

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

### Part 94

#### BREAKING THE SEALS (continued)

“And I beheld when He had opened the *sixth seal*, and, lo, there was a great *earthquake*; and the *sun became black as sackcloth of hair*, and the *moon became as blood*; and the *stars of heaven fell* unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the *heaven departed as a scroll* when it is rolled together; and every *mountain* and every *island* were *moved out of their places*. And the *kings of the earth*, and the *great men*, and the *rich men*, and the *chief captains*, and the *mighty men*, and every *bondman*, and every *free man*, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains...” (Rev. 6:12-15).

As the sixth seal is broken the whole scene changes and John sees in vision such a display of divine power as to cause believers to wonder and unbelievers to stagger. The throne room vanishes, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders are not in view, the horses have galloped away, the temple is gone, the altar scene has disappeared. The Seer is looking down upon the earth. He sees a great earthquake, an eruption of nature that not only shakes the boot of Italy, not merely Japan, Portugal, Nicaragua, or San Francisco, but convulses the whole world of nature with mountains sinking, abysses yawning, cities falling; the sun goes into total eclipse, a big full moon appearing as a huge, awe inspiring bloody ball, stars fall from their sockets, plunging into the earth — not comets or meteors but *stars!* — and the heavens are rolled up like a scroll. He sees the sea raging and every island engulfed, the whole population in terror, high and low, all ranks and classes seeking shelter, as men do in times of catastrophe. The vision, if taken literally, implies that God would visit this earth with judgments so terrible and universal that kings, crown princes, field marshals, the rich and the strong, all bondmen and free men, would hide in caves and cry for the mountains and rocks to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb.

Of course this is not to be taken literally! Such a convulsion would be the total destruction of the universe! Stars do not fall to the earth. Some of them are larger than our entire solar system! Should even one star literally fall upon the earth there would not be even a cinder left. And we know, even from the book of Revelation, that the world exists long after these events. Again, I remind you that this is a *picture*. It is a figurative description! The imagery is taken from the prophecies of Joel and Isaiah where the coming of the day of the Lord is described in metaphorical terms of the dissolution of the heavens and the earth, denoting the passing away of the *old spiritual order* and the establishing of the *new!* (Joel 2:30-31; Isa. 34:2-4). On one occasion Isaiah says, “The moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed when the Lord shall reign in mount Zion” (Isa. 24:23). This is a prophecy of the superior light of the kingdom of God dimming into obscurity the lesser light of the old covenant of the law and the old-order church systems of man. Another metaphorical use of the sun is found in the prophecy of Jeremiah, “Her sun is gone down while it was yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword” (Jer. 15:9). This was a prophecy of the rejection of Israel because of the sin of unbelief. And again the prophet Micah says, “The sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them” (Micah 3:6) — the withdrawal of the light of inspiration from the prophets of Israel because of their unfaithfulness to the Lord.

You see, beloved, we don't really need to *spiritualize* anything, for the greater part of the whole of scripture has already been spiritualized by the Holy Spirit! It is only the carnal mind of unspiritual men that seeks to *literalize* the word of God of which Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they *are spirit* and they *are life*." Of the carnal-minded "literalists" who were offended by the teaching of Jesus, the Lord said, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But *blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear*" (Mat. 13:14-16). Those who see only the "letter of the word" simply do not have ears to hear *the Spirit*! Upon first glancing upon a scripture we will get the surface meaning, but we must look deeper to gain Truth. When you read of the sun being darkened and the moon turning to blood, the stars falling and the mountains and islands moving out of their place, it may be difficult to see that this refers to ***your little world***, as the sixth seal is broken! But when you *do see*, you will be *blessed* indeed, for "*blessed are the eyes that see, and the ears that hear!*"

The following are some quotes from Jane Leade, a wonderful prophetess of the 1670's. "I proceed now to the opening of the *sixth seal* where the first thing observable is the great earthquake, representing the terrible shaking of the very foundation of the old earth in which is the *original seed of sin* (the hour of whose judgment is come) *and the trumpet hath sounded for the dissolving this first earth and heavens that their place may be no more found*. The wind of the mighty Spirit blows upon all flesh to make it die and wither. The *sun of the outward reason* is changed into blackness and the *moon of the senses* into blood, and all the *starry imaginations* drop like untimely fruit, and *every island and mountain of strength* melteth away. There can be no hiding in this day — a consumption being determined upon the whole universe which has been under the Beast's captivity.

"*We may call this a blessed ruin or undoing* to see a destruction come upon all that hath kept the Lamb and His kingdom out. This causes a great outcry and perplexity in the properties of degenerate nature where the *king of reason* and *the captains, the senses*, do not know whither to flee from the face of Him who is come to make all things new, which could not be until all of the old building was broken down and taken to pieces where the fretting leprosy of sin did still rise. The wisdom of God could no better way contrive for the laying of a sound and sinless foundation for the New Jerusalem according to this fore-contrived model, than by that express word which came unto me, that none could or ever should come to the opening of the *seventh seal* till all this was fully finished. And I must give witness that is happening and doth not seem grievous because of what is to succeed and follow when the next seal shall be opened *within*" — end quote. What a word!

Under the more outward prophecies of the Old Testament given to the nation of fleshly Israel, the falling of stars, sun darkened, etc. often indicated the fall of nations, empires, kings, and rulers. But in the spiritual meaning of the spiritual book of Revelation given to the body of Christ, when you see all these cataclysmic upheavals it simply means that because of the raising up of Christ in our lives there is a brand new king upon the throne! Who was ruling before isn't ruling anymore! Lights have been put out. Strong dominions in our lives have been shaken to their foundations and removed from their places.

The spiritual heavens of former realms and orders in our spiritual walk have been rolled together as a scroll, and the sun (truth) that lightens the outer court has been draped in darkness, giving way to the greater glory of the most holy place. Oh, yes! You will remember that there was no light from man in the most holy place, only the blazing glory of Yahwey Himself. In the holy place the light was that of the candlestick, the inward anointing of the oil of the Holy Spirit in our vessel. But in the outer court the light is the natural light of the sun, moon, and stars, lights from the realm outside of us, shining upon us, but not experienced within. The light of the sun, the letter of the word, has been extinguished, and the little light of the moon of traditions, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, ordinances, and programs has been turned to blood so that the *life* and *reality* to which they pointed are now visible, seen, and experienced within. All the dominions and powers of our previous life in the flesh and our former walk in the various realms and orders of spiritual experience have all passed away with great commotion and a great noise. Christ alone remains!

## A GREAT EARTHQUAKE

“And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was *a great earthquake*” (Rev. 6:12).

Throughout the word of God the earthquake was a regular feature of divine visitation. When God descended upon mount Sinai, “the whole mountain quaked greatly” (Ex. 19:18). Isaiah prophesied that men would hide in caves from the terror of the Lord, “when He ariseth to shake mightily the earth” (Isa. 2:19). “Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth,” writes Haggai (Hag. 2:6). Earthquake denotes a sudden, powerful, and violent disruption of the normal state of things. No human power can control or bring about earthquakes. Many times we have seen on the news cities that were shaken by temblors, and have seen the wreck of some of the finest dwelling places and business buildings the ingenuity of man can devise. In a few seconds, while the hearts of men stood still with terror, while no human hand could possibly aid them, the great concrete structures crashed and shattered to ruins in the street below. Men and women grabbed their babies and fled blindly for shelter — they knew not where. No human power can stay an earthquake, or even definitively warn of its coming.

It is interesting to note that the first time the Greek word for earthquake is used in the New Testament is in the story of the storm that arose when the Lord was asleep in the ship and the disciples were afraid. It is in the phrase, “There arose a great *tempest* in the sea” (Mt. 8:24). Tempest carries with it the thought not merely of a seismological event, but of any violent storm, wind, turmoil, disturbance, or upheaval. This concept is confirmed by the use of the word in classical Greek. Plato uses it of disturbances, disorders, and commotion. It denotes quakings in general. It is used of the shaking of a fig tree, and in the Greek translation of Joel 2:10 it is used to denote violent disturbances in the heavens. And here in our text the *result* of the great earthquake, or the great *shaking*, is that everything in both the heavens and the earth is affected and moved out of its place! The whole system of the world is implicated in the vastness and violence of the commotion!

In the light of the context and the references in various portions of scripture, it is my conviction that the passage before us indicates primarily the shaking of all *external orders*. You see, my beloved, the Adamic nature within us was fully dealt with by the time we reached the fifth seal — the soul was *slain under the altar*. But now there are those powers from without which would influence us, affect us, and dominate us, and all this must be dealt with too! And that is the true work of the sixth seal! Only with the mind of the Spirit can we discern *what it is* that is passing away by means of the great convulsions of the sixth seal. Whereas the ministry of the four horses and their riders brings to finality the death of all *within us* that is contrary to the Spirit, the upheaval of the sixth seal sweeps away everything *about us* with which we have identified in our carnal life and immature spiritual walk, all in which we trusted, and by which we functioned.

Everything — orders, systems, material things, methods, movements, governments, structures, ordinances, fellowships, personalities, affiliations, vocations, and a thousand things more are all once and for all and forever shaken away from us, dissolved, removed from our experience and our walk as far as the east is from the west. I don’t mean by this that all these things actually cease to exist — rather, it signifies that *for us* they cease to exist! The Lord Jesus said, “The prince of this world cometh, and *hath nothing in me*” (Jn. 14:30). Jesus is telling us, “The prince of this world cometh and finds nothing in me that *corresponds* to him or that *responds* to him.” Nothing! In that blessed, holy moment the whole satanic realm *passed away for the firstborn Son of God!* It doesn’t say that Satan ceased to exist — but *for Jesus* he had ceased to exist! So far as Jesus was concerned there wasn’t any devil anymore!

Today, for me, the old-order church systems have ceased to exist. Oh, they are still out there in their own little world, but I don’t live in that world anymore and they have no place in the world where I dwell. They are gone — forever *passed away!* Sin has passed away from me, this present evil world, the political systems of man, and a thousand more things I once delighted in, utilized, participated in, depended on, trusted in, and had an affinity for have been shaken loose from me, carried away, dismantled, rolled together as a scroll, and obliterated from the heavens of God’s Spirit where I now live and move and have my being..

Those coming into this experience find it to be cataclysmic in nature and universal in scope. Christ alone must remain! Nothing else is left. Oh, the wonder of it!

If you can receive it, my beloved, this is the ***end of the world!*** There are two games men often play, although they are not always aware that they are playing them. One is, “How long will I live?” and statisticians are happy to provide us with numbers that speak about average life expectancy. The other is, “When will the world end?” and lots of so-called prophets are happy to predict that for us too! Sometimes we hear it said concerning the end of the world, “I hope it doesn’t come in my day.” The expression, “the end of the world,” is a familiar one to most people living in so-called civilized countries; but in the minds of many, the end of the world has frightening connotations. This is due to a traditional concept of God’s plan and purpose for man’s future. Dark Age tradition teaches that the end of the world foretold in the scriptures means the destruction of the planet earth, and the catching up bodily to heaven of all the faithful Christians, and all non-Christians will be consigned to their eternal doom in the fires of hell. Naturally, with this concept of the end of the world, most professed Christians prefer not to think much about it, and non-Christians even less!

Scriptural truth pertaining to the end of the world has been so distorted by superstition, myth, folklore, and fairy tales, that in the minds of many people they have become almost repugnant. How many thousands of sincere people have been horrified when they have heard the tales of this terrible calamity that has been imaginatively pictured to them by overenthusiastic, carnal minded evangelists! Some years ago a noted minister sought to encourage humanity by announcing that the end of the world would not come for fifty million years. Doubtless many noble religionists felt greatly relieved at this news, and rejoiced that such a calamitous event would not befall the earth in their day, nor in the day of their children and grandchildren!

But what a different viewpoint of this subject we obtain when we examine the scriptures, and seek the spirit of truth, apart from the superstitious creeds of the Dark Ages. The scriptures proclaim that the end of the world is something to which all should joyfully look forward! Indeed, when all the Bible prophecies relating to the subject are fully understood in the light of the Holy Spirit, it is found that when Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,” He really was instructing them to pray for *the end of this present evil world, and a better one to take its place!* The many delusions in the minds of the people concerning the end of the world are not to be found in the scriptures at all. The true revelation of God has nothing whatever to do with the literal burning up or destruction of planet earth! Concerning this physical planet on which we live, the prophet Isaiah says, “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath *established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited*” (Isa. 45:18). What a clear word that is!

A friend said to Mark Twain, “I am worried. The world is coming to an end.” “Don’t be worried,” replied the famous humorist, “we can get along without it.” Mark Twain may not have known it, but he spoke the truth. He spoke the very word of God! We can get along without it, because the apostle John has given us this truth, “*The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever*” (I Jn. 2:17). It was this same John who on Patmos wrote, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were *passed away*” (Rev. 21:1).

Thank God, there is an end of the world! The question is — what *is* the world? Is it the planet earth, the nations with their governments, the buildings and infrastructure, the homes, businesses, and factories, society, or the people themselves? The apostle John clearly defines for us what is meant by the world in these words: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For *all* that is in the world, *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, is not of the Father, but is *of the world*. And the *world passeth away, and the lust thereof*: but he that doeth the will of God *abideth forever*” (I Jn. 2:15-17). The “world” is here discovered to be just three things: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. That’s the whole inspired definition! The world is really in the heart of man! It is man’s lust after, and pride in, the natural, physical, corruptible, valueless, transient things of earth instead of His love for God and things spiritual and eternal. John says that these three things are “ALL that is in the world” or the sum total of everything the world is. And the most interesting thing of all is that everything the world is — is **WITHIN US!** Study all the Bible passages about the world and it becomes abundantly clear that the “world” is not planet earth! We see the

outward expressions and manifestations of the world everywhere, in society, education, business, government, culture, entertainment, and religion with all their good and evil; but all is merely the external projection of the inner world of our own natural, fleshly, human life!

We always thought the end of the world would be quite a dramatic event. Let me tell you something. The end of *our world* is indeed quite a dramatic event! Once a heaven and earth pass they are gone forever, they are not coming back. Go and fast for forty days to get them to come back. They still won't show up!

## THE SHAKING OF THE HEAVENS

“And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal...and the *sun* became black as sackcloth of hair, and the *moon* became as blood; and the *stars* of heaven fell unto the earth...and the *heaven* departed as a scroll when it is rolled together” (Rev. 6:12-14).

“Whose voice then shook the *earth*: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, *but heaven also*” (Heb. 12:26).

The book of Revelation is full of the symbolism of *stars* — falling or otherwise. Christ is Himself the bright and morning star (Rev. 22:16). He is the star which Balaam prophesied should arise out of Jacob (Num. 24:17). He holds in His right hand the seven stars which are the messengers of the seven churches (Rev. 1:20). A star falls (Greek: had fallen) from heaven to earth (Rev. 9:1) and upon close examination is discovered to be none other than Adam, who fell from a heavenly state. God's elect is represented in chapter twelve as a woman with a crown of twelve stars, denoting the divine government of the Spirit. A great star falls in chapter eight, its name is Wormwood, and its function is to make bitter all rivers and fountains of water, that is, the streams of ideas, concepts, dogmas, traditions, culture, understanding, and worldly wisdom which invigorate and fortify the souls of men in the earth-realm. The beautiful symbolism of the book of Revelation is exceedingly rich in spiritual meaning and the church world has lost most of these wonderful truths in our day through the arid “literalism” with which the prophecies have been approached.

Stars are a type of light in the heavens, a light which came into creation of the fourth creative day. The light of the stars is a part of the rulership of the night. The stars in our present text are not the literal stars in the sky, nor are they the bright and shining stars of the new heavens, of which our Lord Jesus is “the bright and morning star.” He is also the truth, and it is the illumination of that truth that makes Him the bright and morning star, the announcer and harbinger of the new day of the Lord! Stars are also used in describing messengers and rulers, both false and true — stars of the old heavens and stars of the new heavens. In chapter thirty-seven of Genesis, Joseph had a dream. “I have dreamed...and, behold, the sun...moon, and eleven stars made obeisance to me.” Joseph's father correctly interpreted the dream when he said to Joseph, “Shall I, and your mother, and your brethren come and bow down to you?” In other words, Joseph's father, mother, and eleven brothers were the “sun, moon, and stars” in his life, but would give way to him. This meant that Joseph's father, mother, and eleven brothers, who were the “sun, moon, and stars” ruling in his life, would, in effect, “fall” from that heaven, would now bow down to him instead, and he would rule over them! That, of course, is exactly what happened!

The stars of the old heavens bespeak our natural understanding, carnal perceptions, earthly consciousness, temporal knowledge, worldly wisdom, soulful discernment, religious dogmas, and all the personalities and vehicles which represent, disseminate, promulgate, and promote these. Oh, how many stars there are in the old heavens! The luminaries of the political world, the economically powerful among men, the shining ones of Christendom's leaders, and leaders of all religions, the educators and professors of the world's schools of learning, the scientists, doctors, and psychologists, all shine forth in the old heavens! Their influence, control, and prestige are being removed from our lives so that Christ only will be the Light of our life! Ultimately they will fall and withdraw their shining over the whole world of men as the new heavens of God's sons, the kings and priests of His kingdom, are established over all mankind and all realms.

The stars of the old heavens are falling in the spirit. Throughout church history, and especially over the past few decades, we have seen the “fall” of various church leaders and well-known evangelists,

preachers, and priests. Anointed ministers should be doing the will of God, living the life of God, speaking the words of God, and lifting the Lord's people into the heavens of truth and reality. Instead, we are witnessing stars of the old religious heavens doing their own thing, promoting themselves, deceiving the people, making merchandise of the gospel, and fleecing the sheep. The Lord shall bring judgment to the entire church system, to deliver His people out of it! How we praise God that *within ourselves* these stars have already fallen from the heavens of our lives! What a change has taken place as the Lord has caused these stars to fall in our experience, and rolled the whole of the old heavens together like a scroll! The powers of the heavens, or the realm of the spirit, and the rulerships and dominions over our lives, have been mightily shaken! There is gross darkness in the hearts and lives of most people, both unbelievers and believers, which is a result of the superficial light of the old heavens. But the new heavens shall radiate the glorious Light of Christ to dispel all the darkness in men's hearts and change the world! Aren't you glad!

It was when the prophet Joel beheld this Day in the Spirit that he exclaimed, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and terrible (awesome) Day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:31). This doesn't mean that the literal, physical sun up in the heavens, ninety-three million miles from earth, is going to *nova* and go dark. If it does, we're all dead! And if the sun could somehow go dark without exploding, we would be plunged into an instant ice age the likes of which the planet has never seen. We would all become frozen statues haunting an incredible darkness. Nor does it mean that the moon which graces the night sky with its beauty is going to turn into literal, physical blood. This is symbolic language!

The sun is our natural light. The figure speaks of that which is light to us turning to darkness. The Spirit of God is speaking to us today that in order to enter into this new Day of the Lord the natural light, the natural source of life for the Adamic man, all of our carnal, letter-of-the-word, religious understanding which we have put upon the word of God and the things of God, together with the moral, philosophical, governmental, all other powers and orders that have influenced and dominated our lives, are now being turned into darkness. There is no hope for it! It has no spiritual illumination in it, nor can it quicken us or produce within us any spiritual seed of life. The natural light is being *turned off*! As the elect of God we are today being *clothed upon* with the illuminating glory of the Living Christ! And the moon — all those reflective ordinances, rituals, creeds, religious works, programs, and flesh oriented activities — are being *turned to blood*, brought to life within us, so that we are made partakers of the *reality*, having no need any more for the *shadow*. Instead of the cold, reflective light that only rules over us in the night time darkness of our walk as carnal Christians, the Lord is now bringing His called and chosen ones into the hot, throbbing, pulsating, radiating, penetrating LIGHT OF LIFE! Ah, *our sun* shall be fully turned into darkness, and *our moon* into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord comes in our lives! The natural light of the carnal understanding must totally *pass away*, while the typical and symbolic must be *spiritually fulfilled* within each of us. This is how the Day of the Lord is now dawning in our hearts!

There is one further thought I would insert here. It is true that the apostle Peter quoted the scripture above (Joel 2:31) in his great sermon on the day of Pentecost. When the Spirit was poured out from on High, Peter stood up and declared, "*This is that* which was spoken by the prophet Joel!" And what happened on the Day of Pentecost, and in the days following, was certainly a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy! Yet, it is evident that it was not the complete or only fulfillment of the prophecy, for long years after the day of Pentecost John beheld in spirit the same scene of the sun being turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, and the stars falling from heaven. You see, my beloved, it is not a one-time event, but rather an *on-going reality*! On the day of Pentecost, by the power of the Spirit, the old heavens of the old covenant, the physical temple, the priesthood of Aaron, the law, and the significance of the fleshly Israel, *passed away* for those first followers of Jesus. But every member of God's elect must also experience the same wonderful happening — now *our* heavens are passing away so that we may enter this new Day of the Lord! Isn't it wonderful!

## THE HEAVENS ROLLED TOGETHER AS A SCROLL

"And the heaven *departed as a scroll when it is rolled together...*" (Rev. 6:14).

A scroll in ancient times was the book of today; it was opened by unrolling the scroll to the proper place for reading from it, and rolled together to close the book. This was the primary form of books until the

invention of movable type by Gutenberg in A. D. 1436. We see a clear example of the use of scrolls in the ministry of the Lord Jesus. He entered the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth on a Sabbath. He took His turn in standing up to read from the scriptures, and they handed Him the scroll of Isaiah. The account in Luke's Gospel reads, "And when He had opened the book" (Lk. 4:17). Jesus did not turn the pages of a book like we do to find the place where Isaiah 61:1 was recorded. Rather, He unrolled the scroll of Isaiah to the proper place and read from it. When He finished reading the record states, "He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister" (Lk. 4:20). The two ends of the scroll were rolled together.

Rolling the two ends of the scroll together, then, is equivalent to closing the book! The rolling together of the heavens as a scroll is similar to closing a book. It means that "*the book is closed*" on the old heavens and on all their power over us and all they represent! They are *passed away*! On the scroll of the old heavens is written all the religious beliefs of the church systems of man and other religions as well. On the scroll of the old heavens is written all the political ideologies of the nations. On the scroll is written all the philosophies of the great thinkers of the world. On the scroll is written all the natural experiences we have had which shaped our thinking as natural men. Everything we ever heard or learned from carnal men and the carnal systems of men which developed and nurtured our natural life and understanding as human beings is written on the scroll of the old heavens. All of our fleshly imaginations, hopes, desires, dreams, pursuits, and goals are written on the scroll!

By what means, then, does God move to roll up the scroll of our old heavens? No one knows what His dealing in each life will be to accomplish this, but our Father knows just what is needed in each of our experience to produce the collapse of our old heavens! He leads each of us down the precise path that prepares us for this awe-inspiring event. And it is not a calamity when it happens, for the old heavens *must* be removed to make room for the new heavens! There was a day when atheistic communism had control of a large part of the world, and control of the minds of men. As atheism flourished they boasted that they would obliterate the knowledge of God from the face of the earth. It appeared that the philosophy of atheism would "close the book" on the true church in those captive nations. But today communism is not even a serious factor in world politics! How surprised and awed most people were when God got ready to roll those heavens together as a scroll! The Lord had revealed to me in a dream six years before it happened that it *would* happen, and I declared this in several meetings and conventions during those years, beginning in Daytona Beach, Florida. I will never forget my own excitement when a parade of Christians down a boulevard in Moscow was flashed on the evening news and I cried out through the house for Lorain to come and see it, for I had seen that very parade in my dream those years before! How swiftly and phenomenally it all took place! Oh, yes! When the Lord gets ready to roll up any heavens as a scroll He has both the wisdom and the power to do it swiftly and effectively!

Just as our old heavens are rolled together as a scroll, so are the new heavens unrolled and unfurled over us as a scroll! The firstborn Son of God has revealed to us the wonder and the glory of this reality! It was at the Jordan River when Jesus was thirty years of age that He was baptized by John the Baptist, and following His baptism He went straightway up out of the water and at that precise moment the record states that "lo, the *heavens were opened unto Him*." The heavens were *opened, unrolled as a scroll*, unto Jesus! Then it was that the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and the voice of the Father in heaven was heard, saying, "This is my *beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased." Was it not the ***heavens of His sonship*** that were opened unto Him? The old heavens of the age of the law were rolled together as a scroll, and Jesus stepped out under the heavens of sonship to God. That is why He could say, in quoting Moses, "It was said by them of old time...but ***I say unto thee...***" and He said just the opposite of what the law proclaimed! He was under new heavens!

The writer to the Hebrews tells us that the prophecy in Psalm 40:6-7 was a prophecy of the Son of God. It reads, "Lo, I come: *in the volume of the book* it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Jesus said that He had come to do all that had been ***written of Him in the volume of the book***, that is, in the book of life, the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ! Before ever the light of the sun shone upon this terrestrial ball, it was inscribed in the heavens that God would send His Son and His sons into this world to reveal the glory of God. In that long ago time when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, it was because of what was written "in the book," in the scroll of God's eternal purpose in the heavens. This is the scroll that was opened to Jesus when "the heavens

were opened unto Him” and the voice came from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!” It was the Father’s voice, and the Father was reading what was written in the scroll concerning His Christ! What was written was at that moment fully revealed to the firstborn Son of God and He understood that “His hour had come” for manifestation to Israel and to all mankind. This is what was indicated by the “heavens” being opened to Him! From that day forward the Lord Jesus read from that book in the opened heavens by the spirit of revelation, and He recalled the things that were written there to be fulfilled in His walk of manifest sonship upon earth. And that is what is now happening to every member of God’s elect called to sonship. It is indeed wonderful!

All the old heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. Then the new spiritual heavens of God’s manifest sons shall be opened so that all men and nations shall be enabled to walk in the light of the Lord!

### **THE MOUNTAINS AND ISLANDS MOVED OUT OF THEIR PLACES**

*“And every mountain and island were moved out of their places” (Rev. 6:14)*

Mountains always occupy a dominant position in relation to the surrounding terrain and are imposing and strong, consisting primarily of rock. From this standpoint they fittingly picture kingdoms, governments, organizations, and strong dominating powers which impose themselves over men. We will come back to this thought later on.

An island is a “cut off” place separated from the mainland. It represents people and movements which have an independent spirit, who live in their own little world, and are not aligned with the great and powerful kingdoms of men, yet they are a habitation and stronghold within themselves and unto themselves. The message is just this — *everything* of the old heavens and the old earth, from the least to the greatest, from the weakest and most isolated to the most powerful and proximate, are being folded up, swept away. There shall be nothing left to identify with, cling to, or trust in! “For the first heaven and the first earth are *passed away*.”

### **HIDE US FROM HIS FACE**

*“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*” (Rev. 6:15-16).*

Dearly beloved brethren, I do not hesitate to tell you that it is Adam who wants to hide from the face of Him that sits upon the throne, because he doesn’t *know God!* Because of sin, because of walking after the flesh, it was in the swirling mists of that long ago Eden that Adam in fear first slinked away among the shadows to hide himself from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the Garden. Adam is the only man who hides from the presence of the Lord!

Six groups or classes of men are here mentioned as overcome with terror and as hiding themselves. The number six is the number of *man, humanity, the flesh — Adam!* These bespeak six aspects of the strongholds of the flesh and the carnal mind in the natural man! The kings mentioned are the chief rulers on earth, or the strongest, most powerful propensities and proclivities of the law of sin and death within our natural life. The great men, or noblemen, or princes, are the members of the king’s court, representing those seemingly *good* dispositions, character, qualities, and attributes of human life which are esteemed by men and applauded and honored by the world. The chief captains are the king’s generals and commanders, portraying those passions of the flesh which “*war* against the spirit” (Gal. 5:17). The rich men are men who have great power by virtue of their wealth. These stand for worldly knowledge and fleshly wisdom, power, fame, and prestige which comprise the “values” of the carnal man. The mighty or strong men are those habits, practices, ways, fashions, and traditions that are entrenched in the nature, stubborn, difficult to overcome, and do not easily yield to the dealings of God in our lives. Under the term “every slave” are included all those areas of false religion, religious spirits, spiritual deception, spiritual pride, and hypocrisy of men who are held captive of the devil. And by “every free man” is meant the ego of our self-hood whereby



we imagine ourselves to be “free moral agents” possessing the right to do things “our way,” the “I will” of the carnal mind. ***“I will*** ascend above the heights of the clouds; ***I will*** be like the most High!” (Isa. 14:14). The term does not indicate those who have *truly* been delivered and set free by the Spirit of God, for all six of these classes of men ***are Adamic men*** who are crying out for the rocks of the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sits upon the throne, and from the passion of the Lamb!

It is the world created by the Adamic man that God is out to destroy! The Adam man wants to hide within the safety of the mountains of the carnal religious, economic, political, and social kingdoms of this world to keep from being destroyed. He hides in busy-ness so he won't have to think about God! He hides in church membership, he hides in religious activities, he hides in lodges, he hides in tithe paying and supporting charities, and doing good works, thinking that will save him. He hides in morality and respectability, supposing that the garments of self-righteousness will cover his nakedness. Man seeks security in the myriad systems of this world, believing that these things are sufficient to justify him before God. Adam is afraid to meet God, because of the false vision he has of God. It is only in the *mind* of Adam that man is alienated from God. “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies *in your mind* by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled” (Col. 1:21). These precious words teach us that it was *in our minds* that we were alienated from God, that is, it was in our *imagination!* God was never alienated from us, but in our minds we perceived ourselves as alienated from Him. And God was never *our enemy*; ***we were enemies IN OUR MINDS BY WICKED WORKS!*** God has never left man, never been the enemy of man, never hated man, never turned against man, never deserted man. It was the other way around! And God never reconciled Himself to us — He only reconciled *us to Him!* Isn't that wonderful? But Adam has become psychotic, he imagines that God is a tyrant, that God is against him, that God is “out to get him,” so when He sees the One sitting upon the throne he cries out for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon him to hide him from the face of the One that sits upon the throne! What a tragedy!

I have a vision of God who is full of love and full of grace, compassion, mercy, and redemption. He's not trying to hurt anybody, for He loves all men and desires all men to come into union with Him. So why should we be afraid of our Father? Men have been given a wrong view, a mistaken image of God! “*God is love,*” the Bible tells us. “God is love” is in the Greek “God is *agape.*” Agape is pure, divine, unconditional love flowing from a nature which expresses itself in terms of care, concern, and endearment toward all His creatures, and actively manifests that interest and affection and high purpose by acts of loving care and self-sacrifice in behalf of the objects of His love. “...that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for *He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust*” (Mat. 5:45). “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (Jn. 3:16).

In our natural world a house may be constructed of many constituents — lumber, nails, brick, paint, wallpaper, and what not, all together making a house. But not so with God! God is not made up of parts. HE IS ONE DIVINE BEING, ETERNAL, UNCHANGEABLE AND INDIVISIBLE. A house can be torn down and all its parts separated, the lumber burned, the brick pulverized, other pieces sold for scrap, some re-cycled. But God cannot be divided, for all His “parts” are so unified within Himself that His love does not militate against His judgment, nor does His mercy oppose His justice.

When God judges it is *love* that judges, just as the love of a Father corrects his erring child. God did not condemn man to destroy him in hell, He condemned Him to save him! Paul says it so succinctly, “For God hath concluded them ***all*** in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon ***all!***” What a revelation that is! What a thought — love as a *Judge!* His justice demands His mercy, for He knows — understands — what is in man, what makes him act as he does. He is *faithful* and *just* to forgive us our sins, John wrote. Faithful I can understand — but *just*? Is forgiveness *justice*? Isn't justice opposed to forgiveness? With justice don't you get what you deserve? What is there about justice that would compel God to forgive us! Ah, the reality is that the love of God has been demonstrated towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Love sent Christ to die for us though we didn't deserve it! Love sent the Son into the world. Love died for us, paid our debt, canceled our responsibility. Since love has done this for us it is only *just* — that is, *right, lawful, proper, appropriate, legitimate, reasonable,* and *legally binding* for God to forgive us all our sins! He would, in fact, be unjust NOT to release us! For God to require us to pay our penalty when it has already been paid by another would be a gross ***injustice!*** Oh, the beauty of it! So you

see, my beloved, God has no “parts” for there is no difference or conflict between any of His glorious attributes, all are unified within Himself and God is GOOD!

God being love and being all over and in His creation, means that throughout this whole world of ours there is that mysterious love which underlies all our existence, is interested in and involved with each of us, and will see to the welfare of every one of His creatures. While God allows evil for His own wise purpose, for our training and development into overcoming sons of God, this creation will never be surrendered to evil! The God of love will ultimately prevail — not simply for us, or on our behalf, but *in us* as He reconciles all unto Himself and raises up the power of Christ in every man. That is the scheme of love! And love *never fails!* This sacred knowledge brings stability to our lives at a time when the outer world seems to be headed into despair and destruction.

However, as the love of God does not cancel out His wrath, so His wrath does not cancel out His love! Every parent who has ever punished a child understands this! Wrath and love work together to correct what is wrong and make it right. Strictly speaking the wrath of God and His love are not equally *eternal attributes* of God. God IS love, but nowhere do the scriptures infer that God IS wrath! You do not see in any listing of God’s attributes that wrath is included. Wrath is not named as one of the *fruits of the Spirit*. When sin is finished in God’s universe His wrath will end, but His love will abide eternally upon all His creatures and upon all the works of His hands. God *reacts* to sin by wrath — stern measures of punishment and correction. The wrath really is the love of God in reverse! When we believe God, obey God, and begin to walk with Him we experience His love in salvation, goodness, and blessing. When we disbelieve and disobey Him and turn from His ways His love turns on us in judgment, punishment, and correction. It cannot be otherwise! According to the word of God His wrath *is but for a moment* — but His love is *unending!* In wrath God remembers mercy — because GOD IS LOVE!

Men have been given a wrong view, a mistaken image of God! Religion preaches and serves a God who is a monster, who is mean, cruel, and vicious. They say that God is love, but in their hearts they believe that God is vindictive, implacable, harsh, unmerciful, and exacting, because they believe that God’s judgment against sin and sinners is eternal torture in the fires of hell *without one degree of mercy*. They also believe that God is fickle, for He will send to this eternal hell men who never had a chance, who never heard the name of Jesus, who were ignorant and undiscerning, who were careless and unconcerned, although they did not hate God or deliberately walk in rebellion against Him. But then, the vilest man who ever lived, who hated and blasphemed and abused and murdered, if on his deathbed, at the last breath of his life, he simply says, “Father, forgive me; Lord Jesus, save me,” this one gets to go to heaven! Now that, my beloved, is classical *fickleness!*

But God has revealed to us how wonderful He is — He loves every man so much that His judgment against sin and sinners is not eternal, unmerciful, unrelenting torture and damnation — His judgment against sin and sinners is *Jesus hanging on the cross in our place and on our behalf!* Oh, yes! God was *in Christ* reconciling the world unto Himself! God came in Christ to die for every man, yet He is going to torture most of mankind for all eternity with no respite — those two ideas *don’t compute!* They just don’t add up! They are contradictions! So there is ***no need to hide, no need to call on the mountains and rocks to hide us from the face of our sovereign Lord! Let it all go, let God sweep away the old creation, renounce the mistaken identity of the old, carnal, natural Adamic man, and God will raise up the new man, Christ in your life! You will stand tall and blessed and powerful and glorious in the new heavens and the new earth!*** Praise God for the sixth seal!

When the sixth seal opens the *face* of the Lamb appears. When His face begins to shine the kings of the earth and their noblemen, and their magnates, and their military chiefs, and the wealthy, and the strong, and everyone, whether slave or free, run to the caves and dens of the earth and cry out to the rocks of the mountains, “Fall on us, and hide us from the *face* of Him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!” That is fearful Adam talking! But I tell you by the word of the Lord — the Lord God who walks in the Garden in the cool of the day will bring you out from under your rock just as He brought Adam out from behind his tree! There is no place you can run to and hide where this face cannot be seen! That’s what the book of Revelation is all about — the revelation, the unveiling of Jesus Christ! There is no escape from the face of the Lamb. Somewhere, someday, somehow, He will get you, He will win, you will be captured,

captivated, conquered by Him! He *is* out to get you — not to destroy you, but to save you and make you His chosen one! He will ravish your heart. He will win your love. He will gain your adoration. He will command your obedience. This face is a voice. If those who heard this voice on Sinai could not escape the voice speaking on earth, how much more can we not escape the voice that now speaks from heaven!

Thus there comes a time in our spiritual unfoldment where everything we have seen and known, believed in, understood, trusted in, and been related to disappears — the old heavens and the old earth pass away amidst great commotions and to us it is as though they never existed. We recognize that we have been birthed into a new order, a new day has dawned upon us, a new world has appeared and we have been translated into a higher kingdom, and everything pertaining to that old order has passed away. The personalities we once esteemed and drew our life from are no longer part of our world. The things we used to do, the places we used to go, the religious systems that controlled us, the traditions we kept, the rituals we performed, the ordinances we observed, the worship we enjoyed, the teachings that inspired us — none of these hold anything for us anymore nor do they even exist in this new life of sonship to God.

There was a time when we were not quite ready for this to take place, there were certain practices of our old life and certain trappings of our old religious life that we hung on to because we were familiar and comfortable with them. But the day came when all the old elements had to go, the old heavens and the old earth passed away with a great noise, the sun of that realm was turned to darkness, the stars all fell, the heavens were rolled up as a scroll, every mountain and island fled away, that whole world once and for all and forever disappeared from our experience and for us it no longer existed at all.

Every son of God knows that the change we have undergone is so drastic that we have a hard time even remembering the “other world” we lived in before. I remember on one occasion, some twenty years after the Spirit had drawn us out of the Pentecostal denomination, the Lord impressed me to visit a small Pentecostal church not far from our home. As I sat in that meeting listening to the classical Pentecostal style of preaching, the thundering against sin, the legalism and condemnation heaped upon the people, and the old songs about flying away to heaven and “won’t it be wonderful there,” I thought to myself in amazement, “My God! Do you mean there are still people on this planet serving God like that?” It all seemed so strange, so foreign to me, as though I had entered a far-away land, or was having a nightmare born of some long repressed memory. That world had passed away for me and barely did I recall what it was like! It is indeed wonderful!

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth *were passed away.*”

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY