

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 1

The mark of the beast. Armageddon. The Four Horsemen. The false prophet. Babylon the great. Falling stars, stinging locusts, and giant hailstones. The seven last plagues. The bottomless pit. The lake of fire. These images of terror and catastrophe from the book of Revelation have greatly influenced the thinking of millions of Christians through the ages. Even the secular press uses images such as "Armageddon" and "four horsemen of the Apocalypse" to describe calamities in our world. Despite 1900 years of fascination with the book of Revelation, John's letter to the seven Churches of Asia continues to be misunderstood. And badly misinterpreted!

One misconception shared by some is that the Revelation has nothing of importance to say to us. It's considered to be merely a bizarre piece of first-century writing with no relevance for today. Another wrong idea is that the Revelation is a code book describing a specific outline of history written in advance. Countless interpreters have tried to "decode" the book from a historical perspective to find all the major world events of the past 1900 years. Others interpret it more literally as a handbook for predicting the cataclysmic events that will bring the final wrath of God and the end of the world. The claims of Christian groups from the early church to the present — that the Revelation pinpoints the events, personalities, and time periods of "the end" — **have all failed**. This should be a caution to believers for using the book of Revelation as a *predictive handbook*. Other people's interpretation of the book of Revelation is based on the "Pan Theory" — it's all going to *pan out* in the end! Beloved brethren, the fact is, *it's not panning out* the way the end-time prognosticators are projecting!

Through the years I have ministered the Word in Bible studies, seminars, and church services of various types. When there has been a question and answer session, or when opportunity was granted for people to request teaching along a particular line, the most often requested subject has been — THE BOOK OF REVELATION! I have met people who were babes in Christ, carnal Christians whose lives were a mess, they had incredible problems and needs, including deliverance, and instead of prayer or counsel or messages that would help them overcome and grow up in Christ, they wanted me to teach them the book of Revelation! "Yeah, brother, that's for me, lay it on me, I want the book of Revelation!"

In retrospect, in the early days of my walk in God, my desire was no different. I was young, both naturally and spiritually. I knew little about the word of God or the purposes of God, but a call was in my heart. Being unlearned and immature, my very first dream was that I wanted to be a "prophecy" teacher. I imagined that I would be able to so eloquently expound the mysteries of the book of Revelation that great crowds would flock to hear me teach. After all, where do you start when you're brilliant and young in the Lord! Thank God, very few of those who read these lines had to suffer through some of the things I taught out of the book of Revelation! The old adage was surely fulfilled, "Fools rush in where wise men fear to tread." Today it seems to me that the dumber a person is spiritually, the more determined they are to teach the book of Revelation! Those who know nothing are convinced that they know everything, and the first

place they head is for deep water. There are depths in God, and heights of revelation and reality far beyond anything that the carnal mind can conceive. The reason people who are spiritually illiterate jump into it with such gusto, and people who have some idea of the majesty and meaning of its message are more hesitant, is because the book of Revelation is the most dynamic, powerful, awesome, devastating book of the Bible! Those who have caught glimpses into the transcendent glories of its deepest mysteries often shy away from it in the light of its loftiness and eminence. What Christians are normally exposed to are the radio and television preachers, the "good ol' boys of religion" who think they know all about it and parrot and elaborate on all the absurdities they have been taught by their teachers.

Today, many Christians are confused. They are tossed too and fro with every new book that hits the market or every new fad end-time scheme introduced by some celebrity preacher. The popularity of the Revelation today is due to man's insatiable curiosity regarding the future, the interest in the unknown tomorrow, which characterizes the restless human soul. To claim that in the pages of the Revelation we can see the signs of the present times and thus predict the tomorrows; to pull back the veil and claim to lay bare the future is to attract an audience, for that is the nature of man — fascination with the future! And that is the thrust of the scores of books always appearing, almost all of them claiming to be able to unravel and accurately predict the great world events about to unfold. Man reveres the past, but he is intoxicated by the heady wine of prophecy. The very claim, then, of these many books — that they can reveal to us things which are soon to come — helps to explain the popularity of those books on the Revelation.

The most popular of the apocalyptic entrepreneurs undoubtedly is Hal Lindsey, the author of the sensationalist book *The Late Great Planet Earth* and other more recent titles. His combination of literalist biblical interpretation and outright scare tactics have resulted in gaining him an extremely wide readership. But — his predictions have continually needed readjustment in the light of deadlines which have come and gone without fulfillment! Also, according to the February/March 1980 "special report to the members of the 700 Club," entitled "Pat Robertson's Perspective," the beast of Revelation was to have been the Soviet Union, which he believed was about to attack Israel "to gain unrestricted access to Middle East oil plus a land bridge to the mineral wealth of Africa." The economy of Western Europe would be doomed by this and the world would then see the rise of a "counterfeit Messiah," a satanic figure "more malevolent than Adolph Hitler," who in 1980 was "approximately twenty-seven years old" and was being groomed for his sinister task. His nightmarish seven-year reign is the time of the "Great Tribulation," which supposedly will come to an end with the second coming of Christ, who will destroy the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon. I do not hesitate to tell you that all such speculation, which purports to unravel the immediate future of world events out of the prophecies of the book of Revelation, are doomed to failure. *None of them will come to pass!* Church history is full of these schemes. Every generation, from the early church to the present, has been impacted by prophecies of that sort. I could write page after page, and go on and on, about all the end-time predictions that have been taught out of the book of Revelation that weren't worth the paper they were written on, and often times were proven wrong almost before the ink was dry on the paper!

I am wearied and my spirit vexed with all the newspaper eschatology and comic book theology, with everybody talking about everybody and everything **except what Jesus Christ is**

doing! I've had my fill of preachers trying to figure out what the European Community, the Russians, the Chinese, the Israelis, the United Nations, the Illuminati, the Moslems, Saddam Hussein and everybody else is doing, while they have not the foggiest notion what the firstborn Son of God is doing! Alive today on the face of this earth are more people than have lived in a hundred previous generations. Don't think for one moment, precious friend of mine, that God is going to walk away from the greatest harvest, the grandest opportunity to pour out His love and grace and make known His power and glory, released for man at Calvary. Don't let it even enter your mind that God is about to turn this old world over to the devil to tread down, torment, enslave, ruin, destroy, and damn into judgment and hell. The Antichrist is not a world political leader, the Antichrist is the false religious spirit in the church that has everybody looking at everybody and everything **except Jesus Christ!**

Go to these so-called "Prophecy Conferences" and all you hear is newspaper clippings, world events, and wild speculations about conspiracies of doom and gloom. My God! It's time to bow the knee, fall upon our faces, and rend our garments, until we receive a revelation out of the heavenly realms about the triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ in the earth in this great and glorious Day of the Lord! God has an elect people in the earth in this very hour who have done, and are doing, just that! We know by the spirit of wisdom and revelation that God is not up in heaven building some kind of Christian Resort for His saints while the world rushes madly onward to hell and damnation. Oh, no! Calvary was for real — the Lamb slain to take away the sin of *the world*, the sacrifice made to reconcile *all things* to God, the Christ who came to draw *all men* to Himself **will not fail!**

The book of Revelation is THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. Revelation is a book that teaches who and what Jesus Christ is. It reveals Him in all of His glory, unveils Him in all of His fullness. You will find Jesus the Christ in every chapter of the book, for it is the revelation of Himself. When we read the message of the Revelation with a heart that seeks after Christ, we see in every page His face and hear from every line His voice. If we do not see Christ in the pages of the Revelation, then all we see is vanity. By drawing near to this book in the power of the Holy Spirit, we draw near to Christ. How beautiful that is! May the elect of God receive much grace to see more and more of Christ in the pages of this book.

The book of Revelation is the Sixth Gospel of Jesus Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote what they saw of Jesus Christ on the earth in the days of His flesh. Luke, in the book of Acts, wrote of the revelation of Jesus that came by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and throughout the in-part realm of the earnest of the Spirit during the church age. But John, in the book of Revelation, wrote what he witnessed of the full and complete revelation of Jesus Christ that comes to and through "him that overcometh." It is the revelation of Jesus Christ in sons upon mount Zion, in the manchild on the throne, and in the New Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven. John the Revelator wrote what he saw of the ascended and glorified Christ manifesting out of the heavens of God's Spirit. This book releases the mind of Christ out of celestial realms. We must by the Holy Ghost get on the horse, put our feet in the stirrups, take hold of the reins and ride through this book experientially in the anointing from on High. We must be *in the Spirit on the Lord's day* to understand it, just as John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day to receive it. And when we do — we *see Jesus!*

Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, and you'll see Jesus,

Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, you'll see the King;

Walk in the Spirit of the Lord, and you will find Him:

He's resurrected in His body, He lives in me!

As dew distilling from the heavens comes the revelation of Jesus Christ from every page of John's vision. It is the drama of God's great plan of the ages wrought out first in the saints, then in the nations, and finally in all the vast creations of God. Everything is viewed from the divine perspective. It is not the history of Satan's activity in men, but the all-conquering power of God's Christ! It is the *spiritual drama* of Father's dealings in our lives.

In chapter one John gets his first view of the exalted Christ. He sees Him not with the hair, eyes, hands, feet, voice and clothing of the prophet of Galilee. Now he hears a voice as the sound of many waters and, turning to see the voice, he sees God's Christ, God's complete Christ, Head and body, dressed in the garments of a king-priest, with hair like a lamb, eyes of fire, his countenance as the brightness of the noonday sun, with a two-edged sword flashing out of His mouth, and feet like glowing brass.

In chapters two and three John sees the Christ in the midst of the seven churches, representing the whole church realm throughout the present age while God is calling out and forming a people for His purpose. And it's not a pretty sight — for as well as faith and love and patience and good works and the word of the Kingdom, there is also carnality, sin, heresies, apostasy, ceremonialism, false prophets, fleshly control, satanic activity, lukewarmness and abominations of every kind. Who can deny that this has been precisely the history of the church world for all of the past 2,000 years!

In chapter four John sees a door standing open in the heavens. With holy astonishment he beheld an open heaven and a voice bidding him to "come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter" — after the candlestick realm! John was invited *spiritually* to ascend from the horse and buggy age into the space age! That, I know, is the testimony of a vast company of saints in this generation who are journeying from the natural to the spiritual realm. We have heard within our spirit the voice John heard on Patmos in that long ago, and standing in the midst of the seven-churches-realm we have turned to see a glory high above the candlestick realm, even the surpassing glory of Christ promised to *him that overcometh*. Do not our hearts rejoice within us, for we have *seen* the opened heavens, we have *seen* in the heavens of God's Spirit a throne set, we have *seen* One sitting upon the throne, and the sovereignty and glory of God's Kingdom realm has shed its transforming light upon our earth, dispelling the mists of natural understanding and religion, making us glad partakers of the mind of Christ, raising us up into the heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*!

The book of Revelation reveals the centrality of Jesus Christ upon the throne of the universe and upon His throne within our hearts. It gives us centeredness. It gives us something to build our life around. It gives us our proper orbit in the heavens of God's Spirit. In 400 B.C. the philosophers and scientists thought the earth was flat, and the planets were wandering stars. They had no comprehension of any order of the universe. It was in 340 B.C. that Aristotle first introduced the concept that there was order in the universe and that the earth was the center of the universe. He saw the sun and the stars as lights in the canopy of the heavens that moved around the earth. But for 1600 years they struggled to make sense out of the times and seasons with any predictability. Then, about 400 years ago, Copernicus discovered that the sun is the center of our solar system. As this knowledge expanded it gave stability and predictability to all the events on earth that are controlled by the order of the heavens.

If one does not have the right center, his life will be out of order and out of orbit. There are people who have their job, business, or money as the center of their life. There are others who have their husband, their wife, or their children as the center of their life. Some have amusement and pleasure as the center of their life. Many Christians have their church, their pastor, or their ministry as the center of their life. Some in this Kingdom walk even have "revelation" as their center! Men have different things as their center, but not HE who sits upon the throne! Then all it takes is for their center to be shaken, and their whole world falls apart — their orbit becomes erratic, world's collide, and destruction overtakes them. All it takes is for their *center* — the preacher — to be caught in adultery or a homosexual act; they lose their job, their business goes under, their spouse leaves them, their children get into drugs and crime, or are tragically killed in an accident, and their lives go out of orbit, emotionally and spiritually they fall apart, go haywire, and self destruct. But when the resurrected, ascended, glorified, exalted Christ upon the throne of our hearts is truly our center, **no matter what comes or goes, we will not spin out of orbit!** When the mighty Christ within is the sovereign center of our lives, when the One who sits upon the throne sits upon the throne *within*, heaven kisses earth and heaven and earth intersect *within us*! And it is just there that there is a mighty REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

In the early chapters of the book of Genesis we read that Abel went out and took of the *firstling* of his flock to offer in sacrifice to God. "The *first* of his flock" indicates not merely the firstborn, but the very best, a lamb without spot or blemish. But Cain, his brother, took of the fruit of the *ground* for his offering. In Abel's sacrifice we find a beautiful picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, for Christ was the firstling of the flock, the firstborn of many brethren, the beginning of the creation of God, and out of the whole family of mankind He was the most excellent specimen, unsurpassed in purity of character, excellence of mind and body, and all attributes of divine nature. But then again we still have the same scenario of Cain, people are still offering to God out of the fruit of their human efforts, the best the flesh can produce. It is a great fact, however, that the best we can produce of ourselves is Adam, and old Adam is not good enough, he's not acceptable. In the living out of the life of sonship, which is the life of Christ, we are not talking about modifying the carnal mind, we're not talking about overhauling Adam. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be! You can make Adam memorize as much scripture as you can, go to church every Sunday, sing in the choir, learn all the doctrines, do every kind of good work, lay the law on him and force him to act like a saint, but he's still not acceptable in the sight of God. Just as the dog returns to his vomit, and the hog

to his wallowing, so the corruption of the Adam man will eventually break out, revealing him to be exactly who he really is. Sonship is not about modifying the behavior of the *old man*, the man of earth. It's about putting on the life of Christ, the firstling of the flock, a new creation in the image and likeness of God! Don't struggle, dear one, with old Adam with his weaknesses, failures, limitations and corruption. Give yourself to the *putting on of Christ* and the *more you put Him on* the more the Adamic nature will disappear as the snow before the noonday sun.

These beautiful representations of divine truth appear in the opening chapters of Genesis and follow through all the wonderful types and shadows of the Old Testament. The Word of God is replete with pictures of Christ — in Genesis He is the seed of the woman. In Exodus He is the lamb whose blood is on the door post. He's the manna that fell in the wilderness, He's the rock that was smitten. In Leviticus He is our great High Priest. In Numbers He is the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. He's the glory over the mercy seat, and He's the mercy seat as well! In Deuteronomy He is the prophet like unto Moses. In Joshua He's our heavenly Commander who is going to take us across this Jordan of death to old Adam and into our inheritance in the Kingdom of God. He is, furthermore, the ark in the middle of the river, He's the ram's horn that's blown to introduce us to the beginning of our inheritance in Jericho, where you don't even have to fight in the battle, all you have to do is blow on the ram's horn, march around the city, and send up a loud shout. All you have to do is sound forth the message that comes from the throne of God, march forward in the consciousness of the presence and covenant of God, and then shout the victory, and God will give you the city! It's not based on you and me, my beloved, it's rooted in HIM, and HE is the one who will lead us into the fullness of our inheritance in God!

Everywhere in the word of God, matters not where you go, **it is a revelation of Jesus Christ!** There are thousands of experiences of the people of Israel with their journeys, their battles, their kings, their priesthood, their temple, their offerings, their laws, their rituals and infinitely more in which the work and glory of God's Christ is shown forth. So why is it, when we get to the book of Revelation and read where the Holy Spirit says, "This is the revelation of Jesus Christ," the preachers then proceed to preach **everything but Jesus!**

It never ceases to amaze me that people read the Bible and never get a glimmer of these mysteries. The reason the Holy Spirit arranged for the book of Revelation to become the last book in the Bible is so that after you have finished reading the other 65 books you should have at least an idea of what some of the types are about, so that when you get over to the book of Revelation and read about a temple being measured, you won't be over in the Middle East somewhere carrying around a measuring stick! Over the past several years a number of people have sent me books and letters and they are all excited because men are raising red heifers to take over to the land of Israel to sacrifice for the purification of the priesthood. I see them as they read these reports and get all excited about these red heifers. As Lynn Hiles has said, I, too, want to shake them and say to them, "If your theology brings you to the place where you go back to outward temples made with hands, and the ashes of red heifers, and the blood of bulls and goats — *somewhere you missed the point!* There are few things that I will argue with anyone about, but I tell you, if your theology ends with the blood and ashes of bulls and heifers, someone has hoodwinked you and pulled the wool over your eyes! If you think the blood of red heifers will ever purify a priesthood to serve in a temple in Jerusalem, or that some Antichrist will one day

sit and reign from a Jewish temple, you haven't learned your ABC's of spiritual truth and divine revelation. I can hear the Holy Ghost saying, What! Are you *mad*? You mean to say that after 65 books of the Bible you *didn't get* that point?" "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for *ye are the temple* of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Cor. 6:16). "Him that overcometh will I make a *pillar in the temple* of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

We might fill this whole article with illustrations of the futility and limitation of the natural mind in comprehending things spiritual, but that is not our purpose now. Our purpose now is to show that the book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ to, in, through, and as the glorious many-membered son of God! So many truths are in this hour quickened by the Spirit that it seems several lifetimes would be required to expound in depth upon them. It seems to me that for centuries our eyes have been kept holden to the truth and greatness of God's purpose in earth, in His people, and in the universe. We have diligently studied the scriptures, burning the midnight oil, pouring over musty volumes and reference works about the Bible, grasping with the natural mind the superficial, surface meaning, taking for granted that we understood what was written, yet missing completely the deep kernel of truth concealed within. There is no need to mourn this lack of understanding, for the great truth is that God never reveals anything to anybody until *He is ready* to reveal it, and He is never ready to reveal anything until the time has arrived for a people to appropriate and enter into that truth within themselves, becoming partakers of, participators in, and the very manifestation of that which He is prepared to accomplish.

This is nowhere more true than it is in regard to the book of Revelation! George Hawtin penned words that are still instructive for all today who follow on to know the fullness of God. "No, we need not worry about our ignorance of things. Our only concern should be that when God does send us light that *we receive it*, for if we reject it, the light we have becomes darkness and we can understand nothing. The moment the Spirit of God begins to shed light on a truth, it is time to begin to ask Him to instruct us in it. Do not submit God's revelation to the criticism of some dead church member or preacher, for they like the birds of the air will steal away the seed of the truth before it has a chance to sprout or take root within you. We are looking for the *unveiling* of the sons of God. We are looking for the *revelation* of Jesus Christ. The revelation will reveal what is hidden. The unveiling will reveal what has been kept veiled. As the lightning flashes forth from inky clouds, so the manifestation will disclose that which has been hidden in darkness. 'Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.'" — end quote.

The prophetic word of the Lord is **perceptive to the Initiated**. The book of Revelation is God's unique deposit of **ultimate truth**. There is no part of scripture richer or more bounteous in rewards for those who hear and see by the spirit. It is a garden of flowers and nuts, a jewelry box of wondrous pearls and dazzling diamonds. It is a vast and varied landscape of the realm of earth, the depths of the sea, and the glory of the heavens of God's Spirit, filled with beauty and grandeur, the horizon of which is fringed with the bright dawning of eternal Day. Here, and here alone, we can see the real scope and magnificence of God's working and purposes in His sons and in His kingdom. Here, and here alone, we can trace God's redemptive, reconciliative, and restorative plans to their ultimate consummation, and behold the depth and power of the counsels

of His love. At every step there is something to encourage and instruct God's elect as we pass through our present trials, testings, purgings, and dealings on to the glory of *manifested sonship*.

Consider this, dear saint of God — if the limits of our earthly knowledge can be extended and increased by the study of rocks and bones, and beasts, and birds, and stars, how much more profitable in our spiritual life will be the enlightened understanding of those heavenly, divine things set forth in the book of Revelation in the prophetic language of voices, seals, trumpets and vials; of suns, moons and stars; of beasts, scorpions, dragons and colored horses; of horns, crowns, thrones, rainbows and glassy seas; of angels, thunders, lightnings, arks and temples; of earthquakes, meteors, fires, odors, olive trees and candlesticks; of lewd women and chaste women, of a manchild on a throne, of a great city of evil and a beloved city coming down out of heaven full of the glory of God. All these things sound very wonderful: but what do they really mean? Can we unravel the story? Can we decipher the strange symbols? Can we unlock the treasures of this book? And what does it mean to us in our journey into sonship in this great Day of the Lord? As in the natural world we must have eyes to see the beauties around us, so in the spiritual world of God's kingdom it is the Holy Spirit's illuminating power that sheds upon our pathway the light of the heavenly realm. My heart sings a thousand hallelujahs, for this is the hour of THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!

There is no benefit in any knowledge if it merely builds your intelligence, satisfies your curiosity, or inflates your ego. Hear me! I am neither writing nor teaching for the purpose of merely increasing knowledge, of simply putting *facts* into men's heads. If that was all we could accomplish, I would forever lay down my pen today. It's not that we shouldn't have knowledge, but the point of the knowledge is to define in understandable terms the deeper and higher reality of our relationship with God and the working of His purpose within our lives. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is vain, pointless, and powerless. "Knowledge puffeth up," the apostle pointedly wrote. To fill our heads with mere information will bloat us like the pompous frog, allowing us to croak loudly, but accomplish nothing. The word that will transform us in this hour does not come by the seeing of the outer eye or the hearing of the outer ear. But just as a warhead is carried by a missile to its target, so is the living word of the Lord borne by that which is communicated in the outward as a written, spoken, or acted word, borne to pierce into the innermost part of our being, that we may be quickened by the spirit of that word in the deepest part of our life. If we receive that word only in our mind, if it never penetrates by the Spirit into our heart as a living power, then it is just knowledge and will never bear any fruit in our experience.

There are levels to understanding the word of God. There is the plain and literal surface meaning; there is the symbolic, figurative, or representative meaning; there is the spiritual or mystical meaning; and these meanings are on an ascending scale in that order. The highest of all meanings is the spiritual meaning, for that is where we meet and touch and experience the reality of God who *is Spirit*. The beloved apostle John referred to these three levels of truth in these significant words: "I write unto you, *little children*, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake...I write unto you, *young men*, because ye have overcome the wicked one...I write unto you, *fathers*, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning" (I Jn. 2:13). It is the same word, but on different levels to each realm. The word of God will meet you at a different place depending upon where you are in the progression of your spiritual development from babes

to young men to fathers. And one can tell where people are in their spiritual stature by the level of the word they are feasting upon! The called-out elect of the Lord today is able to appropriate the truth of God in higher and higher dimensions of reality as we grow up into Christ in all things! We are continually thrust into deeper applications and experiences of God's living word by the renewing of our minds from realm to realm!

Praise God for the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation! It is entirely different from all other books. It is altogether a new book — everything is new! It is a revelation from the Throne! It is a book that carries us beyond the church age! It is a book of Ultimates! Just as the book of Genesis is the book of beginnings, so is the Revelation the book of consummations! In this book is revealed a *new name* (nature), a *new song* (revelation, message), a *new Jerusalem* (people), a *new heaven* (government), a *new earth* (order, expression), and finally it is proclaimed, "Behold, I make A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S NEW!" (Rev. 21:5). Hallelujah! The whole purpose of God in this book is to declare the eternal passing of all that is old, and the establishment of ALL THAT IS NEW.

In addition, every utterance to the body of Christ in this book is the utterance of the seven-fold Spirit of God. It is always the Spirit who is speaking! "He that hath an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit saith** to the churches" (Rev. 2:7). Seven times in chapters two and three we read that it is the Spirit who is speaking to the churches. "Yea, saith the Spirit" (Rev. 14:13). How different from the prophecies of the prophets who through the ages have prophesied, "Yea, my people, thus saith the Lord..." And how different from the writings of the apostles in their epistles to the churches! "This I (Paul) say" (I Cor. 7:6), or "I (Peter) exhort" (I Pet. 5:1). Here in this superlative book of Revelation it never says, "Thus saith the Lord," or "This I say." Rather, it is, "The Spirit saith, the Spirit saith, the Spirit saith!" Seven times — the number of completion and perfection — the admonition sounds forth, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Why is this repeated seven times? Because of the seven-fold Spirit! He who hears the seven-fold Spirit will be an overcomer! He who overcomes will be a son! He who is a son shall inherit all things! He who inherits all things receives the fullness of the seven Spirits of God! Oh, the wonder of it!

Because the seven-fold Spirit is bestowed upon the overcomers, eventually the entire book is concluded in this way: "And the Spirit *and* the bride say..." (Rev. 22:17). We read in the beginning of this book that the Spirit is speaking to the churches. But by the end of the book, through the dealings, quickenings, purgings and processings of the Spirit, the soul and spirit of the elect have been brought into union, the masculine nature of the regenerated spirit has wooed and won the affections and obedience of the feminine nature of the soul, and the marriage of the Lamb has come, for His wife has made herself ready. I shall not attempt to develop this thought at this time, for that is not our purpose now, but the Spirit and Bride have BECOME ONE — they speak together! They speak with one voice! The Spirit and the Bride in this passage are a compound subject. The two have been integrated — the two have become one within God's elect. God is making us as overcomers one with the seven Spirits, and the seven Spirits are being fully inworked into the overcomers. This is God's great work! It is experientially taking place within those who follow the Lamb in this great Day! This is the consummation of His eternal purpose within us!

The book of Revelation is a book that is written for kings and priests. It is not intended for the world to understand, neither will it be understood by carnal Christians. To be a king-priest doesn't mean that we will strut around in splendid robes and all who meet us on the street will bow their heads and genuflect, acknowledging that we are great and mighty ones. God is not interested in carnal recognition, neither are those to whom is given the kingly spirit and the priestly nature. At the very outset the book is addressed to a peculiar class of people: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto **His servants** things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1). The term "servants" here does not indicate *servants* as contrasted with *sons*, but *sons who are servants* even as was the firstborn among many brethren, our Lord Jesus Christ. There has never been a greater servant than King Jesus! "Behold, *my Servant* shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men: so shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (Isa. 52:13-15). What a *servant*!

When you read the book of Revelation and the book begins to *speak to you*, that is a good indication that it is *for you*! The book cannot and does not speak to the individual it is not intended for. Even then, the understanding of the book does not come all at once. You don't open the book at chapter one, verse one, following on to verse two, three, and so on, trying to figure out the meaning of each verse as you go. If you think the message of the book will instantaneously be revealed in your spirit by that method, each event systematically falling into place, you will be greatly disappointed. It doesn't work that way! As you seek the Lord in the book different parts will speak to you that are for you at that appointed time. The book will be revealed **in your experience** as you grow and progress into the stature of sonship to God. The wisdom of man is *foolishness with God*. The wisdom of man would seek an understanding of the book of Revelation verse by verse in the letter of the Word, but the wisdom of God teaches **it experience by experience**. Don't try to understand it, but pray for obedience, that you might apprehend the ways of the Lord. Seek that your mind and heart (soul) will come into that relationship with God where the Spirit of God in your spirit can reveal. Then the book will commence to speak to you out of your relationship with the Father! Instead of mere head knowledge, the message of the book will begin to apply to your life in the power of kingship and priesthood.

Most of the book is rooted in the symbology of the Old Testament. You will find there the temple, the sacrifices, the worshippers, the ark of the covenant, the candlestick, the city Jerusalem, mount Zion, the prophets, the priesthood, the king and the throne, the archangel, the serpent, trumpets, feasts, and many more. Now by the spirit of wisdom and revelation all these things begin to relate to *your experience, your life, and your walk in God*. You cross the thresholds of spiritual reality where all that was natural and external to Israel in the Old Testament now becomes spiritual and internal as the revelation of Jesus Christ in the elect. The symbols of the Revelation appear to be highly complicated, and they are to the carnal mind! How crude and presumptuous is the darkened carnal mind that would lift its voice in pretentious wisdom to *understand the deep mysteries of God*! We must consider such mysteries with reverence and godly fear, remembering above all else that our Father has willed that we be *partakers of His mind*. I have no hesitation in saying that just as surely and truly as the mind

of the Father dwelt in the firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, so also that same mind that dwelt in Him will dwell in all that blessed company now becoming sons of God. The deep mysteries of God and the unfathomable wisdom and knowledge hid in Jesus Christ cannot be discovered by the natural man or the carnal mind, but God *reveals them unto us by His Spirit*. The secret then is not in studying, burning the midnight oil, pouring over vast volumes searching out information and understanding, but the divine secret that unlocks all the divine depths of divine things is *walking in the Spirit* and *hearing what the Spirit saith*. The same Spirit that *inspired* the book *reveals* the book, opening the precious storehouse of truths of the Kingdom of Heaven to the sincere and seeking heart.

The visions of the book of Revelation are well-ordered and each of the keys to the book testifies of itself. The idea that the body of Christ is a company of kings and priests, so graphically set forth in chapters four and five, suggests that our ministry is to bring people out of an old world order into a new world. Noah was commissioned by God to bring his family out of an old world into a new world. He passed through the destruction of the flood, stepped out of the ark, and established a new age and a new order in the earth. When we come to the book of Revelation there is so much that looks like judgment, destruction and retribution upon mankind and the earth — the grass, the trees, the rivers, the seas, the mountains and valleys, the cities, nations and peoples — but these are mere figures for the passing away of a *realm of life*, a *sphere of existence* and a *state of being* — old Adam with all the systems, order, society, culture, institutions and ways of the *fleshly mind and life*. The Spirit is speaking of the coming into being of a new heavens and a new earth *within ourselves*. God is raising up in the earth today a new people with a new mind, nature and heart, a new spirit, a new temple of God, a new order of priesthood and kingship, a new habitation of God, a new revelation of God, a new city of God, a new government of God, a new order of God within men. Hallelujah!

The book of Revelation is *the revelation of Jesus Christ*. The word "revelation" means to *unveil*, *uncover* or *take the cover off*. The *unveiling* of Jesus Christ — that's what is happening in God's elect! That is what is taking place in the earth today! That's what the book of Revelation is all about! As that which has been hidden in Jesus Christ is revealed, uncovered, brought out into the open and exhibited, the glory of Jesus Christ is shining forth from His body in all the earth. Christ is *in us*! The revelation of Jesus Christ must be *within us*! Christ in you IS the hope of glory, the apostle wrote. There is no *hope* for creation in a rapture. There is no *hope* of glory to be revealed in the earth through dying and going to heaven. There is no *hope* for a new and bright future for the world in understanding world events. There is no *hope* for the raising up of Christ in our lives by a Great Tribulation out there upon the nations of earth. Oh, no! Our only hope is *Christ in us*. Until we grasp the eternal significance and transcendent importance of this wonderful truth, the carnal mind and its silly interpretations of the book of Revelation will lie and cheat and deceive. CHRIST IN US is our hope of glory! And it is the world's only hope! Furthermore, God has now delivered His true elect from the foolish notions of the church systems that God's glory has something to do with some far-off heaven somewhere, streets of gold, walls of jasper, gates of pearl or fluttering around in white nightgowns playing harps! Glory is nothing more nor less than the expression of God's nature through a human vessel. That's what glory is! Christ in us is the *hope* of God expressing Himself through us to creation.

The book of Revelation gives us the keys that unlock the necessary events within ourselves to bring forth this manifestation of God. Before there can ever be a new heaven and a new earth in all the power of them there will be some mighty dealings of God that will burn up the grass — those surface coverings and masks in our lives; they will destroy the trees — those deeply rooted things that grow out of our earthly nature; they will shake the mountains — those high and exalted kingdoms we have built up from our carnal minds; they will turn the seas to blood until every living thing in them dies — the raging passions, surging emotions, relentless, unsatisfiable desires, and foaming agitations of the Adam nature which we must pass through to get to the other side. When John said that he beheld and there was no more sea, he meant that there was no longer anything within us preventing the pure and full expression of Christ in our earth. The reason there is a new heaven and a new earth is not because there is coming a great cataclysmic destruction in the outer world, but rather, all the walls and barriers that religion has built up in us, that have separated God from the earth, are to be obliterated so that there shall be an expression of God's Spirit through us to creation. Religion has taught people that they have to die to obtain God's fullness, while others have taught that we will fly away to some far-off heaven somewhere to get it while the world suffers the horrors of the damned and untold billions of humanity are consigned to eternal torture in the unquenchable fires of hell. We have been told a thousand things that aren't true and have been used, beaten, threatened, controlled, bled of our money, time and peace, brain washed and deceived by the carnality of the harlot system that calls itself the church. Oh, how men have been tossed to and fro upon the violent waves of the sea of the doctrines, laws, methods, schemes, promotions, gimmicks, deceptions, fraud and foolishness of the church systems! Thank God, the day is coming when there will **be no more sea!** And for many of us, blessed be His name, it has already become a glorious fact that within ourselves there **is no more sea!**

God has in these days powerfully spoken to His elect that there is an inner working of His Spirit that leads to the full expression and manifestation of *His glory*. There must be a new heaven because heaven represents the realm that is invisible, the dimension of spirit and the mind of Christ. We can never change our outer world until we change our inner world. There will never be a new earth (visible expression) until there is a new heaven (inner, invisible reality), for one cannot change what he is outwardly until he has been changed in what he is inwardly. And that's where vast multitudes of the Lord's people are missing it. They are trying to obey some set of rules, the traditions of religion, be faithful to the programs and please the church which makes them appear godly, but works no change or transformation of the nature. These things give no life nor do they in any way help us grow up into the power of the life of the Son of God.

Ask a crop farmer what he does, and he'll say, "I'm a grain farmer," or, "I raise cucumbers," or, "I grow grapes." No farmer sums up his work by saying, "I plow up weeds," or, "I get rid of bad bugs." Although farmers do those things, their main focus isn't what they plow up or get rid of; it's what they produce. God is a farmer! He is working to produce a good crop in His people! We sometimes think of God only in terms of what He is against, but that's a mistake. Of course, God is against carnality and various sins and works to rid us of them, but His main focus is **PRODUCING A RICH HARVEST OF CHRIST'S NATURE WITHIN US**. For all who are in step with God's Spirit, that is their main focus too!

What's the use of being against things if we're not *for* anything? If a farmer plows under every weed but doesn't plant good seed, and properly care for and nourish them, he won't get a harvest. In fact, if he plows but doesn't plant, he'll soon have more weeds than ever! Once he plows, a good way to prevent more weeds from taking over is to plant good plants. So, too, God has planted within His chosen elect the good seed of the Christ life and the book of Revelation is the symbolical, illustrative, figurative, metaphorical, and allegorical teaching of **how God deals both positively and negatively in His garden** to bring forth the harvest of Christ within us!