

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

### FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

#### Part 64

THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA

(continued)

"To him that *overcometh* will I grant to *sit with me in my throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

The phrase "to him that overcometh" is very clear in the Greek. It is in the active voice in contrast to the passive voice. What that means is that it is participatory. The person is involved with the activity, rather than just permitting something to be done to him. Overcoming is an action verb. It implies that one *has succeeded, is succeeding, and shall succeed* in the endeavor. Now, the mood is a participle here in the Greek. What that means is that the verb "overcome" has, as it were, an *i-n-g* on the end of it. It shows a present tense action. Since we all live in the present, it implies overcoming — *now*. Therefore it should read, "To him that *is overcoming* will I grant..." The only place that any of us can be an overcomer is in the situation at the present moment! We can't go back and undo the past. Nor can we speculate about the future. All overcoming has to be accomplished in our NOW! This time that God has given us in His dealings is our opportunity to conquer and gain the victory in all situations and circumstances.

The seventh stage of our progressive journey to perfection is where we hear Jesus say, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.” It is significant to notice that our Lord says, “*in* my throne.” We need to understand what this means! Paul tells us that through His death, resurrection, and ascension Jesus was raised up to sit at the right hand of God in the higher-than-all-heavens. This does not mean that Jesus has for the past two thousand years been sitting beside a physical God, or a God limited to some particular spot in the universe, on a physical throne. In the first place, God does not exist in a physical form! He is omnipresent spirit which fills this whole universe, of which our scientists tell us there are more galaxies out there than all the individual grains of sand on all the beaches of the world. And each of those hundreds of billions of galaxies contain billions of trillions of stars, suns, planets, and moons!

Therefore, you cannot limit a God who is the originator of all these marvels, the source of their flaming energy, who upholds all things by His power, and who *fills all things* with Himself. “Whither shall I go from Thy presence?” the Psalmist asks. There is nowhere to go! Should you travel a billion light years into space you would still be surrounded and overwhelmed by the presence of God. You cannot limit this God, or put Him in a physical form, for He is “the *light* which no man can approach unto” — the very source of all the energy of the universe! The expression, “raised up to sit at the right hand of God” is a figure of speech denoting Christ’s *spiritual position*. In His glorified humanity He is the revelation and expression to creation of all the authority and power of the invisible God, yet He is not in His glorified humanity the invisible God. He, positionally, is at the right hand of God. The idea of God sitting on a throne and Jesus sitting on the throne beside Him ruling with Him denotes Jesus having been raised up in His glorified humanity

to express within Himself the authority and power of the One whom our eyes cannot see.

When Jesus says, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,” that is what He means. Notice, He did not say, “I’ll let him sit beside me on a throne.” Rather, “I’ll let him sit *with me* in *my throne*.” This denotes us having been raised up to the same state of glorification and exaltation and co-rulership with Jesus. Everything He is, the sons of God are! Then He said, “Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.” So when we see Jesus sitting in the Father’s throne, we know that the Father’s throne is His throne, and therefore our throne is likewise the Father’s throne. At the last stage of our journey we also are raised up as the full expression and revelation of the authority and power of almighty God, our Father!

Perhaps this is too great for the faith of some to receive, but all who have truly received the call to sonship *do embrace this truth in the full assurance of faith* and know within themselves that it is the revealed plan of God for His called and chosen elect. Ah, “It is not by might, nor by power, but *by my Spirit* saith the Lord!” This is not something that might happen or might not, for “He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having *predestinated us unto placement as sons* by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will” (Eph. 1:4-5). That which God has predestined He will bring to pass! He appointed us to sonship before the foundation of the world. May your soul rejoice in this precious truth, my beloved, may it fill you with the godly determination and divine faith to hasten your journey toward that place which is prepared for you!

The seven messages to the seven churches close with these three great earthly figures of eternal truth — the *door*, the *table*, and the *throne*. This order none may reverse or alter! We must open the

door, we must sit at His table and sup with Him, and He with us, and *then* we will be raised up to His throne!

Many years ago, amidst a great moving of the Spirit of God, the revelation of sonship fell with wonder upon our ears and burst with glory within our hearts. We sat enraptured for hours at a time, day after day, and were taught by the Spirit about the Father and His purposes and about that elect company He has called and chosen and apprehended to be His *sons*, ordained of God to rule with Him in His kingdom and restore all things into God. We learned that these sons would have unlimited power — power over everything — power over sin, power over sickness, power over the elements, power over demons, power over all the power of the enemy, power over Satan, and power over death. We were going to rule and reign in power, and our eyes sparkled like diamonds in the light and our hearts swelled with joy in expectation of the wonderful position and authority we would soon have in the kingdom. We could think and talk of nothing else but the power we would have, and in our glorying we tried to usurp and demonstrate this power. We were intoxicated with illusions of grandeur as we pressed our way into the kingdom and the exalted position of sitting on the throne with Jesus and ruling the world and the vastnesses of infinity forevermore.

It is true, wonderfully and gloriously true — the sons are destined to sit on the throne with the Lord, they are going to rule over the nations, and they are going to have power beyond our wildest dreams; power to bring salvation to the masses, power to reveal the secrets of men's hearts, power to heal every manner of sickness and disease with a word, power to do great signs and wonders, power to speak to the rulers of the earth in every realm of politics, economics, education, business, entertainment, and environment with divine wisdom and omnipotent authority and demand their obedience to the word of Christ; power to raise the dead out of their coffins after they have been embalmed, and out of their dark graves in the cemetery, power to deliver the whole

creation from the bondage of corruption into the liberty and glory of incorruptible life! That is the true revelation of manifest sonship. That is the original revelation of manifest sonship as birthed by the Spirit of God in the days of the moving of His power among the called and chosen of the Lord. Many today scoff at such a hope and seek to water down and dilute the revelation, applying it on a lower level, making manifest sonship nothing more than a spiritual believer under the old order of Pentecost, where it is impotent to accomplish all that we have spoken. But those are the words of bastard sons, who share not the mind, heart, and vision of the Father!

Yet — there was a truth that was withheld from us in the beginning, and later revealed by the Spirit, the truth that as the firstborn Son of God was made a **priest** after the order of Melchizedek, and as the Son reigns as a **priest** upon His throne, so the sons must also be. Christ is referred to in scripture as “a **priest** upon His throne.” It is not the kings who reign, but the priests! It is the fact of the priest being given ruling authority that makes the priest to also be a king. He is not a king who becomes a priest, but a priest who is given rule. And so we read, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be **priests** of God and of Christ, and shall **reign with Him** a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6). Ah, it is the **priests** that reign! Can you not see the mystery? A king without a priestly nature is no king at all — merely a despot. We have a dual role to fill in the government of the kingdom; we are not only to be kings with authority, power, and dominion; we are also to be priests with priestly hearts of mercy, love, compassion, and reconciliation.

It is a lofty position to which we are called, and for which we are being prepared. Sonship, yes! Kings and priests, yes! But why equipped with such power and glory? To SERVE! For it is written, “Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, **and my servant**, whom I have chosen” (Isa. 43:10). As kings we reign and rule, as priests we serve and bless, for

the ministry of the priest is that of a servant, and we REIGN BY SERVING! Little did we understand in those early days the processings that would be necessary to bring forth in us a kingly and priestly nature! We had no idea of what it would take to produce within us a priestly nature, the spirit of priesthood. We heard the part about “sitting in the throne” but we missed the full implication of what the “overcoming” would involve. We did not yet understand that the way **up** is **down!** The carnal mind would have us believe that the way **up** is **up!**

The way up is revealed for every son of God in the life of the firstborn Son, who is the example and pattern for us all. “Let this mind be in you,” the apostle Paul exhorts, “as it was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). What is that *mind* that was in Christ Jesus? Was it His mind of wisdom, His mind of discernment, His mind of holiness, His sense of Godhood? Oh, no! Here is what it is: “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and...humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross**” (Phil. 2:6-8). What a downward path that is! All the way from the glory of the Father’s bosom to the humiliation and death of the cross! And along the way He shared all of our sorrows, pains, difficulties, problems, doubts, fears, weaknesses, “made in the likeness of men.”

“Wherefore!” That is what Paul says next. “Wherefore God also hath **highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father**” (Phil. 2:9-11). The way up is down. That is the eternal truth for every son of God as revealed in Jesus Christ! You see, my beloved, before we understood this great truth we pressed our way into the

sonship ministry, we “stood on the promises,” demanded of God our sonship “rights,” and sought to seize the throne. It is true, precious elect of the Lord, that God wants to take us UP — high into the realms of God — UP to the throne — but our Father would teach us and have us thoroughly understand that the way UP is always DOWN!

Our Father wisely submits us to all that is common to man, He compasses us about and leads us down, down, down into trials, testings, difficulties, problems, sorrows, pain, suffering, misunderstandings, humiliations, reverses, and losses; for it is only by these that the *compassion* of priesthood can be worked into our lives. Wouldn't it be wonderful if God could just *pour divine compassion into us* in some kind of instantaneous spiritual experience! But that is not how you get compassion. Jesus has shown us the way! “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God...who may have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that *he himself is compassed about with infirmity*” (Heb. 5:1-2). “Compassed about with infirmity.” Compassion is worked into us through our partaking of the troubles of those to whom we are to minister! I personally have a special compassion for people restricted to wheelchairs, and it floods my heart every time I see one, because some years ago I came so very, very close to spending the rest of my life in a wheelchair. The Lord was merciful and wonderfully delivered me out of my trouble, but I *tasted* of what it would mean to be so limited and helpless. Oh, what compassion, what understanding, what pity, what tenderness of heart that creates in us! Those who have suffered abuse, or illness, or habits, or problems of many kinds, once delivered out of it and transformed, are best suited to minister to others who are held captive there. No one else understands the problem, or the solution, as they! That, my beloved, is the way to priesthood. And priesthood is the way to kingship!

There are certain basic principles of the kingdom of God that must be a part of the frame of mind and experience of all who press forward into sonship to God. We are learning to think like God! We are learning how to RULE WITH CHRIST IN THIS LIFE. So many saints are weak, frustrated, and defeated. But those called to sonship God is blasting out of the lowlands of lethargy, discouragement, oppression and defeat, into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy, and triumph of His kingdom. We are encouraged by the words of our brother Paul, “Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armor of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world — the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Wherefore put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and, having fought to the end, TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD” (Eph. 6:10-14, Weymouth).

We are called to reign with Christ from the highest heaven! Such all-embracing majesty is too vast for my feeble understanding, yet I know by the Spirit that the body of Christ is in practical preparation for the explicit purpose of *universal dominion*. But how can a man rule over principalities and powers and universes if he is unable to *rule his own spirit*? “He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city” (Prov. 16:32). The awful betrayal, trial, mocking, beating, and crucifixion of Jesus is the most shining example. It is difficult to imagine any humiliation more bitter than that! It is the worst indignity that anyone can be called upon to endure. Few have ever had to bear it. Never was dishonor less deserved, never was dishonor so bravely borne. Through that fierce and heated hour our Lord bore Himself with quiet dignity. Others were convulsed with uncontrolled passion, cursing, screaming, blaming, rebelling; He alone was calm and self-possessed. His victory over *Himself* was greater than His victory over His



enemies! In such experiences of provocation, truly, “He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city.” God is a God of principle. He does not do anything by chance. It is my deep conviction that what happens in your life and mine is ordained of the Father to teach us the laws of the kingdom — the pathway to authority and the ways of dominion. Learn this, dear one, and you will know one of the fundamental principles of reigning with Christ: OUR AUTHORITY IS OVER SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS **FIRSTLY IN OURSELVES!** “To him that overcometh will I (consequently) give power over the nations: and he shall rule them...” “To him that overcometh will I grant (consequently) to sit with me in my throne...”

As sons of the Most High, we have access to the same strength that enabled Jesus to live an overcoming life — and to conquer even death. He now gives us that same authority and power that gave Him victory over sin, death, hell, and the grave. Have you ever wondered what would happen if Jesus would come and transfer places with you? If suddenly He would come to dwell in ***your body!*** I have often wondered what He would do if He had my circumstances, my weaknesses, my lusts, my pressures, my problems. If the Master came to me and said, “Move over, I am coming to live in your house for a season!” I do not doubt that in a short period He would have all of my problems straightened out and all of my weaknesses and turmoil under control. He would overcome all of the things that I struggle with. But the wonderful truth is — HE HAS COME! HE DOES LIVE IN MY BODY! “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me...*” (Gal. 2:20). “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” (Rom. 8:9).

Do you feel overwhelmed with problems? Then let me show you how to discover the ***challenge*** that lies in every obstacle. I promise that if you look for the challenge, you will find it, and then you will be able to turn the *stumbling-stone* in your pathway into a *stepping-stone* to the

throne! The divine principle of which I speak is found in the prophecy of Isaiah, “Out of the desert shall come streams of water” (Isa. 35:6). What a challenge — to get streams out of the desert! Out of every obstacle comes a new challenge — an opportunity to overcome, to *do* the “impossible”. This is the point I want to make loud and clear! For if you want to overcome as Jesus overcame, you will need to tap into the dynamics of this principle. ***The only force that can cause weakness and failure is a challenge that is mistaken for a problem!*** But there will be no failure when we discover the ***challenge in the problem***, grab hold of it, and use it for a stepping-stone to higher ground. On the other hand, we can never overcome anything as long as we allow some horrendous problem to blind us to the divine challenge that is inherent in every obstacle. In our Father’s great school of sonship, in His effective training program for the future rulers of the world and the universe, He knows just exactly which obstacles to place in our pathway for our development and processing. If we try to use our faith to “move the mountain out of the way,” such action will not bring us where faith can be perfected and ***overcome*** the mountain — scale its heights, climb over it, and *conquer it!*

Some of you who read these lines are facing severe problems today, seeming insurmountable obstacles, and are feeling frustrated, at this point, by my apparently trivial treatment of circumstances that tower so ominously and menacingly before you. You think I don’t understand just how bad your situation really is, or how many times you have failed. Listen! I would not make the solution so simple, if it were not simple. These are principles I have *proven* in my own experience through years of walking with God. The answer lies so near — right there within you! The secret lies in whether you view your situation as a *problem* or a *challenge*. “What difference does it make,” you say, “whether I call it a problem or a challenge?” The difference is all-important!

Here's why. If you perceive an obstacle in your path as a problem, you will nurture negative emotions in respect to it — frustration, fear, anger, hopelessness, despair, depression. These emotions are grave-diggers — they carve out the pit of failure and death in which to bury you! On the other hand, if somehow the Holy Spirit can give you the revelation of it, if you can see by the inspiration of the Almighty that the obstacle is **God's challenge** — you have received the **kingdom attitude** in which spiritual (divine) emotions are released — faith, hope, confidence, peace, rest, encouragement, joy, thanksgiving, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and power. These positive emotions, the fruit of the spirit, energize you and propel you *through* and *over* and *out of* and *above* the obstacle, issuing in strength and triumph! You see, precious friend of mine, the only problems in the world are problems that are *perceived* as problems. When the problem ceases (in your mind) to *be* a problem, then the problem is no longer a problem! Although the problem may still exist outwardly, yet, when the problem is no longer a problem *to you* you have risen above it, scaled its heights, *over-come* it and conquered it! Who cares how high a mountain is if he has climbed over it or is flying above it!

A. E. Rowe, a great champion of faith in Christ, was reared as an atheist. For years he preached the gospel of grace and shared his experience of how he came from total unbelief to a true faith in the living Christ in these words: "I was reared as an infidel. My parents and all of my immediate relatives were proud of their unbelief. I was nourished on the vaunting skeptics of the ages. But I observed with what futile amazement all the skeptics from Celsus to Welles stood around the cradle of Christ, and I wondered how this helpless babe should have been thrust into the world in a time when Roman greed and Jewish hatred and Greek subtlety should combine to destroy it. Yet, this most impressive combination of forces the world has ever known served only to advance the cause of this infant, born in a stable. And I marveled that this poverty-stricken, uneducated plebeian from the remotest of

villages in a despised province who exercised no authority, commanded no army, held no office, received no honors, wrote no books, and who died in early manhood, the most contemptible of deaths, a malefactor on a cross, between two criminals; and yet today His name is still the most esteemed on earth — I marveled at this!

“No unbeliever could tell me how it was that His word is still charged with the same power that it had nineteen hundred years ago and how He could reach down with pierced hands and pull human monsters out of a world of iniquity and transform them, overnight, into flaming evangelists and steadfast heroes of faith. They died in torturing flame, on crosses, and beheaded with the ax that others might know the love and mighty power of Christ that had brought deliverance to their souls. Nor could anyone tell me how this isolated Jew could utter words, at once so simple that any child could understand them, and yet at the same time so profound that the greatest intellects that the world has ever known have not been able to plumb their shining depths. The words, the life, the character, the power of this man, the greatest enigma of all history, and any naturalistic explanation only serves to deepen the mystery and make more puzzling the paradox. But I discovered that the paradox was made plain and the mystery was solved when I accepted Jesus Christ simply for what He claimed to be — **the Son of God**, come from heaven, the Saviour of men. But more than that, *my* Saviour, and *my* Lord. I learned to thrill at the angel’s words, ‘*Behold, unto you is born a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.*’ Even more than that, I learned the greater truth that though Christ, a thousand times, in Bethlehem be born, **if He be not born in thee**, then thy soul is still forlorn” — end quote.

I know another truth like unto this. Just as Jesus was a *nobody* in the eyes of the world and religion of His day, but His words and His acts and His life were freighted with such power that they changed the course of history, dethroned all the gods and goddesses of the pagans, and conquered the world empire that ruled the earth, SO IS IT WITH ALL

WHO ARE CALLED TO SHARE HIS THRONE! Few, if any, of God's called and chosen ones who are being prepared as overcomers destined to reign with Christ in His kingdom, are known in the halls of government, respected in the commercial empires of the nations, approved by the educational systems or schools of higher learning, or acclaimed by the vaunted religious systems of men.

These saints of the Most High to whom the kingdom shall be given are simple people, unknown, unlettered, unheralded, unrecognized, and unsung! The world knoweth them not, even as it knew Him not. They are all hidden away in their own little Nazareth, the place of no good thing; but it is there that the Father of glory has appeared to them, proclaiming them His sons, revealing His heart, opening His word, teaching His ways, purifying their souls, transforming their lives, giving them His mind, His wisdom, and bringing them to maturity and perfection in His own divine family. At the appropriate moment these will be empowered with the fullness of His Spirit, just as Jesus was at the Jordan; their bodies clothed with the pure garments of the incorruptible Life of Christ, their mortality swallowed up of His Life, just as Jesus was in His resurrection; they shall enter upon the stage of history as unknown and unannounced as was Jesus when He strode into the wedding at Cana of Galilee on that day of His "showing forth unto Israel."

In the Old Testament we read a most wonderful account of Hannah, the wife of Elkanah. Elkanah and Hannah lived in the days when Eli was the priest and the judge of Israel. Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninah. Peninah had children, but Hannah was barren. This was a source of much sorrow to Hannah, for Peninah apparently ridiculed and scorned Hannah and caused her much distress because the Lord had shut up her womb from conceiving. Hannah wept and was grieved in her spirit because of her barren state. Every year Elkanah went up to worship at the house of the Lord in Shiloh, which was about fifteen miles from his home. At one of these visits Hannah

prayed to the Lord in deep sorrow, with weeping and bitterness of soul, saying, "O Lord, if Thou wilt look upon me, and give me a son, he shall be given to the Lord as long as he lives."

Eli the priest saw Hannah praying in the temple with such desperateness and thought perhaps she was drunk, but Hannah assured Eli that she was only in travail of spirit because of her barren state. Eli then blessed her and said, "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him." The Lord heard Hannah's prayer and gave her a little boy; and she called his name Samuel, which means, "Asked of God," because he had been given in answer to her prayer. While he was still a little child, Hannah brought Samuel to Eli, the priest, and said to him, "My Lord, I am the woman who stood here praying. I asked God for this child; and now I have promised that he shall be the Lord's as long as he lives. Let him stay here with you and grow up in God's house." And we all know the story of Samuel, how he heard the voice and word of the Lord, how he became one of the greatest of the prophets, and how powerful was his prophetic ministry that it is written of him that not one word that he spoke fell to the ground. He did all the will of God and spoke only the words of God all the days of his life!

As we prayerfully meditate upon the experience of Hannah and her son, we are able to see that she is a type of the true church of Jesus Christ, the barren wife, in contrast to religious Babylon which claims to have many children. As the Lord caused the barren wife to bring forth a son of promise, even so the Lord is bringing to the birth a son company from His favored wife, the bride of Christ. We who are apprehended of the Father unto the calling of sonship are fulfilling the type shown in Samuel, for we are His *manchild* of promise and are to be considered the Lord's possession, even as Hannah returned Samuel back to the Lord. And just as Samuel heard the voice of the Lord and spoke the words of the Lord, which words never failed, but brought forth the kingship in Israel, so are we hearing the voice of the Lord, and are

appointed to speak the words of the Lord, and bring His authority and dominion to pass in the earth in this appointed day! As we endure the trials and testings of this present time, and await the fulfillment of our destiny in God, let us be aware continually of the fact that we belong to the Lord and have no right to direct our own lives.

Before we leave this point of our thought, I want to share another portion of Hannah's prayer in the house of the Lord in Shiloh. She prayed in the spirit of prophecy, saying, "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; He bringeth low, and lifteth up. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, **to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory:*** for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed (the power of His Christ)" (I Sam. 2:6-10).

Here in Hannah's prophetic prayer we see many wonderful truths and divine principles which reveal the sovereign purpose of God to take those who are esteemed as nothing by the standards of this world and, through His processings unto perfection, to exalt them to a position of kingship and dominion over the earth. It is the Lord who takes a life out of the present realm of earthiness and death and raises it up into incorruption and glory! You see, all is in HIS sovereign power and that is why the kingdom of darkness can never prevail in spite of all its cunning devices. There is a most amazing statement in Hannah's prophecy, for the word of the Lord declares, "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich..." Our hope of the kingdom of God is rooted in our knowledge of God — the very truth that He is sovereign and that He controls the

destiny of all men, including both the poor and the rich, on whatever level that is applied. We might think that the Lord controls only the destiny of those who are His predestinated people, but such is not the case. HE IS LORD OF ALL! ALL are in His hands and the steps of every man are ordered of the Lord. I do not presume to understand all the “whys” and “wherefores” in God’s appointments in the lives of men, both evil and righteous; I simply believe His word and perceive that it is as He has declared it.

That “all things are of God” is declared over and over again in the scriptures. Did not the Lord say to Pharaoh, that wicked man of rebellion against all that was of God, “Even for this same purpose have ***I raised thee up***, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared *throughout all the earth*” (Rom. 9:17). The infinite wisdom of God’s mind cannot be ascertained by the carnal little heads of natural-minded men. We have God’s own word for it — He is the sovereign Lord who controls *all things*! I would not be surprised if some of the compatriots of the prophet Amos may have thought he was speaking blasphemy when by the Holy Spirit he said, “Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be *evil* in a city, and ***the Lord hath not done it?***” (Amos 3:6).

And again, “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, THAT THERE IS NONE BESIDE ME. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. ***I the Lord do all of these things***” (Isa. 45:7). It is completely impossible for any man to truly know God until his soul has been taught that before all things, through all things, in all things, and after all things standeth God, omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, eternal, purposeful, and filled with righteousness, love, kindness, and truth. He was before all things and by Him all things consist. There is no angel, principality, or power anywhere in all the endless vastnesses of infinity that does not hold his authority by direct appointment of God. In



Him all men and angels and creatures live and move and have their being. By Him and for Him and to Him are all things. From Him everything comes, by Him everything exists, and in Him everything ends bringing glory to God forever and forever, Amen!

Armed with this understanding that God controls the destiny of all men and all events it is not difficult to see how the word of the Lord through Hannah is fulfilled. When we consider the word of the Lord further we see the great purpose and process of God in raising up the “nobodies” of this world to the very throne of His glory! We read, *“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory...”* What a word! Thus, we find God’s stated purpose in making anyone poor, humble, and needy: that He might raise them up out of their poverty and abasement, and make them inherit His throne of glory! The Lord has given me a message of encouragement, consolation, understanding, and purpose for the poor nobodies of this present world who have received the call to sonship. That message is that God has made us poor for a glorious purpose: ***that He might raise us up again to inherit His throne!*** If ever you tend to doubt that you can attain to such a high and holy calling, remember this prophecy and assure yourself with the fact of God’s sovereignty. Hannah’s prayer stated further that God’s ability to raise up the poor, and even the beggar (the needy ones), and make them inherit His glorious throne is based upon the fact that the pillars of the earth are His, and that He has set the world upon them. God lays all foundations and controls all things! He raises up, and He casts down, according to His own sovereign purpose and power. No one would have believed that an unknown itinerant preacher from Galilee could have conquered all the pagan gods of the civilized world. But He did! Neither Caesar nor Pharaoh nor the philosophers of Greece would have believed that a handful of ignorant fishermen from Galilee could have, in the space of thirty years, turned the world upside down. But they did! The same omnipotent God will

stand up His unknown, unlettered, unheralded, unsung, unrecognized *sons* in the earth in this, our day, and by the revelation of His wisdom and power in them cause the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. **THE SAME GOD WILL DO THIS! You can count on it!**

Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren, but the entire house of sons is, in the book of Hebrews, called the “church of the firstborn” — the body of that firstborn Son who is become the Head of the ORDER OF THE FIRSTBORN. Jesus was the firstborn and as such received the inheritance of the firstborn. By His love and purpose we share with Him, counted as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in the inheritance of the firstborn. That inheritance includes within it the very throne of God — His omnipotent authority, power, and dominion over all things!

Let me close with this illustration. At the performance of an opera, the first part of the evening is given over to the playing of the *overture*. As I understand it, the overture is made up of, or contains, parts of all the main numbers of the whole opera. The overture is an overall pre-view, or glimpse of the opera throughout until the end. But following the overture, the action goes back again to the beginning, and the whole opera is performed in its detail until the finish. Thus the overture presents the plot in portions and points to the end, so that one who has never heard it, will have a view of the action and the climax of it. But, as I pointed out, following the overture the action returns to the beginning and the detail of the whole plot is played out. However, both the overture and the detailed action come to a common end or result.

Let all who read these lines grasp the great truth that THE MANIFEST SONS OF GOD ARE THE OVERTURE OF GOD’S WHOLE GREAT DRAMA OF SIN AND REDEMPTION. Jesus is the overture for the sons, while the sons are the overture for all creation. The working out of redemption and restoration into the image of God is revealed first in *the*

*man Christ Jesus.* In the manger of Bethlehem He was born in weakness, a little child that made a woman cry. He took upon Himself our humanity in the ultimate weakness of it, a child raised by poor parents in a small dusty village in an out-of-the-way province of a despised land. He lived in weakness and was crucified in weakness. And against all odds — out of that weakness He overcame all things, including death, and has ascended to the throne of the universe! He is the first, and so far the only, ***perfected man***. This gives us knowledge of two wonderful things. Through Jesus we have the knowledge of both the ***beginning*** and the ***end*** of God's great drama of sin and redemption — MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD! But we also have the knowledge of the dealings and processings by which man is brought to that end. And ***we are the overture***, the preview, the firstfruit, the demonstration of all God's creative and redemptive plan, presenting upon the cosmic stage of the universe the final end that God has in mind for His whole vast creation!

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.” That is the wonderful climax of our journey through the seven churches, the glorious end of our progression into God!