

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 108

THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS (continued)

"And the *third angel sounded*, and there *fell a great star from heaven*, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the *third part of the rivers*, and upon the *fountains of waters*: and the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the *third part of the waters became wormwood*; and *many men died* of the waters, because they were *made bitter*" (Rev. 8:10-11).

As the trumpets sound we see actions that originate out of the heavens of the spirit and enter powerfully into the symbolic earth and the sea of our natural lives. It is the realm of the spirit where God dwells and from whence He moves to redeem and transform us in soul and body! In the passage above a "great star" falls from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and falls upon the third part of the *rivers* and *fountains of waters*! Not the literal springs and rivers that flow through earth's mountains, plains, and valleys, of course, but the rivers of *man's human life* and *man's fallible word* rather than *God's divine life* and *heaven's living word*! Just as the Spirit of God and the living Word of God make up the wonderful "river of life" in the closing chapters of the Revelation, and flow out from God, so the "spirit of the world" and the "word of man" comprise the carnal "rivers" and "waters" of the earth-realm which flow out of the carnal minds and hearts of natural men.

The "great star," burning as it were a lamp, is a ***burning word*** of authority and power! It is Christ Himself, the ***bright and morning star***, who is the Word of God, and descends out of the heavens of our spirit to fall upon the soulful rivers and upon the human well-springs of imaginations, carnal knowledge, and worldly wisdom that flow within our earthly, natural, human life and identity. "Rivers" suggest the ***flow*** of these ideas and beliefs as they are taught, propagated, and assimilated into the minds, hearts, and behavior of mankind. These constitute the word and spirit that flow out of a carnal realm — Christ falls upon these with His blazing word of divine Spirit and heavenly Truth and turns them to *wormwood* — ***bitterness!*** By that bitterness, death is brought to that realm! Not only a third part of the rivers, but also the "fountains of waters," that is, the *water sources* are rendered undrinkable. The "fountains of waters" represent the ***sources*** of the ideas, concepts, philosophies, teachings, precepts, creeds, doctrines, traditions, ideologies, observances, customs, laws — all the intellectual, moral, political, and religious influences of *this world* which are the sources from which men draw their life, their natural joy and refreshment, their ways of thinking, their image of themselves, their understanding of the world, their vocations, life-styles, their hopes, dreams, and ambitions, and their relationships. If ever a purging was needed, it is here!

The "great star" is Christ! "*And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and...the waters became wormwood (bitter).*" It is Christ Himself who causes the streams of our natural life, human understanding, worldly wisdom, and man's religion to be ***made bitter!*** "*And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*" Oh, yes! The very thing that was once life to us now becomes death! That is the divine wisdom and effective processing of the Lord in the lives of His elect!

The river of God is *spiritual*, the rivers of earth are *soulful*. The river of God is the *spirit* of the word, the rivers of earth are the *letter* of the word. The river of God is *essence*, the rivers of earth are *form*.

The river of God is *living reality*, the rivers of earth are *lifeless shadows* and *deceptive illusions*. The river of God is *truth* and *life*, the rivers of earth are *cold, dead facts* in which there is no life! There are many things that are *true*, but they are not *the truth*. They are *cold, dead facts*, but they are not *quickenings* **life** and **power**! And now may I exhort you to flee from those things which are true but not Truth, as surely and swiftly as you would flee your home if you discovered it to be a den of rattlesnakes!

We have a whole crop of doom-casters in the land today who spend their time and energy in nothing else but informing the Lord's people of all the negative situations which are going to overtake our nation and the world! Many of the Lord's precious people are being fed a steady diet of messages, articles, books, and tapes about world conditions, politics, the situation in the Middle East, oil crisis, economic collapse, one world government, conspiracies of the Illuminati, Council on Foreign Relations, World Trade Organization, World Bank, European Common Market Beast Government, the Antichrist, the mark of the beast, cashless society, strikes, riots, war, terrorism, the great tribulation, supposed "safe areas," food storage, living off the land, planetary conjunctions, pestilence, tsunamis, erratic weather conditions, wickedness, catastrophes, the end of the world, and a whole catalog of other fearful and frightening events which they imagine fulfill the prophecies of the book of Revelation, some of which will undoubtedly happen, just as they have happened historically through the ages, but many of which I tell you now are nothing more than wild and sensational speculations conceived in the darkness of the carnal minds of men who masquerade as end-time teachers and prophets of God, bewitching the saints. The natural mind, my beloved, is certainly one of the well-springs and sources of the earthly "fountains of waters" from whence flow the "rivers" of carnal ideas, concepts, teachings, and imaginations of which the "inhabitants of the earth" drink and find a certain level of excitement, refreshment, and fulfillment.

Let every child of God who has had birthed within his bosom the beautiful hope of sonship turn the searchlight of sincerity and truth upon his pure heart and ask this one important question: Do any of the above mentioned things minister LIFE? Does the knowing and study of them cause you to be more filled with the Spirit? Do they enable you to put on the mind of Christ? Do they work deliverance and overcoming power in your life? Do they transform you into the image of the firstborn Son of God? Do they flood your life with peace and joyful expectation in Christ? Do they imbue you with spiritual wisdom and understanding, with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Do they inspire you with ever-increasing faith by which you shall conquer every enemy and lay hold upon life and immortality? Are they TRUTH, quickening, life-giving Truth, or are they, one and all, merely things that are *true*, or, perhaps, *may be true*, or *may not even be true at all*! I have no hesitation whatever in telling you that all these streams of teaching are naught but ***carnal rivers flowing through the earth-realm!***

MARAH

"And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters *became wormwood*" (Rev. 8:11).

Wormwood simply means "bitter" or "bitterness." This is reminiscent of the children of Israel when they were dying of thirst in the desert! It was only three days after they had crossed the Red Sea. When Moses led out the people of Yahweh, he led them to the wilderness of Shur and for three days they found no water. At last they came to the waters of Marah, and the people cried out against Moses, for the waters were bitter and they could not drink them. Therefore they cried, "Marah! Marah!" which means Bitterness! Then Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree, and when he had cut it down he was divinely directed to throw that into the waters of Marah, and the waters became sweet (Ex. 15:22-26).

Here in the Revelation there is one significant difference. In Israel's experience in the desert the waters were bitter and by the word of the Lord they were made sweet. Here, however, the waters seem sweet, but by the word of the Lord they are made bitter! In both cases it is the Lord Himself who changes the waters! Yes, IT IS THE LORD! This "star" which is Christ, descends upon the earthly rivers and fountains of waters as a beaming ray of brilliancy; but to the carnal mind it is poison — Wormwood! Wormwood is the bitterest shrub known to botanists. Several varieties are found in the Middle East. Wormwood has a bitter, nauseating taste. When it is used freely, it produces convulsions, paralysis, and death. In the Hebrew

language its name means “to curse,” and rightly so, as it is listed among the curses given by the Lord to Moses.

The presence of the Lord and the anointed word of God have a way of *poisoning* man’s word, so far as man is concerned. That the rivers and fountains of waters represent the flowing of a “word” through our land, which the Lord Himself embitters with wormwood, is wonderfully clear in the prophecy of Jeremiah. *“And I have seen the folly in the prophets of Samaria: they prophesied in Baal, and **caused my people Israel to err**. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and **walk in lies**....therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will **feed them with the bitterness of wormwood**, and make them **drink the poisonous water of gall**: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land”* (Jer. 23:13-15, KJV & Amplified).

“And many men *died of the waters*, because they were *made bitter*,” signifies the extinction of our desire to partake any longer of the polluted waters of earth, for a man is called “alive” when he desires, seeks, trust in, or responds to the environment around him. When one is separated from a world of “life,” or what is counted as life, he is considered dead. Many saints have become “dead” to the world they used to live in! The things that once were *life* to them have now become *death*. Truly, we who have been apprehended to the high calling of God have died to the world, we have died to sin, we have died to various religious realms, and we have died to so-called “truths” we once held as sacred. “*Because the waters were made bitter*” indicates that God has brought us to the place of maturity in the spiritual life of Christ where all the philosophies, methods, ways, and spirit of the world, as well as the multiplied religious activities of the old-order church systems have lost their appeal, attractiveness, and glamour — none of them hold anything for us anymore! Not only do they not hold anything for us, but they have become to us repugnant, repulsive, unpleasant, unpalatable, insipid, and nauseating! Truly, all these “waters” have been *made wormwood* unto us! And our wonderful Lord in His great mercy and love has done this for us! Because of His great purpose for us, predestined before the foundation of the world, He now calls us away from the rivers of earth that we may live only and always by the river of life that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb! Isn’t it wonderful!

How powerfully we see this in the life of our blessed forerunner, the firstborn Son of God! Though Jesus was “made of a woman,” and “made under the law,” being raised in the synagogue with all the practices of the religious life of the people of Israel, by the sovereign revelation of His Father, when His sonship was revealed to Him, He saw the law for what it was — bondage and vanity. And He could never redeem us from the bondage and curse of the law unto the liberty and glory of sonship until He Himself once and forever REPUDIATED THE LAW and stepped forth to live only and wholly by the Father! He had to abandon the righteousness of the law in order to reveal the righteousness of God by the Spirit! That is precisely what He did when He came to John the Baptist and was baptized *unto repentance*. That means Jesus *repented*! He was the only man who ever lived that kept perfectly every precept of the law. He was the blameless, spotless, pure, holy, and undefiled Lamb of God, the only *sinless One* of humanity! Other men came to John’s baptism repenting of *sin*. But Jesus had done no sin, therefore He could not repent of sin. Yet — He was baptized *unto repentance*!

Jesus repented! What a thought! The only thing He could repent of was the old covenant His Father had subjected Him to. It was a hindrance to His sonship, for it was an inferior order that was ready to pass away. As long as He was a child He was subject to the tutors and governors of the law, but when the hour arrived for the unveiling of His mature sonship He walked down to the river Jordan and was baptized unto that repentance, or turning from the law, and came out of the water in the power of the Spirit of His Father! He buried the law, and all the old order of the old covenant, and was invested upon by the glory of the new order of His Father! He stepped forth with the public recognition by His Father. He was recognized as the SON OF GOD for the first time when His heavenly Father spoke out of the open heavens proclaiming a Son who was no longer under the tutelage of the schoolmaster of the law. He had turned from being ruled by the law to being ruled by the Spirit of Life! He turned from the natural to the spiritual! He turned from the human to the divine! He turned from the earthly to the heavenly! He turned from being a channel, a riverbed for the waters of a carnal, lifeless, earthly word, to becoming the spring, the fountain, the reservoir of that living water which flows from the heart of God! From that time on He was filled with the Spirit and led by the Spirit. The waters of eternal and incorruptible life flowed from His innermost being! His life

changed dramatically! He did all these things to deliver us from the limited waters of the earth-realm and bring us to the unlimited celestial waters of the kingdom of God! It is indeed wonderful!

The flowing streams and fountains of waters of the external form of truth in the law were *made wormwood* — made bitter, even poisonous, so that the Son of God would turn from them and drink of them no more! It was the Father Himself who turned those “waters” of Old Testament truth and revelation to wormwood! And because of the bitterness of those waters to the pure, holy spirit of sonship within Jesus, He *died* to that realm once and for all! The firstborn Son of God understood this very clearly by the mind of the Father! Out from under the curses of the law He never condemned the prostitute, the fornicator, the tax-gatherer, the thieves, or murderers. He never demonstrated holy anger against the Romans, the world, or the wicked. It was the *religious leaders* that He denounced! His anger was focused on the hypocrisy of the so-called carriers of God’s word! He condemned those who laid heavy burdens upon the people, yet they themselves could not keep the laws they tried to enforce! They appeared clean on the outside, but inside were full of greed and wickedness! Those who gave tithes and fasted and prayed and loved the best seats in the synagogues to be seen of men, He rebuked! Those who distorted the word of God, who turned the truth of God into a lie, who misrepresented the nature of His Father, and loaded people down with religious burdens and obligations, He called a generation of *vipers* — a brood of *snakes*! (Mat. 23:2-7,13-15).

What an astonishing word for Jesus to deliver to those lettered doctors of the law and chief priests who had studied the scriptures and were esteemed leaders of the religion of the past! Just as those religious leaders could not discern the day of their visitation and refused to relinquish the old in order to apprehend the new, so are there multitudes in this new kingdom day who will fail to make the transition by repentance, and will reject the new thing God is about to do in the earth. Those who drink from the corrupted, polluted streams of man’s religion will reject the river of God that flows from the manifest sons of God in the hour of God’s unveiling!

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation (judgment, processing). Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves” (Mat. 23:13-15).

I do not for one moment doubt that this is what Jesus would say about the leaders of the church systems of our day! If Jesus was walking among us today, as He once was with a body of flesh and blood, He would utter the same denouncements against the carnal church systems today! And He *is* walking among us now, not as Jesus in the flesh, but as Christ, the Spirit! Jesus had no fear of the multitudes who heard Him rebuke and chastise the scribes and Pharisees that day for their useless, empty, vain, pompous, carnal religious practices! Much of what the Christian leaders do today only appears to be spiritual, but all of it is totally religious. In many cases it is done to cover up their hidden agenda, which is to deceive their unsuspecting followers, to gain a following, to build a kingdom, and to take from them for their own prestige and gain. Father is leading His elect onward and upward spiritually, from the low lands of Christendom’s infantile experiences, to the more mature high places of relationship with Him. He has called us to ascend the heights of mount Zion, that here we may grow spiritually, step by step, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. And in that process of growth, our Father is delivering us from the lifeless doctrines and static creeds of the past! He has turned all those “streams” into wormwood, and we are no longer able to drink of those waters! And Father is doing a very strong and sure work of cleansing us within to deliver us, once and for all time, from all the earthly rivers and fountains of waters of man’s carnal and corrupt religious systems. He does this, first of all, by giving us a revelation, causing us to *see Babylon for what it is!* Within us, within our minds, hearts, and nature, He comes into our world in the power of His Spirit and makes all the rivers of Babylon bitter to our taste!

How well I remember when the Spirit of the Lord in my life began to turn the waters of Babylon to wormwood! I sat in the same pew where the word coming forth had seemed life to me, it was exciting and satisfied my soulish understanding, emotions, and desires. Yet suddenly that same word and those same activities that had blessed me became repulsive and abhorrent — I could stand it no longer, I wanted to

throw up! The waters were made death to me! They became poison! When I drank of them they made me sick! If I would have continued to drink of them they would have killed me! Oh, yes! IT WAS THE LORD WHO DID THIS! The star from heaven, burning as a lamp, fell upon my rivers and upon my fountains of waters, making them wormwood!

Every member of God's elect can testify that the things we once loved we now hate. Things that were important to us, now appear insignificant and worthless. The pleasures of sin, the allurements of the world, the priorities of society, the vain traditions of religion all become a weariness and stench in our nostrils. Someone once asked, "If I become a Christian can I still get drunk?" A wise believer responded, "Yes, you can get drunk all you *want to*!" He knew that once the higher and more glorious life and reality of the Lord was raised up in that man, Christ would take the "want to" out of him! And let me tell you, my brother, my sister, I am perfectly free to attend, join, support, and be active in any religious system of man that I *want to*. Oh, yes! But I testify to every man who reads these words that long ago the blessed spirit of wisdom and revelation from God purged my ransomed soul from any desire to enter the harlot's house.

There is a truth that is deeper yet than this. I must confess that I have often been distressed by the lack of *understanding* among the Lord's people. Somehow so many seem to *miss the point*. And nowhere is this more true than when we come to the harlot church systems of man! Let me make this point as clearly as I can. *The mother of harlots is not the Roman Catholic Church*. The *mother* of harlots is a lot closer home! The *mother* of harlots is still birthing her children! The *mother* of harlots is the soulish dimension of man's life that through her carnal sense-consciousness and human logic and reasoning births what *she believes* is pleasing to God, what *she feels* is the worship of God, what *she perceives* to be the work of God, and what *she determines* to be the way of God. The *mother* of harlots is our very own *soul* — our own *religious* mind, will, emotion, and desire! Where did the Roman Catholic Church, with all her false doctrines, pagan practices, and carnal rituals, come from? Did it not proceed out of the carnal, soulish heart of man? You see, beloved, carnal church systems are not really birthed out of other carnal church systems at all — they are, one and all, birthed out of the *mother* of them all — the *soulish heart of man*! Viewed from this vantage point, it could well be said that the systems constitute the "rivers" whereas the carnal soul of each of us is the fountain-head or the head-waters from whence they flow! Ah, it is even here within us that the fountains of waters have been *made wormwood*! It is a marvelous wonder of God's grace that the waters which were once so sweet and satisfying to us have been made bitter, and as we drank of them *death was worked in us*, and at last *that realm died within our hearts*, and the waters of religion no longer flow through our land! We now stand on the banks of a vast reservoir and the artesian fountains of the deep of Christ's incorruptible and immortal life have sprung up within us and out of our innermost being, from the inner sanctum of our spirit, flow rivers of living water! "*There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High*" (Ps. 46:4)

"Have this mind in you," says the apostle, "which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). To be a son of God is to do just that, to have the spirit of Christ and to learn to think and act out of the reality of sonship to God. We no longer see ourselves after the childish mentality that calls us "sinners saved by grace." No more are we to be called after the much maligned, generic term, "Christian," which can mean almost anything! Beloved, now are we the *sons* of God! Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be *called* the *sons of God*! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. We are now laying aside our own mentality, conditioned as it is by the spirit of the world and the foolishness of religion, and accept the instruction of the Christ within. As our minds are exposed to the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, our thoughts, understandings, and beliefs undergo a marvelous change. Our fallacies, misconceptions, errors, ignorance, and illusions lose their power over us and we begin to know the truth that makes us free. The power and glory of our sonship to God cannot be revealed through us as long as we are in bondage to any realm of knowledge or false conceptions about God, about ourselves, or about our glorious Father's purposes in us and in creation. In order to completely deliver us and truly make us free, the *star that Christ is*, is falling in power upon all the streams of our natural, human lives and turning them every one into bitterness! Oh, the wonder of it!

Blessed be His name! God has provided some *better thing* for us and now we can return — the way has been opened into the presence of God, into the life of God, into the kingdom of God, into the city of God where flows the pure river of the water of life! That's what this journey is all about, and that's why the

trumpets are sounding their blasts in our land — it's calling us to a return to the Lord. It is our return to the heavenly; our return to the spiritual; our return to the mind of Christ; our return to the image of God; our return to Eden; our return to the kingdom; our return to the incorruptible; our return to the Elohim; our return to the throne! There's a call within us, and deep calleth unto deep. I tell you, my beloved, there is something within me, an inner compulsion, and I know I have passed the point of no return. There is no turning back from this Quest for God! The trumpets are sounding and I must arise again and again to march forward into my promised land! There is no turning back because my heart has returned to the Lord!

THE FOURTH TRUMPET

“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for the third part of it, and the night likewise” (Rev. 8:12).

This is the fourth angel to sound, and it is significant to note what happened on the *fourth creative day* as God arranged the cosmos in that long-ago beginning. *“And God said, let there be **lights in the firmament of the heaven** to divide the day from the night; and let them be for **signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.** And let them be for **lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth:** and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to **rule the day**, and the lesser light to **rule the night:** He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give **light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night**” (Gen. 1:14-18).*

The truth of the great lights in the heavens includes many wonderful examples of that which is taking place in the realm of the spirit. The sun, moon, and stars of the heavens exist in a realm where God is absolute Sovereign and Lord, far above the sin, confusion, sorrow, strife, pain, and death of earth. Therefore, in their highest meaning, in their spiritual meaning, the sun, moon, and stars are used to represent HEAVENLY, SPIRITUAL RULE AND DOMINION. The prophet said, “The heavens do **rule.**” That is the great truth revealed when at the moment of creation the almighty Creator proclaimed of the lights of the heavenly realm, *“Let them be for **light upon the earth...the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.**”* The primary thought is that of rulership and dominion! The God of heaven rules over all, and can we now open the eyes of our understanding to behold the wondrous truth that God's elect *sons* are destined, with their sovereign and glorious Father, to become the CONSTELLATIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL HEAVENS, THE LUMINARIES AND RULERS IN GOD'S SKY! As the glory of the Lord arises upon His chosen ones they pierce the gloom of earth's dark night of sin and sorrow and bring deliverance, life, and order out of the chaos of man's failure and despair. *“And they that be wise shall **shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever**” (Dan. 12:3).* Can we not see by this that those who rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom are indeed THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS IN THE HEAVEN'S OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD!

The sun in prophecy is the most exalted ruler in any order. We find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the scripture a “sun.” *“For the Lord thy God is a **sun** and a shield” (Ps. 84:11).* Also, our elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, is called *“the **sun** of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2).* Furthermore, we find in reference to men, *“He that **ruleth** over men...shall be as the light of the morning, when the **sun** ariseth” (II Sam. 23:3-4).* David the king was called *“the **light** of Israel” (II Sam. 21:17).* This same meaning is found in II Kings 8:19 where we read, *“Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David His servant's sake, as He promised him to give him always **a light.**”* This is exactly the same promise we find in Jeremiah 33:17 where the Lord says, *“David shall never want a man to **sit upon the throne** of the house of Israel.”* Our Father has told us, *“heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool” (Isa. 66:1).* Heaven is His throne, or may we say, His throne is heaven! “Heaven” bespeaks of rulership and dominion, the lights of the heavens are the individual rulers who occupy the heavenly thrones of authority and power! The earth is that which is ruled by the heavens — that which looks to the sun, moon, and the stars for its light and direction. Thus, the heavenly bodies are here viewed solely in relation to the earth-realm and those who dwell in the earthlies. There is an order of human government now, but all these are soon to pass away, as those heavens pass away with a great noise, and the lights thereof are darkened, fall from heaven, and a new order shall be inaugurated.

It is interesting that on the *fourth day* of creation God ordained the lights of the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; and when the *fourth trumpet* sounds it is the heavenly bodies that are the object of the Lord's work. It is of further interest to note that in Christ's message to the *fourth church* the promise is that the overcomer shall receive the **morning star** and become a **ruler!** Finally, in chapter sixteen of the Revelation it is the pouring out of the *fourth vial* that brings a final judgment upon the sun!

The divine pattern in all these things becomes clear once we understand the great truth that there are revealed in this wonderful book of Revelation *two heavens* and *two earths*! The blessed Seer of Patmos beheld these in rapt vision and recorded what he saw in these inspired words, "*And I saw a **new heaven** and a **new earth**: for the **first heaven** and the **first earth** were passed away; and there was no more sea*" (Rev. 21:1). There is an old heaven and there is a new heaven! There is an old earth and there is a new earth! The old heaven and earth pass away, but we look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (II Pet. 3:13). It should be clear to any thinking mind that the old heaven with its sun, moon, and stars, is the old world of human consciousness, worldly society, and man-made religion with all its luminaries — the "lights" that governed, controlled, dictated, constrained, inspired and directed our thinking, understanding, ways, will, desires, ambitions, and conduct in the world of humanity. It is a source of wonder to me that very few believers perceive the contrast between the "rivers" and "fountains of waters" under the third trumpet, and the "sun," "moon," and "stars" of the "heavens" of the fourth trumpet. Let me make it very clear. The "rivers" and "fountains of waters" under the third trumpet represent that which we partake of, which we willingly appropriate to ourselves because of the perceived benefit received thereby. People drink water because they are thirsty and the water meets the need of their life. But the heavens *rule!* This is more than refreshment, my friend, it points to the authority, power, and dominion exercised upon us by realms which impress themselves upon us!

Each of us has at some point (again and again) received a new understanding, revelation, quickening, and dealing of God in our lives. Gladly we embraced what Father was showing and doing, and we separated from former ways of thinking and walking as well as from previous associations. We stopped drinking from those fountains! For instance, there came a day when we no longer saw ourselves as "merely human," or "sinners saved by grace," no longer were we trying to "reform old Adam" and make our flesh or natural man conform to the righteousness of God. We now knew that we were not human beings having a spiritual experience, but indeed we were *spiritual beings* having a *human experience!* We saw clearly that we are the offspring of God, with the seed of divine life within, truly *sons* of the living God! For the first time we understood that we cannot make our flesh better, that only by nurturing and growing up the spiritual man within could the old mind and nature be overcome. The errors of religion and our old mind-set and understanding of ourselves and God's plan and purpose for us and His whole creation were radically changed! Though we fully and gladly embraced these and many more truths, and did our best to make a clean break from all the false concepts and beliefs and from all the old orders that dominated our lives, still many were "haunted" by the old ways of looking at things, apprehensive that maybe they were now mistaken or deceived, and troubled that they no longer attended the former church orders they had been a part of, plagued by a residual guilt that they were not still "doing" all the things they used to do "for" God! Though they were convinced of the truth of the new, the old continued to come in and try to lay a claim upon them, plaguing them with apprehension, fear, and sometimes even torment! Many have vacillated back and forth for a season, torn between the old and the new, between religion and Christ, between error and truth.. Oh, yes! Their "rivers" and "fountains of waters" had been turned to wormwood, and they had fled from those waters to drink from the river of God. Yet — the sun, moon, and stars of that old order — the **powers** of their old heavens continued to shine upon them, asserting their authority out of that old heavenly realm, trying still to control, dictate, dominate, govern, rule, and subdue them! Can you not see the mystery? The *third trumpet* had done its work, but the *fourth trumpet* was yet to sound! The lights of the old heavens must be darkened until there is no more pull or power over us in any way. Only then are we truly free!

These two heavens — the old heavens of man's order, and the new heavens of God's rule by the Spirit, are both presented throughout the book of Revelation and we must be keen in discernment to understand which is in view in any scene. Let me put it this way. One way to recognize whether it is the old heaven or the new heaven is to observe the action taking place. The heavens that are being darkened, smitten, falling, rolled together as a scroll, and passing away with a great noise certainly are **not** the **new heavens**, for only the old heavens pass away and the new are established in righteousness and glory and

power forevermore! It is the heavens of God's kingdom where sons reign upon the throne and from whence the seven spirits of God are sent forth into all the earth! It is the new heavens of the Spirit of the Lord from which the holy city, New Jerusalem, descends (Rev. 21:2)! It is out of the heavens of God that the great voice is heard saying, "*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God*" (Rev. 21:3). All through the book of Revelation grand and glorious things take place in, and out from, the heavens of God's Spirit! The seven angels that blow the seven trumpets sound forth their messages out of the heavens of God! Can we not see by this that it cannot be the sun, moon, and stars of the heavens where *we dwell* that are smitten and darkened!

Oh, wonder of wonders! It is my deep conviction that in our text it is the third part of the sun of the *old heavens*, a third part of the moon of the *old heavens*, and a third part of the stars of the *old heavens* that are smitten, and the lights (rulerships, authorities, dominions) of that old world of man, of man's thinking, man's economy, man's politics, man's philosophies, man's orders, man's religion, and all the rest, are smitten and darkened in our lives. It is not just our desire to imbibe of those things that is taken away, as under the third trumpet, but now their rule — their authority — their power over us is *broken*! What we see here is the doing away with the old creation and the bringing forth of the new. This is happening *within* the life of every overcomer, for "*if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: **old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!***" (II Cor. 5:17). It is the dominion of God's government coming and being established in His elect which evokes the darkening of the old heavens within us! The prophet Isaiah spoke of this wonderful reality of the darkening of the heavens of man's world when he prophesied, "*Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously*" (Isa. 24:23).

The type for this was first seen in the land of Egypt when God sent the plagues for the deliverance of His people. "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be **darkness over the land of Egypt**, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a **thick darkness in all the land of Egypt** three days: they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but **all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings***" (Ex. 10:21-23). Is it not remarkable that while there was dense darkness over the whole land of Egypt, yet there was light in all the land of Goshen where the children of Israel lived! Do not fear the darkening of the old heavens you have lived under, my beloved, for while thick darkness covers the old past orders of our lives, so that nothing of that realm can function or exert authority over us anymore, yet our gracious and wise heavenly Father has provided wonderful light — a new mind, a new consciousness, a new understanding, a new heart, a new spirit, a new identity, a new nature — the scintillating light of truth, life, and reality *in the spirit*! Oh, yes! There is light in all the dwellings of the new creation that we are! There is the pure white light of the glorified Christ in our spirit! Just as the darkness over the land of Egypt was designed by God as an instrument to deliver His people out of the bondage of Egypt, so the darkening of the old heavens of our natural lives, all those things, people, systems, and realms which exerted authority and dominion over us, is the hand of God moving to deliver us from the bondage of the Egypt of this present world system.

One strange phenomenon appears in John's vision of the darkening of the celestial bodies — the fact that it is only "one third" of each that is darkened. Stranger yet is the statement, "*and the day shone not for the third part of it, and the night likewise.*" Certainly this is not the natural result of the darkening of a third part of the literal sun, moon, and stars! Should one third of the sun be darkened we would have less light during the day, but the effect would not be that our day would be one-third shorter. Yet, if a third part of the sun of our physical heavens was darkened *we would see it, feel it*, and the whole earth and every living thing would be *affected by it*! The temperatures would drop, crops would fail, food would become scarce, and great distress would come to mankind. Should a third part of the moon and the stars be smitten it would have various negative effects also. Those who are guided by the stars would be thrown into confusion!

So what is the solution to this mystery? It reveals, first of all, that we have not here a literal phenomenon, but a symbolic representation of *spiritual things*! The "one third" of everything under the first four trumpets stands for the elect of God! As the work represented by these visions is accomplished within us we are being prepared for the unveiling of Christ in us, and the manifestation of Christ through us, in all

His fullness and glory! The rest of the world is not being dealt with in this way nor on this level at this time, but the “one-third” company is! While the systems of man and the delusions and tyranny of the carnal mind still control the nations of earth, they no longer control the overcomers! We make up the “one-third”. The sun of man’s order no longer shines in the realm we live in, for we live as the new earth, under the rule of the new heavens, therefore man’s day, symbolically, is *one third shorter* than it was when all the people, including the Lord’s people, walked under the dominion of the earthly, carnal systems of man! The moon and the stars of man’s order no longer lighten the world we walk in, therefore the “night” of man’s world is *one third shorter* than before!

Furthermore, the natural sun, moon, and stars were the light of the *outer court* of Moses’ tabernacle. There was no other light. The outer court had no covering, so its light was the sun, moon, and stars. In the inner court of the holy place lamps were used as the source of light. In the most holy place, however, there was no light of the sun, nor any light of the moon, nor the light of the stars. Those lights were completely eclipsed, and the glory of God alone was the light! As the sons of God come to perfection and the fullness of Christ, the lights and luminaries of the old heavens truly become darkened, so that the word of the Seer of Patmos is fulfilled in us — *“And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, **having the glory of God: and her light** was like the light of a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, **clear as crystal:** and the city **had no need of the light of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: FOR THE GLORY OF GOD DID LIGHTEN IT, AND THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF**”* (Rev. 21:10-11,23).

The New Jerusalem does not need the light of the sun, moon, or stars (outer court), nor the light of any lamp (holy place), because in this Holy of holies dwells the eternal presence of the almighty Father and the Lamb who are the light of it. The city has no outer court or holy place! Those holy sons of God who dwell there have no need for the *outward light* of creeds, doctrines, laws, ceremonies, rituals, ordinances, baptisms, organizations, programs, or any other work of man, for the very presence, life, mind, and nature of God Himself *within* is their illumination! The holy place of Moses’ tabernacle was oblong in shape, being thirty feet in length, fifteen in width, and fifteen in height. The Holy of holies, on the other hand, was fifteen feet in length, width, and height, or a perfect cube. The only other cube described in the scriptures is the holy city, New Jerusalem! **The perfect cube of the Holy of holies now finds its fulfillment in the city of God!** *“The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal”* (Rev. 21:16). Now a cube is the most perfect figure, being equal on every side — finite perfection. It has what you call finality, it is the most comprehensive, and it holds the most — nothing contains as much as a cube — and therefore, it is given here as the expression of *perfection* and *fullness*. It is divinely inwrought perfection and fullness — the very glory of God — and therefore it is spoken of as a cube. The message is clear — one can never know the glory, illumination, and power of this city in the outer court of popular religion, nor yet in the holy place of Pentecostal economy. Only those who by faith enter in beyond the veil into the glorious and eternal reality of the most holy place can ever begin to touch and know the surpassing glory, perfection, and fullness, of this realm of God’s life!

When God reveals this New Jerusalem people in all His fullness the world will know this wondrous fact, that *“the glory which Thou gavest me, I have **given them.**”* The glory of God is the **light** of this great city! Not only is it the light of the city, but it shall become also the light of the whole world, for *“the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it”* (Rev. 21:24). The light of God is pure light, total white light, for *“in Him there is no darkness at all”* (I Jn. 1:5). All through the scriptures we find that light has been a symbol for both the *Spirit* and the *Truth*. When the Bible says of the holy city that her light shall be like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, it simply reveals God’s called and chosen elect as having come to all light, perfect light, all truth, purest truth, absolute understanding, walking and living in absolute light and truth — the *perfection of the mind of Christ within*.

The following words by Ray Prinzing put the cap-stone on this beautiful truth: “With the extinguishing of earth’s lights, comes the forth-shining of God’s luminaries of the new creation order. HE IS *‘the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world’* (Jn. 1:9). And He is also *‘The Father of lights...’* (James 1:17). He births after His own kind. *‘Now ye are light in the Lord’* (Eph. 5:8). To the new order He speaks, *‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people* (as earth’s lights are diminished),

but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising' (Isa. 60:1-3). Turn to see the fading of the old order, and your back is to the dawning of the new. Turn to see that new light arising, and your back is to the diminishing former lights. O, to behold Him, and with a single eye to follow on, for 'the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day' (Prov. 4:18) — end quote.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY