

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 13

THOU HAST MADE US KINGS AND PRIESTS

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath *made us kings and priests unto God* and His Father..." (Rev. 1:5-6). "Thou...hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast *made us unto our God kings and priests*: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

This passage is one of rare beauty. It is like a precious diamond, the effulgence of whose radiance dazzles the mind. It is a drop of pure distilled essence, whose fragrance fills the rooms of the heart of every man and woman who has received the call to sonship. It is a joy forevermore and a challenge to all who comprehend its message. It must be engraved deeply upon the heart of every son of God. It exalts and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. "THOU hast MADE US!" THOU! There is so much depth to that text that I am afraid that we often do not perceive it. It is like a beautiful star-studded sky on a bright clear night and one cannot even begin to grasp the vast depth that lies above us. So it is with these marvelous words: "Thou hast MADE US TO BE KINGS AND PRIESTS!" The book of Revelation is addressed to those whom Christ is *making to be* kings and priests unto God! All the experiences of this wonderful book are prepared unto that end – to *make us* kings and priests unto God!

The unveiling of the sons of God is not the revelation of some people that can **do** something. No, it is the unveiling of some people that have **become** something. God is not concerned about taking us some place – to some far-off heaven somewhere. He is concerned with *making something out of us*. That is what redemption is all about! It is not a question of where we are going, it is a matter of *what we are becoming*. Two men may go to Miami Beach. One is a beggar, the other a business tycoon. They are both in the same place, but they are not both *the same thing*! There will be a lot of spiritual beggars in heaven! God is working not to *take us*, but to *make us*. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to **become** the sons of God" (Jn. 1:12). "Thou hast **made us** unto our God kings and priests." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will **be** his God, and he shall **be** my son" (Rev. 21:7). If Jesus is who He is, then certainly He can **do** all things, but the doing is incidental, merely a by-product of the **being**. Our vision in this new Day of the Lord is not in doing or going. We are following on to *know the Lord*! Our hearts are set on *Him*! We are not becoming occupied with ourselves, we are occupied with His purpose in us, with what He has said He would make us for *His sake*. "This people have I formed **for myself**." "Ye shall be **unto me** a kingdom of priests."

When the light of God comes and shines into our heart, we become a light. When we feed on the bread of heaven, we become living bread. When we drink of the water of the Spirit, out of our innermost being flows rivers of living water. When He is made unto us righteousness, we become the righteousness of God. When He has fully saved us, we become the salvation of the Lord. When He reigns upon the throne of our hearts, we become kings and lords with Him. God will have a body through the earth in these days, a people walking in God, walking *as* God, terrible as an army with banners, whose only purpose is that the Father may be glorified! God is raising up a people formed for Himself, through whom He can reveal and manifest Himself in all His wonderful fullness. Come, let us now open our hearts wide to Him! Come, and as we gaze upon this glorious ministry and its life-flow to all the peoples of the earth, let us yield ourselves unto God that He may work HIS WONDROUS WORK in our lives, bringing us into such union with Jesus, our great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the High Priest of *our profession*, that we **become** in nature and power **His Royal Priesthood** in the earth!

Because all the earth is His, God is raising up a Kingly Priesthood to reign in mighty spirit power and authority over the earth, not to be little human dictators, or an external government of laws and systems headquartered in Jerusalem, or Washington, or London, but with an outflow of life and light and love, touching God with one hand, and humanity with the other, by their priestly ministry bringing the two together, that God may indwell men by His Spirit and live and rule in them in power and glory. The kingly nature in us is not to dominate over men's lives, but to deal and break the power of selfhood and rebellion and sin and the devil that men may be reconciled to God. This is a King-Priest ministry, after the order of Melchizedek! Kings have power and authority. Priests reconcile in mercy and love. But once the reconciliation has taken place, and Christ is enthroned, we deliver men up to God, even the Father, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. That is the principle of the kingdom of God! We rule only to subdue men to God – then GOD RULES IN THEM! He rules first through us, that He may rule finally in them. The manifestation of the sons of God for which all creation is in travail is nothing more nor less than the full manifestation of God's fully developed and empowered government of KING-PRIESTS AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. Throughout the age now ending the Holy Spirit has been forming, preparing, and equipping that body. In the new age now upon us that body shall be given power and authority over all nations and all things! In the ages yet to come the kingdom shall be expanded from realm to realm, from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, for of the *increase* of His government and peace there *shall be no end*!

A thousand, yea, tens of thousands, a mighty army is being touched by the fire from off the altar of God! A great Kingdom of Priests is being set ablaze with the life and love and power of God that will cause the nations of the world to turn to the living God in these crisis days. Too long have men occupied themselves in religious efforts to embalm the spirit of yesterday's revival, wrapping it in the grave clothes of ecclesiastical systems and securing it in sepulchers that speak only of the past. If you want to bless humanity, if your desire is to see the world transformed and the captives set free, if the cry of your heart is to see sin and sorrow and death driven from men's lives until there is a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, then *forget*, once and for all, *all* the old-order church system methods of the past, for *none* of them have converted the world, delivered creation, or brought in the kingdom of God! None of them are sufficient for

this new Day! Until we see that God is doing an entirely *new thing* in the earth in this Day, we haven't learned the ABC's of sonship.

Even now a move of God of world-wide dimensions is in the making! It is being formed *in a people*, in a *sonship company* that is *becoming* the embodiment and personification of all *He is*. This will not be a revival of evangelistic crusades, television programs, musical concerts, bus ministries, or the building of church buildings, but the overflow of divine passion and power from people who have been so consecrated to God that their hearts and their hands have been filled with HIMSELF. These will not minister in organized meetings, there will be no pulpit, no choir, no song service, no prepared sermons, no organization or promotion of any kind. These will minister *spontaneously* in every place at all times – in the fields, on the streets, in the homes, in the business establishments, in the restaurants, in the hospitals, in the churches, in the schools, on the airplanes, buses, and trains – wherever they are to minister, by command of the Spirit they will *appear* in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost! They will minister to the meek and lowly and needy, to the great and mighty, to the common people and to kings, presidents and prime ministers, to all men everywhere without respect of persons. None will be able to gainsay their wisdom or their revelation or their power!

Already bright clouds are gathering on the horizon, clouds of a multitude of witnesses to the deep and vital work God is doing in the lives of His apprehended ones in preparation for the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God! The celestial rivers are running full, and great glory is about to break forth upon the earth. This is the time to gird up your loins, like Elijah of old, and run before the chariots. In due time the clouds shall burst and empty themselves upon the earth. Let your heart be lifted high, for God is on the move, and this can be YOUR HOUR OF MANIFESTATION! Only that will erupt and overflow from God's people which has first been *inworked* by Father's hand. This sonship ministry will not flow from gifts of the Spirit, but from the very life and nature of Christ *formed in His body*. The ministry of kings and priests is not a gift – we are being *made* kings and priests – it is a *becoming*! Do not belittle or depreciate this day when it may seem so little is happening in your midst, my beloved. The accent of the Spirit is not on the external works and gifts and manifestations in this hour – we have already had all that! His concern is with the inner development of the Christ, the formation of all He is as life and nature within, our **becoming** the essence and substance of His very Being! Right now the greatest service we can give to others is to die out to all our own ego-self, to all the antiquated religious methods of the past, that the living of *His Life* becomes its own declaration of all that He is and can do, to His glory and praise. Amen!

COMING WITH CLOUDS

“Behold, He *cometh with clouds*; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him” (Rev. 1:7).

The book of Revelation contains deep and rich teaching for the elect saints concerning the coming of Christ; symbolic, mysterious, wonderful, but always to be approached reverently, humbly, with head bowed low and shoes removed from off our feet, as people standing on holy ground. The coming of the Lord as revealed in the book of Revelation is complex and progressive, extending through a variety of diverse scenes, stages, events, and manifestations, until He has

come in such measure of fullness that we know Him finally in that dimension where HE IS the glorious fulfillment of all that our heart has yearned for, and desired so earnestly. All the lacks swallowed up into completeness, all the voids filled with His fullness, and we know the bliss of HIMSELF as our all-in-all!

Almost two thousand years ago John on the isle of Patmos saw unfolding before Him the enthralling drama of the coming of His Lord. As the awesome sight began to unfold he cried out in astonished wonder and surprised joy, "Behold! He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." This phrase, *He cometh*, is from the Greek *erchomai*. It is the third person singular, present indicative. Any reader who knows the conjunction of verbs knows what that means. First, it means HE COMES as a present tense reality. The verb is present indicative. He comes. He is in the act of coming. Behold! He is *now* coming! In other words, He has been coming, He is still in the act of coming, and He continues to come. This is extremely important. More than once the coming of the Lord is spoken of in this tense throughout the book of Revelation. It's not merely a future thing, not something that shall happen somewhere down the course of history, but it is something that **is**. Oh, that God with flames of His holy fire would burn this truth indelibly upon the hearts of all who read these lines!

The church world is either looking back to an historical Christ, or forward to a futuristic coming of Christ. They miss this word *erchomai* altogether, their spiritual understanding never being quickened to this grand truth that HE COMES — He is coming, He continues to come, He will continue to come, until He has come in the fullness of every dimension in which He *can* come. It is something that is happening right now! It is happening in *your life* right now! It means that He comes from one place to another. He comes out of the realm of spirit to be manifested in flesh, out of the realm of the invisible to be expressed and revealed in a visible, tangible way to the physical creation. *Erchomai* means to come, to make one's appearance before the public. It means that He comes and appears before the view of the people round about. And this coming has already happened, it is happening now, and shall continue to happen! This is the revelation that so captivated the apostle John that he could only exclaim with amazement, "Behold! He comes!" And we have been just as amazed as the Spirit has borne witness for a number of years now among the Lord's people that soon Christ shall come in a manifestation of Himself on a plane, and in a measure, never before seen or experienced by men upon this planet. He shall come to be glorified in His saints, manifested in His sons to set creation free. The bondage of corruption, the power of sin and death, shall first be broken from off God's people, then from all humanity. Yes, He has come in measure, and He shall yet come in fullness!

There are two more words: "*With Clouds*." "Behold! He cometh with clouds." "With" is from the Greek preposition *meta*. It means with, but it also means together with, in the midst of, among, between, in common with, with the help of, and by means of. Here are the ways He comes: Behold! He comes *with* clouds, denoting an association. Behold! He comes *together with* clouds, denoting a communion. Behold! He comes *in the midst of* clouds, denoting an indwelling. Behold! He comes *among* clouds, denoting a fellowship. Behold! He comes *between* clouds, denoting a union. Behold! He comes *in common with* clouds, denoting a participation. Behold! He comes *with the help of* clouds, denoting an interdependence. Behold! He comes *by means of* clouds, denoting an instrumentality.

From the dawn of history the way in which God has displayed His glory has been in the form of a cloud. This *glory cloud* of God has taken different shapes and different sizes on various occasions. When it was time for the children of Israel to begin their exodus out of Egypt, the glory of God took the form of a pillar of fire enshrouded within a cloud. “And the Lord went before them by day *in a pillar of a cloud*, to lead them in the way; and by night *in a pillar of fire*, to give them light, to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Ex. 13:21-22).

What did the glory of God signify every time it appeared? The glory cloud of God signified the unique presence of God! It always told the people of Israel, when it appeared, that Yahweh was uniquely present in this place, at this time, for a special purpose. When the glory of God as a cloud led the children of Israel out of Egypt, it signified to the people that God was with them in a very real and sovereign way. “And the Lord went before them *in a pillar of a cloud*.” God was **in** the cloud! The almighty God Himself dwelt in that cloud by day and in the fiery pillar by night. That strange pillar of cloud and fire was the visible manifestation of His glory and presence. While Israel walked in the light of His fiery presence, no calamity could harm them, no enemy could attack them, no evil could befall them, nor plague come nigh their dwelling. God was with them in sovereign power in all their marches! “And the Lord said unto Moses, I come unto thee in a *thick cloud*, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe for ever” (Ex. 19:9). And again, “And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: **for I will appear in the cloud** upon the mercy seat” (Lev. 16:2).

When the cloud came down out of heaven and rested on top of mount Sinai, it signified that God in a unique sense had come out of the realm of spirit to meet with the children of Israel in His manifestation on the earth plane. When they saw the cloud enter into the most holy place in the tabernacle and later in the temple, it signified again that God in a special sense was taking up residence within that worship structure within the nation of Israel. The light that shone in the holiest of all behind the temple curtain of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, laced with threads of gold and figures of cherubim, was not the beams of the sevenfold candlestick of the holy place, nor even the radiance of the sun in the outer court. It was the glory light of God’s own divine majesty! Through time the Israelites called that glory cloud of God the *shekinah*. The word *shekinah* means “to dwell.” And since the glory cloud always signified that God was present at the place where the cloud appeared, to dwell in a special sense, they called it the *shekinah* or *dwelling glory* of God!

The disciples of Jesus had become accustomed to seeing Jesus the man, Jesus the healer, Jesus the teacher, Jesus the miracle worker. They had heard Him tell of the majesty and glory of His Father in heaven, but had never grasped the significance of the glory, majesty, and power of the Christ who walked the road with them. On that momentous occasion when the Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into the mount and was transfigured before them, suddenly there appeared a *bright cloud* – a cloud with a light in it! And out of that bright cloud the voice of the Father spake concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. “This is my beloved Son – hear Him!” It is more than coincidence that, as Peter spoke, a *cloud* overshadowed them and a Voice came out of the cloud. One of the significant facts in connection with the glory cloud of God’s presence is that God always *spoke* from the cloud. This began first on mount Sinai. “And the Lord said unto

Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may **hear when I speak** with thee...and the Lord came down upon mount Sinai...and the Lord **called Moses...**" (Ex. 19:9,20). At a later time God spoke from the same cloud after that it had descended upon the tabernacle. "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and **the Lord talked with Moses**" (Ex. 33:9).

What was that bright cloud with the light in it from which the voice of God spoke on the mount of Jesus' transfiguration? It was none other than the pillar of cloud housing the glory fire, the shekinah glory of God that had led the children of Israel in their exodus out of Egypt and guided them for forty years! As Jesus prayed on the mount, He was transfigured before His chosen disciples. At that moment of transfiguration the glory cloud enveloped Him and God spoke from the midst of the radiance of glory. In the wilderness this *glory*, this *cloud*, and the *voice out of the cloud* are all brought together: "And Moses went up into the mount, and a *cloud* covered the mount. And the *glory* of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the *cloud* covered it six days: and the seventh day He *called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud*. And the sight of the *glory* of the Lord was like devouring *fire*" (Ex. 24:15-17). On the mount of transfiguration the *Son* is enveloped in the *cloud* and we are commanded to *hear Him*. The writer to the Hebrews then identified this *voice* and this *glory* in these remarkable words: "God...hath in these last days *spoken unto us by His Son...who being the brightness of His glory*, and the express image of His person..." (Heb. 1:1-3). Jesus is the brightness of God's glory! He is indeed, the presence in the cloud and the very cloud and fire of the presence!

Let every reader of these lines be assured beyond any possible shadow of doubt that it was this same shekinah, this very same glory cloud which the eleven disciples beheld in spell-bound astonishment on the crest of the mount of Olives that blessed day when the Lord ascended into mid-air and suddenly a bright cloud, like a chariot of God, bore Him speedily away, concealing Him from mortal gaze. "When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a *cloud* received Him out of their sight," the record states. An accident? An illusion? A marvelous coincidence? Not on your life! This is the equivalent of saying that the cloud which hovered over Israel in the wilderness; the cloud which rested upon the glorious tabernacle of old; the cloud which dwelt between the gleaming cherubim in the most holy place; the cloud which filled Solomon's temple until the ministers could not minister by reason of the blazing glory; the cloud which overshadowed the virgin girl Mary when she came to be with child; the cloud which enveloped the Son of God and revealed His glory on the mount of transfiguration; that cloud **is the very same cloud** that received the Lord Jesus into its midst and out of the sight of mortal eyes! The cloud that received Jesus out of the sight of those startled disciples certainly was no ordinary rain cloud which happened to be blown across a torturous sky. It was the blazing shekinah cloud which had always veiled the divine majesty of God from time immemorial!

Here is where I wish to point out a most significant fact of scripture which has entirely been overlooked by most Bible students and nearly all preachers and teachers. All the way through the scriptures, from the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel, to the ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, God consistently manifested Himself in ONE GLORY CLOUD. There was always only ONE SINGLE CLOUD! One cloud before the camp of Israel. One cloud over mount Sinai. One cloud resting upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. One cloud shining in the most holy place. One cloud filling Solomon's temple. One cloud overshadowing the virgin of

Galilee, implanting the seed of the Christ. One cloud shimmering over the summit of the mount of transfiguration. One cloud in which Christ ascended from the mount of Olives. Christ ascended in **one single cloud** of God's glory – the very **same** cloud in which He had manifested His presence throughout the long ages of time!

It is when we come to the return of the Lord that we notice a distinct difference! For suddenly the one single cloud disappears and we are introduced to a great **plurality of clouds!** Let us *see!* Christ departed this earth in *one cloud*. He comes again in *many clouds!* “Behold, He cometh with **clouds**: and every eye shall see Him” (Rev. 1:7). Daniel in vision beheld Him thus: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like a Son of man **came with the clouds of heaven**...and there was given unto Him dominion” (Dan. 7:13-14). Jesus Himself said, “And they shall see the Son of man **coming in the clouds of heaven** with power and great glory” (Mat. 24:30). And again, “Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and **coming in the clouds** of heaven” (Mat. 26:64). Finally, the apostle Paul relates this dramatic experience: “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them **in the clouds**...and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thes. 4:17). In the CLOUDS! More than one cloud. Many clouds. A great company of clouds!

Why are there many clouds attending Christ's coming, and what are these clouds? Let us not for one moment forget that we are dealing with *the cloud of God's glory, presence, and power* – the shekinah! When the firstborn Son of God was in the world John said of Him, “We beheld *His glory*” (Jn. 1:14). When did they behold His glory? You may reply that they beheld His glory when He went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, performing miracles and teaching and speaking as never man spake. Ah, yes, I am sure that in all those things they beheld a glory, but the apostle Peter reveals to us what is really meant by their beholding the glory of the Son. “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and *glory*, when there came such a voice to Him *from the excellent glory* (the glory cloud), saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, *when we were with Him in the holy mount*” (II Pet. 1:16-18).

How very significant that at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry He said, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also shall be one in us...and **the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them**...I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...that they be with me where I am; that they may behold **my glory** which Thou hast given me” (Jn. 17:20-24). And this is the crux of the whole matter! From the dawn of creation's light until Jesus stepped upon this planet, God manifested to His creation in a *singular way* His own glory. He, the one eternal God, exhibited His presence in the form of one glory cloud! But as Jesus approached the cross, and the glorious events to unfold thereafter, He disclosed the grand truth that God purposed from eternity to **SHARE HIS GLORY WITH A VAST FAMILY OF SONS**...that glorious body which is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all!

Let us see, then, what great encouragement God has given us concerning His glory. “And ye know how we exhorted you...that ye should walk worthy of God, who hath called you *to His*

kingdom and glory” (I Thes. 2:11-12). Peter asserts: “I...also am...*a partaker of the glory* that shall be revealed” (I Pet. 5:1). “Whereunto He hath called you...to the obtaining of *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (II Thes. 2:14). “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with *the glory that shall be revealed in us*” (Rom. 8:18). The writer to the Hebrews adds this significant testimony: “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing *many sons to glory*, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10). As the spirit of revelation and understanding floods our minds, we are left without question as to the meaning of all this. There is to be a mighty and universal revelation of the glory of God, that very *same glory* which was revealed in the cloud of old, but now an *intensified many-splendored glory* in the *many clouds* of God’s sons!

Another evidence that the “clouds” with which Christ comes are in fact the sons of God *in their glory* is couched in the terminology of the scriptures on this subject. In most places the passages in question speak of Christ coming “with clouds.” There is only one other group of plurality of objects of which it is stated that Christ comes “with” them, and that is – the SAINTS! “To the end He may establish your hearts...at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **WITH ALL HIS SAINTS**” (I Thes. 3:13). Jude says, “And Enoch also...prophesied...saying, Behold, the Lord cometh **WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF SAINTS**” (Jude 14). The Amplified is helpful, when it reads, “Behold, the Lord comes **WITH MYRIADS OF HOLY ONES** – ten thousands of His saints.” But the Interlinear reading from the Diaglott translation gives the clearest of all renderings from the Greek text, so we note, “Lo, comes Lord **IN HOLY MYRIADS OF HIMSELF**.” Myriads of Himself! And all of them partakers of His divine nature, conformed to His image, imbued with His mind, filled with His life, radiating His glory! Myriads of Himself, of His own kind, born of His seed, reproducing His life, a many brethren company of sons – all His sons. Though there are multiplied testimonies to this truth, we will add but one more: “And the Lord my God shall come, and **ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE**” (Zech. 14:5). The beloved John sees this same scene in wonder-filled vision and cries out, “Behold, He cometh **WITH CLOUDS**; and every eye shall see Him!”

When Jesus ascended two thousand years ago, He ascended glorified in that singular glory cloud in which He had dwelt from eternity. He was the **one God** manifested in all fullness in **one Man**, the Son. But, blessed be God! As He comes again, “He shall come to be **GLORIFIED IN HIS SAINTS**, and to be admired **IN THEM** that believe” (II Thes. 1:10). Centuries ago the apostle Paul wrote these words to the saints at Rome, “And if we are children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also **GLORIFIED TOGETHER**” (Rom. 8:17). Christ coming “with clouds” certainly shows that each of these sons, to whom is given that *same glory* that Jesus had from eternity, shall stand ultimately *in his own realm of the glory of the Lord*. The glory is shared, so the cloud which represents that glory is shared. Each elect son becomes a manifestation of the glory – of the *cloud* – of the *shekinah*! In the light of truth so sublime let us search our hearts and sanctify ourselves in the knowledge that we are the *body of Christ*. The cloud of old rested upon the tabernacle and filled the temple with the glory of the Lord! *We* are now His tabernacle and His temple! *We* are now His ark, His most holy place, and His holy mount! The glory is now given to us, rests upon us, increasingly fills us, and shall radiate out from this holy habitation of God forevermore! In Old Testament times God dwelt in one single cloud. But now He says, “I will

dwell *in them*, and walk *in them*...and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord” (II Cor. 6:16-18).

As the clouds pour out the rain upon our land, so the heavens pour down water upon the earth. When a cloud becomes so heavy with droplets that it can no longer hold them, it spills over, and we have rain. “O Lord my God, Thou art very great...who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: who maketh the *cloud His chariot*: He *watereth* the hills *from His chambers*” (Ps. 104:3,13). The clouds are the chambers of God containing the water of life! A cloud is full of water and water speaks to us of life. Water typifies both the Spirit of God and the Word of God (Eph. 5:26; Jn. 7:37-39). A cloud speaks to us of a vessel which contains water, or contains life. God by His Spirit gives *living water* to refresh and impart life to His creation! It is the nature of a cloud to *empty itself*. “If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth” (Eccl. 11:3). When the cloud gets filled up, it rains! That is the nature of the clouds – rain pours out! Now, all that God *is* is being formed in His sons, we are becoming a receptacle, a vehicle for all the fullness of God, filled up with the life-giving properties of our Father! HE IS FILLING THE CLOUDS!

The nature of each son will be to pour out that life just as God poured it into Jesus and Jesus is pouring it into us. If the sons, as the clouds of heaven, be full of God, they will pour Him out upon all who dwell in the earth-realm! A true ministry has life to give, and is willing to empty himself in order to give life to a dry and thirsty people. Pour out his life for others – that is what Jesus did! We shall empty out that same life on a groaning creation and quicken all who are held in the bondage of corruption! The apostles Peter and Jude both tell us that *false ministries* are “*clouds without water...carried about of winds*.” A *true* ministry, then, is *acloud with water*. A true ministry has life to give! A true ministry is willing to empty himself out in order to bring that life to a dry and parched land! Jesus was a bright cloud laden with water, for “the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *give His life*...” Prepare to rain, O ye clouds!

The one glory has become the multiple glory! The one cloud of His presence has become many clouds of His presence! The Lord is coming to be glorified in a many-membered body, in the clouds of His presence! These are the clouds of His glory into which the triumphant saints of God are being “caught up.” Our “catching up” is being brought to that high spiritual sphere where we become one with that whole great “cloud of witnesses,” the *spirits of just men made perfect*! They without us cannot be made perfect, but they with us are the very perfection of God expressed out of the high realm of the heavens of God’s Spirit. What a glorious *union* of forces when those of our generation on earth, and all those overcoming saints of all former ages who have gone on before us, are joined together, becoming an indestructible force in the full, total and complete manifestation of God’s majesty, power, and glory at the manifestation of the sons of God! Gird up your loins, beloved, for I hear the sound of *abundance of rain*!

The Resident within the shimmering cloud of glory is just the Lord Himself! The Lord is the source of the dazzling light, for it is HE who causes the celestial host to shine forth, thus forming the “cloud” and manifesting His glory thereby. Be not discouraged, my beloved, for our Lord shall complete all of His work and purpose in us, lifting us up into higher realms of His Spirit, and completing that *union with the whole body of the firstborn*. The life of God is taking form! The clouds are coming together! The clouds are gathering rain! The glory of the Lord shall

be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together! Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him!

This treasure we have in *earthen vessels* (II Cor. 4:7). Ah, there is a glory even now as we glorify God in these mortal bodies. Christ had and disclosed such a glory in that dim and distant past when He walked the shores of blue Galilee. But, blessed be His name, in His resurrection He came forth in new garments, clad in a sin-free and death-free body of incorruption and immortality! Now His wonderful life is swallowing up the sin and death in us, bringing to His chosen ones also a change of raiment, and in His due time we shall be *changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, for this corruptible is putting on incorruption and this mortal is putting on immortality. Only as we daily *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ are we changed! “Putting on” is not a passive thing. We *are* putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; we *are* putting on incorruption and immortality; and because we *are* putting on the life, mind, and nature of His resurrection, we *are* being changed! When we are fully changed by the power of His resurrection we shall be *bright clouds* out of whom *God shall shine* and out of whom *the voice of God shall speak*. We shall be pillars of clouds by day, and pillars of fire by night, to lead and guide *all humanity* from the bondage of Egypt to the blessing and abundance of the Promised Land!

Though His glory has generally been hidden throughout the ages, at certain times and on special occasions that hidden glory has flashed forth into prominence before the eyes of the few who by the predestined counsel of God were permitted to experience unspeakable things unlawful for a man to utter. We are coming ever nearer when God shall unveil His power and glory before the face of all nations and peoples in a manner far beyond any measure experienced by men of any age! The whole world shall soon see the glory of the Lord in an unprecedented way! From earth’s teeming millions of all ages there is a people arising in the image of Christ. Those who watch the spiritual heavens shall soon see clouds as they have never seen before! We have seen the clouds of earth’s atmosphere, inky black clouds, and clouds of snowy whiteness; clouds brightly tinted, and many silver lined; clouds made brilliantly gorgeous by the afterglow of the setting sun. But we never yet have seen clouds made magnificently glorious by the blazing splendor of the Son of God! We have seen clouds charged by flashes of lightning. Not yet have we seen clouds charged with the power of omnipotence and flashing with the incorruptible radiance of Christ’s life and immortality! Afar off we have seen the morning clouds as they have enwrapped the distant mountain peaks and splendidly capped the hilltops. We have yet to see the clouds which enfold the blazing form of the Mighty One! We have seen clouds driven as chariots to carry rain to the dry and thirsty fields. But *CLOUDS ARE FORMING IN THE HEAVENS OF GOD’S SPIRIT THAT WILL BE SEEN, THAT WILL BE THE CHARIOT OF HEAVEN’S KING OF GLORY AS HE COMES TO REFRESH AND QUICKEN AND RESTORE ALL THINGS!*

What a sight for eyes to behold! How it enraptures the faithful ones who “love His appearing” and have hoped to the end “for the grace that is to be brought unto them” at “the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Of a sudden the blazing light of day will take on a new brightness, above all the glory of the sun, and grow still more light, more bright, and more dazzling, until the eyes of men behold the advancing glory of God’s Christ! And with the glory clouds of myriads of like ones unto Himself the all-conquering Christ will appear in all the fullness of Himself in the earth! These brilliant bands will fill the glory-flashing skies from end to end and flood the world

with life, light, and love! How magnificent will be the advancing pageantry of the skies! How sublime beyond all mortal comprehension will be *the revelation of Jesus Christ!*

No wonder John followed his exclamation concerning the Lord coming with clouds with this significant explanation: "...and *every eye shall see Him.*" This beautiful text has often been misused and abused in an attempt to prove the erroneous theory that Jesus will return as a flesh and blood man and be suspended in the sky until every individual throughout the whole earth has had an opportunity to see Him. But this crude interpretation of the prophecy is quite out of harmony with the Bible's use of language and the symbolic scheme of the book of Revelation. Let us note, for example, how scripture uses the function of the eye to symbolize *discernment*. After Job's long experience of calamity and trial, and the revelation of God's heart to him, he cried out in communion with God, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but NOW MINE EYE **SEETH** THEE!" (Job 42:5). All will concede, I believe, that Job did not see God literally, but he saw Him, nonetheless. Jesus said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they *see.*" I doubt that any would contend that Jesus was reminding the disciples to reflect upon how fortunate they were not to be *physically blind!*

To "see" means to *know*. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall *know* God." A pure heart is one to which all that is not of God is strange and jarring. A heart that has no desires but for the glory of God, whose affections all center in Him, whose delight is in His perfect will, such an one will truly *see* and *know* the Lord! It is better to know God than even to see Him by the eyes of sense. There were many who saw Jesus who did not know Him. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him and hated Him, some of them. You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless your heart be quickened, cleansed, and transformed, you could not know Him to be the Christ. It is only purity of heart that gives purity of sight!

I don't believe every eye is going to see Him because they are watching TBN, CBN, CNN, or reading USA Today. Every eye is going to see Him because there is coming such great grace and mighty power at the revelation of Jesus Christ in His body that it shall produce a supernatural *quickening* in the lives of all who behold the appearing of the Lord. Their *spiritual eyes* shall be opened and they will *understand* and *know* what they have never known before! They will not see as they have seen before, but their minds and hearts will be changed and transfigured in the light of His glory. What a hope!

A beautiful illustration is found in the gospel of Luke. The aged prophet, Simeon, who had received the promise from God that he should not see death until he had *seen* the Lord's Christ, came by the Spirit into the temple, when Joseph and Mary brought in the child Jesus. "Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: FOR MINE EYES HAVE S-E-E-N THY SALVATION." What kind of eyesight is this? A little babe in the arms of his mother, and yet Simeon's eyes were opened to see – not just the form of the babe, but THY SALVATION! This certainly was not an uncommon sight, mothers were constantly coming into the temple with their children, to do for them after the custom of the law. And no doubt there was a vast multitude of other people in the temple on that day; they, too, saw the babe in the arms of his mother, but they did not see THY SALVATION, for having eyes, they saw not – "and the world knew Him not."

When the scripture said, “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and *all flesh shall see it together*,” God is saying the same to the world today. The unveiling of the sons of God is the revelation of the glory of the Lord! When the glory of the Lord is revealed, which is the salvation of God, it is the fulfillment of the word of the Lord to His elect through Isaiah, “I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that THOU MAYEST B-E M-Y S-A-L-V-A-T-I-O-N UNTO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.” When the kingdom of God fills the earth, the earth will be filled with righteousness. WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD! When the glory of the Lord is revealed, the earth will be flooded with light. WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! The reason the world will know the sons of God to be the salvation of God is because God pours out His Spirit upon *all flesh*. All humanity, with that quickening of the Spirit, will have their eyes enlightened to *see* in the body of Christ the salvation of God, to *see* in the sons of God the glory of God and the righteousness of God. The world will see God’s elect as the righteousness of God because we are becoming righteous sons! The world will see God’s elect as the light of the world because we are becoming a glorious shining people! The world will see God’s elect as the salvation of God because we are becoming a fully-saved people!

“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him!”