

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

### FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

#### Part 54

#### THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

*"And by the angel of the church in Philadelphia write..."* (Rev. 3:7).

The church in Philadelphia is the sixth of the seven churches in Asia addressed by the Lord in the vision of John. The Greek word for Philadelphia is *Philadelphos* and its meaning is "one who loves his brother." Philadelphia was a young city founded and colonized by people from Pergamos. This was done during the reign of Attalus the Second, who ruled in Pergamos from 159 — 138 BC. Attalus had great love for his brother Eumenes, and it was because of this love that he was called Philadelphos. It was after him that Philadelphia was named.

In the letter to the church at Philadelphia we find many of the same phrases that were penned to the other six churches, so we must look a little closer to see what the Lord is really saying. Philadelphia is a great church to study for so many wonderful things are said about this church! In fact, not one negative thing is said about the church in Philadelphia! We can benefit from the positive things said about a church, and we can also benefit from the negative things said about a church. The fact is, the word of God is filled with great commendations, and also with great corrections, and we can profit by both. The

scriptures are replete with people's mistakes and people's successes. God has never made it a practice to hide His servant's mistakes as the leaders of this world are wont to do.

Most men who write their autobiography maximize their successes and minimize their failures. Some of us have surely noticed in scripture how the Holy Spirit often takes just a verse or two to record a man's successes and chapter after chapter to talk about his failures. Let us then be men and women of understanding, that, instead of seeking only the praise and blessing of God, we may also receive the rebuke, correction, and chastening dispensed from the Father's hand of divine wisdom and purpose upon all who receive the call to sonship. These are the great lessons in the letters to the seven churches freely offered to all who seek after glory, honor, and immortality in the kingdom of God!

Of the seven churches, two of them received no indictment from the Lord, nor were they told to repent. The church in Smyrna was known as the "suffering church" because of their severe persecutions, and they were not told to repent. The Lord saw their trouble and tribulation, their poverty and imprisonment, their unswerving steadfastness and great faithfulness, and they did not need to be told to repent. It was in their hearts to repent when the need arose, for the work of God ran deep in their lives. Considering their great trials and intense tribulations and the mighty dealings of God in their lives, the Lord said to them, "*Be thou faithful unto death, **and I will give thee a crown of life***" (Rev. 2:10). It was not to the death of the body that the Lord referred, but to the death of the carnal mind of the Adamic life!

The second church, of course, against which the Lord laid no charge, nor did He tell them to repent, was the church in Philadelphia. Because they kept the word of His patience, by which the kingdom of God is inherited, He gave them wonderful promises. To the church in Philadelphia the Lord said, "*Hold that fast which thou hast, that **no man take thy crown.***" These last words mean "that no man step

into that place which was designed for thee.” For example, after the manner that Jacob stepped into Esau’s place; Judah stepped into Reuben’s place; David stepped into Saul’s place; Matthias stepped into Judas Iscariot’s place; the church stepped into Israel’s place. The message is clear — God *will* have a victorious body, a company of overcoming sons of God, who shall within themselves overcome all things and be crowned with life, glory, authority, and power! Should we fail to move in and possess our inheritance in God, as the generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt did, the Lord will reach out and raise up others to take our place, and they will thus *take our crown!*

The “crown” is mentioned in connection with only *two* churches out of the seven: Smyrna and Philadelphia — God’s overcoming remnant! The word picture is that of a royal crown of triumph — total victory over *every enemy*, including the last enemy, death. The Greek word for crown in these passages is *stephanos*. The popular name “Stephen” is derived from this word, and this crown was usually a laurel wreath woven of fragrant branches, or the like. It was granted to winners in the Panhellenic games and also as a token of public honor for distinguished service, especially of military leaders who had been victorious over their enemies on the battlefield. It was also given at marriage feasts, especially in royal families, to celebrate the joy of the bridegroom in having “won” the maiden as his bride. This crown always denotes A VICTOR’S CROWN — the crown of an OVERCOMER!

It is my conviction that these two churches, the church in Smyrna and the church in Philadelphia, represent the Lord’s elect and chosen remnant in the earth throughout the church age. They also correspond to the two witnesses in chapter eleven of the Revelation. We know that a *candlestick* represents a *church*. There are *two churches* out of the seven that received no condemnation or reproof from the Lord, and were given only great and precious promises. Of the two witnesses it is testified, “And I will give power unto my *two witnesses*, and they shall

prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (humility, brokenness). These are the *two olive trees* (anointed ones), and the *two candlesticks* standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3-4). **Two candlesticks! Two churches!** Two given a special anointing and standing before God! Ah, Smyrna and Philadelphia, what a calling you have!

## THE KEY OF DAVID

“These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that *hath the key of David*, He that *openeth, and no man shutteth*; and *shutteth, and no man openeth*” (Rev. 3:7).

The key of David speaks of he who has the “key” or the “authority” and “dominion” of the king of Israel. The king of Israel is the king of God’s called and chosen people! The people of Israel in the Old Testament experienced great and mighty things. God called them, chose them, and made them a great nation in the earth. The hand of God was upon them in favor and blessing so long as they loved, honored, obeyed, and served Him; but when they departed from the Lord and did wickedness, in faithfulness He judged and corrected them.

One such occasion was in the days of Isaiah when both the house of Judah and the house of Israel were filled with corruption, sin, idolatry, and rebellion. Their response to God’s correction at that time is described in these words: “In that day the Lord God of hosts called you to weeping and mourning (in sorrow and brokenness), to shaving off all your hair (in humiliation) and to the girding with sackcloth (of repentance). But instead you gave yourselves to pleasure and mirth, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, with the idea Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die! And the Lord of hosts revealed Himself in my (Isaiah’s) ears as He said, Surely this unatoned sin

shall not be purged from you until you are punished — and the punishment will be death, says the Lord God of hosts” (Isa. 22:12-14).

The Assyrians came and laid siege against the city of Jerusalem and the city was about to be taken. The defenses of Judah were inadequate to protect the city. There were “breaches” in the walls of the city of David and the people were tearing down their houses to fortify the wall. Their water supply was endangered. It was a desperate time for the inhabitants of Jerusalem! God was calling for weeping and mourning, but they chose instead joy and gladness, eating flesh and drinking wine. They were partying in the face of catastrophe!

The government was exceedingly corrupt. A man by the name of Shebna was the steward of Hezekiah, king of Judah. As steward he had authority over all the king’s house and affairs of state. Today we might call him the chief of staff. His authority was the very authority of the king himself to administer the affairs of the kingdom on behalf of, and in the name of, the king. Shebna, however, was a vain, proud, glory-seeking man! Shebna was living in ease and splendor while all the trouble was going on, heedless to the problems that were piling up. He misused his authority and spent the king’s money on frivolous things. In those days when men spent lavishly, it was not the races, casinos, yachts, or huge estates, but expenditures were made on sepulchers. Shebna was presumptuous enough to be building himself a tomb among the great men of Israel, a massive, ornate, and expensive tomb worthy of a king, far exceeding his known income. The inevitable inference, of course, was that in order to accomplish this he was appropriating the state funds for his own use.

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord declared that He would violently take away this corrupt government, and roll it like a ball into a large country. “Behold, the Lord will hurl you away violently, O you strong man; yes, He will take tight hold of you and He will surely cover you with shame. He will surely roll you up in a bundle and toss you like a

ball into a large country (as a captive): there you will die and there will be your splendid chariots, your disgrace to your master's house! And I will thrust you from your office, and from your station will you be pulled down" (Isa. 22:17-19, Amplified).

This prophecy had a literal fulfillment in the days of king Hezekiah, but it has deep **spiritual significance** to the elect of the Lord in these days! All the things which happened to the fleshly Israel are written for *our admonition*, upon whom have come the transition of the ages. They teach us great and valuable lessons in the spirit! The Lord told Shebna that He would take away his authority and position and that He was going to install a new government. The record continues, "In that day I will call my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. And I will clothe *him* with *your robe* (position) and bind *your girdle* (will, administration) on him and will commit *your authority to his hand*; he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And *the key of the house of David* I will lay upon his shoulder; he shall *open and no one shall shut, he shall shut and no one shall open*. And I will fasten him like a peg or nail in a firm place; and *he will become a throne of honor and glory* to his father's house. And they will hang on him the honor and the whole weight of his father's (David's) house" (Isa. 22:20-24, Amplified).

God said He was going to install a new government, raise up a new administrator, even one named Eliakim, and lay the *key of David* on his shoulder. This is the first mention in scripture of *the key of David*, and the Lord quoted this prophecy in His message to the church in Philadelphia — confirming that HE was the One to whom Isaiah had prophetically pointed! Shebna's position was given to Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, whom the Lord calls "my servant." Eliakim was a bondsman of the Lord, one who had an ear to hear what the Lord said, and a heart to obey His word and do all His will. He was a bondsman of God! Eliakim was of the same spirit as God's called and chosen elect, to whom the

book of Revelation is addressed, the *bondslaves* of Jesus Christ! (Rev. 1:1).

When God called Eliakim to rule Judah, the Lord said of him, “*And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open*” (Isa. 22:22). The key of the house of David represented the God-given power and authority given to Eliakim to rule and reign over Judah. With that key, Eliakim was fully authorized of God to open doors of authority and opportunity that no one else could shut, and to shut doors that no one else could open. For us, the key of the house of David represents God-given power and authority, first of all to rule in the circumstances of our own lives, to rule and bless in the midst of the Lord’s people, and to govern all the nations in the kingdom of God. And when that kingdom key is given to us as the body of Christ, the body of the One who has the key of David, we shall govern wisely, for we shall do so with the mind of Christ and with the authority of our Father.

Shebna is a type of the sinfulness and arrogance of the people of Israel, and therefore of the natural man, of the religious man! The beautiful parable here reveals the great truth that the authority over the house of the Lord is to be taken from the carnal, religious man of flesh, and given to another. Eliakim is a type of the *new man*, the *new humanity*, the *new order*, and the *new dominion* that supersedes the authority of the old man, the carnal mind, and all the old religious systems of man. The government and authority of the house of Judah, which had corrupted its ways before the Lord, forsaken His covenant, broken His commandments, polluted His name, prostituted His truth, and paganized His worship, would be given to another, a true one, a faithful one, who would reign in righteousness and be a father to the Lord’s people and a deliverer of all creation. This is the Christ! This is the Christ, both Head and body, the true one, the faithful one who shall reign in righteousness over all things in the kingdom of God!

This new Christ-man, the spirit, the spiritual man, the inner man, the elect of God in the full stature of Jesus Christ will never be replaced by the man of flesh or any other order unto the ends of the ages. “And I will fasten him like a peg or nail in a firm place; and he will become a throne of honor and glory” (Isa. 22:23). These words were spoken of Eliakim, to whom the Lord gave the key of David and the authority of the kingdom. Prophetically, in type, it points to God’s Christ! And in the message to the church in Philadelphia the Spirit says to the overcomer, “Him that overcometh will I make *a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out*” (Rev. 3:12). A pillar is that which is set, established, permanent, immovable. The Lord also told the church in Philadelphia, “These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, HE THAT HATH THE KEY OF DAVID, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name...to him that overcometh *will I make a pillar in the temple of my God*” (Rev. 3:7-8,12). The intent of the Spirit in this passage is to show the awesome power and authority invested in Christ, and then to show God’s intention to share that authority and power with us!

The true application of this “key of David” is to the government of Christ. In Christ God is bringing forth a new man, a new ministry, a new order, a new authority, a new rule and government that has concern, respect, and honor for the kingdom of God. A key is being cut and formed and prepared to administer the kingdom of God in all the earth! Our Lord has that key on His shoulder, for the government is *upon His shoulder* (Isa. 9:6), and the shoulder is the point where the weight of the kingdom rests upon the **body of Christ**. Notice that God told Eliakim that He would lay the key of the house of David “*upon his shoulder.*” The Hebrew word translated shoulder in this verse indicates the area where burdens are placed. When a man such as Eliakim is called of God to reign over an earthly government or kingdom, it is truly



a burden. To rule and reign in the earthly governments and kingdoms under man's corrupt order is indeed a burdensome experience. I have noticed through many years that most men elected to the presidency of the United States of America appear to *age ten years* during one short four-year term. There is a dramatic increase of wrinkles in their face, bags under their eyes, and gray in their hair. What an awesome weight they are under! But in the kingdom of God, there are no burdens. It is not a burden to rule and reign with Christ in our Father's kingdom! The kingdom of God is a kingdom of righteousness, blessing, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! It is joy and peace and rest to reign with Christ in our Father's kingdom, for we are then doing our Father's will on earth in righteousness, blessing, peace, harmony, and perfection. Those who make up the mature and perfected body of Christ, upon the shoulder of which the kingdom rests, rule with great delight, gladness, and joyfulness!

## HE THAT OPENS, AND NO MAN SHUTS

*"These things saith He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7).*

The Lord knows when to open doors, and when to close doors — and no man is able to close the door that He opens, or to open the door that He closes. Only by the Spirit of God are the realms of God opened up to us! Man will have nothing to do with "electing" or "appointing" God's kings and priests who shall reign with Christ over the nations and over all things! The man-made religious systems elect and appoint their elders, deacons, pastors, superintendents, presidents, overseers, bishops, and archbishops, and they can dismiss them and move them from one assembly or area to another at will. The kingdom of God is not a democratic organization — it is a **spiritual administration** — and its kings and priests are not subject to the will of the people, nor the whims

of ecclesiastical leaders. The name *Eliakim* means “God raises up.” Oh, yes! Only God can raise up the government of His kingdom in the hearts of His called and chosen elect, and this He does sovereignly by His Spirit. All who occupy positions in the religious systems of man by the vote of the people, the vote of a board, or the will of man, are the servants of men and not the ministers of Christ by the Spirit. No man can close the door the Spirit opens, and no man can open the door the Spirit closes. Christ alone possesses the key of David! He opens doors that no one else can shut, and shuts doors that no one else can open. It is His delight, joy, and utmost desire and holy will to share all that He is with us. We are receiving the keys of the kingdom as we continue to grow in Christ! As we receive these keys we are learning the ways of Christ, the mind of Christ, and the will of Christ in all things. We are now doing only that which we see our Father do! Therein lies the authority of Christ.

There are many churches and individuals who are constantly trying to open doors that God has not opened for them. That is truly an effort in futility, for the Lord assures us that when *He* opens a door *no man can shut it*, and when *He* shuts a door, *no man can open it*. When one “confesses” and “names and claims” and “speaks” to a situation and nothing happens, that one is truly trying to open a door that the Lord has shut! Only by the mind of Christ are we able to speak to the situations that GOD purposes to change and deal with, and refrain from endeavoring to move mountains that God is not moving. Oftentimes brethren try to fit into someone else’s vision when what they should be doing is seeking the Lord to know what door He has opened for them. There are doors God has opened in our life, and there are doors God has closed, so why do we expend precious time and unnecessary effort trying to open a door that it is impossible to open?

Have you ever felt yourself to be in the lovely presence of Christ? I am sure you must have at times. If you have never waited for

His presence, I strongly advise you to wait with Him until all earthly voices are stilled, until the sounds of business, family, pleasure, and your own rampaging thoughts and clamoring desires are silent, until you hear Him whisper His message to your heart. Find out by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in that holy moment which doors are open in your life, discover through prayer and holy waiting upon God what your calling in God is; determine within yourself by that inward voice of the Son of God what is the *will of God* in your present walk; seek after that and give yourself to it instead of trying to kick open a door that God has closed. He has opened it up for someone else, perhaps, but not for you, at this time, therefore be content, my precious brother, my dear sister, in God's purpose within you. If your life seems small, confined, and uneventful, do not fret; abide in *Father's provision*, for none of us can go beyond the door He has opened or shut before us. God will teach you the greatest things and do the most marvelous work within you right there in that undistinguished place where you are! Leave the door opening and shutting to the Lord!

Every member of the body of Christ has a function, a vision, a direction to go in the Spirit. Many of us in this hour God has called to stand in the word of His kingdom, to ascend in the Spirit into the high places of God, and there to worship and minister in His holy temple. Everything about us is being affected as we fulfill this priestly ministry! You have callings and abilities of God *in the Spirit* and therefore are admonished to faithfully go through those doors God has opened for you. John was "in the Spirit" when he saw a "door opened *in heaven*." Ah, the doors opened for God's elect are **in heaven!** They are in heavenly places where we sit with Christ and rule and reign with Him in the Spirit. These are doors that God has *sovereignly* opened in your life, which others cannot enter; they are not doors of your choosing, but doors of divine ordination. Our calling to sonship and the kingdom of God is the door that God has opened before us, which we are now entering by the grace and power of Christ.

Many do not understand this truth, but it is an utter impossibility for any man or woman, at any point of time in his or her life, to go *beyond the will of God*. It is as impossible for you to open a door that God has shut, or shut a door that God has opened, as it is for a whale to fly with eagles. Learn this, oh man, and you will know a great truth: there is a *time* for every thing and every man! Truly did the wise man write, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace" (Eccl. 3:1-8).

There is a time to be born into God's family! There is a time to wait upon God! There is a time to grow and learn and discover! There is a time to mature and be manifest as a SON OF GOD! It is a great mystery, but the truth is that not one of these realities can be obtained or attained apart from God's *appointed time*. I know brethren who think that by their own intense desire and faith they can by-pass the grave, lay hold upon immortality, and step right in to manifest sonship. Some will consider me an unbeliever, but I do declare to you that *it won't happen!* God has a *time!* The firstborn Son of God came "in the fullness of time." At age twelve He could have gone to Cana of Galilee and tried to turn water into wine, but nothing would have happened! "My hour has not yet come," He said. There was a time to be born in Bethlehem's stable. There was a time to go to Nazareth and be subject, growing in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and men. There was a time for His "showing forth unto Israel." When the day of Pentecost was "fully come" the Spirit was poured out from on high. Peter and the rest could have gotten tired of *waiting*, left the upper room, determined to bring in the new dispensation sheerly by faith, but their efforts would

have proven futile! God has a time for everything. God has a time for the manifestation of the sons of God! Don't think you can hasten it, my friend. Abide in Father's dealings and wait patiently upon the Lord. All who are walking in the light of the Lord, in expectation of the glory of God, and doing the will of the Father *will stand in their place in the hour of manifestation!* GOD will do this thing, my beloved, not the will of the flesh nor the zeal of man.

I am reminded of an incident in the early 1960's when Lorain and I were laboring as missionaries in Mexico. Two new doors of ministry had opened to us and we were not certain which we should enter. We asked a dear sister, a prophetess of the Lord, to pray with us about the matter. Shortly she sent a note with a prophetic word which said, "Do not enter either door — stay where you are. *One year from this date*, as man reckons time, a door will open and you will know it is the door the Lord has opened." We honored this word and continued to minister in the area where we were.

The following summer I was attending a convention in the state of Pennsylvania. As I sat in the meetings a strange thing happened. The voice of the Spirit came to me powerfully, telling me to return to Sarasota, Florida to minister with the church where I had been an associate minister prior to going to Mexico. For two hours I reasoned with the Lord, for, as far as I knew, the church in Florida was not in need of my services, and they certainly had not contacted me or invited me to come! Furthermore, we were involved in the ministry in Mexico with plans for an expanded ministry there in coming months. At last I said, "O.K. Lord, but it's up to you!"

A few days later I was in a brother's house in another place in Pennsylvania, where I was ministering for the weekend. His phone rang. It was a long distance call for me from Florida. One of the elders in the church in Sarasota was on the line. The senior minister there had resigned. The brethren had prayed and discerned in the Spirit that I was

to come and fill that place. Of course, I accepted at once! Shortly thereafter we returned to Mexico to settle our affairs there. While sorting through the papers in my desk I ran across the prophecy from our prophetess friend. I opened it and began to read, “*One year from this date, as man reckons time, a door will open and you will know it is the door the Lord has opened.*” I glanced at the date on the top of the page — it was exactly, to the day, one year before the brother’s phone rang in Pennsylvania with the invitation for us to return to Florida! You see, my beloved, God is the great door-opener! When the Lord opens a door, no man can shut it; when the Lord closes a door, no man can open it. It is the law of the kingdom! And there is a *time* for everything! It is not by trying to force the issue, but by *faith and patience* we inherit the promises! It is by abiding in His will, paying the price, rejoicing in hope, and preparing our hearts for GOD’S TIME!

“I know thy works: behold, I have *set before thee an open door*, and no man can shut it...” (Rev. 3:8). While there are many doors God opens and shuts in our lives as we walk with Him and grow in Him, this open door is the same door John saw “opened in heaven” at the end of the messages to the seven churches. Because the church in Philadelphia is God’s faithful overcoming remnant, a door is opened by which they are ushered into the heavenlies — into the high places of the Spirit in Christ! To enter this door is to have a transformation from the earthly consciousness and state of being into the heavenly. If any of us seem to fall short, be encouraged, for He will deal with us until we are able to enter in. No man can shut this door! No one can keep you out of God’s purpose for you! The door is open before us! We have heard the voice as of a trumpet saying, “Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.” The Spirit is bidding us to arise and enter in to our full inheritance in Christ! This call goes out only to the called and chosen elect of the Lord! If you have heard the voice, the door is open before you!

## I WILL KEEP YOU FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will *keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth*” (Rev. 3:10).

Another way of saying this is, “I will guard you from the hour of afflictions sent by God to test one’s character.” Each of us must have specific tests that are custom made for us. God in His infinite wisdom has chosen the ones that you need to bring you to maturity in Christ. The tests I have are not the same ones you have. Yet, thank God, there is a place where the testing *ends!* That place is where we move out of our fleshly consciousness to live and walk in the Spirit and by the Spirit.

This process of testing, or the “hour of temptation,” comes upon all the world, saith the Lord! The word “world” here is not the Greek word *kosmos*, but *oikoumene*, meaning the entire globe and all its inhabitants. But the Lord goes on to say, “to try or test or discipline them that dwell upon the *earth*.” I find myself too limited to set forth this truth as I should do, but let us request of God’s Spirit the ability to see that the “earth” speaks to the natural realm of the carnal mind, and there are vast multitudes of believers who dwell all their lifetime on a natural plane of man-made religious experience, unquickened to the supernal glories of the heavenly realm where spiritual men and women sit together in the blessedness of the divine life and celestial glory of the ascended Christ.

Those who dwell in the heavenlies in Christ live and walk in the Spirit far above the earth realm where the testings of those “upon the earth” cannot reach. In this high and holy realm we are kept from the

hour of testing, trial, and discipline that is designed for men dwelling in the lowlands of the flesh and the carnal mind. Oh, yes, our bodies are still upon the earth, but our spirits have soared to celestial worlds where what happens in the flesh does not affect how we live our lives. All are tried — but those who live the life of ascension are unaffected by the pressures of this dark age. What happens in the outer world has no power to take us off our course that God has set for those who are called to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are not judged with the world, we are not tempted or tested or tried as are those who are still struggling and have not overcome the world, nor are we moved by any of the allurements, pressures, or powers of the earth realm of flesh and carnality. The words of the beautiful song by Bob and Charlotte Torango express it so aptly:

Come up hither, in the Son realm,  
No dragon here abides;  
For the sure word now has conquered  
And in Him we have our life.  
Though the kingdoms of men crumble  
Have no fear, just stand and see  
That the kingdom of our Father  
Is brought forth in you and me!

It will greatly aid our understanding of the book of Revelation when we see that almost all the events in the book take place in one of three dimensions: HEAVEN, EARTH, and SEA. These are, of course, symbolical and prophetic terms! They represent states of being, lifestyles, levels of consciousness, and dimensions of life within each of



us. The *lowest* of these three realms is the sea. Throughout the book of Revelation a number of things transpire in the *sea*. “And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the *sea*: and the third part of the *sea* became blood.” “I stood upon the sand of the *sea*, and I saw a beast rise up out of the *sea*, having seven heads and ten horns.” “And the *sea* gave up the dead that were in it.” “Woe to the inhabitants of the *sea*, for the devil is come down unto you.”

Throughout the scriptures the sea is a type of the inner storms and turbulent nature of the Adamic man. The prophet Isaiah penned these inspired words: “The *wicked* are ***like the troubled sea***, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isa. 57:20-21). Jude also described wicked men when he said, “These are ***raging waves of the sea***, foaming out their own shame” (Jude 13). The beloved John, on the isle of Patmos, had a vision of a great whore sitting on *many waters*. The angel revealed the meaning of the many waters, saying, “the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are ***peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues***” (Rev. 17:15).

The natural sea is a great deep, an abyss (Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2; Deut. 8:7; 33:13). The Psalmist wrote of this abyss of the wickedness of man, “They *search out* iniquities; they accomplish a diligent *search*: both *their inward thought* of every one of them, and the *heart* is D-E-E-P (an abyss)” (Ps. 64:6). To the enlightened mind of David the depth of iniquity of which the human heart is capable is so great that it is beyond the ability of man to comprehend. The heart of man is an ***unfathomable depth***, or, as Jeremiah observed, “The heart is deceitful *above all things*, and desperately wicked: *who can know it?*” (Jer. 17:9). While John the Revelator saw a ***beast*** (nature) rising out of the sea (abyss, depth) of humanity, Jesus expressed the same truth thus: “For from ***within, out of the heart of men***, proceed ***all these evil things!***”

No one can dispute the fact that it is this restless, turbulent, raging, evil heart of the fleshly man that inspires every evil and devilish perversion, and has filled the world with ever increasing confusion, faithlessness, immorality, falsehood, fraud, hatred, violence, greed, cruelty, strife, wars, bloodshed, and oppression. Ah, the *sea* is the *lowest realm* on earth, and this vast sea of fleshly, Adamic humanity represents mankind at his lowest point — as bad off as man can be! Individually, however, it speaks of the lowest aspect of our human nature and life — the **body** with its passions and lusts. The sea represents the physical desires and impulses that are restless, driving, compelling, and raging out of control!

The second realm is that of the *earth*. In contrast with the sea and with heaven, the *earth* is the symbol of the second dimension of life, a realm higher than the sea, but lower than heaven, an intermediary realm which at its highest peak kisses heaven, and at its lowest level embraces the sea; yet, in the true sense it is, of itself, neither heavenly nor degenerate. The sea, as we have seen, comprises the masses of restless, surging, sinning, warring men who live only and always after the unrestrained desires of the flesh (body realm). Heaven, on the other hand, speaks of those who have been quickened, raised up, made alive in Christ, seated in Him in the heavenly places, who walk only and always *in the Spirit*. Those who “dwell upon the earth,” however, are a moral class, religious folk, with many up-right citizens of the community and church-going Christian people in their ranks; but these, while not overtly wicked, are not spiritual either, but in most aspects of their daily lives “mind earthly things.”

On the individual level the earth speaks of the *soul* — mind, will, and emotion. It is an intellectual realm, but also the realm of the carnal or natural mind. Out of this realm comes our organized society, law and order, charities, good works, even good religious works which are deemed spiritual, but which do not originate out of the spirit. The man

who walks in this realm of “earth” is that good neighbor of yours, a nice fellow, a good person, who wouldn’t cheat you or lie to you or misuse you in any way. In fact, he may be helpful, caring, and compassionate. He may attend First Methodist or St. Mary’s Church; he may be a Sunday School teacher, a deacon, or board member; he is socially and religiously active, a God-honoring, flag-waving man, but has never ascended into the heavenlies and does not live out of a heavenly dimension. You can’t accuse him of any gross sin, or any wicked or ungodly act, but if you start talking to him in a spiritual realm he will look at you like you came from Mars. He has absolutely no idea, not the foggiest notion, of what you are talking about! He doesn’t live in the sea, he doesn’t wallow in the lusts of the flesh, in pornography, crime, drugs, adultery, dishonesty, or any lustful thing. BUT NEITHER HAS HE BEEN TO HEAVEN!

In the earth realm one can **touch** the sea, and one can **touch** heaven, but one doesn’t dwell there! The hour of temptation is to “try them that *dwell* upon the earth,” the Spirit says. The Greek word for “dwell” is not the ordinary *oikeo*, but the strengthened form of the word, *katoikeo*, meaning those who have settled down upon the earth, who have identified themselves with it. They are content to remain in a carnal, soulish, natural-minded state of being! The man of earth lives out of the dimension of the first man Adam — the *living soul*! It is a soulical realm of life.

The third and *highest* of the three realms is *heaven*. This is the highest dimension of life, the dimension of *spirit*. Those who live out of the spirit are spiritual and heavenly. The Greek word for heaven is *isouranous* meaning **elevation, height, exaltation, eminence**. It has both physical and spiritual applications. In its spiritual sense it bespeaks of the eternal, invisible, and omnipresent **realm of the spirit** in which God and all celestial beings dwell — *far above* the realm of the physical, material, earthly, and mortal. It is not a geographical or astral

location. It is not a planet or a place. It is a DIMENSION OF LIFE, REALITY, AND BEING. It is a SPHERE OF EXISTENCE. It is a PLANE OF CONSCIOUSNESS. Every spirit life-form lives on a plane of spiritual awareness. Each of these planes constitutes a “heaven,” a spiritual realm *above the physical*.

Heaven is naught but the biblical name of the REALM OF GOD’S SPIRIT, the invisible and omnipresent dimension of Spiritual Reality. And it is all around us! It is as near to us as the air we breathe, closer to us even than the blood coursing through our veins. We are one with it by virtue of our spiritual life. “He that is joined to the Lord is *one spirit*.” We touch heaven as we touch God in our spirit. We behold heavenly things as with our spiritual mind we behold spiritual realities. We walk in heaven as we walk *in the spirit*. We think like celestial beings when we think with the *mind of Christ*. We act heavenly when we live by *divine nature*. Heaven is, furthermore, the realm of God’s government — His infinite power and almighty authority. This kingdom is rooted *in our spirit*, the heavenly dimension of our life.

Our Lord Jesus Christ had left His heavenly glory. He had humbled Himself, had taken upon Himself the form of sinful flesh; and becoming a man, was despised and rejected. He made Himself of no reputation. And yet, while in humanity and reproach, a Man among men, He made this statement: “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man ***which IS IN heaven***” (Jn. 3:13). The Son of God left His glory, and descended to the depths of shame and reproach. He came and took our place of disgrace in order that we might be raised and exalted and honored and, with Him, be given a name (nature) above every name! He, the Christ, who was made in all things like unto His brethren, yet, while a man on earth, in humility, Himself said, “The Son of man which ***IS in heaven!***”

Jesus the Christ, when a man on earth, was at the same time, in heaven! Our Lord was in heaven; He came down from heaven, and still

was in heaven. It is something a person can be in, can descend from, and still possess. Our Lord was the Mighty God — God manifest in the flesh, Emmanuel, God with us! Yes, even while in the flesh, by the eternal Spirit within, He was ONE with the invisible, infinite REALM OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD. His outer man was conscious of the earthly realm and one with it, but His inner man was conscious of the eternal realm and one with it. Oh, the mystery of it! The heavens were open to Him, He dwelt and lived and thought and walked and manifested out of the divine sphere of life. He was a heavenly man on earth!

No word written or spoken could hold more truth in this regard than the words of the apostle Paul wherein he speaks of “the power which God exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand *in the heavens, far above* all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come” (Eph. 1:20-21). These wonderful terms used by Paul are figures of speech. God is *omnipresent spirit* — He doesn’t physically *sit* on anything! Nor does He physically have a right hand! It means that Christ is raised up permanently into that ***highest spiritual realm*** where He has all power and authority! The “throne” spoken of in other scriptures refers to His ***omnipotent power***. So now we know where Christ ascended! HE ASCENDED INTO THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF SUPREME AUTHORITY AND ALMIGHTY POWER!

Then Paul says, “And He ***raised us up together with Him*** and ***made us sit down together with Him in the heavenly sphere***” (Eph. 2:6, Amplified). It will be a blessed day for us when God makes it clear to our hearts that we have already been raised up and given joint seating with Christ *in the very same heavens* where He is enthroned with His Father. YOU ARE WHERE HE IS! That is the true heaven — not visionary mansions, golden streets, or a flowing river out of the throne. Most Christians have no idea where heaven is, what

heaven is, or where they are! Therefore they live in the consciousness of a lower realm out of which they think, walk, act, and live.

The vast majority of believers think of heaven in futuristic and sentimental terms, somewhat as when a mother in some little country town sends her boy to the great city, and at once feels familiar with the great city because somewhere, lost in among its hurrying thousands, her boy is there. His familiar life, transported to it, seems to make it familiar. She feels as if she knew all about it. She talks of it with a kind of affection. As if it were almost her home, because it is the home of one she loves. She catches every mention of it as if it were a message meant for her. To go there is the constant dream of her life, and she feels as if when she came there she would know immediately the streets in which her heart has had its home so long. But though she dreams about it, and feels familiar in a strange way about it, the fact is she has ***never been there!*** That is how people think of heaven. But that is not how **spiritual people** think of heaven!

Those who are God's elect in this hour have been taught of God, they have been given an understanding for they have been quickened, made alive, raised up into the higher than all heavens, and in consciousness, in spirit, in reality are seated even now in the heavens in Christ Jesus! People think they are where their natural mind tells them they are. They have missed the spirit reality altogether and understand not that they are born from above and their citizenship is in heaven! That high and holy realm is not a place away off beyond the galaxies, but a place in our spirit where we rise up above our earthiness and learn to compare *spiritual things* with *spiritual things*. It is there that we discover ***reality!***

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

victory and triumph of the Son of God who dwells in our spirit, and in whom we dwell in blessed union, far above the sorrows, strife, sin, problems, perplexities, limitation, struggles, fears, disappointments, and death of the carnal realm. THIS is sonship! In spirit I hear the wonderful words falling upon the ears of the prophet of Patmos, “Rejoice, ye heavens, and *ye that dwell in them!*” (Rev. 12:12). This should help us see how it is that the promise of the Lord is fulfilled in us, “I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all *the world*, to try them that ***dwell upon the earth.***” The sons of God do not “dwell upon the earth!”

Those who dwell in heaven, who walk in the spirit, who think with the mind of Christ, who live out of divine nature, have no need to be “tried” as men who dwell in an earthly state. There is no processing in heaven! There is no condemnation, no judgment, proving, purging, refining, correction, discipline, or testing of those who live and dwell and sit in the ascended Christ! Those who truly walk after the spirit are not depressed, perplexed, worried, or victimized by any kind of “earthly” situation. When our affections are set upon *things above*, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and where we sit with Him and in Him, we are resurrected and ascended, for the Christ with whom we are joined in spirit is the Christ who has ascended into the heavens! When you stand in union with Him you are high above the mountains, not in the valleys. You are in the heavenly places, far above the earth. The things of earth grow strangely dim to those who truly are *in Christ*.

In the book of Revelation everything that comes out of heaven is good and wonderful! Angels, great and mighty, come out of heaven (Rev. 10:1; 18:1; 20:1). Voices of wisdom, revelation, and power come out of heaven (Rev. 10:4,8; 11:12,15; 14:2; 18:4-5; 21:3). The all-conquering army of God, Christ the firstborn with all the holy sons of God, come out of heaven (Rev. 19:11-14). And a city, a glorious city, the New Jerusalem, comes down from God out of heaven (Rev.

21:2,10). The throne of God is in that city, the Lamb is on the throne, and every overcomer is on the throne! So heaven is a wonderful realm, and I live there. All who live and walk in the spirit live there. Individually, I live there *in my spirit*. Collectively, we all live there in our walk with God in the spirit.

Within me, and within you, my beloved, there is a sea realm, the outer man of the body. In our intellect, in our soul life there is an earth realm. And in our spirit there is a heaven realm! There are things that are true in each of these realms, in each of these dimensions of our life. Every man on earth fits into one of those three categories — *every man!* There's not a man on this planet who isn't living out his life from one of those three realms. Millions of people live in the consciousness and power of one of those three categories of being. All processing takes place only in the realms of earth and the sea. Everything that comes out of heaven affects and deals with the earth and the sea. Fire comes down from heaven and brings purifying judgments upon those who dwell upon the earth and in the sea. Mighty messengers come down out of heaven and the sea rages and the earth shakes. Oh, yes! When heaven comes down and touches earth there are voices, and lightnings, and thunderings, and earthquakes, and judgments, and fires, and blood, and hail, and mighty transformations. I can't think of anything greater that could happen to my body and soul realms! I can't think of anything better that could descend in power upon the self-consciousness and self-righteousness of my soul realm, and the lusts and passions of my body realm. In the book of Revelation all that happens in the earth and in the sea originates out of heaven! I'll tell you why that's important. If you're trying to deal with your carnal mind and your flesh and your religious hang-ups or any other thing *apart from the life of God out of your spirit*, then you indeed are making a great effort of futility.

There is only one way to deal with the soul realm and the body realm, the earth and the sea, and that is to deal with them out of



heaven, in the spirit and by the spirit. We should earnestly meditate upon the words of the apostle Paul wherein he writes, “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye **through the spirit** do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Rom. 8:13). It is impossible to conquer the activities of the soul and the body by any effort that originates out of those realms. They have no power to reform themselves! But if you **through the spirit** put these realms into neutral, out of gear, you shall then live by the spirit and in the spirit. Paul continues, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Aren’t you glad!

For those who live in heaven everything is *in the spirit*. We walk in the spirit, live in the spirit, pray in the spirit, worship in the spirit, speak by the spirit, and do all things in and by the spirit. *This* is sonship! We find that as we walk and live after the spirit, judgment is brought into our lower realms of soul and body, and we have not to do anything about it. It is all accomplished out of a heavenly realm, by the spirit! There is no other way. If we go around preaching death to self, how to crucify the flesh, how to kill the old man, how to reform and change the old Adamic nature, then we’ve missed the whole book. None of that is of any value at all. My brother, my sister, nothing will even happen in your earth or in your sea until there is an administration of life out of your heaven. Read the book! It’s all there. THIS IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST!