

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 131

THE TEMPLE OPENED IN HEAVEN

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament" (Rev. 11:19).

The temple of God in Jerusalem was made after the pattern of the heavenly or spiritual temple, as it was shown unto Moses on the mount. The idea of the temple is that of a dwelling place of God. The temple was the house of God, His habitation. It was the place where the manifest presence, glory, and power of God resided in the most holy place. But to this must be added that it was a limited place, where God dwelt on a different level of manifestation than He did in the outward world, and in distinction, too, from the holy city without. It speaks of the fact that in the world at large God does not manifest His presence, glory, and power in an overt way. But that distinction is only temporal. God shall not remain in His temple separated from the world, and unseen by mankind! There are precise steps in the progressive unfolding of God among men. The first step is that He builds a temple and dwells there in the midst of mankind. The second step is that the temple is opened in the heavens of the Spirit, and the glory and substance of Himself is caused to be seen, or revealed throughout the city of God. The third step is that His presence, glory, and power fills the whole city so that there is no more temple! At the conclusion of that work John describes the city itself as "having the glory of God." Then the city descends into the earth realm and His glory shines forth from the city, flooding and enlightening the whole earth and all peoples and nations. What a plan!

Naturally, when the temple (*naos*, inner sanctuary) is opened, the ark of His covenant is seen! For the ark stood in the most holy place, under coverings of skins and separated by a thick veil. It was in a most specific sense the representation of the character and majesty of God Himself, His plan and purpose, and His covenant with mankind. It is called the throne of God in scripture. It stood in the immediate presence, glory, and power of God, as represented in the cloud, and on its mercy seat the blood of atonement was sprinkled, bespeaking God's nature of goodness, mercy, and blessing toward the whole world. It contained the law of the covenant as well as the golden pot of manna and the budding rod of Aaron. And therefore it is the symbol of God's righteous nature, His law put into our minds and written on our hearts; His priestly heart revealed

in Aaron's rod; and His eternal and incorruptible life in the Spirit. As the temple is opened, that ark now *appears* and is *seen!* As the temple is opened by the revelation of the Lord within us we are even now able to *see* by the spirit and in the spirit the great glories and realities contained therein! In God's due time these wonderful things shall be *seen, known, touched, and experienced* by all the Lord's people who constitute the holy city of God!

There is no place where the temple of God is opened on earth. Yet — the temple of God is on earth! “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (I Cor. 3:16-17). The temple of God is on earth, but earth cannot open it. Any time the temple of God is opened, it is opened where He has raised it up, in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord. You are the temple! And just where is this temple? “And hath *raised us up together*, and made us sit together *in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*” (Eph. 2:6). As we pursue these thoughts concerning the temple in heaven and the ark that is seen in the temple, we are brought to that most glorious Psalm that has been such an inspiration to so many all through the years — the ninety-first Psalm. Truly it is a Psalm for those who, while physically on earth, consciously dwell in the heavens of the Spirit! “He that dwelleth in the *secret place of the most High* shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, *thy habitation*; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling...” (Ps. 91:1-11).

The Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament was connected with the *secret place* of the tabernacle or the temple, the most holy place made with hands, where dwelt the ark of the covenant, the ark of the Lord's manifest presence, glory, and power. This was the *secret place* for the Aaronic order of priests, and it was so sacred and so secret that no one dare look upon this place unprepared, uninvited, or unfit lest he die. Only the high priest, and that once each year, was permitted to enter that most secret and sacred spot. The physical and earthly “secret place” of the Aaronic priesthood points forward to the true and spiritual SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH where again, only those apprehended ones who receive the call, quickened by His Spirit, have boldness to enter in by the blood of Jesus! This is but a parable of the fact that deep within the heart of each of us there is a spiritual temple, a spiritual most holy place, in which the divine presence shines, and where our Father is worshipped with humility and awe and reverence by all who enter there.

The Hebrew word for “secret” means hidden, concealed, protected, disguised. The Hebrew word for “place” indicates standing, spot, locality, condition. Thus this *secret place of the most High* is a hidden, concealed, protected, and disguised location, condition, and standing. It is not open before the eyes of all men, but is reserved for those prepared for it. It is that deeper spiritual realm “within the veil” whither our Forerunner is for us entered, where the *most High* may be seen, known, touched, and experienced in all the glorious fullness of Himself!

There is a most holy place within us, in our spirit, where our Lord ever dwells beyond the passions of the soul and the lusts of the flesh; it is there we must enter! No enemy can reach you

in this precious retreat: neither can any enemy get you out of it if by faith you abide in HIM. Is the adversary tormenting you with fears and forebodings? Hide away in the secret place where you know the truth as it is *in Him!* Is there something that is disturbing and distressing you? Hide away in God in the inner sanctum of your spirit; be still before Him there, commit your way unto Him and He will bring it to pass. Are you misunderstood and unjustly accused and maligned? Find the rent place in the veil, Christ, and hide away; for this veil was rent for you and me and for every son of God that our lives might be hid with Christ in God. People who see us in our outer form do not know that we are hiding away in the *secret place of the most High!* They see only a heavenly, supernatural calm, which abides through every storm and pressure; but God knows we are hiding away in the secret place, and He communes with us there. When we abide in the secret place of His spirit and life, we are as much hidden away as God can hide us. Walking in the conscious awareness of His indwelling presence and His overshadowing power is a *secret realm* the world cannot see nor comprehend. Those about us see our bodies walking around on earth, just as the ancient Israelites could gaze upon the outward form of the temple; but they do not know that we, who live in these frail tents, are hidden away so that neither man nor devil can find or touch us!

When we take this place and abide there, at every step we prove that Yahweh, the authority of God's life, the most High, is a wall of fire round us and that He is the glory within. Dear sons of the most High, ABIDE IN HIM! It is alone with our Lord; it is when the strife and opinions of the human have ceased; it is when earth has receded and heaven and eternity have drawn near enough for us to begin to see the unseen, that the voice of our Lord is heard in our hearts, and His beauty appears in His temple! It is in such separation and communion, that His image begins to be manifested. God would have us dwell in His presence until it is the atmosphere we breathe, the breath and source of our life; until it is so our identity and our reality that we are hardly conscious of this holy relation with God as anything distinct from our outer world. O precious Secret Place, O wondrous Habitation, which can only be found when new vision is given to the sons of the most High! O blessed hiding-place where no one but God is with us, and no eye but His beholds us as we perfectly abide there! What strength and power, what refreshing and holy swiftness to those who *make* the most High their habitation, who *dwell* in the *secret place of the most High!*

Yet, it is not enough that we dwell there in this secret, holy place. You are the temple in heaven! God wants to "open" the temple of God in heaven! He purposes to open you up, to bring forth a revelation and a manifestation out of your innermost being. He seeks to completely uncover that holiest place within you where He resides in your spirit, the ark of His covenant inside of you. This brings the *visible* expression and manifestation of His presence, purpose, nature, life, glory, and power in your life. He is moving to open that up that it may be seen by all in the city of God and ultimately by the whole vast creation!

In this connection Ray Prinzing has shed wonderful illumination upon our path. He wrote, "For so long God has quickened truth to His 'hidden ones,' and sealed it up within them, to work in their own being its transformation process. *'Until the time that His word came: the word of the Lord tried him'* (Ps. 105:19). *'I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world'* (Jn. 17:14,16). It is HIS WORD, and we receive it, not to immediately run and broadcast it everywhere, casting it as pearls before swine, but it is to WORK IN US until we are fully changed. However, not forever does the process continue — though the *'bread corn is bruised;*

(yet) *He will not ever be threshing it*' (Isa. 28:28). Threshing — breaking — NOT FOREVER, only until it has done its work, then follows a joyful victory. There came a time, when on the cross, Jesus said, *'It is finished.'* And there shall come that day when He shall have brought to a successful conclusion His redemptive work in His people. When the temple is opened, ***'there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.'*** All of the Christ within His elect *shall be revealed, seen in His temple!* He is the ark of the testament, the *center* of our testimony and victory, and it is to Him that we shall bear witness — of His salvation, of His life!"

The temple was opened, John says. Beloved, we too are going to be opened to reveal what manner of man we are. Seeing that this temple is in heaven, those believers who love and live and walk after the flesh will not be found there! They have already, for two thousand years, been opened and out of them flows corruption, fleshly programs and promotions, pride of life, static creeds and lifeless forms, because their desires and methods and works are of the spirit of the world, and the world is filled with the foolishness of what has been exposed in the temple of religion. The saints and ministers in these carnal, church systems of man have not dwelt in the heavens because of their carnal understanding of the Word and their fleshly living. Since this temple is opened in heaven, it can only be those elect of the Lord who have the Christ so formed in them that when they are opened for all to see, only Christ is revealed!

Chapter eleven of the Revelation opens with John being instructed to *measure the temple of God*. But now the temple is completed, built up a spiritual house, a habitation of God through the Spirit. The temple has grown unto a *holy temple* in the maturity and fullness of Christ! All the meticulous inworkings of God have been consummated, the temple has been thoroughly measured, fully judged, and stands approved of God. The temple is opened in the realm of the Spirit, in the high places of Christ in God. Now "opened" is an interesting word!

That the temple was *opened* bespeaks a truth higher and far more glorious than that of the *rent veil*. In that long ago temple on earth centuries had passed and it seemed as if that veil would hang there forever. And then a lone and desolate figure, upon a cross on a hill outside of Jerusalem, cried out to God, *"It is finished!"* Suddenly the earth shook and reeled like a drunkard, the mighty immovable rocks rent and split. In that awesome moment two huge and invisible hands reached down and took hold of that veil of the temple, so strong that six yoke of oxen could not pull it apart, and those divine hands tore it apart from top to bottom. I have heard people say that when that veil was rent at the crucifixion of our Lord, the two compartments of the holy place and the most holy place were *made one*. But that cannot be! Yes, the veil was *rent, split* — but the veil was *still there!* It had only been split down the middle. The compartments were still divided.

In His resurrection and ascension the Lord Jesus did not stand in relation to His elect in a most holy place from which the veil had been removed, for of His entrance into that realm of fullness in God the writer to the Hebrews testifies, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have *fled for refuge* to lay hold upon the hope *set before us*: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which *entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered*, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 6:18-20). Again, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to *enter into the holiest*, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living

way, which He hath consecrated *for us, through the veil*, that is to say, His flesh” (Heb. 10:19-20).

Can we not see that Jesus went *through the veil* into the fullness of divine life and glory. He opened and consecrated the *way for us to follow, to pass through the veil* into that glorious realm. The veil in its spiritual meaning is identified as the veil of **His flesh**. Many people speak of passing through the veil of flesh and they mean *our flesh*, getting into the realm of the Spirit beyond our outward flesh man. There is indeed a truth there, but it is not the truth presented here. To enter the most holy place one must enter in “through the veil, that is to say, HIS FLESH.”

Our little minds are far too limited to grasp heavenly realities. We are limited in our thinking to earthly interpretations and understandings. We can only conceive of the “flesh” of the animal kingdom, and of fish and fowl and creeping things of earth. But it should not seem strange to discover that *all flesh is not the same flesh* and that there are *bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial* (I Cor. 15:39-44). The flesh of the Son of man, of which Jesus said we must eat in order to have life, is not the flesh that was upon the bones of Jesus as He walked the pathways of earth. It is not that flesh born of Mary, which suffered hunger, weariness, weakness, and death. That human flesh was just HUMAN FLESH. Human flesh is *dead flesh*, for the Holy Spirit calls our human bodies “mortal (dying) bodies.” That which is dying can only produce corruption and death. Adamic flesh is doomed from the moment of its conception in the womb, and in that flesh can be found no hope whatever of eternal life. The law of creation is that everything brings forth “after its kind.” It can never be, then, that Jesus was offering us that mortal flesh in which He was clothed, for that flesh could be killed and laid in a tomb. Only that which is incorruptible can produce life, and Jesus testified of Himself, “I am the *living bread* which *came down from heaven*,” and again, “He that eateth *my flesh*...shall live.” The flesh of which Jesus spoke is an incorruptible flesh, yea, a celestial flesh, and our Lord promises that those who eat of *this flesh* will have *the life of the ages*.

My sincere prayer to God is that He may grant to every reader of these lines eyes to see and hearts to understand this simple but sublime truth: ALL FLESH IS NOT THE SAME FLESH! ALL BODIES ARE NOT TERRESTRIAL BODIES! There is a flesh that is corruptible and there is a flesh that is incorruptible. There is a flesh that is a shame and there is a flesh that is a glory. Behold, I show you a mystery! The body that Jesus brought out of the tomb *is the incorruptible, eternal body of Christ*. The body that Jesus brought out of the tomb is the only *glorified human flesh* that has ever existed. He is the *firstfruits* of them that slept. Jesus is the only perfect man empowered to raise His flesh body up into the state of spiritualization — a *spiritual body*, truly a body, but not a natural body, for now “there *is* a natural body, and there *is* a spiritual body” (I Cor. 15:44). The spiritual body is *His body!* The incorruptible, life-giving flesh is *His flesh!*

There is a flesh with which we are familiar. There is a flesh about which the natural man knows nothing at all. There are bodies which are earthly, physical, visible, and tangible. And there are bodies which are heavenly, spiritual, invisible, and imperceptible. The flesh with which we are acquainted is OUR FLESH. That which yet remains a mystery is HIS FLESH. The natural mind is very dark and without understanding. Only the Holy Spirit can awaken it! Only the Holy Spirit can give us eyes to see that Jesus was not offering us the flesh of His earthly tabernacle,

NEITHER WAS HE OFFERING US SOMETHING WITHOUT SUBSTANCE. When Jesus said, “Eat my flesh,” He spake of a flesh invisible to the human eye but a flesh that was and is, nonetheless, very real. Not corruptible flesh, but incorruptible! Not decaying flesh, but living flesh! Not flesh that would splatter when struck by an eighteen wheeler, not flesh that lives off of steak and potatoes, not flesh that uses mouth rinse, deodorant, and cologne to keep it smelling fresh, not terrestrial, temporal flesh — but celestial, eternal flesh! Only heavenly, divine flesh can impart eternal life!

The partaking of divine flesh (the celestial body) of Christ produces *life*. And what is this heavenly flesh, this celestial body? We know how the Word, the Logos, who had from eternity existed in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of manifestation when He was lowered into the earth realm and was made flesh, the Son of man. After passing through His earthly experience, when He ascended to heaven, back into the realm of the Spirit, He was still the uniquely begotten Son of God who had been witnessed to by the Father throughout His earth life — and yet not altogether the same! For He was now also, as Son of man, the first-begotten from the dead, CLOTHED WITH THAT GLORIFIED HUMANITY which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself, as the *second Man*, the *last Adam*. And now, as we receive into our lives the Spirit of the firstborn Son we truly receive the Spirit of the LAST MAN ADAM, the SECOND MAN FROM HEAVEN, the GLORIFIED JESUS, yes, the Spirit of the risen and exalted Christ, the bearer and communicator to us, not merely of the life of God as such, but of that divine life as it has been interwoven into the perfect manhood of the person of our Lord Jesus the Christ.

Let us now return to the passage quoted earlier from the epistle to the Hebrews. “*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, HIS FLESH...*” Jesus passed *through the veil*. “Through the veil” is the new and living way He has consecrated for us! And what is the veil He passed through, and which also has been consecrated *for us* to pass through? Is it not the veil of *His flesh*? Dearly beloved brethren, consider prayerfully and reverently what I now say. NOWHERE IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS DOES IT SAY THAT THE VEIL IS REMOVED! The veil was *rent*, not *removed*. The way into the most holy place consecrated for us is *through the veil*. Therefore the veil remains! We will understand a great mystery when we see that the veil is the converging point between time and eternity, between earth and heaven, between flesh and spirit, between mortality and immortality.

Take the shoes from off your feet, O saint of God, for the ground upon which we stand is holy. *There are two sides of the veil* — that is the mystery. One side of the veil faces the holy place. The other side of the veil faces the most holy place. It is the same veil, but two sides, each side in a different realm. The side of the veil that is toward the holy place faces a realm of mixture and imperfection. Nothing in the holy place is perfect, pure, and incorruptible! There is the golden lampstand, but the oil in the lampstand burns out and must daily be replenished. There is a wick which must continually be trimmed. The light it sheds forth is a weak, flickering light. The loaves of showbread upon the table contain leaven, the very symbol of fleshliness and sin, and weekly they have to be replaced. Even the altar of incense must again and again be replenished with fire from the brazen altar and a fresh supply of incense. Nothing in this order is pure, unmixed, incorruptible, and eternal! This signifies the life of Jesus (and us) as He walked in the flesh, in a

natural body, subject to all the sorrows, weaknesses, pain, and death of this earth realm. He was made in all things like unto His brethren, and was tempted in all points like as we are!

The other side of the veil is in the most holy place! In this *most* holy place everything is pure, perfect, full, and incorruptible. There God dwelt in the Shekinah Glory between the outstretched wings of the cherubim on either side of the ark of the covenant. The light of this realm is the shimmering, blazing, self-generating light of the glory of the incorruptible God! It never needs to be rekindled and it never burns out! The manna in this realm is the *hidden manna* which never breeds worms, for it is transformed by the incorruptible power of divinity. The tablets of the law were that which was written by the very finger of God, untouched by human hand. Aaron's rod of priestly authority is that which blossomed and bore almonds by the law of a higher life. When Jesus passed through this veil He revealed to us the great truth that He penetrated through the veil of flesh on *this side* and passed through to the *other side*. He entered the veil on this side in His earthly, mortal body of flesh and came out on the other side in His resurrected, immortal body of glorified celestial flesh! Both sides are flesh, His flesh, this side is *this mortal body*, the other side is the *immortal body of resurrection and glorification*. And He consecrated *this way for us through the veil of His flesh*, from the flesh of *this* side to the flesh of *that* side. And let me tell you something — He is the forerunner, He consecrated this new and living way for us, and we must pass through the veil from imperfection to perfection, from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality, and ***it can only be accomplished IN HIM, THROUGH HIM, AND BY HIM!*** It is the veil of HIS FLESH! As we are baptized into Him, buried with Him, risen with Him, and ascend in Him we shall bear the image of the heavenly even as we have borne the image of the earthly. There is no doubt in my mind that we may by faith penetrate through that veil even as we stand upon our two feet, because the way into the Holiest is through the veil from one kind of flesh to another kind of flesh. It means to *cross over* out of this realm, out of this natural man, out of this carnal mind, out of this corruptibility, into the mind of Christ, into the heavenly man, into the glory and majesty of the life and immortality of the divine! It means a thorough change — from earthly to heavenly, from natural to spiritual, from corruptible to incorruptible. Our Lord Jesus consecrated this *way* for us, and He did it in His flesh so that we may have boldness to enter in by the blood of Jesus! Aren't you glad!

The tabernacle in the wilderness, with its high priest entering within the veil into the most holy place, and coming out again from that glorious precinct invested with the authority, power, and glory of God to bless the whole nation of Israel, is surely a parable of our union with Christ in God. We now have boldness by the blood of Jesus to enter into the Holiest — but that is only one half of the divine equation. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest...*let us draw near.*” It is a call to God's elect to enter in through the rent veil, into the place to which the blood has been brought, where our great high priest lives, and where the ineffable glory of the Most High God shines brightly, there to live and walk and work always in the fullness of the Father. Christ Jesus has opened the way into the Holiest of all! This is the full salvation and the full inheritance of God that belongs to the saints! Oh, the glory of the message! For fifteen centuries Israel had a sanctuary with a most holy place into which, under pains of death, no one might enter. But now the call goes forth: Enter in! The veil is rent! The way through has been consecrated for you! God wants to welcome you to His bosom, into His fullness. Henceforth you are to live in union with Him. Son of God, daughter of God, thy Father longs for thee to enter in, to know and dwell in His fullness forevermore!

This has been present truth in our generation. Multitudes of God's elect have received the call to enter *beyond the veil* into the fullness of God! Yet — when the sanctuary of God is *opened* in heaven and the ark of His covenant is *seen* in His temple, something transcendent transpires — The veil is *removed!* In fact, even the outer covering of skins that enclose the “sanctuary” is likewise *stripped away* and the temple of God stands opened, revealed in the heavens! The coverings of skins and veils are no longer there. There is no need for any to have boldness to “enter in beyond the veil,” nor is there any need for any to “come out from behind the veil.” THERE IS NO MORE VEIL! The temple of God stands wide open in the heavens of the Spirit, revealed for all to see!

We find our final reality in God, of course, in that box called *The Ark of His Covenant*. In the Hebrew language the word for “ark” is the same as the word for “coffin.” You have probably noticed that this Ark was present in a spiritual manifestation in the sepulcher where Jesus had lain for three days after His crucifixion. His fleshly humanity was carried there, and rested there. Yet in that same place He was quickened by the Spirit of God and raised up by the power of God into the glory of resurrection! The One who came out of that tomb stepped forth in the fullness of divine, incorruptible life and glory and testified, “**ALL POWER is given unto me, in heaven and in earth!**” Now notice that at the time of His resurrection in the tomb the scene of the most holy place and the ark of the covenant was re-enacted in a spiritual dimension. When the disciples came and *stooped down to enter*, they saw the slab where Jesus had been with an angel (cherub) at each end. The glory and radiance of His resurrection was first manifested over that slab (mercy seat) *between the cherubim*, just as it had been in the most holy place of the tabernacle and temple. With astonished hearts they beheld the lid of the Ark with the golden cherubim recreated right there before their eyes!

Though the disciples had to stoop to enter, that they could enter at all was made possible only because the stone had been *rolled away*. Before arriving at the tomb the disciples had questioned, “Who shall roll away the stone for us?” It's an important question! When we compare, as Paul said, “spiritual things with spiritual things” we see that the question also is, “Who shall remove the veil for us?” It is wonderful to be behind the veil and experience the glory there, but before there can be a *manifestation (unveiling) of the sons of God*, the stone must be rolled away, the veil must be taken away! There must be an unveiling, an uncovering, an *opening* of the sanctuary of God that we are! The Ark, Christ in us, must be *seen!* Ah, who shall roll away the stone for us? Who shall remove the veil? The omnipotent power of Christ in us, and us in Christ, shall remove the veil, open the temple, and cause the Ark to be seen! Isn't it wonderful!

I know that some say we are not passing through the tabernacle in our experience of Christ, moving from the outer court to the holy place, and on in to the most holy place. They tell us that since we have been quickened by the Spirit we are already in the most holy place and that all that remains is for us to *come out* from behind the veil to be revealed in our sonship and to minister to creation. But let me tell you something. No priest could come out of the most holy place until he first had *passed through* all realms of the tabernacle, completed the ministry in each, and entered in beyond the veil, and *completed all the ministration there*. All of this represents progressive *experiences* in our lives! We can't leave the outer court until we have thoroughly *experienced* all the reality of the outer court. Nor can we go beyond the holy place until we have completely *appropriated* all the reality of the holy place. So-called “positional truth”

won't do here! Now I know God has given us boldness to enter in beyond the veil into the Holiest, but I can assure you that I have yet to meet the brother or sister who has fully *appropriated* and *experienced* all that the most holy place is! Do me a favor, my brother, my sister, and *don't come back out of there* until the most holy place is **what you are!** Should you come out in your present state of limitation you will have little to add to the lower realms, nor will creation be set free from the *bondage of corruption*. And that is the truth!

Our all-wise heavenly Father has a safeguard. None of us can come back out from behind the veil of our own desire or volition; no not one! All that God has ordained for us in that realm must be completed according to His word before any can step back out. And though you should come out from behind the veil, you will still minister in a realm of limitation. When the high priest came out of the sanctuary he *blessed* the people (Lev. 9:23). It is wonderful to "bless" people! But it will take more than "blessing," my brother, my sister, to *deliver creation from the bondage of corruption*. Here is the mystery. When the temple of God was opened in heaven, immediately John saw a great *wonder* in heaven, a woman with child, crying, travailing in birth 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. Can we not see by this that only *the opening of the temple in heaven brings forth the unveiling of the manchild, the manifestation of the sons of God!* Our full sonship is not manifest by "coming out from behind the veil." Oh, no! When God's sons are revealed, manifest, there will be no veil to come out from behind! The temple of God will be *opened* — the veil will be **removed!** All that the most holy place represents will be put on glorious display, not by passing back through the veil, for that would mean the reversal of the transformation experienced by passing in through the veil of His flesh! The manifestation of the sons of God comes only by OPENING THE SANCTUARY so that the ark of His covenant may be SEEN in all the splendor of the realm it pertains to! Oh, the wonder of it!

Creation is in pain and agonizing travail waiting for the *manifestation of the sons of God!* Only the manifest sons of God will possess within themselves the full measure of the **power of the kingdom of God** as did Jesus! Only the sons of God can deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption. Jesus is not the *firstborn* among many Christians, or among many believers, or among many saints, among many church members, or among many ministries — He is the firstborn among **many brethren!** The brethren are all *sons of God* and they are *like Him*. Each and every one is like Him! God is not bringing many gifted saints to glory, He is not bringing many apostles to glory, He is not bringing many prophets to glory, He is not bringing many teachers to glory, He is not bringing many musicians or many praise teams to glory, He is not bringing many preachers to glory, but He *is* bringing many SONS to glory!

Sonship is glorious beyond anything our eyes have seen or our ears have heard. Jesus Christ is the firstborn Son of God. And now all His brothers are empowered to follow Him to maturity! All will follow His steps, becoming what He is. The spiritual life of every son of God has the same origin as the firstborn, for all are born of God. We are being perfected by the same process, and will ultimately achieve the same result! Jesus Christ was the personification of the Father within Himself, and so shall we be! The holy nature of Jesus is ours to be raised up within us. The works that He did, we shall do as well! The authority of Jesus Christ, even the dominion of the ages and all things, He will share with those who come to the measure of the stature of His fullness. Jesus possesses the totality of God's substance, and this is the heritage of every manifest

son of God. The present resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus is the portrait of our destiny! It is indeed wonderful!

In the days before us, those who have attained to sonship will be displayed in the blazing glory of immortality. This climatic finale is a fast approaching certainty. From the difficulties, struggles, testings, and processings of this present time the son company will burst forth into everlasting splendor, streaming glory, wisdom, and power as a shower of stars. With Jesus as the Captain, this reigning government of God shall invade the bastions of darkness and by war, yea, by *spiritual warfare* they shall wrest the rule from the kings, presidents, and prime ministers of the earth. These are celestial kings and priests, trained and tested in conquest! They are invincible in the nature and power of the Father. Nothing shall confound them; all will succumb to their sway! This company of sons is the final world government — it will never be overthrown! They will subdue every enemy, and be the fountainhead of every blessing! They are the solution that God has ordained for the travail of earth's teeming billions. All humanistic philosophies, all false religions, great and small, all the entrenched institutions and organized powers of man will melt, wither, break, and collapse before their wisdom, glory, and power. God's sons will enter into His state of being — they will become what He is in an unchangeable personal possession.. This is the destiny of God's Christ, Head *and* body!

THE ARK IS SEEN IN THE TEMPLE

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was *seen in His temple the ark of His testament...*” (Rev. 11:19).

In this vision the temple of God, which is the Christ body, is opened in heaven, or in the spiritual realm. The ark of the covenant is then seen in His temple, or in and among the saints who make up the body of Christ. The work of the unfolding of the fullness of Christ in His body is a progressive work, and is set forth prophetically and progressively through the visions given us in the book of Revelation. Therefore, as John now sees the ark of God's covenant, including the articles within it, in and among Christ's body, this signifies that the time for that which the ark symbolizes to be fulfilled in the sons of God, is now at hand!

The ark of the covenant that John sees is the spiritual reality pictured by the physical ark that was in the tabernacle in the wilderness (Ex. 25:10-22). That ark was made of acacia wood, which was a hard wood typical of the humanity of Christ, and consequently of our redeemed humanity. The ark of the covenant, or the ark of His testament, as it is called in the King James Bible, was overlaid with gold, which represents the divine nature of God; it is divinity swallowing up humanity so that only the nature of God is in manifestation! Is it not true that the fullness of the glory of the Christ life shall swallow up this old human identity, including this body of flesh, covering it completely with the glory of the resurrection life of Christ? Thus it is written, “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but ***clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life***” (II Cor. 5:4). Indeed, we most certainly do groan daily as we wait for our transformation. We are waiting and believing that one day soon this body of flesh and blood shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, changing our outer manifestation from a fading glory of earth to a much greater glory of divine life by the Spirit of the Lord. As the gold covered the acacia wood of the ark of the covenant, so the

resurrection glory and life of Christ shall cover this flesh and blood body, swallowing up or devouring the old corrupt, dying thing to replace it with the transforming life and glory of God. Because we are in Christ as sons of God, our transformation is assured! Even should we go by way of the grave we shall rise up in the power of His resurrection to stand in our place with all the holy sons of God in the hour of manifestation! God has given His word and sealed that word or oath with His very presence and power in the midst of the saints!

In the history of the ark, we observe that a strange divine power always accompanied it. The waters of the Jordan rolled back to the right and to the left under the shadow of it, while the people passed over dry shod. The walls of Jericho fell down flat in their places on the approach of that holy piece of furniture. When the ark set forward, the enemies of God and His people were scattered. When the ark rested, the people were peaceful and happy. The ark of the covenant, as seen in this vision, unveiled for all to see by the Spirit, speaks of the speedy fulfillment of all the promises of God! God engaged Himself to do certain things for His people, for the whole earth, and for all His creation, and He has progressively been doing them, but He will put forth His power in a more open and fuller way and fulfill all that He has pledged to accomplish! As the sign of this, the ark, the symbol of *His covenant with man*, **appears**. God's promises, all of them, without one exception, as spoken through prophets and apostles, since time began, will be fulfilled by the strength of His mighty word!

The ark was the very center of life for the children of Israel. It was not merely an article of religious furniture, but it was the dwelling place of the very presence, glory, and power of Yahwey in their midst. In the wilderness, its centrality can be seen typologically in its central position in all the activity of the tabernacle and in its central position in the set up of the camp. So important was the ark that, were it not in its place, all the other pieces of furniture and all the spiritual ministry in the tabernacle would lose its purpose for being. The primary reason for the tabernacle, and the later temple, was to provide a *house* for the ark of the covenant! There upon the mercy seat, between the golden cherubim, Yahweh was in visible and audible manifestation in the midst of His people! Its sacredness and power was so overwhelming that improper handling of the ark resulted in death. In the natural, all electricians understand that *power* must be handled properly or it may result in death. The power in and upon the ark of the covenant was very real! God wasn't out to "kill" people, so He gave very precise instructions about how the ark was to be handled!

Almost everyone knows about the "lost ark." Even a popular Hollywood movie was made about it. Sometime along the line of Old Testament events the ark mysteriously disappeared from history. One thing is certain — at the time of the ark's disappearance it was not transported to heaven, for it was made of acacia wood and gold, material things, and it was *symbolic* of heavenly realities, a *mereshadow* of true, whereas heaven itself is the realm of those very realities! The question has always been "What could have happened to the ark of the covenant?" First we must ask, "What is the ark?" The *true ark*, the *pattern* for the earthly ark which Moses saw in and by the Spirit in the holy mount, and which the beloved John also saw in His visions on Patmos, is not a little box of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Oh, no! In its heavenly and spiritual reality the ark is God expressed, revealed, and manifested *in and through a people!*

There is great soulish sentimentality and excitement today in various religious circles about the discovery of the old, earthly ark of the covenant. In spite of the destruction of Jerusalem, the

earthly ark of the covenant was preserved for a long time. The apocryphal books which are contained in some Bibles contain some interesting information. In Maccabees 2:4-8, for instance, it says that the prophet Jeremiah ordered, upon divine command, that the ark of the covenant be hidden by those who were led into Babylonian captivity, and that it was done. Some believe that the prophet Jeremiah himself oversaw the hiding of the ark before the captives left for Babylon. Thus, it was not harmed at the destruction of Jerusalem. This, however, is not the only story surrounding the *lost ark!*

During the reign of king Solomon, the queen of Sheba (Ethiopia) visited him in Jerusalem. II Chronicles 9:12 tells us that “King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which she had brought unto the king...” In a September 1935 article in *National Geographic*, L. Roberts recorded his interviews with various priests in Ethiopia who consistently recounted that the queen of Sheba had married king Solomon (Solomon had 1,000 wives, many were from the royal families of surrounding nations) and had a child named Menelik. Solomon educated the lad in Jerusalem until he was nineteen years old. The Ethiopian epic, *The Glory of the Kings*, recounts that the queen of Sheba died and Prince Menelik prepared to return home. King Solomon wanted to give him a replica of the ark of the covenant to take with him to Ethiopia. However, Prince Menelik was concerned with the fact that his father, Solomon, was now placing idols in the temple to please his pagan wives. King Solomon gave his son a banquet and later Menelik switched arks and left the replica in its place. Menelik reverently took the true ark to Ethiopia for safekeeping until Israel should return to the true worship of Yahwey. Unfortunately, Israel never returned to following God exclusively. Thus the Ethiopians never returned the ark! Some people believe that this ark is still preserved and guarded in a church, the historic Church of Zion of Mary in Aksum, along the northern boundary of present-day Ethiopia. Some years ago I read a confirmatory report on this in the *Jerusalem Post* and the investigative reporter who wrote the article included a picture of the Church of Zion of Mary along with one of the priests who is a guardian of the ark.

One charlatan, a gentleman who claimed to be an archeologist, reported that he had discovered the lost ark hidden in a cave under mount Calvary where our Lord was crucified. He published some very professional and impressive videos, tapes, and articles concerning this. He explained that God ordained the ark to be hidden there in the days of Jeremiah, so that when the true Lamb of God was slain on mount Calvary His blood ran down and seeped through a fissure in the rocks and dripped right onto the mercy seat on top of the ark! According to him, his discovery of the ark there is a carefully guarded secret by the Israeli government. How *c-o-n-v-e-n-i-e-n-t!* The only problem is that this man was later proven to be one who misrepresented his credentials, and with a long history of being a compulsive liar and a con-man. So much for the ark beneath mount Calvary!

Dear man of God, dear woman of God, let all who possess a spiritual mind put away such childish prattle. Is it so difficult to understand the simple truth that were the lost ark to actually be found there would be nothing special about it? It would be merely an antique, an interesting archeological exhibit. It pertains to a covenant that is now abolished and has forever passed away! The glory has departed from it; there is no fiery presence of Yahweh flaming out from between the cherubim, no divine presence flooding its environs, no heavenly voice emanating from its radiant cloud, no flashing lightnings of power, and no blinding glory. It is all

gone! Forever *gone!* The only value it could have would be that of a famous religious relic. The presence, voice, glory, and power of the Lord now rest upon the anointed people of God, the body of Christ! This is the heavenly and spiritual reality to which the old ark pointed! The blessed prophet Jeremiah (who may indeed have hidden that ark) prophesied by the Spirit of this day and this new and greater glory, “And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will *bring you to Zion*. And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with *knowledge and understanding*. And it shall come to pass...in those days, saith the Lord, **THEY SHALL SAY NO MORE, THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD: NEITHER SHALL IT COME TO MIND: NEITHER SHALL THEY REMEMBER IT; NEITHER SHALL THEY VISIT IT; NEITHER SHALL THAT BE DONE ANY MORE!**” (Jer. 3:14-16).

You see, precious friend of mine, the old ark was only a picture, a type, a shadow pointing to the greater reality to come. When the real has come, you have little interest in a model of it! Here I would draw your attention to the very next verse which follows the one quoted above. Jeremiah’s prophecy continues, “At that time they shall call *Jerusalem the throne of the Lord*; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it...neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17). The old ark used to be *the throne of the Lord*. Now, praise God, His New Jerusalem people has *become the throne of the Lord* — the seat of His almighty, omnipotent, glory, power, and majesty! There is a mighty ingathering coming as the glory of the Lord arises upon the sons of God who have followed their forerunner through the veil into the Holiest all! And when the temple of God is opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant is *seen*, the light of the Lord shall shine upon all the nations and the whole earth shall be full of His glory!

Those who are searching for the Lord’s ark are looking in the wrong place! The ark was found two thousand years ago — John saw it and it was in the temple where it should be, right in the Holy of holies where it belongs, and the temple is the temple in heaven. Now, there may be an ark, a box of wood overlaid with gold, with two golden cherubim on top at either end, hidden somewhere in the world today. But that ark is not the true ark, it is only a cheap imitation of the real ark which has always been in the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! When the reality came, the shadow forever passed away! *Christ* Himself is the ark, yea, *Christ in you* is the ark, and John saw the ark in the true temple which we are!

Hear the word of the Lord! “I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and keep thee, and GIVE THEE FOR A COVENANT of the people, and for a light of the nations” (Isa. 42:6). Oh, yes! The ark of the covenant has become a people. “I will *give thee for a covenant of the people*.” We don’t have to concern ourselves with the outward any longer. It matters not one whit to us where or when the old ark was “lost,” or where or when it might ever be “found.” We have no more use for the outward ark than we do for a brazen altar and a bullock to offer upon it. I have no idea where that ancient brazen altar has vanished to, and it would be quite meaningless were it found. The one sacrifice of Jesus has been offered once and forever for all, by which the world has been reconciled unto God and we have been sanctified. The shadow has forever passed away! I would spend no more time looking for the ark of the covenant than I would looking for the brazen altar, the laver, the candlestick, the table of showbread, the altar of incense,

or even one of the hooks from the curtain of the outer court. You, my beloved, contain within yourself the covenant — the evidence and proof that HE is God!

The temple of God is the elect of the Lord, the *inChristed*. The life, the power, the nature of every son of God is *Christ in you*. Christ Himself is the ark; still the mystery is deeper than this glorious fact! The ark is *Christ in you*. You are, in union with Him, both the temple and ark, yet it is HE who is the indwelling life and reality! The temple *opened* and the ark *seen* is the manifestation of Christ out from His body! The heavenly manna, His own incorruptible life, is within you! The tables of the law, His own divine nature, is within you! Aaron's rod that budded, His own heavenly appointment and priesthood, is within you! And the glory is upon you! Look with me into the realm of the Spirit, and you will see that the temple of God, or the Christ body, is open and revealed. Look and behold with the eyes of the Spirit, and you will also see that the ark of His covenant is among us. Because the temple is open, the ark of the covenant can now be seen. The throne of God is now manifested, in His body. It is here among us now so that all that is represented in that ark shall be fulfilled by the Spirit. YOU are the covenant, my beloved, the covenant of God unto all the ends of the earth!

When in our vision, the Seer declares that he saw the inner sanctuary opened, he means to tell us that he beheld the *glory* of God in *manifestation*! In those days to which the "last trumpet" refers, the Lord God Almighty will be unveiled within His elect, so that all the Lord's people will truly see Him in His love, power, wisdom, and grace, as it is not possible for them to see Him now while we are still "behind" the veil. The greater revelation of heavenly things belongs to the "days" of the great consummation. In that glorious time, all veils will be rolled back, all mists lifted, all clouds dissipated, and all barriers broken down and removed, and the Holy of holies, with the ark of the covenant, the glorious Christ within, will be fully disclosed to the vision and the hearts of the redeemed and to all God's vast creation!

*"Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and **give thee for a covenant of the people**, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them"* (Isa. 49:8-10). What exceedingly great and precious promises for us and for all mankind! You realize now — you're the covenant. You're the ark now. You contain within you the promise and God's commitment to all men. The mercy seat of God rests upon you! Oh, the wonder of it!

J. PRESTON EBY