk down by the cabbages and vegetables and talk about, well, anything you like. What would the cabbages think about you? What would the turnips say about you? They neither hear nor understand what you are talking about, whatever it is. Their kind of life is not your kind of life. Their faculties are not your kind of faculties. They are not constituted in your kingdom. There is no correspondence between them and you at all. They have not the capacity, the ability, the qualification, the faculty for the most elementary things you may be talking about. You may be talking about such foolish things as cars, ordinary everyday things, but they do not know it. That is how it is. There is just as great divide between the natural man and the Kingdom of God. The divide is so utter that if you and I were brought in our natural state right into the place where the Spirit of God was speaking, unless the Spirit of God wrought a miracle in us, the whole thing would be of another world. Is that not how it is? You believers go out into this world and talk about the things of the Lord and see men gape at you! It is all foreign to them! "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." And to actually enter into this Kingdom as a King-Priest after the order of Melchisedec, which is the order of the Son of God, something has to happen to us, and that means we have to be constituted anew, with altogether other qualifications and abilities and faculties for the realm of the Kingdom of God. You go out into the church world today and begin to talk about Sonship, Perfection, the Firstfruits, being changed while we stand on our own two feet, Overcomers, the Temple People, the Book of Life Company, Saviours on Mount Zion, no Rapture, no golden streets and no harps and no white night gowns and no marriage supper on a cloud eating pork chops – I can assure you that the christian will gape at you! It is not that they do not have the spiritual faculties of the new creation man to see and discern the deep things of God, only that they have not developed them! A baby has ears, eyes, nose, mouth and hands, but discerns very, very little of the world into which he has been born. And if that baby were brought into a world where there are no other human beings, he would never learn to talk nor do the thousand and one other things that make intelligent, rational human beings. Beloved, if we would grow up in the Kingdom of God there is one thing necessary: Constant fellowship and communion with the One who inhabits that high and holy realm – Jesus! Only through intercourse with HIM are we able to develop the faculties of our spirit that we may become the sons of God. There is no other way!

Few statements have ever been made that carry a more intense message than these words of the apostle Paul written to the Roman believers: *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."* (Rom. 8:6) To be spiritually minded means to walk in the spiritual mind and pay no mind to the desires, thoughts and claims of the carnal mind which minds only earthly things. The three trees of Eden are three kinds of men, three potentialities within man, and three kinds of lives that may be lived out by every regenerated person: body life, soul life and spirit life. It is interesting to watch these three kinds of lives revealed in a gathering of the Lord's people where there are saints who are walking on different levels of spiritual development. When a deep revelatory word is coming forth, and the Spirit of God is probing into the depths of the hearts of those saints walking in the SPIRITUAL REALM, others seem to withdraw and appear to be bored with the service. Then if another voice begins to speak, appealing to the SOULISH REALM, with shallow sentimental preaching, peppy music, clapping of the hands, emotional appeal for people to "come forward" for this and that blessing, this second group of saints suddenly becomes alive and responds accordingly with their manifestations. And finally, as yet another voice speaks and announces that the meeting has ended and donuts and coffee will now be served, there is this third group who live in the BODY REALM, who endured all the service thus far, who now begin to respond and come alive. Each has seen, heard, tasted, touched and smelled on one of the three levels, whether of the spirit, the soul or the body.

The sons of God are called to be THE TREE OF LIFE KIND PEOPLE. Those pursuing this calling in God will more and more know what it is to be lifted beyond the pale of natural things to behold the realm where God lives in the Spirit. It is the glory of His presence and the power of His life that changes us from corruption to incorruption, that transforms the ragged garments of our mortality to raiment which is white and glistening. God is moving in our heart and preparing us for a great change in which we shall move completely out of the tripartite nature of spirit, soul and body to live only and forever in THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. There, beyond limitation and imperfection, we shall see Him as He is and know Him even as we are known of Him. Our vision of heavenly things has been so distorted due to our looking through physical and soulish eyes. You have sometimes seen a window made of fluted glass, and you know that if you look at the street through this window everything will be distorted. The passers-by and the automobiles will appear to be warped and distorted in absurd and ugly ways. Nevertheless, you know that these things are really quite alright in themselves, and that

the distortion arises from your seeing them wrongly. The pure eyes of our regenerated spirits have had to filter through the fluted shell of our carnal minds and the marvelous things of the realm of God's Spirit have been distorted into myriads of carnal doctrines, traditions, rituals, concepts, interpretations and religious systems and exercises. This distorted vision of heavenly things is really what we know as "Christianity." It is a seeing, but a false seeing. It is knowing, but a false knowing. The sons of God are arising to pass through this veil, to abide forever in the Holiest of all. Our Leader and Forerunner opened up this path to God, in which He first walked Himself, and then draws us to follow Him. The veil is the flesh. The veil that separated man from God was the flesh; body and soul under the dominion of sin. Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelt with us here outside the veil. The Word was made flesh. Through the rent veil of His flesh, His will, His senses, His earthly faculties, His human life, yielded up to God in death, He entered beyond the veil into the Holiest. Through the rent veil He rose to the very throne of God. And this is the way He has dedicated for us. As little as He could open and enter the Holiest for us, except in His path of suffering and death, as little can we enter in unless we walk the same path of obedience and death to self. He is our way. Let us arise and follow HIM!

To be continued...

J. Preston Eby

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