

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 101

THE SEALING OF THE 144,000 (continued)

“Of the tribe of *Benjamin* were sealed twelve thousand” (Rev. 7:8).

Benjamin was the twelfth and last son of Israel, and the second son borne to him by Rachel, his beloved and dearest wife. When Benjamin’s older brother was born, Rachel named him Joseph, which means “*may He add*” — which made Joseph a *prayer* within himself, for Rachel used this name to make the statement that she desired of the Lord ***yet another son***. She asked the Lord to “add” to her one more son beyond Joseph! This prayer was answered when Joseph’s younger brother, Benjamin, came forth from Rachel’s womb. His birth, however, was an occasion of joy mingled with sorrow. The record states, “And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor. And it came to pass, *when she was in hard labor*, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; *thou shalt have this son also*. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him *Benjamin*. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel’s grave unto this day” (Gen. 35:16-20).

As Rachel lay dying, her last act was to name her newborn son Benoni, meaning “*son of my pain*.” Jacob, however, named the child Benjamin, meaning “*son of the right hand*.” The scene is strikingly reminiscent of the apostle John’s vision of the birth of the manchild! Just as Rachel was in hard labor to bring forth Benjamin, so the sun-clad woman of chapter twelve of the Revelation is seen “*travailing* in birth, and *pained* to be delivered.” Then we read of this marvelous birth, “And she brought forth a *manchild*, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” We know, of course, that the position to which this overcoming manchild company is caught up is that which is occupied by the firstborn Son of God who is seated at the ***right hand of God!*** And just as Rachel died following Benjamin’s birth, so the woman who brings forth the manchild “flees into the wilderness.” Both figures reveal the great truth that as soon as this “son” is birthed ***the old order which birthed it forever passes from the scene!*** Rachel went to her grave, and the church-order-mother of the manchild flees to the wilderness. The “son of the right hand” now brings forth a new day and a new order as he reigns upon the throne!

A son! A son at the right hand! In Benjamin we complete our journey into sonship and to the throne! The throne of Israel was in Jerusalem, and it is wondrously revealing that Jerusalem was located, not in Judah as is commonly supposed, but in the territory of Benjamin! (Josh. 18:28). Many have seen a reference to Jerusalem in Moses’ blessing on Benjamin, “And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all day long, and ***He (the Lord) shall dwell between his (Benjamin’s) shoulders***” (Deut. 33:12). The dwelling place of the Lord among His people Israel was in Jerusalem, in the temple. Thus, the Lord later located His sanctuary, the temple, in the territory of the inheritance of Benjamin! The glory of the Lord *now* rests upon the sons of God who make up the body of Christ, which is also the true and eternal and spiritual and heavenly temple of God and the New Jerusalem!

God's glory is not now, nor has it ever been, on a denomination, program, or building of man's design. His glory is the glory of Christ, which is the radiance and splendor of His mind, nature, and power in the realm of the Spirit. The glory of the Lord is that holy and awesome presence of the Lord that is supernatural, marvelous beyond my faltering lips or feeble pen to describe. That glory belongs to the Christ body! The unspeakable glory that Jesus had with the Father before the world was is now given unto God's sons! And the hour is nigh at hand when we shall be crowned with the fullness of the wondrous, majestic, and awesome glory and honor of the Lord! Through God's sons the name of the Lord shall be exalted in all the earth and before all nations! The nations shall come to the light of the glory of God upon us, and kings shall come to the brightness of our rising! When the Christ body is complete and mature and united in one, when we shall have fully experienced within ourselves all the character and purpose of the twelve tribes of Israel through the dealings of God, we shall be changed into His likeness in spirit, soul, *and* body and crowned with glory and honor. We shall then have dominion over the whole creation in that wonderful and omnipotent power of His resurrection! Oh, yes! The Christ body is the temple of God, the priests of the Lord, and the kings of the kingdom. All of this is represented spiritually in the sealed ones of the tribe of Benjamin!

Many a sermon has been preached on the rule of the kingdom of God on earth, and I think most of them have missed the mark because they see only God reigning over His kingdom. The greatest mystery of the ages is that on the throne of God today is a MAN. God came down from heaven and invaded humanity, He took upon Himself the nature and body of a man, so that when He went back to the throne (His omnipotent power in the Spirit), He would take humanity back to the throne. There is no mystery to it that God sits on the throne, He belongs there; but to think now that MAN is sitting on the throne! "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs... THIS JESUS hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED..." (Acts 2:22,32-33).

There is confirmation of this in Acts 7:55-56 where we read concerning Stephen, "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and JESUS STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. And said, Behold I see the heavens opened and the SON OF MAN standing on the right hand of God." Of course God does not physically have either a throne or a hand! The "right hand of God" is simply a metaphor denoting the *visible manifestation* of the invisible spiritual realm of **all authority, power, and dominion**. Moses and the children of Israel claimed to have *seen* "the right hand of God" (Ex. 15:6) when the waters fell in upon the armies of Pharaoh and they were drowned. What did they actually see? Nothing but a tremendous manifestation of God's power and glory! This, they called "the right hand of God."

The right hand of God is not a physical location somewhere in the universe. The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent **spirit** is not a physical one, but speaks of the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AND UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The right hand of God is the realm of *manifest* power and authority out of and by the Spirit, a position of eminence, a condition and a state of divine being. It is the assumption of the almighty power and universal dominion of the Father! It is the dispensing of His *positive energy force* into His creation. The "right hand" signifies the chief place, position of excellence or favor, next to the chief ruler. Those manifesting and dispensing the life and power of God into creation are not *themselves* GOD HIMSELF. They are the expression and revelation of God who indwells them and flows through them! Thus, since they are not the very power itself, but the vessel or vehicle of that power, they are described as "on the right hand of God" or "at the right hand of power" or "at the right hand of the Majesty of High." Exalted to that high realm Jesus no longer walks in a limited, physical, mortal body, for He now indwells the spirits of His many brethren, who are THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL (Eph. 1:22-23). Can you not see the mystery?

Blessed be God! We now have a share in the **realm of the right hand!** "When we were dead through our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ... and raised us up with Him, and made us *sit together with Him* in the heavenly places (the heights of His own exaltation)" (Eph. 2:5-6). This shows that as we come to know the resurrection life of Christ, we are also made to experience the *ascension* of Christ.

We are chosen of God not only to be made alive from the dead and have God's life, but also to sit in the heavenly places as ASCENDED MEN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD!

This brings us to the thought I want to share in this message. Almost all churches and most believers are not aware of it, but for the most part we have made God to be a one-armed or one-handed Being. Of course we realize that God is spirit and has no body of material substance and consequently no arms or hands such as we have. But spirit is real, God is real, and the "eyes" of the Lord are omnipresent spirit eyes, His universal ability to see by the spirit! God does not possess some wonderful eyes up in some far-off heaven somewhere with X-ray vision by which He can see through the long distances of space. Oh, no! God is spirit, He is everywhere, and the eyes of the Lord are everywhere! He sees you right there where you are, not from a distance, even as He also, at the same time, sees all things everywhere throughout all the unbounded heavens right there where He is by His omnipresent spirit! All the faculties of God are omnipresent spirit faculties and exist by His presence in all places at the same time. The arms and hands of God are omnipresent spirit arms and hands, bespeaking His universal ability to act, touch, and perform by His Spirit!

The thought of God having a "right hand" and a "left hand" should not be strange to us, although the preachers have so often presented God as a one-handed Being. In the scriptures we find the right hand of God mentioned a great many times, and the left hand of God is mentioned on a number of occasions. A great deal has been said as to the meaning of the right hand, but few have seemed to have any understanding or revelation of the significance of the left hand.

Let us look for a moment at the meaning of these two words, right and left. The word "right" as used with "hand" is generally the Hebrew *yamiym* meaning "stronger, more dexterous." The word for "left" is *smowl* meaning "dark." From the meaning of these two words it is easy to understand that God's right hand is His strength and dexterity, or His wonderful ability to do all things! The implication is that the right hand of God is the GOOD HAND of God, doing GOOD things. The Psalmist confirms this when he says, "In Thy presence there is fullness of joy; at Thy *right hand* are PLEASURES FOREVERMORE!" (Ps. 16:11). Again, "The voice of REJOICING AND SALVATION in the tabernacles of the righteous: the *right hand* of the Lord doeth valiantly. The *right hand* of the Lord is exalted" (Ps. 118:15-16). To which the prophet Isaiah adds his inspired testimony, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will STRENGTHEN thee; yea, I will HELP thee; yea, I will UPHOLD thee with the *right hand* of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

It is not my purpose in this message to expound upon the subject of the *left hand* of God, but in passing let us note, as I have pointed out, the left hand in the Old Testament means "dark" and from this we can readily understand that it signifies the opposite of the right hand — what we call bad or evil. The left hand represents the ***dark side of God***. This is the hand of God so little understood! The distinctive work of these two hands is graphically portrayed in the wonderful parable Jesus told of the sheep and the goats. How sobering are these meaningful words of truth: "And He shall set the sheep on the *right hand*, but the goats on the *left*. Then shall the King say unto them on the *right hand*, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...then shall He say also to them on the *left hand*, Depart from me, ye cursed, into age-abiding fire, prepared for the devil and his angels..." (Mat. 25). But just what or who are these two hands of God? The two hands of God represent two aspects of God's dealings, two ways in which He moves and acts to accomplish His purposes. We can readily see from the parable of the sheep and the goats that God deals through both *positive* and *negative* forces. Those in the right hand of God are a *spiritual people* raised up to manifest the glory of God; they are the deliverers and blessers of humanity! But those in the left hand are called "vessels of wrath" and "vessels of dishonor." When God raises up negative forces in the earth, to judge something, or destroy a system or an order, those negative forces accomplishing God's will represent the *left hand* of God! It may be communism bringing judgment on an apostate religious system, but whatever it is it is negative, yet an instrument in the hand of the Lord! His *left hand*, of course! Although they are raised up as a negative instrument in the hand of the Lord, there are no rewards for the work they do, they receive no kingdom, no status in the order of God for the ages to come. Rather, they are placed under the dealing hand of God in a process of fiery judgment to receive correction!

“Thy *right hand*, O Lord, is *become* glorious in power. Thy *right hand*, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy” (Ps. 15:6). While it is difficult for us to conceive of God becoming something more than He already is, and as to His nature there can never be any change, yet the Spirit reveals that the *right hand* of God had not previously been all that it was when the children of Israel triumphantly marched dry-shod through the Red Sea, for the prophet speaks of a day wherein the *right hand* of the Lord “is *become* glorious in power,” denoting a process in the *unfolding* of the power of His *right hand* in the midst of men. And, while the right hand of God is first and foremost the realm of God’s almighty power and authority, His right hand *became* glorious in power when it was revealed through mighty signs and wonders through the person of the man Moses.

May I now point out that there has again been a wonderful enlargement in the revelation of God’s right hand, for Jesus Christ has been exalted to the realm of the right hand; and there shall be a further enlargement, for the promise is sure, “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). Thus Jesus was able to say, “ALL POWER is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:18), and again, “But YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...” (Acts 1:8). God’s right hand is *becoming a people*, the Christ, Head and body, a many-membered SON OF THE RIGHT HAND; and the manifestation of God in and through this RIGHT HAND COMPANY shall *become* even more glorious in power as the appointed hour for the unveiling of the sons of God arrives. These shall not only declare His word, but shall have authority and divine ability to see it established in the earth! When the power of God arises in all fullness in His body of sons, and He is exalted in the people He has prepared, how unspeakably glorious and honorable He will be in the eyes of His creation! These are the hundred and forty-four thousand who have come all the way into the tribe of Benjamin — **THE SON OF THE RIGHT HAND!** That is where the glory rests!

“O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His *right hand* and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory. The Lord hath *made known His salvation*: His righteousness hath He *openly showed* in the sight of the heathen. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity” (Ps. 98:1-3,7-9). Think of it — His enemies submit, the nations are ready to worship Him, and sing to His name, the ends of the earth shall turn to Him, because His *right hand* shall do marvelous things, and He shall make known His salvation to all!

Truly, beloved, this RIGHT HAND COMPANY will get Him the victory! There is no doubt about it, no devil, no wicked men, no laws passed by legislatures, no edicts of kings, no armies of nations can stop this company from doing the things God has declared they will do, and because of their ministry, the nations will come to know the Lord and sing His praise. As the work of restoration progresses, what harmony, what glorious unity shall fill the universe, as this company of king-priests flows together, by that which every joint supplieth, to gather together into Christ all things, till all has been set in array, and God is indeed ALL IN ALL — everything to every one! It is indeed wonderful!

How sweet shall be the influence of this RIGHT HAND COMPANY, the *positive force* of God’s energy, ministering His life, His joy, His peace unto creation! How thankful we are not to be numbered among those who are called to the *left hand*, to walk in darkness, and be vessels of wrath. There is no harshness in the ministry of the right hand; oh yes, even the right hand “dashes the enemies in pieces,” but it is the destruction of the negative qualities that there might be *Life*. These bring correction ministered in love, leading all mankind to the fountain of living water, feeding them in green pastures, causing them to lie down and rest, and not be afraid. Ah — we would SEEK THE THINGS AT THE RIGHT HAND! “If ye then be risen with Christ, *seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*” (Col. 3:1).

The whole earth and all creation is waiting for the glory of the Lord to be manifested! The dealings of God in your life and mine are fraught with divine purpose. There is something far greater ahead of us than walking on streets of gold or flitting about in white night gowns strumming harps. That was the mentality instilled into me as a young man. Thank God there is a heaven, but I want to tell you something. All the

dealings of God toward us — the cross, the suffering, the processings, the blessings, the glory — all are intended to put something of His nature and character into us. This working will enable Him to be made manifest in this old dark world in which we live. God has purposed that righteousness and glory shine forth before all nations! This is going to be done through those who are being transformed into the likeness of His firstborn Son! Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall fill the earth! His power will shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before HIM!

With what joy and holy wonder do I tell you today that the power of Jesus Christ is the power that will again be manifested on the earth through the ministry of Christ's *many brethren*, the sons of God! What a calling rests upon the firstfruits! How humbly we should seek God, how fervently we should cry out to the Lord, that His work be completed in us to bring this sonship ministry to pass in the earth! How we praise God for the in-part ministry of the church age — it has been glorious beyond words and has brought us to where we are in God. But none can deny that the ministry of Jesus has not been fully duplicated in all the power and glory of the kingdom of God! Who among us can raise his hand and tell me that in him, or in his prayer group, or in his church, or in his movement, or in his sonship convention, the miraculous sonship ministry of Jesus has been reproduced in all of its fullness and power? Regardless of how much revelation we have, or how many miracles we have seen, or how many spine-tingling prophecies we have heard, were we to make such a claim we would all be found liars. After two thousand years of the meticulous formation of the Christ body, creation *still* groans and travails *waiting* for the *manifestation of the sons of God* who shall *deliver creation itself from the bondage of corruption*.

The greater ministry of the sons of God will allay every disturbing element; break the power of sin and death; put down every wrong; still every clamoring tongue; calm every raging sea; touch every inflamed sore of society; unite into harmony every quarrelsome crowd; heal every excruciating pain and suffering; pilot every tossed soul into the harbor of rest; banish all fear, malice, bigotry, and hatred in the melting fire of divine love; bind every demonic power; dissolve every corrupt government; undo every heavy burden; swallow up every false philosophy and religion into the quickening of truth and reality; heal every sickness, disease, and torment; fill to the full every lack and void; impart life more abundant to all men everywhere; and give joy unspeakable and full of glory until the whole earth is full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and all creation pulsates with the scintillating life and light and love of God!

This revolution will come through the ministry of the sons of God and will penetrate and judge the motives, character, intents, activities, and institutions of the whole world! This marvelous work will be wrought by a company of king-priests after the order of Melchizedek. This sonship ministry will be the most awesome and powerful ministry the Lord has ever unleashed on an unsuspecting world! Nothing will be able to stand before it! No philosophy, creed, science, academics, or humanistic concept of men shall be able to gainsay the wisdom of God in His sons! It will consume and break in pieces the whole fabric of the nations! The economic, cultural, educational, military, ecclesiastical, and political structures that man has erected by the carnal mind and fleshly wisdom will disintegrate before the very eyes of all men! These sons of the Most High are even now being prepared and empowered with the mightiest weapon in the universe — the sword of the Spirit which is *the living word of God!* All things and all creatures obey the command of the word of the Most High God! At His word creation springs forth and darkness flees from before His face!

“The Lord shall utter His voice (speak His word) before His army: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?” (Joel 2:11). *All* that I have stated above is summed up in that one small passage of scripture! This army of God is earth's deliverers and the Lord's restoration hosts; not a revival crusade, not a political action committee, not a movement or organization, not a regiment of soldiers, but a *spiritual company of divine origin and formation* — invincible and all-conquering! These are the marching men and women of God progressing through the ages, tramping the corridors of God's purposes, binding time and eternity together, fulfilling their mission, bringing the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Wherever the desperate needs of men are, from India's vast land, teeming with hundreds of millions, from Africa's dark juj ceremonialism, from the igloos of Iceland to the farthest reaches of Tierra del Fuego, from Wall Street to the Great Wall of China, from the ivory-covered halls of learning in Paris, or Cambridge, to the dusty roads of

the commonplace of all nations — wherever man may be found — the sons of God shall bring the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of heaven with power and great glory!

The ministry and rule of sonship is ready to be poured out upon the nations of this world. What a perfect *luxury of blessing* shall come upon all mankind! The ministry of Jesus revealed in the four Gospels, shall be intensified by tens of thousands of manifest sons of God stepping forth in the power of His resurrection in the midst of the earth! When the mighty work of salvation, restoration, and transformation is complete, there will be none of those painful and debilitating diseases which now plague mankind. We shall need no doctors and the great clinics and hospitals of our cities and towns will have no patients who need treatment, surgeries, or nursing. From every mental hospital the inmates will stream forth shouting for joy at finding that God's Christ has touched their minds with His omnipotent hand of love and power, just as did the man of the Gadarenes in Jesus' day. From every prison in the world will leap forth prisoners of every sex and every age to testify to the saving, delivering, and transforming work of God in their lives, breaking completely and forever the shackles of sin and Satan, turning thieves, murderers, and rapists into men of mildness, righteousness, and compassion. The power of sin and death being broken, the undertaker will look in vain for corpses and will find it the hardest thing in the world to keep his business open!

NOW HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! When God's *spiritual work* in the mind, heart, nature and character is finished in each of His sons, the *sign* that the hour for the manifestation of the sons of God has arrived will be given throughout the whole earth. On a day much like today, those who have been fully awakened within and transformed into His likeness in spirit and soul, will step into another dimension. Suddenly, instantaneously, and simultaneously **every sickness and disease in each and every body of all the sons of God will be totally and permanently healed.** This will be the most astounding *mass-miracle* of the ages! A shuddering will run through their bodies. In an instant these sons will burst into the resplendence of the shimmering glory of God brighter than the noonday sun! Incorruptible life will surge forth from within, quickening their mortal bodies with vibrant, self-perpetuating life! Their minds will at the same time be expanded with divine wisdom, understanding, and discernment! All things will become open and known! The secrets of the universe will become as clear as the letters of the alphabet! Creative power will flow from their mouths and their hands! The secrets of men's hearts will be revealed and they will know all that is within man; but they will not be permitted to speak these things except in private; only mercy, grace, and omnipotent love will flow forth to mankind! But the *very first sign* that the hour of manifestation has arrived will be the sudden, instantaneous, and simultaneous HEALING OF EVERY SICKNESS AND DISEASE IN THE BODY OF EVERY SON! You can watch for *that sign* that the day of full manifestation *is here!* Some will not receive this word, but it does not matter. The sign *will* be fulfilled, and glorious shall be the Day unto those who are appointed unto it!

This will be Benjamin — THE SON OF THE RIGHT HAND!

THE GREAT MULTITUDE

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a *great multitude, which no man could number*, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9-10).

In visions of glory while on the isle of Patmos, John was made to see a “great multitude” of saints which no man could number. Asked by one of the elders, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands, and whence have they come?” John answered, “Sir, you know.” And the elder said to him, “These are they which have *come out of great tribulation*; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:13-14). Each of these white-robed saints had to experience *great tribulation*.

It seems to me that these are the very people who had been followers of Jezebel, the false prophetess, the false ministry of the church systems, who committed spiritual fornication and ate spiritual food that was defiled by idols — doctrines corrupted and contaminated by false images and conceptions of God. Were we not all there at one time? To these the Lord Jesus said, “Behold, I will cast her into a bed (of trouble), and

them that commit adultery with her into *great tribulation*, except they repent of their deeds” (Rev. 2:22). The Lord said of Jezebel, “I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not” (Rev. 2:21). Thank God! He gives us space to repent! He sees the depth of our being. He reveals what He sees to us. Like a parent correcting a child, He gives us space to repent. He doesn’t just slap us around! If we will not heed His warnings, then come His feet of brass that burn as a furnace! Can we not see? Do we yet understand? He casts her into a bed of trouble rather than pleasure, He throws all who fornicate with her into great tribulation, He kills her children. This is the judgment which comes. This is the judgment which will redeem Zion! This is the judgment which washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion and the blood of Jerusalem! This is a revelation of judgment from the Lord which begins at the house of God (I Pet. 4:17) and then flows out from that house to all creation!

It is interesting to note that the term “great tribulation” appears only twice in the book of Revelation, and neither time does it apply to the *world*. In both cases it has to do with the Lord’s own people! What elaborate and fancy fictions men have written and preached about the so-called great tribulation that is supposed to come upon the whole world! Jesus said He would cast the spiritual fornicators of the church age into *great tribulation*, unless they *repented*. What do you suppose would be the purpose of the great tribulation? Why, bless your heart, would it not be to influence and motivate them to *repent*!

Our English word “tribulation” comes from the Latin word *tribulum*. The tribulum was a hollowed out rock where they poured their wheat or other grain with the husks still upon it — the chaff was still attached. There was another rock suspended above it which was connected to a lever. The lever was used to make the rock crash down upon the wheat. When it struck the wheat with force it broke the chaff loose from the kernel. Bellows were then employed to blow the chaff away from the grain, after which it was gathered for a future burning. The kernels were gathered into the barn. This process was called *tribulation*! The great truth revealed to us from this concerns the great *purpose* of tribulation. The work of tribulation is specifically designed by God to *separate the chaff from the wheat*. That is the mystery! God’s people have been passing through the fires of tribulation all through the centuries. All who will be purged and purified, all who will wash their robes and make them white, all who will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God *must* pass under the relentless blows of the *tribulum* (Acts 14:22). This is the process our all-wise Father has ordained to separate the precious from the vile in the life of every saint of God. The sons of God are now experiencing this work of tribulation and are being perfected through the trials and testings they suffer. But the “great multitude” of the nominal church world have yet to pass through the fires of the great tribulation!

Every time you see the twenty-four elders, or the four living creatures, or the hundred and forty-four thousand — God’s king-priest ministry — immediately afterward you see a vast throng of people praising and glorifying God because they are free! That’s what the overcoming company, the sons of God, the Melchizedek priesthood, is all about! These are God’s prepared instruments to release and restore creation, and the *great multitude* is the first group out of all the nations that is released and restored! John was a great mathematician, and he managed to count up to 144,000 footstep followers of the Lamb standing upon mount Zion. But that was only a representative number for the company of the manifest sons of God. As for the church of God, gathered out of all the tribes and tongues and peoples and nations of earth, he gave up all idea of computation, and confessed that it is “a number that no man can number.” That would be a lot of people, because even if there were *billions* they could still be numbered! Even the population of the whole world today has been numbered! But the construction of this statement in the Greek is most revealing. I quote from the Emphatic Diaglott which says, “*After these things I saw, and lo a crowd great, which to have numbered no man was able.*” What that means is — IT IS A MULTITUDE GREATER THAN WE COULD HAVE EVER DREAMED! It staggers the imagination of man that God could have, from one man Jesus, and a handful of fishermen, tax-collectors, and the like, brought forth such a work in the earth!

There is still a deeper meaning beyond this. “To number” in the spiritual sense signifies to *know the quality*, because a number in scripture does not signify a literal number, but the quality of a thing. For example, twelve is the number of divine government. One hundred and forty-four thousand is twelve squared by itself times one thousand (which stands for the day of the Lord). Therefore, we can know that there will not be exactly 144,000 sons of God, but the sons are those in whom the government of God finds its highest expression, bringing the day of the Lord! The number reveals their *quality*, not their *quantity*. All

the numbers in the whole book of Revelation bear that significance! A whole book could be written just about that. Therefore, by John's estimation of "a great multitude *which no man could number*" is meant in the spiritual sense that no one but the Lord alone knows their quality! The Lord alone knows where each has come from spiritually, some from Baptist, some from Methodist, some from Pentecostal, some from Roman Catholic, some from the Mormons, some from Episcopalian, some from Jehovah's Witnesses, some from Seventh Day Adventist, etc. Oh, yes! Don't let it dismay you that I include some groups that by many are considered cults. Men look on the outward appearance, but God knows the heart! Whoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved! It doesn't say, "He that believeth and hath all his doctrine straight." Oh, no! God has people everywhere! And only He knows their spiritual state, only He knows their ultimate place in Him! The Lord alone knows the quality of their affection after Him, and arranges all into order according to it.

God has a precise order for every man and every thing to be set free and restored into the truth, the life, and the purpose of God. Here it is clear that the religious realm of Christianity (Jezebel) is released *first!* This is a great harvest! The 144,000 are the *firstfruits* of Christ's full redemption (Rev. 14:4). This harvest principle reveals the order of God in the restoration of all things — God has an order and there is a progression in His great program of redemption, reconciliation, and the restitution of all things. The next part of the harvest (after the firstfruits) is the big harvest, not the full harvest in the end of the year, but the complete "wheat" harvest that comes after the waving of the firstfruits. These are people uniquely His "out of" every nation, kindred, people, and tongue. The Greek word is *ek* meaning *out of*. This is the full redemption of the church which is God's "called out" people out from among the nations (Acts 15:14). God will restore His people who have been held captive in religious Babylon! And that is the *first thing* on His agenda following the manifestation of the sons of God! The firstfruits of His redemption are the sons of God. Next in order is the church. Then the salvation of all nations. After the salvation of the nations shall come the gradual resurrection and restoration of every man who has lived and died from Adam all the way through the ages. And finally, the restoration of all spirits and all worlds and all realms throughout the endless vastnesses of infinity!

John described the great multitude of saints this way: "*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*" (Rev. 7:14-17).

Surely this passage describes the blessing of God to come upon His people! They are coming out of great tribulation, which is in this case the judgment sent upon the woman Jezebel presented in chapter two of the Revelation. They are being chastised of their Father for their spiritual harlotry in the land of spiritual Babylon, and through this process their "robes" are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Thank God, John sees a great multitude that has *come out of great tribulation*. A wonderful transformation has taken place in them through the process of the great tribulation! They have now "washed their robes" and have "made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Their robes weren't always white! Before their "great tribulation" their robes were soiled, stained, spotted, dirty, polluted, and filthy! They were truly God's people, but were not yet washed from the *defilement of religion* and *religious systems!* As a result of their going *through* that great tribulation, God's purpose is accomplished in their lives.

These are the redeemed of God who have washed their robes from the defilement of the false doctrines, empty rituals, blinding traditions, fleshly methods, and carnal programs of the church systems of man. White robes in the book of Revelation denote "the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev. 19:8). It is the righteousness of Christ with which they are clothed, resulting in righteous, truly *spiritual acts* manifested out of their lives upon this earth. All of them have endured the strippings, purgings, prunings, threshings, refinings, and purifying dealings of God and have been thoroughly chastened and corrected by the Father. They are seen coming out of this great tribulation waving palm branches of victory and praise to God! They are now a righteous people, and they are a joyful, praising people! The Lord has led them through the processings of His Spirit, separating from them all the garbage of religion, making them pure and righteous in the sight of God.

Cleansed and purified by the Lamb, they are transformed and brought very near to His throne of love, grace, and power! By this work of spiritual cleansing, they are given access to the throne zone — not to sit on the throne, but to stand “before” the throne where they do not reign, but they “serve” God by worshipping Him day and night in His temple. He that sitteth on the Father’s throne (the overcomers) dwells among them. Because the Christ body dwells among them, these delivered saints from the old order church systems of the world shall never hunger or thirst again, for the Lord will now feed them and fill them with true spiritual food, the heavenly manna they were deprived of at the tables of Babylon; and they shall drink from the fountain of full and abundant life. There is now a flow of life, a reality of life, which has satisfied the very depths of their being. They do not look for another. They do not fantasize about another. They have found Him whom their soul loveth and He is more than enough!

Neither shall the sun smite them anymore, for they are now called out of the outer court where they formerly dwelt, where the sun shines, into the secret and covered place of the most High, in the inner sanctuary of His presence. God will eliminate all sorrow and wipe all tears from their eyes; no more travailing and weeping for more of God, for they shall now at last be *satisfied!* They no longer have any inner turmoil, for all the tears are gone. As Ricky Evans has pointed out, “The word ‘tear’ comes from *dakru* which means ‘an inward cry that cannot be heard audibly, inner turmoil.’ It speaks of those dissatisfactions, those longings, that warfare which goes on within us, while we keep a smile on our face and don’t let anyone know our deep dark secrets. God’s life, His presence, the reality of His person, wipes away those cries, removes the inner turmoil.”

Some may think that because this multitude stand “before the throne” they must be up in heaven someplace, instead of being a people upon earth. We must remember, however, that the scene is symbolic and spiritual, and therefore has nothing to do with physical location! If it is on earth that they wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, why should it not be on earth that they wear them? If they come out of great tribulation on earth, why should they not carry their palms on earth also? The palms bespeak of *praise!* They are “before the throne” and it is here on earth that the apostle says, “Let us therefore come boldly *to the throne of grace*, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

The great multitude is a people, the Lord’s people, long held in the dark clutches of horrible darkness in religious Babylon, the carnal, man-made church systems, now set free through the ministry of the manifest sons of God, and ushered out of the feasts of Passover and Pentecost, on into the glory of the feast of Tabernacles. One point indeed ought to be carefully kept in view. The great multitude all has “*palms in their hands*” (Rev. 7:9). The palms in the hands of the great multitude are not the palms of victory in any earthly contest, but the *palms of the feast of Tabernacles*, and it is upon the thought of that feast the scene is molded. The feast of Tabernacles, it will be remembered, was at once the last, the highest, and the most joyful of all the festivals of Israel! It fell in the month of October, when the harvest not only of grain, but of wine and oil, had been gathered in, and when, therefore, all the labors of the year were past.

Even this was not all, for we know that in the later period of their history, the house of Judah connected the feast of Tabernacles with the brightest anticipations of the future as well as with the most joyful memories of the past. They beheld in it the promise of the Spirit, the great gift of the coming age; and that they might give full expression to this anticipation, they sent on the eighth, or the last and great day of the feast, a priest to the pool of Siloam with a golden urn, that he might fill it from the pool, and, bringing it up to the temple, might pour it on the altar. This is the part of the ceremonial alluded to at the point when the joy of the people reached its highest point, and we read that “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers of living water*. But this spake He of *the Spirit*, which they that believe on Him should receive” (Jn. 7:37-39). These words rang and echoed down the streets of Jerusalem as the crowds gathered around the priest when he brought the water from the pool, and they waved their *lulabs* — small branches of palm trees, the same palms referred to as being waved by the great multitude! The courts of the temple vibrated with their glad song, “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. 12:3). Ah, the great multitude wave the palms of joy and praise unto God! They draw living water out of the wells of salvation, out of the depths of the Spirit which they have received! This

is the Spirit *beyond Pentecost*, this is the church, the vast multitudes of the redeemed, through the ministry of the sons of God, brought into THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES! Oh, the wonder of it! Isn't it wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY