

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 86

BREAKING THE SEALS (continued)

“And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, Come! And there went out another horse that was *red*...” (Rev. 6:3-4).

As these seals are opened, as the clatter of the hoofs of the horses is heard, as we experience these wonderful unveilings of Christ charging into our land to accomplish their purpose in us, let it be said, these are not haphazard, unplanned, or hit-and-miss dealings, these are processes and experiences, instruments and forces that have been prepared, working progressively, steadily, and meticulously to accomplish the plan and will of God in our lives. The white horse is Christ riding forth out of the inner realm of Spirit, invading the outer realms of soul and body, initiating His march of conquest to subdue our whole being to God. He enters our domain first in the dazzling whiteness of *light* and *illumination*, sending the arrows of Truth into our heart, quickening our spirit by His Spirit, giving the understanding that comes from the light of His countenance.

The horse is the embodiment of speed and strength. He who is mounted can get over a greater distance, do quicker work, than on foot. Thus with Jesus Christ. By the strength of omnipotence He carries on His conquests with great rapidity and power! With great vigor and velocity He moves down upon the enemy; and wheeling His forces into line, charges upon the opposing ranks of flesh and carnality, overcoming them by the impetuous energy of His movements, before they have recovered themselves from the surprise of His sudden and swift attack. And no sooner does He attack upon His white horse of illumination and quickening, than He appears upon His red horse, pressing the battle ever forward.

Words utterly fail me to describe the scene of the Rider upon the red horse! It is so heavenly, so divine and wonderful, so terrible and awesome, that it completely defies all human description. The Christ pursues His battle upon a magnificent red horse — not the color red, as paint or dye — for the Greek word is *purrhos* meaning “flame-like” or “flame-colored.” It denotes no color at all, but an appearance, a condition, a manifestation of fire or flame. *Purrrhos* is from the root *pur* — the Greek word for fire. It is interesting to note that a derivative of this Greek word for fire (*pur*) is the Latin word *pyra* meaning “pure” and the English word “pyre” — the place for the burning of a corpse. “Pyrex” also comes from the same root, *pyr* or *pur*, meaning a fire, and *rex*, meaning a king — that which is king, thus ruling over the fire, hence a “heat-resistant” glassware. All our English words having to do with that which is **pure** are related to the Greek word *pur*, indicating clearly that that which is pure is so because it has been cleansed BY FIRE! Consider: PURE, PURify, PURification, PURitan.

OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE, the scriptures affirm. I understand not why fire has been represented to us as something so terrible, so frightening, so hideous that we should try to avoid it. If our approach back to God is through fire, as revealed by the flaming sword placed at Eden’s gate, why do we always try to evade or get out of the fire? Why expend such energy and effort to try and *pray* ourselves out of the fire? Fire, in the scriptures, symbolizes two primary things: judgment and cleansing. But God is not schizophrenic in His nature — one side of His character disposed to forgive, redeem, deliver, save, heal, and

restore, while the other side of His character is bent on vengeful destruction and sadistic torture of His enemies. His action in fire, like His action in grace, is pure, harmonious, purposeful, and balanced, directed towards the purification that leads to restoration. The fire of God cleanses the believer that he may qualify for God's highest! His activity by fire towards the unbeliever is to the same end, conditioning and preparing that one for good results, when, having been broken and purged from pride and rebellion, he bows low before the Saviour, penitently receiving the gracious gift of life. The fire does not save him, but it removes the *hindrance* that separates him from appreciating the kind mercy and goodness of the Lord!

It is the Lamb of God Himself that rides forth on the fiery horse! The Lamb nature is not a weak, trifling, spineless little nature. Oh, no! If the Lamb nature were weak the Lamb would not *dare* to open the seals of the book and unleash all the portentous activities of the horses and their Riders! The nature of the Lamb is the nature of an overcomer, one who cannot be offended, one that can look upon the sin and evil in the world and not become religiously self-righteous but can love the creation to correctively, effectively, and redemptively deal with it. The Lamb is the Lion of the tribe of Judah who has prevailed! Divine judgment is not unto destruction, but unto redemption. Fire appears terrible only to the man who is unprepared to pass through it!

When of old God came down on mount Sinai, its upper peaks were veiled with impenetrable billows of smoke, like the smoke of a furnace. And in the heart of the smoke there was the appearance of devouring fire. There is dread here! Bounds had been set to keep the people back; but a special message was sent to warn them against breaking through to gaze, lest the fire should break forth upon them. But there was no harm as long as they kept within the barriers; and when Moses entered into the very heart of it, it did not singe a hair of his head, and injured him no more than when it danced around the fragile acacia bush, which burned with fire without being consumed — not a leaf shriveled, not a twig scorched. Yes, our God is a consuming fire, and there is comfort and hope and blessing in the thought! When we yield to God's love, and open our hearts to Him, He enters into us, and becomes within us a consuming fire; not to ourselves, but to the flesh, carnality, and evil within us. So that, in a very deep and blessed sense, we may be said to dwell with the devouring fire, and to walk amid the age-lasting burnings!

Nothing is more certain than the fact that Jesus Christ has already ridden, or shall yet ride, into the world of each of us in FLAMING FIRE! Because of the gross misunderstanding of almost all people concerning the fire of God, I would draw your reverent attention to the natural process of fire. In the book of Revelation we have the horse of flaming fire; but later on the Holy Spirit also describes the manifestation of God as fire under another remarkable symbol. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the LAKE WHICH BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE..." (Rev. 21:8). The word "burn" means combustion, or to consume. To consume does not mean to annihilate, for there is no such thing as annihilation. You can annihilate a *form*, but not a *substance*.

When fire consumes a log in your fireplace it does not destroy any of the elements within the log, it merely *changes their form*. Combustion is the process by which chemicals combine to form new chemicals. For example, a tree may be cut down, sawed into firewood, and burned. In the first place, the tree was formed by drawing chemicals out of the earth and air and rearranging them into the form of a tree. Now, when the wood burns the heat causes those same chemicals to vaporize, mixing with the oxygen in the air to form new chemicals, including water and the gas carbon dioxide. So what was formerly a tree can no longer be identified as a tree, but the substance thereof is now simply *changed, transformed* into a DIFFERENT FORM! Thus, to burn means to *change*. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that fire does not burn down; it always burns up! It seeks the highest level. And all that it consumes (changes) truly "goes *up* in smoke" to exist in a new form in a higher dimension. Even if you take a pot of water and place it over a fire, before long the water will take on the property of the fire and will begin to go *up* in steam. To burn means to *change*, and the change is always *upward* in motion!

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek, shall *suddenly come to His temple*... behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? For HE IS LIKE A REFINER'S FIRE, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall PURIFY THE SONS OF

LEVI, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Mal. 3:1-3).

One of God’s promises concerning the Lord who comes to His temple to sit as a refiner’s fire is that He shall “purify the sons of Levi.” The “sons of Levi” in the days when this prophecy was written, were the priests and ministers of God. The “sons of Levi” in these days of the greater spiritual temple of living stones are likewise the priests and ministers of God. Prophetically speaking, the sons of Levi refer to all who have received the call to the Royal Priesthood of Christ after the Order of Melchizedek, which is after the power of an endless life. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house (temple), an *holy priesthood*, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises (virtues) of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (I Pet. 2:5,9).

The Lord comes to those elect sons of God who belong to His Priesthood, not first with visible blessings and manifestations which inflate the ego, but as a refiner’s fire to purify and refine them, even as gold and silver are refined. In olden times, the refiner of gold and silver would sit over the burning crucible until the dross and impurities in these metals were completely separated and removed. Not until he could see his face mirrored in the molten metals did he declare them to be pure. So too with us! The Holy Spirit brings to light and deals with every aspect of our lives, separating and removing all that is alien and opposed to God’s nature and character, until the image of His Son Jesus is formed and mirrored in us. Only then will we be able to offer Him those offerings and render Him that service which is pleasing and acceptable in His sight, which will also bring deliverance to groaning creation. The Lord never removes or destroys something without replacing it with something greater and better! He sets us apart, like the sons of Levi, and subjects us to an intense discipline and purification that we might become His Royal Priesthood in the earth.

Every son of God has to be cleansed and purified from the carnal mind which is contrary to the nature of the Lord and is an enemy of His life, filled with all unrighteousness, and is not subject to the will of God and never can be. As William Law wisely said, “SELF is the whole root, branch, and tree of sin.” So for us to be His Priesthood, demonstrating His virtues, expressing His wisdom, pouring forth His love, and manifesting His power, this thing that stands in the way of the priestly heart, nature, and ministry, must be dealt with and taken out of the way. We must be emptied of self and everything that pertains to the earthly-consciousness and Adamic identity, so that only the pure and loving and powerful nature of the divine Christ within may reveal His glory in all its beauty and majesty. All carnality must go through the fire! None can escape it! There is no detour around this lake of fire if we are to arrive finally at the safe harbor of perfection in God.

The sons of Levi in this new Day of the Lord have felt the intensity of that purifying fire! It is not just those “dirty old sinners” out there that must pass through the lake of fire, but truly it is the *fear in us*, the *unbelief in us*, the *abominable thing in us*, the *murderer in us*, the *whoremongering in us*, the *sorcery in us*, the *idolatry in us*, and the *liar in us* that must pass through the fire! Oh, yes! Its burning has roused each called and chosen son of God from his lethargic ease as he drifted along the stream of peace with the world; its clear flame has lit up the dark recesses of the carnal mind and the deceitfulness of the human heart, revealing the stark reality of the man of sin sitting in the temple of God; and its blasting flame has separated us from the fleshly follies of the carnal church systems of man. In all who follow the Lamb the fire is effectually doing its purifying work! We have begun to fulfill the prophecy and to “offer unto the Lord and offering in righteousness,” praise His name!

How long will this process continue? I would like to offer you some respite, but I dare not. By inspiration the Psalmist wrote, “The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, **purified seven times**” (Ps. 12:6). Seven is the number of completion and perfection. It reveals the great truth that God’s own nature will be revealed *in the fire*! He heats up the furnace until we have been perfectly cleansed and purified, nothing remaining but HIMSELF. That which the Lord is receiving unto Himself, and for His holy kingdom purpose in this hour, cannot be of an inferior quality to Himself. The gold — ah, it is HIM! The silver — truly, it is HIM! The life of sonship is **pure spirit, divine nature**. How marvelous is the grace that birthed us out of His own spirit-substance, for He is the Father of the spirits of all flesh. But there can be no *mixture*! Only the dross must be removed. Thank God that the Christ comes to us not only

on the white horse, but also on the red horse to carry the issue onward to victory! The question follows — Who may abide...endure...wait for...the day of HIS COMING? For He is like a refiner's fire! Ah, this is not just the blessing realm, it is something beyond the gifts and benefits obtained by faith. This is the *purging, cleansing, purifying realm!* It is the place of qualifying for sonship, of preparation for immortality, of readiness to rule and reign in the kingdom with Christ as a King-Priest after the Order of Melchizedek. And who shall stand — or who can withstand — who can stand against it, who can stop or prevent His appearing as the refiner's fire? No one, may I answer, shall be able to withstand or stand against His coming when He appeareth!

Charge on, O horse of fire!

TAKING PEACE FROM THE EARTH

“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to *take peace from the earth*...and there was given unto him a *great sword*” (Rev. 6:4).

As we have seen, the red horse is a “flame-like” or “flame-colored” horse. It bespeaks the work of Christ within us as a refining fire! Refining is essentially a *separating* process by which the dross and all impurities are separated from the metal so that the metal will be *pure* or *unmixed*. This obviously leads us to the next stage described by John in these words, “and power was given unto him that sat thereon to *take peace from the earth*.” This denotes a *separation!* We understand each of these horse riders to represent different aspects of our Lord's dealing in our lives. He comes to thoroughly purge His floor with His consuming presence, yet in the process He comes in a working to expose and separate the soulish and fleshly from the spiritual. There can be no *removal* until first there is a *separation!* There are areas of our soul and body realms that, once exposed by His glorious presence, we gladly lay down. Ah, but there are also areas with which we are at peace, to which we cling, and do not want to give up. Now we find this red horse Rider comes to rob us of our peace! That is a necessary part of the process! No longer will we be able to live at peace with these soulful and fleshly attributes. He comes with that great sword of His quick and powerful word, dividing asunder between soul and spirit. This disturbs the peace and contentment we had with the carnal mind and the flesh, and there arises in us a dissatisfaction with anything that is not of His Spirit.

The deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt and their eventual conquest of the promised land is without doubt one of the most awe-inspiring, marvelous, and concerted revelations of God's redemptive program, His aim, intent, and objective; His purpose, processings, and dealings; His design, out-workings, and goal that has ever been revealed to mankind. It is not my intention to elaborate upon this, merely to point out in passing the significance of Egypt in scripture. Egypt represents the place of being separated from the life, rule, and blessing of God, and of being oppressed under the dominion of the flesh, the world, and the devil. There is a remarkable word of profound significance which the Lord spoke to Israel regarding their relationship with Egypt. “If ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the Lord your God, saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, WHERE WE SHALL SEE NO WAR, nor hear the sound of the trumpet (calling to war), nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell...” (Jer. 42:13-14).

Think of it — Egypt is the place where there is **no war!** All is peace and tranquillity in Egypt. There is security and provision in Egypt. Spiritually this is not speaking of a country in the Middle East, nor about any natural war! It is a reference to people who are experiencing no spiritual warfare in their walk. They do what comes naturally, and there is no opposition to the way they think, act, or live. This is the normal state of the natural man before Christ rides into his life upon His war-steed! Those who have not been quickened (awakened) by the Spirit from above do not hear the sound of the trumpet — the sound of God's voice mustering to battle across the land. Vast multitudes of these lifeless ones fill the pews of the world's churches Sunday after Sunday, but there is no thirsting after God, no hunger for spiritual things, no comprehension of His purpose, no vision of the power and glory of His kingdom, no discernment between the precious and the vile, and no glint of sword to circumscribe mind and heart. Ah, but when God's hour arrives for such an one to be apprehended of God, suddenly into his or her peaceful world charges Jesus Christ the conqueror — and He enters with great swiftness and power. He has a bow, and the bow is bent, and immediately the arrows of divine conviction and revelation pierce the heart, and He presses the battle to

make conquest of the soul. He fights His way into the human heart until He possesses that which He has purchased, until the fortresses of mind, will, emotion, and desire have been taken and brought under the dominion of Truth. He first shoots the arrow of light and illumination, quickening unto God. Then quickly He wields the sword which “takes peace from the earth” — the very earth which He has illuminated, for the battle must be pursued until man is fully conquered and all enemies concealed within have been routed, exposed, and vanquished.

It is the almighty Lord Himself who declares war and fires the first shot. HE it is that initiates the battle! “I am come,” said He, “not to send peace on earth, but a sword.” Or, stronger still in the original, “Think not that I come to cast peace on the earth; I come not to cast peace, but a sword” (Mat. 10:34). Who holds the sword? Who is to wield the sword? Who is to stir up the fight? Who is to “take peace from the earth?” The Lord Jesus Himself, and the sword is the sword of the Lord! Sometimes people speak about “sweet Jesus.” This Jesus offers sugar, not a sword. He tastes good but hurts no one. When life tastes bad, sprinkle on a bit of His sweetness. The Rider on the red horse is not so sweet! Jesus Christ is a warrior, fierce and frightening.

F. B. Meyer once wrote, “When Christ is born, there is always trial. What trouble the New-born brought into this world! There was trouble for Mary! She was living a happy, peaceful life in Nazareth, when the sword began to penetrate her soul, and she was called to endure an agony of misunderstanding from those who loved her best. There was trouble for Joseph, who was afflicted by startling fears, roused suddenly from sleep, and bidden to leave all and flee. There was trouble for Herod and the Jews. ‘He was troubled and all Jerusalem with him,’ at the story of the new-born King. There was trouble also in a multitude of Jewish homes, entered by brutal soldiery, who tore the babes from their mothers’ breasts and tossed them on their sword-points. Wherever Jesus comes, trial follows. He comes to send, not peace, but a sword; and one who knew well of what he affirmed said: ‘I am *crucified* with Christ — I die daily — I am delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake.’ These inward trials often spring from the unwillingness of our nature to yield to the will and way of God. A man’s foes are they of his own household. Sometimes, also, when we have begun to live the new life it seems as if the box of Pandora were opened, and all the winds had escaped, each eager to outdo all the rest. *But out of the trouble will rise the fairest, strongest life!* By and by some watcher on the battlements of heaven, beholding our approach, will cry, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?’ and this will be the reply: ‘These are they that came out of great tribulation’ — for tribulation is *education* misspelt” — end quote.

There can be no warfare as long as our will is uncontested. There is no war while our desires remain unopposed. There is no conflict when our ways are unchallenged. There is no battle as long as the Adam nature and its activities are not crossed, confronted, or assailed. Our carnal life is at peace within itself until the red horse rides in and **TAKES PEACE FROM OUR EARTH!** The red horse never enters our land until we have been quickened to higher and holier things, brought into living fellowship in the Spirit. The world is at peace with itself, unconvicted of its course of carnality, ignorance, and shame, content in the frivolous activities of the earth-life. There is a war which rages within me and every saint of God which causes far more trouble than any conflict I face without. My number one problem is neither men nor demons, but *myself* — my own limited, self-centered, deceiving, delusional, conniving, *mortal mind!* My flesh nature is the greatest enemy, for it is the enemy of Christ!

For years I blamed everything on the devil and his demons. Then to my astonishment I discovered that all my spiritual battles were right within myself! I didn’t have to look far to find my greatest foe. I found that I face him in the mirror every morning. But I had never experienced a spiritual battle until I met Jesus! When He came into my life He at once declared war! Immediately the flesh rose up in hostile opposition to the divine Invader and the flesh and the spirit were at war, one with the other. Whether or not our “old man is dead” the incontrovertible truth still remains that “the *flesh warreth* against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are *contrary* the one to the other” (Gal. 5:17). Again Paul says, “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is **enmity against God**, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:5-8). J. B. Phillips graphically translates these verses: “The carnal attitude sees no further than natural things; but the spiritual attitude reaches out after the things of the spirit. The former attitude means, bluntly, death; but the

latter means life and inward peace. And this is only to be expected for the carnal attitude is inevitably opposed to the purpose of God, and neither can or will follow His laws. Men who hold this attitude cannot possibly please God.” If they are doing the fighting, what is the fighting over? When two people or two nations fight, they are contending over something. They fight to possess something, to hold on to something, to have ownership of something, to have legal access. They fight for territory or control. There is an object of their affections that they are fighting for. In like manner, the spirit seeks control over our soul and body, and the flesh wants to control them — soul and body are the object of their affection! Soul and body are the “land” being fought over! Each, the spirit and the flesh, seeks to *rule!* Whoever controls our soul and our body controls *us — the land!* The conflict is on and the judgment is in humanity.

When Christ enters into our land upon the red horse, He *disturbs our comfort zone*. Once we are quickened by the Spirit of God, once we are awakened to our true identity, once we stand up as a new creation, we are no longer comfortable with the things of the old creation. Within us have been awakened new longings, new potentialities, new hopes, new ways of thinking, new perceptions of reality, new understanding — a *new nature*, a *new mind*, a *new heart*. Now we are not comfortable with the things we were comfortable with before. In the old creation we were at home with worldly atmospheres, carnal understandings, and fleshly activities; but now that the mind of Christ has been awakened in us peace has fled from our earth, from our soul.

Oh, what a wonder this is! What it means is that all the peace, pleasure, and joy of the earthly, natural, carnal life is taken away. The more we are awakened to the beauty and glory of life in the spirit, the more our *earthly state of being* is perceived as a vile abomination compared to it. We rejoice in the burning, purging fire of the red horse which comes to cleanse our land from every contemptible, fleshly thing. As the hoofbeats of the red horse echo through our earth all peace is taken away from the earthly life so that the carnal mind is bereft of all content and satisfaction in the things it formerly enjoyed with unrestrained abandonment.

Gary Sigler’s testimony is so very enlightening and instructive on this point. He says, “All across the country people have said to me, ‘How do I know if I’m really saved?’ You know, I didn’t know that myself. I went to pastor after pastor, I answered altar call after altar call, because I didn’t change all that much after I accepted Christ. I didn’t think I was saved! The preachers would tell me, ‘You know, after you’ve come to God you can’t live like you’re living any more. You have to *stop that!*’ So, if I saw Billy Graham on the television, I would kneel down in front of the television — I’d do anything, because I just didn’t know if I was saved.

“I’ll tell you how you can know whether you’re saved. I will tell you how you will know if you’re regenerated. The moment the spark of His life is regenerated within you, there begins a *conflict* in your life. If there is no conflict there is no knowing of God in reality. Now, you may have heard a message that stirred you, you may have gone to an altar, you may have tried to accept Jesus out of fear — but if there is no conflict, there is no regeneration. I’ll tell you why! When you are regenerated, the spiritual person that *you are* begins to awaken. That is God in the flesh! That is God once again being birthed in humanity! That is once again an incarnation of the most holy One! And He is very holy, high, and lifted up. That new life, that new person has never known sin, has never been touched by the fall. That person only knows the hunger that he has for God. And that creates a great conflict within you — in your flesh. Have you experienced that conflict? *Then you’re regenerated!*

“So — when you experience conflict, when sin gets the best of you, when habits sometimes pull you down and you fall, *you should rejoice that that bothers you!* You shouldn’t fall under condemnation; you should say, ‘Thank God, there’s something in me, there’s another force within me, there’s a life within me that does not want to do that!’ But at the moment of regeneration that life is *so weak*. And your natural man is *so strong!* That’s why Peter said, ‘As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby’ (I Pet. 2:2). Babies aren’t strong. But, you see, your pastors and teachers (in the church systems) will tell a new baby that’s just been regenerated, ‘You can’t do that any more! God won’t love you if you do that!’ I heard a famous preacher on the radio one night as I sat reading the Bible and smoking a cigarette. This famous preacher said, ‘You can’t blow smoke in Jesus’ face and make it into heaven!’ Because I had a lot of faith in that preacher, that destroyed me for a long time. That’s what *religion* does —

it aborts the baby! It kills the baby. It doesn't give it time, it doesn't give it life — it gives it rules and regulations. Would you take a natural baby at its birth and begin to teach it to live like that? That's ridiculous! Yet, that's what our spiritual leaders have done to us. They've given us no time to grow up and become powerful, spiritual men" — end quote.

Let us examine how a war between two nations comes to an end. A French statesman once pointed out that there were only two types of peace that ever followed a war: A peace imposed upon the defeated by a conqueror; or a peace accepted by the defeated through surrender. There is a vast difference between the peace which is imposed or the peace which one accepts. It should be evident that if there is to be peace between a man and God, the terms must be imposed by God Himself. God, the eternal God, omniscient and omnipotent, must have His way — it is the only right way in the universe! Every other way is the self-will of the creature, the way of earth, the way of empty, vain delusion, the way of limitation, blindness, finiteness. Every soul has been at war with God; in order for reconciliation to take place, there must be a cessation of the warfare, the hostilities, which exist between Adam in the flesh and Christ in the spirit. "God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself*...now then we are ambassadors for Christ...we pray you in Christ's stead, *be ye reconciled to God!*" (II Cor. 5:19-20).

The battle is between two natures, two minds, two wills, two kings, and two kingdoms. The flesh nature we took upon us when we were born into this world. The spiritual nature came alive in us when we were born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye must be born again*" (Jn. 3:6-7). Regeneration, new birth, sons of God — these are all terms with which most Christians are familiar. The beautiful **analogy** is accepted by everyone. But all this means to the average Christian is that he conjures up the nice religious feeling of thinking of himself "as if" he were an "actual" divine son of God, as Jesus is. The average Christian has absolutely no idea of the transcendental implications of birth *into the family of God, the God-family, or the family which is God!* Most think of being a child of God as sort of an "honorary" title conferred on them by an indulgent God who accepts them as "little adopted children" to whom He plans to give as their reward or inheritance for accepting His gift of eternal life, a beautiful park, a celestial playground called "heaven." This heaven is designed for them to enjoy for eternity, playing, loafing, running, shouting, fellowshiping, rejoicing, singing, strumming harps, waving palm branches, and doing whatever other sinless thing their hearts may desire.

But let us understand what it *really* means to actually be **born** into the very family of GOD! I like to turn the phrase "family of God" around, in order to better grasp its significance. Instead of saying that we are born into the family of God, it is just as correct to say that we are born into the GOD FAMILY! I may say, by way of illustration, that I was born by natural birth into the family of Eby. But this also means that I was born into the EBY FAMILY. I am the EBY KIND. I **AM EBY**. Not only are men born into the family of God, but they are born into the GOD FAMILY, the family which IS GOD. We are the GOD KIND. And startling as it may be, this GOD FAMILY is the ELOHIM of the scriptures! And to be born into **this Family** means that we have the awesome potential to become **all that He is!** "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the *whole family in heaven and earth* is named" (Eph. 3:14-14). The new birth is nothing less than the quickening of our spirit which is the offspring of God, the quickening of a God-being, the awakening of a Christ-creature, the arousing of a God-kind, of a God-species, an actual heavenly being, a son of the heavenly Father, who is as ageless and deathless as is his immortal Parent, a brother by birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, destined to grow up into the fullness of His own divine Being, to be like Him in all the majesty that He is!

In the light of the truth we are now considering, so many things take on new meaning. Can we not see that when the red horse gallops into our land, awakening within us the consciousness of *who we are* and to what *potential and destiny we are called*, immediately a warfare begins for **identity**. The Lord Jesus Himself explained the nature of this warfare when He told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit is *spirit*." This is the fundamental principle of the *warfare* that rages within us! The word *flesh* is a comprehensive term that includes all that a person is through his or her natural birth: intellect, emotions, consciousness, will, body, expression, identity. The flesh **is Adam!** The flesh nature is dead to God, but very much alive to the world. The spirit nature, once quickened, awakened, aroused within is dead to the world, but very much alive unto God. This sets into action two competitive

forces within man: one born of the flesh, the other born of the Spirit; one of the first man who is of the earth, earthy, the other of the second man who is from heaven; one minding earthly things, the other minding spiritual things.

It is precisely at this juncture that Christ, the Rider of the red horse, bounds into our land with power to TAKE PEACE FROM OUR EARTH! Since many saints do not understand what is going on within, they vacillate back and forth between Adam and Christ, encountering “mountain-top experiences” and then being plunged into “death-valley experiences.” The death-valley experiences occur when the old nature greedy for personal gratification and fed by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, dominates the spiritual nature.

Here I would share some pertinent words from the pen of Paul Mueller. “Two natures within us manifest the character and manner of each: Adam within us is that *mystery of iniquity* that curses and brings forth the iniquities of the carnal man. Likewise, Christ within us blesses the Father, declares the truth and mysteries of God, makes known the manifold wisdom of God, and lifts us up and causes us to walk in the high places in Him. As we give the preeminence to the Christ within, Adam within shall be subdued and conquered so that our spirit, soul, and body is ‘preserved complete and found blameless at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He will also perfect His work’ (I Thes. 5:23-24). When the **perfect man** comes forth in the image and likeness of Christ, fully adorned with the garments of His salvation, we shall no longer express the dual natures within us. Then, the perfect man, the Christ-body, shall express only the Truth, Love and Life of the Father! Our mind shall be the mind of Christ, a single mind in a fully redeemed body. O the wonder of this so great salvation reserved for those who love His appearing!” — end quote.

Yes, my beloved, there is a great warfare raging within, and Christ has pressed this war upon us, His conquest is going on right now in that inner world of our hearts, minds, and bodies. The battle of the ages, the famed Battle of Armageddon, portrays no literal conflict with carnal weapons. It is not on any battlefield on earthly ground that the glorified Redeemer confronts the banded hosts of earth and hell. We cannot go to the pages of Josephus or Tacitus or Wells, or any other historian, for the events which correspond with these symbols. Nor shall we find the grim ride of the Four Horses of the Apocalypse in the headlines of the Washington Post, USA Today, or Newsweek magazine! The scene reveals one sublime and divine truth: CHRIST SHALL CONQUER! The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, its weapons are not carnal, He does not conquer by blowing away millions of helpless souls with bullets and bombs and bloody savagery. Oh, no! It is within the corridors of our own soul that we must hear the hoofbeats of the Four Horses thundering! He must ride into **your earth**, my friend, taking peace from **your earth**, then conquering all the strongholds of **your land**. The end of the warfare brings peace and life fully and forevermore!

The Bible is a book of war. “The Lord is a man of war” (Ex. 15:3). Heaven is a realm of war, as well as the earth. “And there was war in heaven” (Rev. 12:7). Jesus is a man of war. “Think not that I am come to send peace of the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Mat. 10:34). “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them” (Rev. 17:14). David was a man of war. “Thou (Absalom) knowest thy father (David) and his men that they are mighty men, and thy father is a man of war” (I Sam. 17:8). David faced Goliath and took his sword. He was a man of war before he met Goliath. David is a type of Christ. His followers were men of war. “And there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker” (II Sam. 3:1). The sons of God follow a man of war! Thank God! as the battle rages the Christ within is waxing stronger and stronger, and the kingdom of the flesh is waxing weaker and weaker. So shall it be fulfilled — the natural man shall be subjected to the spiritual, the flesh shall be ruled over by the spirit, and then shall we see “all things in subjection under His feet” (Heb. 2:8).

A SWORD TO KILL ONE ANOTHER

“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that *they should kill one another*: and there was given unto him *a great sword*” (Rev. 6:4).

“Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, *but a sword*” (Mat. 10:34).

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any *two-edged sword*, piercing even to the *dividing asunder of soul and spirit*, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

“And take...the *sword of the Spirit*, which is the *word of God*” (Eph. 6:17).

When the legionnaires of Caesar girded on their belts and fastened their breastplates in position and took upon themselves their helmets and picked up their shields and swords, they were going forth to conquer as a conqueror, to travel across the face of Europe for Imperial Rome, and to conquer all that came before them. How does Christ conquer? By His WORD! Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the sharp two-edged sword, even the great sword with which He takes peace from the earth, held in His mighty hand as he rides astride the red horse. Multitudes cling to the superstition that the Lord desires only to *love* us by showering wonderful gifts, blessings, and benefits upon us, and never pierce our soul or slay us with the great sword of His authoritative word. This sword is not made of fine ground and polished steel, but the Living Word made flesh and manifested as the Son of God within each of us.

The word “sword” is found in the Bible over 400 times. That indicates the tremendous importance the Spirit of God attaches to it. There are both positive and negative connotations. The Lord’s *speech*, the sword of the Spirit which is the *Word* of God, is the expression and influence of His indwelling life accomplishing His mighty work within us. It is interesting to note, as someone has pointed out, that the sword in scripture is continually used to *divide* as in the beginning. The first mention of a sword was when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden, and the Cherubim were placed at the gate with the flaming sword dividing the garden of Eden from Adam’s world. The Cherubim bespeaks a *realm of authority and dominion by a flaming word!* Then we see the sword dividing the nation of Israel from the heathen round about. Later the sword was used to divide one kingdom from another beginning with Saul’s kingdom, and then that kingdom used the sword against David. David used the sword to conquer all his enemies and take the stronghold of Zion, keeping his nation high and lifted up in the name of the Lord. David’s son, Solomon, used the sword as an instrument of judgment, dividing truth from lies as in the case of the two women who both claimed the same child.

Now we find a statement connected with the peace that is taken from the earth, and the great sword in the hand of Christ, which is most perplexing to the natural mind, and can only be understood by the quickening of the mind of Christ. John says, “and power was given unto him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that *they should kill one another*.” What words are these! How will they kill one another? Ah, with the “great sword,” the “sword of the Spirit” which is “the word of God;” by speaking the *fiery word of the Lord* that consumes the flesh, killing and destroying all the essences of the Adamic life! It is Christ the Lord in His rising life riding forth out of the inner sanctum of our spirit enabling us to subdue, conquer, and kill the outer flesh nature, which is the beast in us. Someone objects, contending that our “old man” is already crucified with Christ and is dead. That is true, but it must be proven that the “old man” and the “flesh” are one and the same! According to Paul and other New Testament writers WE ALL HAVE FLESH AND THE POTENTIAL TO WALK AND LIVE AFTER THE FLESH. How could the flesh *war against the spirit* if the flesh is dead and non-existent? It is not my purpose to enter into a discussion of the old man at this time, but every honest soul who reads these lines will be quick to admit that there is definitely *something* in our lives that needs to be dealt with, killed, and destroyed, and not just ignored by confessing that it doesn’t exist!

Henry Drummond tells a remarkable story in one of his books. It is a true story. He was in India for quite some time. He had a friend who lived in a little cottage on a knoll in a valley. During one terrible flood, he got on the roof of his cottage. In the darkness of night, he heard something climb onto the roof

with him. When daylight came, he was shocked to see, lying on the roof, only a few feet from him, a Bengal tiger! He knew that it would be days before the water would recede, so he carefully reached to his side and took out a gun that he always carried. He put it to the head of the tiger and pulled the trigger, killing it.

Sometimes the question is not, “Is it wrong to kill?” The real question is, “Who will have the privilege of continuing to live?” “For if ye live after the flesh, *ye shall die*: but if ye *through (the sword of) the Spirit do mortify and put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live*” (Rom. 8:13). There isn’t room for a tiger to live on the roof of a house with a man. Many of the Lord’s people are trying to live with a tiger in their head! The bestial nature of the flesh stalks about in their minds, emotions, desires, and actions. It is flesh and it will kill you by taking away your freedom to LIVE ABUNDANTLY AND VICTORIOUSLY! That’s what this battle is all about!

At first only our “peace,” because of our state of duality, was taken from us — our comfort zone was disturbed! But now there is action — it is time to begin to deal with the earthly life and to “mortify” the deeds of the body and to “mortify” our members which are *upon earth* (Col. 3:5). God has brought into our lives a great sword, the Living Word of God, that with it we may slay the flesh in one another by the authority and power of the word of the Lord! Even this message which I am writing at this very moment is as a great sword to assist in slaying the beast in those into whose hearts it pierces by the power of Truth. Isn’t it wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY