

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 144

THE DRAGON, THE WOMAN, AND THE MANCHILD (continued)

“And they *overcame him* by the *blood of the Lamb*, and by the *word of their testimony*; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev. 12:11).

What does it mean that they overcame the great red dragon *by the blood of the Lamb*? To Moses God said that He gave the blood upon the altar to be an atonement for the soul, because **THE LIFE OF THE FLESH IS IN THE BLOOD** (Lev. 17:11). That is, the blood in the body is the life of the body. Ah — the power of any blood is in the worth of the life! In the blood of Jesus **THE POWER OF THE DIVINE LIFE DWELT AND WORKED** — *hence its intrinsic value*. He was the Son of God by conception, and the Son of man by birth. He was a specially prepared body to contain a *specially prepared blood* that was to be *the life* of all humanity! The blood was precious from the fact that it was a unique blood which could do something for all humanity that no other blood could ever do. It was the Word of God that became flesh (Jn. 1:14), who was made a man. It was the life of God that dwelt in Him! Jesus did not live out of the natural life of human blood as all men have lived. He lived out of the indwelling life of the Father! That *life* is His *true blood*, and that gave His blood, every drop of it, an infinite value. The blood of a man is of more worth than that of a sheep. The blood of a king or a great general is counted of more value than hundreds of common soldiers. The blood of the Son of God! It is in vain the mind seeks for some expression of its value! All we can say is, it is His own blood, the blood of the Word made flesh! The life is in the blood. As the value of this life, so the value of the blood. In Christ there was the life of God; infinite as God is the worth and the power of that blood!

When Adam transgressed, the *life of God* which had been breathed into his nostrils, fled from his soul, and by that separation of soul and spirit all that was left in man's natural conscious life was a residue, that mortal something which flowed in the veins of his body. That blood contains nothing of the life of God, and in its composition is similar to the blood of the animal kingdom, for when the glorious power of divine life was separated from Adam's soul (consciousness), he entered into the kingdom of death. Some say that there was no separation between man and God, but there *was* a separation right *within man* — soul and body separated from spirit. The soul cleaved to the body, and man was unable any longer to live and walk *after the spirit*. Before this Adam's spirit and soul had existed in blessed union. The record states that Adam was made a *living soul*. From the Greek the statement reads, “The first man was made a *zoe psuche* (living soul).” *Zoe*, throughout the entire Greek New Testament, is always used in reference to the *life of God — divine life*. *Psuche*, on the other hand, is used of the natural life of animals and men. Since both words are used of Adam's life in the beginning, it is clear that he possessed a physical life imbued, infused, injected, impregnated, and permeated with the glorious incorruptible *life of God*! That is what made him not simply *zoe*, and not merely *psuche*, but *zoe psuche*! It was soul and spirit *in union*!

This life, *zoe*, is the life Jesus promised to give to man when He said, “I give unto them eternal *life (zoe)*, and they shall never perish.” This, beloved, is the life that fled from Adam's soul when he transgressed, leaving his outer man ashamed, fearful, and *dead*. The life is in the blood, but our blood being devoid of *zoe* life, *incorruptible* and *divine* life, is in reality dead blood and capable of sustaining only

physical life, and that only poorly until man returns to the dust from whence he came. It is not without significance that, when the bodies of men are embalmed, the first act is to remove the corruptible blood so that the dead body may be better preserved. The fact that a chemical in the veins can preserve a dead body is proof that the quickening power of *incorruptible zoe* restored to union with the blood of redeemed men will result in *life and immortality!* Instead of corruptible and, therefore, deathless blood, Adam's blood corrupted through sin became subject to death. To fully redeem this dead sinner, life must again be imparted! The only remedy for death is *life!* This life is in the blood, so blood must be furnished which is sinless and incorruptible. None of Adam's race could do this, "for in Adam **all** die." There was only one, yes, only one, who could furnish that blood, the virgin-born Son of God, the man from heaven, the last Adam, with a human body, but sinless, supernatural blood, inseminated by the Holy Ghost! By the power of God's Spirit the soul and spirit of this blessed firstborn Son were *united* as the first Adam's had been, and in the power of that *united life* He *overcame the world!*

Jesus came to bring life to the world! Here is where His blood differed from the ordinary blood or life of men. His blood was precious in that it was able to do something for mankind which man's own blood or human life could not do. The natural blood or life of mankind was only for a few years at most, but the blood of Christ was the *life of the ages*. So there must somehow be a discontinuance of the blood of a few years, that the blood or the *life of the ages* might be injected into mankind.

The thing of importance about the precious blood of Jesus is not its physical structure, but the glorious fact that blood bespeaks **LIFE**. What Jesus poured out was His life, His holy, pure, undefiled, divine, heavenly, incorruptible life, the *zoe*, the quickening *spirit*, the life of GOD! He lived and walked out that glorious life in human form and then poured it out as an offering to God. And God took the offering and poured it out, in return, upon mankind! "He...spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE HATH SHED FORTH THIS, WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR" (Acts 2:31-33).

Ah — the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, but in a *new dimension* — the divine and incorruptible life of God as it had been perfected and lived out in the life of the Son of God — was now shed forth as *the Spirit of the Son* to be received by all men to transform and lift them up high into the holiness, wisdom, and power of God. The precious blood of Jesus! There is an old Roman Catholic dogma which says that Christ carried His blood with Him to heaven in a bowl. Without even knowing its source, evangelical Christianity clings to that ludicrous idea from the Dark Ages by perpetuating a form of mysticism around the physical blood of our Lord. The bowl of blood as carried by the high priest in the Old Testament is indeed a *type* from the outward, physical ceremony of the day of Atonement. But in its spiritual fulfillment there is no bowl in the universe that could have contained what Jesus carried into the heavens! When Christ entered heaven (see Hebrews, chapters 8-10), He carried not physical blood, which of necessity would be corruptible blood, but His own DIVINE-HUMAN LIFE. He did not transport a bowl of blood or a bucket of blood; He entered in His resurrection body, with the full power of that divine life He had poured out on behalf of Adam's doomed race. If He had not poured it out upon the cross, He would have forever remained the *only* perfect man — the *only* manifest Son of God. But, blessed be His wonderful name! He shed His precious blood, He released His divine life, He poured forth His quickening Spirit that all may drink thereof and live! The power of His dying was in the power of His *pouring out His life unto us*, giving us His life that we might live as He lives! Oh, the mystery of it!

Beloved sons and daughters of God! The blood of Jesus! Oh, think what it means! God gave it for your redemption from Adam's benighted race and your transformation into the image and glory of God. God accepted it in the true tabernacle, in heaven itself, in the heaven of God's Spirit, when the firstborn of the new creation entered there and presented it on your behalf. God points you to it and asks you to believe in its omnipotent energy, in its everlasting sufficiency. Ah, this celestial man was injected into a whole world full of men descended from the earth-man to impart something we had lacked from the day Adam was driven from Eden's bright portals. That something was *life, living blood*, for He said He came to give life to the world. He could impart a life to the world that would change it completely! When *our spirit* is quickened by *His Spirit*, there is the release of divine life within us; as that divine life is brought into marriage union with soul and body there is raised up within us LIFE AND IMMORTALITY! That is why

the sons of God are now able to overcome the adversary in all of his workings — it is by the power of the life of the Lord within! That is the blood of the Lamb! And that is the *testimony*, His testimony, our testimony, that the power of HIS LIFE WITHIN avails and prevails! Truly, “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony!”

THEY LOVED NOT THEIR LIVES UNTO DEATH

“...and *they loved not their lives unto the death*” (Rev. 12:11).

Hear the blessed words of Jesus as He shows us the path to life and glory. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mat. 16:24). “Let him *deny* himself...” We might paraphrase these words, “Let him *forget* himself.” That’s totally unlike a child. It can never be an action of immaturity! What is the attitude of a child? “That’s *mine!* Give me *mine!* Mama, make him give it to me — it’s *mine!*” What is the attitude of the church in America? “I want *mine!*...I want *my blessing, my promises, my prosperity, my miracle,* I want...I want...I want...what’s *mine!*” “Whosoever will walk the same path that I walk,” says the firstborn Son of God, “let him *forget himself.* Let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever will save *his life* shall lose it.” The word there for life is *psuche* — SOUL. “Whosoever will save, cling to, preserve, deliver *his soul* shall *lose it.*”

“Lose” is a strong word — It means to utterly destroy. “And whosoever will *lose* his life (soul) for my sake shall *find it*” (Mat. 16:25). Whosoever will utterly destroy his own life, his own soul, his own emotions, his own intellect, his own will, his own desires, his own ways, his own opinions, for the sake of God’s Christ, shall save, preserve, and deliver his soul! What a word is that! We are called to lose our soul, our life, yet to save it *in His!* That is because the old human consciousness and natural identity is ***not who we are.*** Every son of God has laid down his own feelings, wants, and opinions. It’s not about struggling with our soul — it’s about *killing it!* Jesus says, “If you want to be a loser, here’s how. Just keep your own way of thinking.” “Well, here’s what *I think,*” someone says. I don’t care! I don’t care about what I think, either! It’s not about what you think or what I think — it’s about the mind of Christ. The great red dragon stalks about in every carnal thought. Jesus says, “If you want to be a son of God, here’s how. Forget about your soul and follow me!” Forget about your old false human consciousness of the outer man, take up *your cross,* and follow me to the mount of Crucifixion; I will lead you on to resurrection and you will follow me into the new consciousness and identity of the CHRIST LIFE. It is the ***“revelation of Jesus Christ”*** that is being brought forth in this hour, not the ego of man. Here is life and reality indeed! Here is the glory of the new creation! Here is the revelation of the Son of God with power!

REJOICE, YE HEAVENS!

“Therefore *rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them*” (Rev. 12:12).

As we have pointed out previously, heaven is nought but the eternal, invisible, and omnipresent ***realm of the spirit*** in which God and all celestial beings dwell — *far above* the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. Not “far above” in terms of space or light years, but far above in terms of eminence, quality, rank, and state of being. Just as gold is “far above” copper in beauty and value, and just as a king is “far above” a ditch digger in wealth, rank, and power, so are those who dwell *in the heavens of God’s Spirit FAR ABOVE* those who dwell in the carnal earth-realm and in the sensual sea-realm. No word written or spoken could hold more truth in this regard than the words of the apostle Paul wherein he speaks of the exalted position of the Christ: “*that ye may know...the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named...*” (Eph. 1:18-21). It is obvious here that the subject is not how far beyond the galaxies Christ went, but how highly He is exalted in eminence, rank, position, and power above all other authorities in heaven and on earth. Then Paul says, “*And He raised us up together with Him and made us sit down together with Him in the heavenly sphere.*” Therefore we can say to every Spirit-led son of God, “Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them!”

Dear ones, how can we live in the heavens? Just by being *in Christ!* Christ has ascended. Christ is now the highest heaven in this universe! Most of those who read these lines understand what it means to

experience the ascended Christ, to daily live out our lives in the victory and triumph of the Son of God who dwells in our spirit, and in whom we dwell in blessed union, *far above* the sorrows, strife, sin, problems, perplexities, limitations, struggles, fears, disappointments, and death of the carnal realm. THIS is sonship! In spirit I hear the wonderful words falling upon the ears of the prophet of Patmos, “Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them!”

Those who dwell in heaven, who walk in the spirit, who think with the mind of Christ, who live out of divine nature, are unaffected by all the “woe” and “wrath” experienced by those who dwell in the earth-realm where the dragon lives. Those who truly walk after the spirit are not depressed, perplexed, troubled, worried, or victimized by any kind of “earthly” situation. When our affections are set upon *things above*, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and where we sit in Him and with Him, we are resurrected and ascended, for the Christ with whom we are joined in spirit is the Christ who has ascended into the heavens! When you stand in union with Him you are high above the mountains, not in the valleys. You are in the heavenly places, far above the earthlies. The things of earth grow strangely dim to those whose life is *hid with Christ in God*. For those who dwell in heaven everything is *in the spirit*. We walk in the spirit, live in the spirit, pray in the spirit, worship in the spirit, speak by the spirit, and do all things in and by the spirit. *This is sonship!*

God is weary of a lot of believers getting together in His name doing all those things that are not of His Spirit. Fellowship and oneness *in and by the spirit* is the only gathering God is interested in! God is the true builder, and we are the material. God is not interested in the outward edifice of a “house of worship” nor in all the carnal, outward activities men perform in those places. God is concerned with the *inner house*, or the spirit of man. God is establishing us for His purpose that He may reveal His nature and power in the inner sanctuary of our lives.

In one of His kingdom teachings the Lord Jesus spoke of a day at the end of the age when He would send forth His angels, His messengers, “*and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to another*” (Mat. 24:31). Notice that the elect are not gathered from one end of the “earth” to the other, but from one end of “heaven” to the other! Then our Lord’s use of the word “gather” is significant. The word, literally, is a verb meaning *to synagogue*; the inference is that the Lord sends out His messengers, the word of the kingdom through His anointed ones, to gather together those who dwell in the heavens of God’s Spirit, to gather His elect people into His *New Synagogue* to consciously dwell in the highest heavenly realm in Christ. Jesus is actually quoting from Moses, who had prophesied, “*If your outcasts are at the ends of heaven, from there the Lord will synagogue you, and from there He will take you*” (Deut. 30:4, Septuagint).

Soon after John the Baptist was thrown into prison, Jesus left the country near Jerusalem with His disciples, and went toward Galilee, the province in the north. Between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north lay the land of Samaria. The Samaritans were remnants of the ten-tribed house of Israel who remained in the land when most of the people were carried off to Assyria. The Assyrians, after conquering Israel, populated the area of Samaria with some of their people and the Samaritans of Jesus’ day were of mixed blood, Israelite and Assyrian. Their religion was also mixed, “They feared Yahweh,” we read, “and served their own gods.” The Samaritans hated the Jews, and in turn were themselves despised by the Jews, and they scarcely ever spoke to each other. They worshipped the Lord much as the Jews worshipped Him, but they had their own temple and their own priests. And they had their own scriptures, which was only the five books of Moses, for they would not read the other books of the Old Testament.

It was a long and tiring journey from Judea back to Galilee, and as Jesus walked along the broad, hot valley floor of the ascent of Lebonah, He would have seen the low-lying hills to the east and the gradually rising heights to the west. He would then come to Sychar, near the ruins of the ancient Shechem. And here, being much wearied from their journey, Jesus and His disciples paused to rest at the well of Sychar. This well had been dug by Jacob, the great father of the Israelites, many hundreds of years before. It was an old well then in the days of Jesus. It was early in the morning, about sunrise, when Jesus was sitting by Jacob’s well. He was very tired, He was hungry, and His disciples had gone to the nearby village to buy food. He was thirsty, too; and as He looked into the well, He could see the water, a hundred feet below, but He had no rope with which to let down a jar to draw up some water to drink.

Just at this moment a Samaritan woman came to the well, with her water jar upon her head and her rope in her hand. Jesus looked at her, and in one glance read her soul and saw her life. He knew that Jews did not often speak to Samaritans, but He said to her, "Please give me a drink." The woman saw from His looks and His dress that He was a Jew, and she said to Him, "How is it that you, who are a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman?" Jesus answered her, "If you knew what God's free gift is, and if you knew who it is that says to you, Give me a drink, you would ask Him to give you living water, and He would give it to you." There was something in the words and the demeanor of Jesus which caused the woman to sense that He was not a common man. She said to Him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where can you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who drank from this well?" "Whoever drinks of this water," said Jesus, "shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." "Sir," said the woman, "give me some of this water of yours, so that I will not thirst any more, nor come all the way to this well."

Jesus looked at the woman and said to her, "Go home and bring your husband and come back here." "I have no husband," answered the woman. "Yes," said Jesus, "you have spoken the truth. You have no husband. But you have had five husbands, and the man you are now living with is not your husband." The woman was filled with wonder as these words penetrated her soul. She saw that there was a man who knew what a stranger could not know. She felt that God had spoken to Him and she said, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet of God. Tell me whether our people or the Jews are right. Our fathers have worshipped on this mountain. The Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where men should go to worship. Now, which of these is the right place?" Her concern, and the major issue of the moment for her, had to do with the specific proper location for worship. In this respect, this woman differed little from the multitudes in this hour who ask, "Where should we worship? What church should we attend? What ministry should we submit to? What covering should we be under?" The Lord did not dodge her question! Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe ME, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the *true worshippers* shall worship the Father *in spirit and in truth*: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit: and they that worship Him *must* worship Him *in spirit and in truth*." The time would come, said the Lord, when both "this mountain" and "Jerusalem", as well as any other geographical locality, or appointed structure, would be completely irrelevant as a condition to *worship!*

A newspaper article some years ago was entitled, ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS STRIVE FOR SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL HOME. It included the views of a rabbi and a Palestinian activist. The interview with the rabbi stated, "Today, Jews believe that worshipping in Jerusalem is essential to serving God, many of whose 613 biblical commandments can be fulfilled *only here*." At the same time, the interview with the Palestinian pointed out, "So sacred is Jerusalem, Muslims believe, that a good deed committed here has *one thousand times* the normal weight, while a sin committed here has *one thousand times* the normal gravity." Opinions and sentiments concerning Jerusalem still run deep and are strongly felt by the carnal-minded after two thousand years! Even many Christians, even Spirit-filled Christians, spend much money flying to Jerusalem to keep the feast of Tabernacles at the appointed time of the Old Testament law! The modern day city of Jerusalem still is the object of a struggle for power involving pride, envy, oppression, and tyranny.

The Samaritans for generations had worshipped God in their holy mount Gerizim, and the Jews had for generations worshipped in their temple in Jerusalem. Each scorned the other's *place* of worship and Jesus is here speaking to the woman of Samaria and telling her that PLACES ARE OF NO CONSEQUENCE! God is a spirit — and mountain worship will not be acceptable! Neither will temple worship in Jerusalem be acceptable to the Lord! If man is to worship God, then man must worship God *as He is* and *where He is* — OMNIPRESENT SPIRIT! Man must not worship God as he thinks He is or where man thinks He may be. Carnality and the natural mind attempt to bring God into a realm that will enable them to see God according to their belief. Therefore some worship idols or images of metal, wood, or stone. Others worship the sun or the elements. Some must go to a building, which they call "the house of God," to worship God and others must have all manner of rites, ceremonies, vestments, and objects in order to worship Him. Some must have a Jesus in a body of flesh, before they can worship God. But Jesus said

that God is seeking a people who will worship Him in the realm and sphere in which He exists — *in spirit and in truth!* Worshipping a location is not spiritual worship. “Oh,” you say, “I do not worship the location, I just go there to worship God.” Precious friend of mine, if you must *go there* in order to *worship God*, YOU ARE WORSHIPPING THE PLACE! Worship has nothing to do with “going” anywhere! That is what Jesus was teaching that day at Jacob’s well. When we worship the Father in spirit and in truth, it separates us from all the “helps” and “crutches.” Such a worship takes away all the traditions of men, all the ceremonies and all the rituals and all the orders and forms of “worship” that every religious body of people are cumbered with.

We won’t go to a mountain, neither will we find it necessary to go to a temple. We will not have to work anything up or pray anything down. Certainly the Lord draws His people together for seasons of fellowship, praise, instruction, and edification. We do not oppose such gatherings, as the Lord ordains. But true worship will not take place just on Sunday morning between the hours of eleven and twelve, and perhaps a night or two each week. True worship is a CONSTANT, CONTINUAL STATE OF BEING! God is spirit, and who can know spirit except God takes us unto Himself in the realm in which He abides. God — Spirit and Truth — fills all space, is everywhere present, eternal and unchanging. When we live and walk in the spirit we are always dwelling at home in Him! We are always able to know and experience Him *in the heaven of His presence*, the true home and heaven of the consciousness of the life, reality, substance, and power of *God within*.

This is one of the great truths that God has revealed to His sons in this day of the Lord, which the vast majority of believers have not grasped to this day. The *place* of worship has absolutely no bearing whatever on the *act* of worship! Today, in order to hold together the system, the religious system men have developed, there must be a *place* of worship, and men are admonished and required to gather themselves together in *that place* so that they may worship God. Anyone who claims to be able to worship God equally at any time and in any place becomes a heretic to the organized religionists. For, if the places of worship were taken away, and men truly worshipped in spirit and in truth, the whole religious system would fall apart! There would be no reason for it to continue. The religious systems of man are built upon having a “place” for people to come to so that the works and promotions of men may continue to be carried out. Again, let me affirm that God does indeed gather His people together, but such gathering together is led by the Spirit and is UNTO HIM, and the place and order become inconsequential. It is when the physical place becomes important, or mandatory; it is when preachers and organizations lay a law upon you, demanding your attendance, your submission, and your allegiance to them and their program, asserting that you cannot make it to heaven, or into the kingdom, or to manifest sonship, or into life and immortality apart from *their teaching, their order, their ministry, their program, their elders, their prophets, their apostles* — it is there that worship in spirit and in truth is usurped by worship in “this mountain” or in “Jerusalem.” Religion always dictates to us these three things: *where, when, and how* to worship! Ah, but the Spirit, like a rushing wind, carries us off to that realm of spirit and truth...far beyond the place, time, and techniques...into the very presence of the Father...for it is there we gather to worship!

Let all who read these lines know of a certainty that worship in spirit and in truth is the worship of the *new covenant*. This worship of the new covenant is a *new worship*, which Christ Jesus, the heavenly spiritual man, initiated two millenniums ago; and then put down and abolished the worship at the mountain, and the worship at Jerusalem, when He ushered in this worship in spirit and in truth. And this spirit and truth must every man and woman know *within themselves*, by which they may know the God of truth, who is a spirit, within their spirit. He who is a Jew *inwardly* worships in his temple, his body being the temple of the Holy Ghost. Those who are Jews *outwardly*, in the old covenant, sing and pray and preach in their temple, an outward temple made with hands. But the Jew inward, in the spirit, in the new covenant, in the new and living way, sings and prays and rejoices and ministers in the Holy Ghost, their bodies being temples of the Holy Ghost. And yet not the outward body of flesh, but the body of the inward man, the house from heaven, the spiritual body, the body of the Christ which every son of God is putting on within himself as Christ is raised up within!

The type has passed, and we know that the temple built with hands is no more. But what do we see? Men are trying to reproduce it, or to invent a substitute for it, thus perpetuating the old covenant, to walk as outward Jews. Church buildings, cathedrals, and temples are pawned off as the meeting place with God!

Call these “churches” if you will. **THEY ARE NOT CHURCHES!** The very name is a blasphemy. They are mere buildings; and there is nothing sacred or holy about them. God does not honor them as His abode. They are not the “house of God” as the ignorant love to call them. We praise God for the privilege of gathering together with those of like precious faith, and rejoice in any assembling of the saints that is truly unto Him: but in point of fact it is not in any building made with hands that God is worshipped. Ah, how greatly we misconceive our true position! We certainly need not the tabernacle of Moses, the temple of Solomon, nor any cathedral or so-called church building to worship the Father or to minister as the Lord’s anointed; because we are constituted priests of the **HEAVENLY TABERNACLE**, which no human hand ever reared, and which is the true meeting-place between God and His spiritual priesthood, yea, of all who come to God! *“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them!”*

It is an indisputable fact that in all of the recorded history of the human race men have been prone to associate their worship of God with *places* and *things* of the earth, and to attach some special sacredness to that place or thing, until the places and things become more important than God Himself. Of a truth I tell you that such are “earth-dwellers,” *mind[ing] earthly things*. Many precious folk imagine that because they met God in some glorious experience in such and such a building, room, or seat, they will find Him there again. I have known people who, because they received the Holy Spirit while sitting in a particular chair, then sit other folk in that same chair so they, too, can be filled with the Spirit, as though there were something “magical” with God about that chair! I remember seeing people, during the great healing campaigns of the late 1940’s and early 1950’s, long after the lights were out, the tent folded, and the trucks departed, returning to stand in the saw dust at the exact spot where the glory of God had been seen, expecting to meet God in just the same way again. But He wasn’t there in manifestation! God has no concern for places — He is seeking a *people!*

Whatever your expression or ministry, it should be able to function at any time and in any place, just as well as it does at “church.” God does not move systematically after opening prayer, three choruses, and a few minutes of “singing in the spirit.” The firstborn Son of God **NEVER ONCE MINISTERED IN THAT WAY!** He ministered in the fields, on the mountainsides, in the streets, in the homes, by the seaside, or in the temple. **HE HIMSELF** was the temple of God at all times and in every place! His meetings never started at ten and dismissed at twelve. Oh, no! God manifested out of the temple of His Son at all times and in every place. *This will be the mark of the manifest sons of God!* Their ministry will be the sovereign, spontaneous, continuous, unrestrained, unplanned, unrehearsed, unprogrammed, omnipotent outflow of Life and Light and Love! It will change lives, transform churches, revolutionize cities, and conquer nations. It will redeem society, demolish every false religion and system of man, and sweep the nations and all things into the kingdom of God. **IT IS THE MINISTRY OF SPIRIT AND TRUTH.**

Even now we must learn to live and walk in the spirit if we treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to God! Our Father is teaching us that we must no longer seek out a “place” where we can move in the spirit because we are the temple of God and our whole life **IS WORSHIP!** While I am not at all opposed to gatherings, preachings, ministerings, etc., the fact remains that the way it is being done today, even among kingdom people, is *still* after the old order of the feast of Pentecost. Seems to me the new order has not fully come in — but certainly the Father is drawing us to walk only in and by the Spirit and not after the old order of a dying age. For me, the answer does not lie in continuing to do the old, nor yet is it in refusing to meet or minister in a visible and corporate way at all — it is just being led by the Spirit each and every day, doing only what we see our Father doing.

There is a wonderful scripture passage which is troubling to many wherein the inspired writer admonishes, **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much more, as ye see the day approaching”** (Heb. 10:25). Be not alarmed nor distressed because of those who would use the letter of this word as a hammer to bring condemnation to one who does not attend their weekly or daily set times of assembly! Nor, on the other hand, should one use his “liberty” as an excuse to simply “do his own thing,” becoming self-righteous and puffed-up in his “freedom,” independent and exalted in his own superior sense of “spirituality,” cutting himself off from the body of Christ! Both extremes are unbalanced. On the one hand, there is the person who is in bondage to a group or leader or religious system, feeling compelled to observe the letter of the law, attending every time the group assembles, complying with all their requirements, to prove himself “faithful,” regardless of the

leading of the Spirit or the quality of the meetings. The other extreme is the one who is so independent and self-sufficient that he holds nothing but contempt for any gathering, regardless of the presence and leading of the Holy Spirit. In seeking to be free, he has come into bondage to his supposed freedom. Even though Jesus was Himself the temple of God on earth, He still went at times into the synagogues and into the temple of Herod as He was led by the Spirit. He was not under law — neither bound *to* such orders, nor bound *from* them. Now that is true freedom! Freedom to be *led by the Spirit!*

But there is a truth in this passage beyond all this. The Greek word for “assembling” is *episunagoge*. The word, literally, is a verb meaning *to synagoge*. It is a compound of the Greek prefix *epi* with the word *sunagoge* from which we get our transliterated English word Synagogue. *Epi* means **super-imposition** — that which is above, higher than, highest, upon. *Sunagoge* means a meeting, assembly, or gathering. Putting these two words together, *epi-sunagoge* signifies **THE ABOVE SYNAGOGUE, THE HIGHER MEETING, THE HIGHEST ASSEMBLY, THE HIGHER-THAN-ALL GATHERING!** It bespeaks something far greater than merely collecting so many breathing bodies together in one place. It is a meeting in a higher realm, on a higher plane, in the highest places of the Spirit, in the very heights of Truth.. It is a gathering together in a dimension above. It indicates an assembling *in the Spirit*, as Paul also testified, “...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together **in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus!**” (Eph. 2:6).

Tens of thousands, yea, tens of millions of believers gather together in “church buildings” every Sunday morning, and because they make the effort to get out of bed, get the family ready, and drive off to a warm pew, they are convinced that they have met the requirements of the divine fiat: “Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.” My beloved, they have not even touched the hem of the garment of this truth! We are not to forsake, or depart from, or neglect that wonderful seating *we have together WITH CHRIST IN THE HEAVENLIES!* That is precisely what the passage is saying. How can we be assured of this? By taking the passage *in its context!* The subject of the verses leading up to this passage are concerned with our entering in to the **MOST HOLY PLACE**. Hear it! “*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...and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith*” (Heb. 10:19-22). Hebrews 10:25 is nothing but lifeless words, until one sits in the presence of the Father in the Holiest of all, joined in worship with kindred spirits, whether they be near or far, and partakes of that holy communion *within the veil!* It is only as spirit calls to spirit that the depths of eternal truth are opened. And multitudes who meet together every week for singing, teaching, etc., never have discovered the glorious and eternal reality of that ABOVE SYNAGOGUE! They neither meet nor minister nor live from that higher-than-all-heavens realm of HIS LIFE.

When we meet with a company of the elect, we are not to think of them as the whole of those with whom we worship and minister. The true priest is one of a great festal throng, which is comprising the spiritual and heavenly temple built of the living stones of redeemed and transformed men and women. As priests in the HEAVENLY SANCTUARY, the TRUE TABERNACLE which is above, we are but part of a great and universal congregation consisting of all the elect saints who have gone before, and those now living, gathered out of all ages, and throughout the vast universe of God. The preacher, the traveler, the mother, the ditch-digger, the king — all meet there **IN THE SPIRIT REALM**, and worship and minister from thence. All are priests, and yonder is the great High Priest of our profession, who has passed through all the heavens and ever lives as the minister of the heavenly sanctuary. He is “a minister of the true tabernacle.” It is the *above tabernacle!* And such are we! He hath raised us up and made us sit together with Him in these heavenly places, and He has made us to be a kingdom of priests. It is not “in church” on Sunday morning that we know the power of this priesthood or our assembly together with Him in the heavenlies — it is **IN THE SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH**, it is **ASSEMBLED TOGETHER IN THE ABOVE SYNAGOGUE**, in reality wrought within, every moment and everywhere and in every situation and circumstance as we live and walk and move in HIS REALM! Oh, the wonder of it!

From the time when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God first shouted for joy, rhythm and rapture have rolled upward and onward through all the boundless and eternal spiritual universe as the sweet expression of the mind and will of almighty God. This universe, this higher-than-the-heavens universe, this kingdom of heaven, is the home and heritage of every son of God. He belongs to it, and it belongs to him. He is in it, and it is in him. He holds himself in harmony with it and fills his soul with its songs. He apprehends its truths, enjoys its beauties, and partakes of its holiness. There is no place in it where

he may not feel at home — no place where he has not a right to be; for it has been the Father's good pleasure to give him the kingdom! His life is not measured by years, but by its possibilities and expansiveness. He has already been translated into this heavenly kingdom! This is what we are not to forsake, depart from, or neglect, my beloved; we are not to forsake this UPPER-SYNAGOGUING of ourselves together — the communion and fellowship and expression together in this highest of all realms — IN CHRIST AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD! "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which *are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*" (Col. 3:1). Though we should meet and sing a thousand songs and preach a thousand sermons out of the Good Book — if we fail to touch that high realm of life and reality *in the spirit* we have not "upper-synagogued" at all, having merely assembled and done some religious things on the low plane of soulish activity — in the earth-realm! "*Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell therein!*"

I feel to close this portion on the "heaven-dwellers" with a sweet word from brother Carl Schwing. "He that dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' Such awesome words, such a marvelous promise, such a blessed assurance. The secret place is the assembly place of the most High and His vast family of sons. It is large enough to contain the vastness of the universe; yet, it is small enough that a world-weary son can enter, close the door, and be alone with the Father. Not many during earth's time have been taken beyond the closet of the secret place. However, there has always been the 'few' that were chosen to remember their place by Him...finding their all within the secret place of their Beloved. My brother-sister-sons: The secret place of the most High is never far away. When we are lifted up, it is there. When we are cast down, it is there. As we walk through the trials and tribulations of the world, it is there. When suffering is placed upon us, it is there. In the beauty of our aloneness, it is there. In the valley of the shadow of death, it is there. It is always there for us...it is everywhere for us...because we have made the Lord, even the most High, our habitation."

THE DRAGON'S SHORT TIME

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil has come down unto you, having great wrath, because *he knoweth that he hath but a short time*" (Rev. 12:12).

Let us prayerfully consider what is meant by the statement, "*...he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*" Unfortunately, tradition says he knows that he has but a short time because Jesus is coming back and the millennium is about to begin. Hogwash! That's not at all what the Holy Spirit is indicating. The adversary knows that you have identified with the truth as it is in Christ, you now *know* who you are, what your true identity is, and the word and spirit of Christ have been raised up into the throne of your life. He knows that you have laid hold upon the power of the ascended Lord who reigns over all things and now *nothing shall be impossible unto you!* He knows that you have no desire any longer to dwell in the dust realm of the soul, or in the sea realm of the passions and motions of the flesh where he dwells. He knows that his time is short because you will no longer tolerate his lies and deceptions in any department of your being, in any vestibule of your house, or in any street of your city — the city of God which you are! That's what he knows — and he knows that his ability to operate in any way or do anything in your spirit, soul, or body is now drawing to a close!

Considering all the glorious, divine, and august things written in all the preceding verses about the victory of the sons of God over the dragon — nothing can be more certain than the fact that Satan's perception that his time is short has nothing whatever to do with a "second coming," the "millennium," or the "end of the world," for none of those things are even alluded to in chapter twelve. It's all about *the manifestation of the sons of God!* It is indeed wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY