

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 121

THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS (continued)

“...in the *days of the voice of the seventh angel*, when he shall *begin to sound*, the **mystery of God should be finished**” (Rev. 10:7).

All trumpets consummate with the seventh and last trumpet. If the reader will earnestly consider the truth of the statement just made, it will become crystal clear that the notion taught by the church systems, that Christ returns and “raptures” the saints to heaven at the beginning of chapter four of the Revelation, is a colossal error. **The mystery of God is finished**, that is, the work of God in His called and chosen firstfruits is **consummated** at the seventh and last trump! This trump doesn’t sound until chapter seven of the Revelation — long after the church has been taken out of the world, according to the popular rapture teaching. The apostle Paul makes it plain in I Corinthians 15:52 that there is a *last trump*, and that at the sounding of the last trump *we shall be changed*. “*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*” There are only seven trumpets in the scriptures, making it abundantly clear that the *seventh* is the *last*. It should not be difficult for any thinking mind to grasp the great truth that the seventh trumpet is also the *last trump*!

The last trump blows right in the middle of the so-called “tribulation period” when they tell us the saints won’t even be on earth! Can any doubt that such a teaching is indeed the confusion of Babylon? Paul says, as I have mentioned, that it is at the sound of the last trump that *we are changed*. Not raptured away to some far-off heaven, mind you, but *changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. This corruptible puts on incorruption! This mortal puts on immortality! And according to the vision of John we are changed *in* or **during** the days of the voice of the seventh angel, as he begins to sound. And yet — the seventh trump is more than a sound, more than a revelation, more than a message — it’s a PEOPLE! The seventh trump is the trump heralding maturity, perfection, and fullness in those who are the firstfruits of His redemption!

Let us now acquaint ourselves with the following wonderful truth, for when this truth is firmly established in our hearts, it becomes the trumpet sound that finishes within us the mystery of God. The trumpet will sound *until* the mystery of God *is finished*! From the depths of my quickened spirit there arises the divine conviction that the seventh trumpet is sounding even now. The certain hope of the mystery of God being finished is now within the grasp of those blessed ones apprehended to sonship. If you are hearing this sound, my beloved, it is changing you! If the sound you are hearing in the Spirit and by the Spirit is truly changing you, then it can be none other than the seventh trumpet! I am hearing a sound in the Spirit today that is changing me! “*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*” (Rom. 8:29). The seventh trumpet is the voice of the Son of God. “*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*” (I Thes. 4:16). There is no greater trumpet, there is no greater voice! When the voice of the Son of God is heard out of the body of Christ, the mystery of God is finished. It doesn’t mean we understand everything, but it does mean that the mysteries have been opened up! They that *hear the voice* of the Son of God *shall live* (Jn. 5:25). We are being changed because we are hearing the living voice of the Son of God in the earth! Some have heard it for years, others are just now hearing it, but

all who hear are being changed! The old carnal mind, the old human identity, the old Adamic life with its corruption and death is fleeing away from our land and God is causing us to live in His sight!

Our Lord said that the hour would come when those that are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God, and all that hear shall live. While it is wonderfully true that death shall be swallowed up in victory at the sounding of the last trump, yet there are graves other than the ones out in the cemetery, that men are buried in. There are many realms of death, multitudes of men are dead in trespasses and in sins, she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth, the wise man said. Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees *whited sepulchers full of dead men's bones*. According to Jesus *religion* is the congregation of the dead, one vast cemetery full of bones! All death is not the same death, but whatever realm of death a man abides in he can come forth and live only when he *hears the voice of the Son of God!* Some of us have been in Baptist graves, Methodist graves, Pentecostal graves, New Age graves — anywhere that men have doctrine and external forms of religion, but not *life!* I sound the message today, I blow the trumpet out of Zion, declaring by the word of the Lord that those ordained to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, who are yet in their graves, whatever grave or realm of death it is, shall in the days before us hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Isn't it wonderful!

Seven is an important number in the word of God. God's creative work was completed in six days, and on the seventh day He rested, and man rested with Him, because His work was accomplished. We had a picture in our minds that Gabriel would appear in the sky and he would blow the "last trumpet," declaring the end of the world. Not so! It is the *seventh angel company* that is sounding the *last trump message*. The last trump is the seventh trump, the *last message* that brings God's redemptive work in His elect to completion and consummation!

If all one preaches is the message of the outer court, which is the message of the feast of Passover, he will get men forgiven and reconciled to God. If all one preaches is the message of the holy place, which is the message of the feast of Pentecost, he will get men baptized in the Holy Spirit and with His gifts. Throughout church history the various trumpets have sounded with their messages, and each has brought us onward and upward into the purpose of God. With each sounding of a trumpet of the Lord came another measure of light and life. But none of the trumpet sounds we have heard proclaimed what creation is groaning for! Nor were they what we ourselves, who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, are groaning for! Creation is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God, for a full, complete redemption and restoration, deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of corruption, in spirit, soul, *and body!* How long God's people have waited to hear the sound of the seventh trumpet! It is this last great final message that has lain longest under the shroud of obscurity and spiritual ignorance.

If your eyes can see how it is now in the heavenlies, you see that the whole realm of the heavenlies is astir and alive with hope and *expectation*. The great cloud of witnesses is passionately urging us to press onward and upward into the kingdom of our Father. The seventh trumpet is announcing that this is the great day of our full salvation! A remnant company of saints is marching toward its destiny...and all the precious saints who went by way of the grave, the great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, are observing their progress! With each step forward and upward we take in God, those spirits of the redeemed in the heavens of the spirit are rejoicing and praising our beloved Redeemer for the work of deliverance, maturity, and restoration He is now accomplishing in the lives of His elect on earth in this great hour. They realize that their only hope of deliverance rests with the sons of God who are entering into their full inheritance in Christ in the power of resurrection. Until the time came for it to be sounded, the revelation of the seventh trumpet has remained unknown and unheralded by the church. But now, praise God, there's an "angel" sounding in this new day of the kingdom of God, a messenger with a message! It's a corporate message. It's a corporate messenger. It's a corporate trumpet sounding! It's the seventh trumpet announcing the life, glory, majesty, and power of the most holy place, which is the call to the feast of Tabernacles, the feast of fullness, the feast of the finished harvest, the full ingathering at the end of the year. In this feast *the mystery of God shall be finished!*

There are a number of "lasts" in the scriptures. Jesus spoke of the "last day." "*And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and

believeth into Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 6:39-40). Paul spoke of the **last trump**. We have surely read these inspired words of instruction: “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready (prepared) to be revealed in the last time*” (1 Pet. 1:3-5).

Let me draw your earnest attention to seven wonderful truths revealed in these words of the apostle. (1) We have been, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, begotten again unto a *living hope*. (2) This living hope is the hope of an *inheritance*. (3) This inheritance is *incorruptible*. (4) This incorruptible inheritance is *reserved in heaven* — the invisible realm of the Spirit — *for us*. (5) Until we fully receive our inheritance we are *kept* by the power of God *unto the inheritance* — preserved so that we can appropriate it when it is disclosed. (6) The inheritance is salvation beyond what we have experienced thus far — *incorruption full and complete*. (7) This salvation is *ready* for us — already prepared for us and appointed to us — and shall be revealed *in the last time*.

Make no mistake about it — the “last time” is not a date on the calendar! That is where so many “end-time” teachers go wrong. They think the last time is a date, so they are always trying to figure out the date, setting dates for the coming of the Lord, the beginning of the great tribulation, the dawn of the millennium, or the manifestation of the sons of God. I do not doubt for one moment that the old church age is rapidly drawing to a close, or that the new age has already dawned, but that is not the issue here. The kingdom of God is not an “age.” The day of the Lord is not an “age.” The “last time” is not a date on the calendar. The last time relates to the elect of the Lord entering into and possessing their inheritance!

The last time is the *finish*, the *completion*, the *consummation* of our experience in God! It is when God’s work in us is *ended*, *concluded*, and *accomplished*! It is when we have grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! It is when we have fully put on the mind of Christ! It is when we have gone *on* to perfection! It is when we have attained unto a perfect man! It is when we have been filled with all the fullness of God! It is when Christ has been raised up within us in all the glory and majesty of Himself! It is when we have spiritually developed into a *mature* faith, understanding, wisdom, love, and power! It is the third day, the third feast, and the illumination, life, and authority of the most holy place! It is a time, not on the clock, nor on the calendar, but in the development of Christ within us! It is not the end of the age that brings the manifestation of the sons of God — it is the manifestation of the sons of God that brings the end of the age! Therefore, let us take heart as sons of God, for growth in Christ is far more accessible to each of us than the unknown dawning of a chronological age! Again, the “last day” and the “last time” and the “last trump” are not a time on the calendar, but a time within ourselves when the work of God in us is brought to its completion! Aren’t you glad!

In interpreting scripture we are so inclined to interpret all things with our human understanding. When the Word speaks of the sounding of a trumpet, our carnal mind envisages a loud blast akin to the sound of reveille, but such is not the case. We have previously spoken of Paul’s inspired exhortation instructing us that we shall be **changed** at the sounding of the **last trump**. The Bible speaks of many trumpets, each with its own signification, but I think all will agree that there cannot be any trumpet sounding after the **last trump**! There may be other trumpets of different orders, but the Last Trump is always the final trumpet to sound in any series. It is significant to note that in the book of Revelation, chapters eight through twelve, we have presented the sounding of seven trumpets. I am confident that this seventh trumpet is the **last trumpet**, for after the seventh trumpet there can be no other. Trumpet after trumpet the inworking of God’s truth and life progresses in the spiritual lives of God’s elect until at last the final trumpet, the last message, the ultimate revelation is ready to complete the process, producing a people in the fullness of the nature, glory, and power of the Lord!

We know that all will be changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” when the last trump shall sound. But the call of the last trump cannot come to any man until he has already heard, heeded, and yielded to the call of every preceding trump, and been changed by each, line upon line, precept upon precept, from glory to glory, in the growth and development of spiritual life. When the last vestige of the

old Adamic mind and nature has been put off, overcome, then the final trump will sound and this corruptible will have fully put on incorruption, and this mortal will have fully put on immortality. The last trump does not sound at the same instant for every man — it is always sounding — but is heard by each in his time when he has been prepared to hear it. Oh, the mystery of it!

May God grant us wisdom and understanding that we may apprehend the mystery of these things! The number seven gives me the understanding that contained within the seven trumpets is the totality of God's character and the complete revelation of His will and purpose. As the trumpets sound within the lives of the Lord's people they begin to experience the increase of all that God is within themselves. There has never been an expression of God at the level of divine fullness in the earth at any time except in the person of the first Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is the firstborn among many brethren! Now there is a people who have been sealed unto the day of redemption, and as the Spirit of God sounds the trumpet-messages it will bring forth a many-membered expression of God at the same level of God's fullness. This is the Lord Himself descending in the trump of God!

I am reminded of a story out of history. Several centuries ago, the Emperor of Japan commissioned a Japanese artist to paint a bird to be put on display in the Emperor's gallery. Months passed, then years. Finally, the Emperor went to the artist's studio to ask for an explanation. The artist set a blank canvas on the easel and in fifteen minutes completed the painting of a bird that became a masterpiece. The Emperor asked why there had been such a long delay. The artist then went from cabinet to cabinet; he produced armloads of drawings of feathers, tendons, wings, feet, claws, eyes, and beaks of birds; these he placed one by one before the Emperor. The Emperor nodded and left the studio. He understood. The exquisite beauty of the painting completed in fifteen short minutes was merely the result of long years of research, preparation, and work!

Our Father shall have a glorious firstfruits company of sons in His own image which He shall put on display before the entire universe as the revelation of His own bountiful grace and matchless glory! The day of that unveiling shall surely come, and will not tarry. In the meantime, and to that end, the blessed Holy Spirit of God is patiently and unrelentingly operating in the lives of His apprehended ones so that we may be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. This conformation cannot take place in an instant, nor by a superficial experiencing of God. It does not happen in a single "experience" one night at an altar, nor can it be imparted by prophecy with the laying on of hands. The hour of our quickening unto God and His great plan was no more than the declaration of the divine purpose; it was just the beginning of the long work! The whole process is a detailed and painstaking progress "until Christ be formed in you." When the work is fully finished, the day shall then arrive when there will come to us a new and living and powerful moving of His omnipotent Spirit and the completed work will flash forth in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; the grand and glorious portrait of God's Christ, exquisitely wrought upon the canvas of our lives, that He might *display in the ages to come* His masterpiece...for *we* are God's own handiwork, created in Christ Jesus! (Eph. 2:7,10).

The new with its glory shall come to the fore,
Proclaiming the kingdom is nigh at the door.
Yet, strange the confusion as some try to stay
Entwined with the old, though it's passing away.
While some try to mix the old with the new,
To be torn by the strife, and the rending in two.
For saviours shall come and His fullness declare,
With beauty for ashes, and treasures most rare.
What ages have veiled as the old order reigned,
Shall burst into view at the time He ordained!

— Ray Prinzing

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, *the mystery of God should be finished*, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Rev. 10:7).

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel" — notice the plural — "*days.*" The "day" of the Lord has "days" within it! Now notice — *"In the days of the voice..."* Each day has its own voice, its own sound, its own truth, its own experience, attainment, and reality. As we came through the "*day of Pentecost*" in our spiritual experience, that day had a voice. It possessed a tongue, a message, a reality that never before had been heard. *"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he begins to sound."* Suddenly the "voice" becomes a "he"! Furthermore, *"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel,"* and the words, *"begin to sound,"* speak volumes to me because the complete sounding of that trumpet involves a process in time and shows us that our change which comes with the sounding of the seventh or last trumpet is not to find its total consummation in one specific moment of time. There is the obvious implication of a prolonged sounding extending through various seasons and dealings. Yet at the initial sounding, the "mystery" of God's purpose for His elect shall no longer be hidden. Ah — methinks I have heard this trumpet, for the mystery of God has been revealed in the midst of the saints in these days! When the seventh trumpet sounds John beholds a wonder in heaven, in the realm of the Spirit, a woman clothed with the sun, and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 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 (Rev. 11:15-19; 12:1-5). This is the final drama of the seven trumpets, the closing act, the grand finale, the birth of God's manchild company, the manifest sons of God given authority and power to rule all nations with a rod of iron and subdue all things unto the kingdom of our Father! It is indeed wonderful!

What does it mean to you, my brethren, when John says that *"the mystery of God"* should be finished? Our English word "mystery" means something which is either incomprehensible or unknown; but this is not the significance of the Greek word *musterion*. In its primary meaning in classical and Biblical Greek it is simply a secret; and a secret when it is disclosed may be understood by any one. A combination lock is a "mystery," the combination is a secret. It is as easily opened as any other lock, provided we have been given the combination, but without the combination it cannot be opened at all. The "mysteries" of the New Testament are divine truths which till then had been "kept secret," truths which had not yet been revealed, and until revealed, could not be known.

The inner secret of divine truth is not learned by word of mouth or studied in a book — it can be known only by the revelation of Jesus Christ, as Paul has instructed us, *"For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ"* (Gal. 1:12). Strong's Concordance gives this definition of the Greek word *musterion*: "a secret or mystery *through the idea of silence imposed by initiation into religious rites.*" In the Bible days everyone knew about the "Greek mystery religions." The people were acquainted with the mystery religions, although they did not *know the mysteries* of those religions *unless they were initiated into the religion*. In the Greek mind a mystery was a secret revealed only to the initiated! A strange silence surrounded them. Their religious rites, ceremonies, and teachings were known only to the initiated persons, and performed in strictest seclusion, and to be spoken of on pain of severe penalties, sometimes death itself. What happened at the secret rituals is not, even to this day, fully known. It was much like the practices of secret lodges in our day. The "mystery religions" were the highest form of religion in ancient Greece. There can be no doubt, I think, that the apostle Paul was using the common Greek understanding of the term "mystery" so often used in his epistles. He said that he spoke *"the wisdom of God in a mystery"* to them that are *"perfect"* — the very word used in the Greek mysteries for the *"initiated"* (*teleios*), those admitted to the secret wisdom of the Greek religion. The Lord Jesus Himself says that it was "given" to His inner circle of footstep followers to "know the mysteries" of the kingdom of heaven, but to those outside it was "not given" — inferring that the disciples were *His initiated!* That was the common understanding of the term in the world Jesus and the early church lived in!

There are many "mysteries" spoken of in the word of God. They are not mysteries in the sense that they cannot be understood, although they cannot be understood by the natural, carnal mind; but they are mysteries because they are kept secret in the counsels of God until the time comes for them to be made known by revelation of the Spirit. For is it not written that, *"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever"* (Deut. 29:29). The prophet David tells us that *"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him"* (Ps. 25:14). The Lord

Jesus prayed these gracious words: “*I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes*” (Mat. 11:25). The prophet Amos revealed this great truth: “*Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets*” (Amos 3:7). And Daniel adds his testimony, saying, “*There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets...of a truth it is, that God is a God of gods...and a revealer of secrets*” (Dan. 2:28,29,47). And again, the firstborn Son of God declared, “*I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world*” (Mat. 13:35). In His infinite wisdom our Father knows that most men are ready to receive only small portions of truth at a time. Those who truly hunger and thirst after God and are ready to receive more, to them He gives understanding! This is why it was spoken by the Lord Jesus to His most intimate disciples, “*Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but unto them which are without, all these things are done in parables*” (Mk. 4:11).

We are told that we are “stewards of the mysteries of God” (I Cor. 4:1). Paul says that “great is the mystery of godliness” — of God manifest in human flesh (I Tim. 3:16). Again we find that our change from mortal to immortal bodies is a mystery (I Cor. 15:51). Then we read that God has graciously “made known unto us the mystery of His will” (Eph. 1:9). In the Revelation John reveals the mystery of Great Babylon — Babylon means “confusion” — and it’s a mystery how it works. There are furthermore the mysteries of the kingdom, the mystery of the faith, the mystery of the gospel, the mystery of the church as a bride, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the Father, the mystery of His fellowship, the mystery of Israel’s blindness, the mystery of iniquity, and the mystery of the seven stars. All of these mysteries require an unfolding by the Holy Spirit of wisdom and revelation! Wherever a mystery appears in scripture it denotes that this knowledge must come from the Lord Himself, in the Spirit and by the Spirit! We cannot gain any insight into these things through human effort, intellectualism, academic study, or carnal research. These deep and eternal truths require the illumination of the Holy Spirit! We must be INITIATED INTO THE MYSTERIES OF HIS LIFE by personal experience. That is why every son of God must receive the “call” to sonship by the quickening of the Holy Ghost!

In the days when the voice of the seventh angel with his trumpet-message begins to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. The “mystery of God” is *God manifest in the flesh!* “Great is the mystery of godliness (God-likeness): God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. 3:16). This is also the mystery of Christ, that God was in Christ, and now God in Christ is in us! Paul elaborates upon this mystery in these words: “*How that by revelation He made known unto me the **mystery**; which in other ages was not known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be **fellow heirs** and of the **same body**, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel*” (Eph. 3:2-6). When you follow the word “mystery” through the writings of the apostles it is clear that the mystery is the *body of Christ*. The body of Christ is composed of *God’s initiated ones!* In Ephesians 5:31-32 it is the mystery of the *union* of Christ the Head with Christ the body in all the fullness that that means. It is time, my beloved, for the **mystery of God to be finished!** *Finished* means completed or consummated. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel THE BODY OF CHRIST SHALL BE FINISHED! Not merely quantitatively, but qualitatively! That trumpet signifies that the Lord’s elect, the sons of God or the body of Christ, have all been transformed into His image and likeness and grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Christ the Head and Christ the body shall be joined in the blessed union of *His fullness*. The **mystery** of God manifest in the flesh will be finished! This remnant company is indeed a mystery. They are as a sacred secret that is being concealed until the hour of their manifestation. These royal sons are hidden away from the religious systems and from the world. While they are hidden, they are being initiated into the divine order of sonship which was established by Jesus Christ, the first Son.

The seventh trumpet signifies that the hour has arrived for the sons of God or the body of Christ to come forth in birth, into full and complete manifestation! This corporate Christ, Head and body, this manchild company, shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Caught up to God and His throne — into His authority! In the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet-message the mystery shall be finished, the body completed, the long and tedious preparation of God’s sons shall at last be consummated. The trumpet has begun to sound! There is an acceleration of the Father’s revelatory word, an intensified trumpet-message, a clear sound of the revelation of Jesus Christ! Listen, my friend, for the sounding of the trumpet-voice within your spirit!

If you can hear this trumpet sounding above all the hue and cry of rapture, antichrist, mark of the beast, great tribulation, demons and devils, denominationalism, sectarianism, mansions over the hilltop, cabins in the corner of gloryland, pie in the sky, religious programs, rituals, ceremonies, endless meetings, shepherds, coverings, bishops, cunningly devised fables, money raising schemes, false prophets, false healers, lying signs and wonders, carnal health and wealth prosperity doctrines; if you can mount up with wings as eagles and soar high above all this carnal, confused, hyped, frustrated clamor of noisy gongs and clanging cymbals, and hear the distinct, plain, unmistakable sound of this last trump, then it can be said to you: *Blessed art thou, overcomer, manchild, hundred-fold, firstfruits; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven!* Oh, the wonder of it!

The seventh trumpet is the final redemptive message and when it is finished sounding God will have made a man in His image! What tremendous truths are being blown on this redemptive trumpet! Let not any man rob you of the greatest sound that man has ever been privileged to hear! A sound with such a high and holy pitch, with tones so deep and profound, that only the Spirit can reveal its message to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, those who “have an ear to hear what the Spirit sayeth!” Do not miss what the Spirit is saying; gird up the loins of your mind with the truth that will fully redeem you, spirit, soul, and body!

When you begin to hear the voice of the seventh angel then the mystery of God in you begins to emerge into fullness. The mystery of God is fulfilled when your own identity and life is swallowed up and *God is manifest in your flesh*. 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 and incorruptible life shine forth before all nations! This is going to be done through those who are being transformed into the likeness of His 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. The harvest of this age shall be gathered.

There is coming a day when the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God! As a mystery is a sacred, concealed secret, so the *mystery of God* is working deep within us to bring us to the fullness of God in Christ. We cannot see Him working in us because this work of godliness (God-likeness) *is a mystery* that is to be kept secret until the unveiling of the sons of God. Neither the church nor the world is aware of what is happening in God’s elect in this significant hour. As a thief shall it come upon them! The Christ within is increasing within us, bringing us to greater maturity. In due time the Father will witness from heaven, as He did with His first Son, “*These are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased.*” Then shall the sons of God be manifest in the fullness of the Father’s nature, glory, and power and the *greater works* (Jn. 14:12) of which Jesus spoke shall be performed by that vast family of sons!

THE LITTLE BOOK IN HIS HAND

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven...and he had *in his hand a little book open*” (Rev. 10:1-2).

This “book” is called just that, “a book,” in chapter five of the Revelation, whereas in chapter ten it is called a “*little book*.” What is the difference? Here I am of the opinion that it is a matter of translation and availability of the oldest and most original manuscripts. Both of these books — whether “book” or “*little book*” — are actually small scrolls. In Greek they are described with the word *biblion*. That is the description for the smaller form of *biblos*. The book in the hand of the mighty angel in our text is called in some New Testaments *bibliaridion*. That again is a smaller form of the expression *biblos*. The fact is,

however, the oldest available manuscripts used the *same word* in both chapters five and ten, namely, scroll. Thus, these *apparently* different books are, in actual fact, one and the same book!

It is abundantly clear that this entire scene is not meant in the literal sense of the word. If that were the case, we would have to assume that this was more than a *vision*, and there was actually a book in the hand of the angel, printed in heaven, and that John actually, physically, took that little book out of his hand, chewed it up and swallowed it. Of course, that is both an impossibility and an absurdity! Books are not meant to eaten, but read. One does not derive any benefit from swallowing a book, but from *appropriating* its contents by taking its message into the mind and heart!

Let us prayerfully and reverently observe that it is the Lamb in the throne who is first given this “little book” to hold in His hand. So what is the book? Where did He get the book? The answer is not far to seek. *“And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain...and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne”* (Rev. 5:1-7). It was the Lion-Lamb who took the book from the hand of the eternal Father seated upon the throne! That clearly, distinctly, and positively places the book in the hand of Christ, the firstborn Son of God! It is HE who breaks the seven seals, bringing forth to our hearts the reality and power of His sonship, and therefore *our sonship*! Now the book is *open in His hand*, just as it is when John sees it again in chapter ten!

It is the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ — not the literal book John wrote which is lying on the table before me at this moment — but the book in the vision which is the living revelation of Jesus Christ in and by the Spirit! You may recall that I have emphasized throughout these messages that the seals represent the revelation of Christ, which is the revelation of sonship to God, unto us, those apprehended to be His “many brethren.” At the breaking of the seals this was a revelation *to* us, showing us how the Father was revealed in Jesus, and subsequently the process by which Christ is raised up into revelation within us, but now as John is given the book from the hand of Christ, eats the book, digests the book, until it becomes life within, made substance within his own reality, Christ and sonship are no longer merely a revelation to us, imparting the knowledge of our high calling, but now we **BECOME THE REVELATION!** The revelation that was sealed (in the seven thunders) then revealed opened (in the little book), is now (after we have eaten and digested it) **THE GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL REALITY OF OUR VERY LIVES!** The totality of the Father in us is now being manifested in light!

EATING THE BOOK

“And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and *eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.* And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and *ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter*” (Rev. 10:8-10).

John was not simply an observer of something that took place at a distance. He was not looking, as it were, at a motion picture projected on a flat screen. Nor was he seeing a stage play. This vision had such depth in dimension that John himself was caught up into it and made part of it — perhaps a little like the interactivity of a dream, or in the holodeck of a starship in the Star Trek series. John went to the angel and said, “Give me the little book.” This signifies that the reality of the revelation of Christ must be received from *Him*, by His word and by His Spirit! And this reality must in like manner be *sought* from Him! The humble disciple says, “Give me, I pray Thee, the little book!” The angel replied, “Take it, and eat it up,” that is, digest it, make it a part of yourself. This signifies the Christ saying to each of God’s seeking elect, “Take it.” Yes, “Take it and eat it up!” “Thy word was found,” said the prophet, “and I did eat it.” The angel also told John how the little scroll would taste (spiritually) and what the effects of eating it would be. “It shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.” He ends

on the more appealing note, perhaps, to persuade John to follow his directions, which must have sounded strange, indeed! Spiritually it means that Christ wants to impart everything to us — both the glory and the suffering! We are joint-heirs with Him, partakers in His suffering, and sharers of His glory, wisdom, majesty, and power — that is the meaning of this strange command that John receives. Many revel in the coming forth of truth, but how many are just as anxious for it to be worked out into reality in their lives? To “love your enemies, and pray for those that despitefully use you” is wonderful to talk about, but it is a bitter experience when it actually happens and we have to put it into practice. And so it is with all truth...it has to be *lived, walked out!*

The story is told of a little girl who stayed for dinner at the home of her first-grade friend. The vegetable was buttered broccoli and the mother asked if she liked it. The child replied very politely, “Oh yes, I *love* it.” But when the bowl of broccoli was passed she declined to take any. The hostess said, “I thought you said you loved broccoli.” The girl replied sweetly, “Oh, yes maam, I *do*, but not enough to eat it!” Is that not how it is sometimes with the revelation of the Lord?

Oh, yes! How sweet it is to our taste when the Spirit communicates some new truth to us! We rejoice in it as those who have discovered hidden treasure; but all truth is death to the natural man, and accordingly when it is established inwardly in the power of the Holy Ghost, we find it bitter in its working and effects. It is sweeter than honey to the taste of faith, so that we do not rebel, but eat it, swallow it, and hide it in our inmost heart. It is only after the truth has thus been made our own by inward assimilation, that the life and power of it can be manifested outwardly. Truth must be devoured; we must take it in to our inner man, until the inner man is built up in substance by it. Truth must become life before we can express it and manifest it as reality rather than doctrine. We must, like John, not only have heard the truth, or received the truth as revelation, we must have *experienced* it within ourselves...before others can behold its power in us! After we have assimilated the contents of the book, the living revelation of Christ and sonship, we must come under its power and influence, until we are transformed by it! Truth has something so sweet for the understanding, typified by the mouth, that is a delight to the mind. What joy and satisfaction to the man to whom truth is communicated! But in the belly it is bitterness, painful as it mortifies the flesh man, and more and more leaves but one desire, that Christ may be formed in us! And this is just the difference between *understanding* and *experience*, between *revelation* and *manifestation*!

This is also the difference between *facts* and *truth*! How many in the religious systems hold to their cold, dead doctrines of FACTS. But facts are expressive only of the dead letter of the Word — the letter that *killeth*! Facts can never make you free, but the TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE! Truth is *reality*. Truth is *spirit*. The *spirit quickens, makes alive*. “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the *letter*, but of the *spirit*: for the letter *killeth*, but the *spirit* giveth life” (II Cor. 3:6). We may feed into our mind any amount of information via the natural senses (hearing, seeing, etc.) but it will be only so many words — preaching, teaching, reading, study, research, *facts*, until the spirit, the living word within, brings it forth as an *essence* in our spirit. Jesus said that man must *live* by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God. Only the word of God can cause us to live! John calls it the “word of *life*” and the “*incorruptible* seed of the word of God which *liveth* and abideth forever.” All the true life we have within has sprung from the living word within us. ALL the divine life we will ever have is the result of HEARING THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD!

No man can live physically apart from the assimilation of food, air, and water. Just as these natural elements sustain and quicken our physical man, so the assimilation of the living word of God produces, sustains, and strengthens the life of God in us. If we do not eat food, meal by meal we become weaker. Paul gives us the key to faith when he calls it the “word of faith” (Rom. 10:8). One cannot separate between “faith” and the “word.” But it is never the “letter” of the word — mere facts — that produces faith! And it is right there that “all we like sheep have gone astray.” The healing evangelists have hammered and pounded into the Lord’s people that they are to take the promises in the Bible and then *act upon them*. “Do what you couldn’t do before!” they cry. “If you can’t raise that arm up,” they say, “then raise it up and show your faith by action!” It sounds good, so logical. But how many times did we venture out to do the impossible, or ignored our aches and pains, not because faith had brought us to that 100% place of believing God had done the work, but we were taking the action, endeavoring *by the action* to somehow lift ourselves up to the place where we could overcome our doubts and fears and

persuade God to move in our behalf. In truth, we tried to *produce faith* by our actions upon a word. But in so doing we had the cart before the horse! Confessing or demonstrating the word of God as a “letter” or “fact” will never evoke life or faith — only death. It is the *living word within*, the *living voice of the Son of God* out of the depths of spirit that produces life and faith! You see, my beloved, faith will produce works, but *works never produce faith!* If our actions are provoked by the faith that comes by hearing the word of God out of the living spirit, then there will always be results. But if our actions are a blind effort to conjure up faith, doing something with the hope that it might work, that perhaps God may honor it, yet the action did not spring out of the energizing, living word of God within, then frustration and defeat lie in our path. The quickening life of His Spirit within, the word of God as an essence, shall bring many sons to a place of exaltation, glory, and power in the kingdom of God! It is the living voice of the Son of God within us, the living testimony of sonship, that is pressing us forward into the fullness of God in this great day of the Lord. We are not trying to “manifest,” hoping the Father may honor our efforts and bring us into the glory of sonship. Oh, no! **THIS IS THE LORD’S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES!**

How true we find all this to be — the revelation God is giving in this day sounds so great, so sweet in our mouth — we shall grow up into the fullness of Christ, we shall be the manifest sons of God, we shall inherit the kingdom and reign over the nations, we shall restore all creation back into God again, and God shall be all in all! This is all contained, without a doubt, in the voice of the seven thunders, which is now the revelation of the open book in the hand of Christ. He shall make this glorious sonship ministry truly ours — how sweet to our taste! But then, the inworking process to make that a reality — how bitter in the belly, the experiential metamorphosis. It produces pains or cramps in our human nature that are not pleasant to experience. But if the revelation of God is bitter to the natural man, it is sweet to the spiritual man! Ah, this message will be *bitter* as we digest it, but it is only in the *eating* of the Word that God is bringing forth in this hour, that sons shall be brought to glory! God has separated a people unto Himself to *eat the book*, even that clear, sanctified, pure and holy Word that proceedeth directly from the throne of God. As one has commented, “The bitterness that we experience in the digesting of the Truth will take away and remove any vainglorious desire to display our knowledge in the eyes of men. The bitterness of the Word working within us will purge away all thoughts of grandeur and of greatness, and leave us ‘dumb’ like Ezekiel of old, until the hour when God shall open our mouths; and then we shall be enabled to speak that clear, infallible Word direct from God’s own heart.”

Then comes the word, “*It was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, **Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings***” Rev. 10:10-11).

The word *again* is significant, for it implies that John had already prophesied before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings, and that now there was to be another, different, greater prophecy to come forth. What he had prophesied before was not the prophecy which resulted from the eating of the book. It would now be the assimilated, digested, message of the open book that would be the substance of his prophecy! There is some debate over the word *before*, as to whether John was to prophesy “before” many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings, or whether the word should be translated “concerning” many peoples, etc. To my mind the argument is irrelative; the Greek word is *epi*, meaning “super-imposition, above, upon, over.” He could prophesy concerning, upon, over, or before the peoples, nations, tongues, and kings — it really would make little difference — **THERE IS A MINISTRY INVOLVED!**

The revelation came to John that he and his message must be one. He must assimilate it, making the message life and substance within himself. It must be delivered to the people, not as a word of teaching or instruction, not out of what he knew or understood, but out of *what he is* — out of his inner *state of being*. The message was to become so part of the man that it would be impossible to separate the prophet from his prophecy. His very life would BE the prophecy — a *living word!* He would prophesy out of a new and higher realm, not merely as a prophet, but as the very *manifestation of God in the flesh!* He himself was to be a “sample” of the message he proclaimed! The scene that is pictured to us shows how John must become prepared to be a prophet to the utmost: a prophet who not merely reveals things, who not merely informs the church and the world of some things with regard to the future, but who himself would be the living representation of the wonderful will and purpose of God for all mankind! Oh,

the wonder of it! This command does not mean that John himself will appear in these modern years, as some assume, to “prophesy again.” John stands for and represents the entire company of the overcomers; this is not merely an experience of the apostle John two thousand years ago, but the prophetic word of the Lord to all His called and chosen firstfruits! To attempt to “prophesy” before we have “eaten” and “digested” will only be to discover our impotence in the presence of the enemy. The sons of God will not minister out of what they think they know, or out of what they do indeed know, or even out of the gifts and ministries they have been given, but rather out of WHO THEY ARE! Aren’t you glad!

I will now close this message by quoting from the inspired pen of brother George Warnock.

“This message will not bring forth that Living Word for the nations of the earth until we EAT THE BOOK. O, what a pure word will come forth in that day! A pure word to all nations! Here is a people who have eaten the Book, and knowing the bitterness of the cross in their lives they will have become merciful and faithful priests to men of every color, tribe, and nation. The bitter herbs of the Passover meal...the bitter hyssop of a broken and contrite spirit...will have completely removed all bitterness from their lives; and they will show forth the mercy and the compassion of Jesus from their very beings. They will not be entertainers. They will not be supported in their ministries by ‘mime’ and ‘puppets’ and ‘rock-musicians’ that go about today in the name of Christ making merchandise of holy things. These people have known and have eaten the bitter herbs, like Joseph in an Egyptian prison, like Moses in the Midian desert, like David in the wilderness of Judea, like Jeremiah in the mire of the dungeon...and now they stand before the peoples of the earth as a clear, living Word from the mouth of God!

“God is saying to His people: I have been faithful in giving you the Water of Life and the Bread of Life. You have tasted of my Word and have found it to be sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. But now I say unto you, Go, take the little book and eat it, otherwise it will not profit you. Fear not to swallow it and digest it. For only then will it become a part of your being. And only then will you be able to bring forth that living Word of Life to the nations of the earth” — end quote.

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY