

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 160

### THE 144,000 ON MOUNT ZION (continued)

“And I looked, and lo, *a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand*, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads” (Rev. 14:1).

In order to understand the deep mystery of the hundred and forty-four thousand we must see beyond the veil of flesh and the mists of the earthly and literal and see right into the heart of God with the eyes of the spirit. Many novel views have been promoted as to the identity of this blessed company. We have met some through the years who felt that they and their group fulfilled this prophecy. I heard of one group who purchased property out in the desert for the “training” of the 144,000 in the “last days,” and another that purchased a large ranch in the mountains for the same purpose. Both of these failed pitifully to reach the anticipated number of members! We know of one well-known group who founded an organization with the idea that that particular organization would comprise the 144,000, and they grew so rapidly that after a while they actually exceeded this figure and were compelled to create “another calling” for the late-comers into the movement.

We first met the 144,000 in chapter seven of the Revelation where they were “sealed with the seal of the living God.” The question often arises as to whether the 144,000 in chapter seven and the 144,000 in chapter fourteen are the same group. Some have wondered whether this could be *another, separate group* of 144,000. The answer is NO! Look at verses six, eight, and nine in our present chapter. John makes differences clear: “*And I saw another angel...*” (vs. 6). In verse eight the Greek text reads, “*And another, a second angel followed...*” Then in verse nine the Greek says, “*And another, a third angel followed them...*” In contrast, John does not call this “*another hundred forty and four thousand*,” although he uses this word over and over through the book of Revelation. No, it is the same 144,000 that were “sealed” in chapter seven, and here it becomes crystal clear just what the “seal” actually is — it is THE FATHER’S NAME WRITTEN IN THEIR FOREHEADS!

These hundred and forty-four thousand are not the *whole* number of God’s redeemed people. In verse four of chapter fourteen the 144,000 is called “the firstfruits” unto God and to the Lamb. They are, therefore, the *elite* among all of God’s people — a select company, called and chosen ones, the feet which stand upon an eminence — mount Zion. Thus, the “firstfruits” are not firstfruits merely in the order of time, but of divine purpose — that ground of precedence to which Paul alludes when he says, “Every man shall rise in his own order.” The writer to the Hebrews referred to those who seek a “better resurrection.” And the Lord Jesus Himself often spoke of those who would be “greatest” in the kingdom of heaven. This theme abounds throughout all the types and prophecies of the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation!

And this is no new thing with the seer of Patmos. In chapter seven John beheld as the 144,000 were sealed with the seal of God. No sooner were they sealed than he beheld a *great multitude which no man could number*, and they were clothed in white robes and held palms in their hands, worshipping before the throne of God. One of the elders posed the question, “Who are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?” And the answer came, “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Yet even this vast and blessed company is not the *whole* of God’s redeemed people — they are only those “in front of the throne.” I think the simile which would best convey to a modern mind the idea here, would be a large assembly in a great auditorium seating many thousands of people, in which each is observing the audience through binoculars. We may think of John putting himself in the place of one of these spectators. He turns to different parts of the building. He asks, “Who are these in the side gallery?” He is told, “These are they who have got in by just a little faith in the one truth that *Jesus Saves*.” He asks, “Who are these at the back?” He is answered, “These are they that got in at the very last minute.” He inquires, “Who are these in the center?” He is informed, “These are they who always had a foot in both worlds, and struggled between the two.” He asks again, “Who are these in the front seats — who have the closest view of what is transpiring on the platform?” He receives the reply, “These are they who loved the Lord with all of their hearts; they went forward immovable, unchangeable, who from dawn to dark lived a life of sacrifice and service; theirs was the faith that faltered not, the love that altered not, the purity that paltered not; therefore they have reserved seats in the general assembly and church of the firstborn; they are *before the throne*.”

He puts a final question: “Who are those on the platform (that is, on the throne)?” And he is told, “These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth — all the way to the pinnacle of Zion. These were redeemed from among men, changed, transformed, with a new mind and a new nature, conformed to the image of the Son, themselves manifest sons of the living God, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. These are they who have the character and qualification to *reign with Him, to sit with Him upon His throne, even as He overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne*. These are they who are chosen to occupy the most commanding position — the typical eminence of mount Zion!” I understand this to be what John later refers to as the “first resurrection,” and what the apostle Paul means when he says, “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” To both Paul and John the thought is not that of *time*, but of *merit* or *quality*; first means *foremost, paramount, leading, crowning, supreme, preeminent*. The dead in Christ are those who are hid with Christ in God, those who have buried self in love, those who have counted the loss of all things as but dung, and obliterated their own human personality with all its claims, hopes, dreams, ambitions, and purposes, that Christ alone would be their life. Therefore they have come to the front; they stand upon mount Zion! This brings us back to our original thought. These hundred and forty-four thousand are not the complete number of the redeemed. They are a special class, the possessors of a particular quality, which places them above their fellows — on mount Zion. That is the mystery.

I do not teach *exclusivism* — the notion that God loves and has chosen to redeem and bless only one specific portion of humanity, to the exclusion of all others. But I do teach *elitism* — the truth that God does not call everyone to the same calling, that there are both *least* and *greatest* in the kingdom of God. There *is* a **high calling** or **highest calling** in Christ Jesus! There *is* a **firstfruits** unto God and the Lamb! There are those who are *before* the throne, then there are those who *sit upon* the throne! There *is*, therefore, an **elitism**. Your salvation was free — the gift of God. Your baptism in the Holy Spirit was free — the gift of God. Prophecy, visions, dreams, faith, healing, miracles, blessings, word of knowledge — all are free, the gifts of God by the Holy Spirit. All the *gifts* are freely given by a gracious God. But after that — you get what you pay for! Overcoming is not a gift. There is a price to be paid! The High Calling is not a gift. The Throne is not a gift. Manifest Sonship is not a gift. Sonship is not free. You obtain it by being a virgin, undefiled with women! By following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth! By being without guile and without fault! By having the Father’s name written in your forehead! And by hearing and learning and singing the new song of total and complete redemption!

The one hundred and forty-four thousand is not a head-count, but a number representing *who they are*. I am confident that out of the ages God has many more than 144,000! Can you imagine an age governed by a people filled with the mind of Christ, conformed to His image, led by His Spirit, endued with the fullness of His authority and power? Can you even comprehend what it would be like for 144,000 manifest sons of God (if it *were* a literal number), 144,000 reproductions of Jesus Christ in all the glory, wisdom, authority, and power of His resurrection, turned loose on this world to speak the words of God and to do the works of God with no limitation at all? That would be almost a thousand manifest sons of God for each nation on earth!

In interpreting scripture, one of the worst things that can be done is to take numbers and interpret them literally rather than discovering the *meaning* of the number. In other words, the key to the understanding of a scripture with numbers is the *value* of the number. So, then, we need to ask the Lord, "What does this number 144,000 mean?" The explanation is that  $144,000 = 12 \times 12 \times 1000$ . Twelve in scripture is the number denoting *divine government*. We will not take time to explain that here, as we have gone into detail about it in previous studies. Now, twelve times twelve is twelve squared by itself, giving the number 144. One hundred forty-four is thus the divine government of God brought to its highest expression. It is divine government multiplied *by* divine government — the absolute fullest and most ultimate manifestation of the kingdom rule of God!

Further breaking down the number 144,000, we come to the word "thousand." This word in Greek is *chilides*. We meet this word various times throughout the Revelation, not least of which is the fact that the saints are to reign with Christ for *a thousand years*. One thousand is the number signifying THE DAY OF THE LORD. The apostle Peter makes this very plain in his second epistle. "*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*" (II Pet. 3:8). It is my conviction that this means more than the idea that every period of one thousand years is counted as one "day" with God. Beyond that it reveals the great truth that the term "thousand years" stands for THE DAY OF THE LORD. It is the LORD'S DAY! To reign with Christ for a thousand years means to rule with Christ in the power and glory of the day of the Lord. This is not a mathematical number, denoting an exact duration of earth-time, but a spiritual number revealing the reality it stands for — the unlimited, never-ending, infinite day of the Lord! The day of the Lord is the day of His illumination, of His arising and bright shining, of His revelation and unveiling, of His glory, majesty, and power! Oh, yes! And this is what manifest sonship is all about, a people formed into the full and ultimate expression of the *divine government* of God, bringing to pass in the earth the illumination, glory, and power of the eternal *day of the Lord!* It is  $12 \times 12 \times 1000$ . That is what it means!

## THE LAMB AND THE LAMBS

"And I looked, and lo, *a Lamb* stood on the mount Zion, and with Him *an hundred forty and four thousand*..." (Rev. 14:1).

Here we find the Lamb standing on mount Zion. Having been slain in sacrifice He is rewarded with "the glory that follows" and is now highly exalted. We are told that in eastern countries where, of course, this symbolic scene is set, when sheep and goats are left to roam where they will, the goats invariably climb to the tops of the hills, while the sheep ordinarily seek the low places, the valleys. So to John it must have seemed most unusual and remarkable that a Lamb should be on mount Zion! By this is brought to light a most important truth concerning Jesus, the Lamb of God. He did not attain His high position on mount Zion by means of self-exaltation, but because, sheep-like, He had sought the "low places." He humbled Himself, and because of that His heavenly Father exalted Him. It was because Jesus permitted Himself to be led as "a lamb to the slaughter" and did not open His mouth in self-defense or seek otherwise to justify Himself before His enemies that the Father, by resurrection and ascension, highly exalted Him. He had sought the "low places," and now we find the Lamb exalted to the throne of the city of God! Our Lord does not sit enthroned in the heavens, as Ruler of the universe, because He was divine in His birth, and messianic in His office, but because He was a LAMB IN CHARACTER. It was because He "made Himself of no reputation." It was because, coming as a man, He "took the form of a servant." It was because as a bond-slave, He "learned obedience." It was because, in obedience, He went all the way, even "unto the death of the cross." "*Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name*" (Phil. 2:5-10).

Even now, as Christ sits enthroned at the right hand of the Father, He reigns in virtue of the fact that He is a Lamb. He reigns as a Lamb-King, because God is raising up lamb-kings in the earth, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit in the earth to establish in each member of the *body of the Lamb* in the earth the nature, and the character, as well as the authority of Him who sits on the throne. "*He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you*" (Jn. 16:14). It is the work of the Holy Spirit not only to impart unto His people the *power* of God, but *all* that pertains to the exalted Lamb, His very nature, and character, and life, that He might be here in the earth, incarnate in His body, to be to you and me, yea, to be

through you and me *everything that Jesus is upon the throne*. The word used for Lamb in our text is peculiar to the book of Revelation. It is the diminutive form of the Greek word for lamb, and is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. It means a young lamb, a little lamb, or a “lambkin,” weak and small. Truly this is *Mary’s Little Lamb!* It includes not only the first little lamb, but all the other lambs who follow with Him. It is a reminder that Jesus is the “firstborn” among many brethren, the “forerunner” of all who enter into that which is within the veil, and the “first begotten” from the dead. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is THE LAMB OF GOD, and joined to Him are the *members of His body, His brethren*, the younger sons of God, the lambkin company. To see this company as the body of the Lamb is not to magnify man, but to exalt Christ, for it is HIS LAMB LIFE formed in them and lived out through them, giving expression to the Lamb nature. Thus the “lambkin” as a figure of Christ is indeed complete and perfect; yet it is a type of Christ in a limited measure and at the same time in the greatest measure. How strange that sounds to our ears, how curious to our minds!

As far as our Lord Himself is concerned, He is not limited at all, but as far as our experience of Him is concerned, there is such a limitation. From the time we experience Christ as the Lamb, we follow Him and begin to progress and advance and make progress in our experience of Christ and receive of His inworking more and more. As we grow in our appreciation of Him He becomes greater and greater to us and in us. Day by day in our experience Christ is becoming greater and greater! At the stage of our experience in which the total triumph of the Lamb is achieved within, Christ is unlimited to us, He becomes all-in-all. It is His almighty strength in the heavens revealed through the weakness of our humanity on earth — the TRIUMPHANT LAMBKIN! Hallelujah!

Thus we see Him in chapter fourteen: “*A Lambkin stood on the mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand.*” It does not say, “And with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand MEN.” Oh, no! There stands a Lambkin on mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand — what? LAMBS! The Little Lamb has become many lambs! We see a similar type, only in the negative realm, in the *little serpent* in Eden which grows through Adam, and increases within men over the millennia to become in the book of Revelation a *great red dragon*. How can we know that it was the little serpent of Eden that became the great red dragon of the Revelation? John tells us so! “*And the great dragon was cast out, that ancient serpent, called the Devil and Satan...*” (Rev. 12:9). As the subtle serpent came with stealth into the garden of Eden defiling with *selfhood* the hearts of the parents of the human race, making a murderer of Adam’s first son, so has he developed in mankind from that small and unimposing beginning to become a monster of gigantic dimensions filling the whole world with religious delusion and fleshly corruption. In Genesis Satan entered Eden as a cunning little serpent, but in the Revelation he has grown into a monstrous fire-belching dragon in the earth and in the sea. In Genesis Satan is an enchanting serpent indwelling a mere handful of people, whereas in the Revelation he is a “great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns,” a composite of billions of peoples, nations, institutions, religions, and governmental authorities!

In like manner, my beloved, the first Little Lamb was none other than our Lord Jesus, the Christ. The Spirit of the Lambkin was poured out upon a little company of people on the day of Pentecost, the first of a new spiritual race of men destined to fill the earth and conquer the dragon. The Lambkin has developed in the saints of God from that small and inauspicious beginning to become a vast company of lambkins upon the pinnacle of mount Zion! To see such a company that shares and ministers His life to all creation does not magnify man, nor does it detract from Jesus the Head; for they are all totally conformed to HIS IMAGE and are partakers of HIS DIVINE LAMB NATURE. HE is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and joined to Him is a lambkin company! Truly these are the kings and priests of God, a kingdom of priests to reign on the earth and restore all things into God again!

It is my deep conviction that within the Lambkin, as we see Him again and again in the Revelation, is converged the reality of the four living creatures (kingship) and the twenty-four elders (priesthood). He brings kingship and priesthood together within Himself. He is the spirit of the Lamb (priesthood) in the midst of the throne (kingship). He is the Lambkin (priesthood) standing upon the mount Zion (kingship). Can you not see the mystery? The four living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and the seven spirits of God are all rolled into *One* and represented now as *the Lambkin!* He is the embodiment and personification of them all! It is appropriate to refer at this point to the words of another ready writer who said, “Freely, gladly, joyfully Jesus Christ faced the hour of sacrifice, pouring out His life, that it might be diffused and spread

over the whole earth. Now God's elect are being brought to the same consecration, so that they give everything for the joy of beholding His life quicken those around them. Willing to spend and be spent, until HIS LOVE THROUGH THEM has conquered all, and creation is restored into perfect harmony with its Creator. There is a work that is totally of The Christ, finished at Calvary, which does not have to be re-enacted or duplicated. He gave His life for the world! Now, this lambkin company, can freely share it with creation" — Ray Prinzing.

"...a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and *with Him* an hundred forty and four thousand" (Rev. 14:1).

They are *with* the Lamb. This does not mean merely that they are in the same geographical place. It has a far richer meaning than that! The nearness of His followers to the Lamb is the nearness of will, of desire, of hope, of purpose, of nature, of stature, of ministry. They are *with* the Lamb. I can tell a person two thousand miles away, "I am *standing with* you," and no one would suppose that I was there physically beside them. These have reached the place where they occupy the same road, the same quality of being, the same reality as the Lamb Himself. They are the knights around His person, and they are all stamped with the likeness of the King. They stand for all that the Lamb stands for — humility, sacrifice, victory, sovereignty; just as the followers of the beast bear the mark of the beast, and stand for all that he represents — ferocity, cruelty, brute force. The Lamb Company, whosoever they are, will not have sought out another manner of life. These are followers of Jesus. They stand with Him! They will not deny nor digress from their station and standing in Him. Having His name, nature, and character as a very part of themselves their mind, being His mind, will only seek to express the virtues of Himself. Almighty Father! Just following Him around, just being where He is, being what He is, speaking what He speaks, doing what He does...what a privilege!

### THE FATHER'S NAME IN THE FOREHEAD

"...a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, *having His name and His Father's name written in their foreheads*" (Rev. 14:1).

We have pictured for us the company of the firstfruits unto God. These are a company of overcomers as signified by their having the Father's name and the name of the Lamb written on their foreheads. "*Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God...and I will write upon him My new name*" (Rev. 3:12). A name in the scriptures is descriptive of the character of the one who bears that name, especially when God gives the name to that person. Names are very important and this is why God many times changed the names of some. Jacob, the deceiver, the supplanter, had his name changed to Israel the prevailer, a prince, a ruler with God. His name had to be changed because he had a change of *nature* through the dealings of God, and his old nature was no longer descriptive of him. Abram, a high father, was changed to Abraham, a father of multitudes. Abram's wife Sarai, which means Yah is Prince, was changed to Sarah, a princess, because from her kings would be born. This firstfruits company bears the name of God and the name of the Lamb, which tells us that they have attained to the image and likeness of God, and are filled with the fullness of the Lamb's nature. There is no doubt about it, it is a spiritual work, or else God is somewhere with a stamper stamping people's foreheads. I don't see God doing that! I haven't yet seen even one believer or one son of God with the name YAHWEH visibly stamped or inscribed on their forehead! It is not the letters of the alphabet impressed, but the very nature of God and the Lamb written, that is, genetically encoded, *within* their foreheads, not merely *on the surface* of their foreheads. It is not an outward symbol, it is an *inner transformation!* Aren't you glad!

The mark of God, the Father's name in the forehead, *is the mind of Christ*. Those who stand with the Lamb have been renewed in the spirit of their mind and have put on God's mind — they think as God thinks, understand as God understands, see as God sees in all things. They have partaken of Christ's cup. They have followed the Lamb, first, all the way to mount Calvary. They have been made conformable unto His death. Nothing is left of self-will, nothing is left of the world's lusts, nothing is left of religious Babylon's spirit and ways, but they find unspeakable joy and pleasure in this: "*I do always those things that please the Father.*" The Father's name in the forehead is in distinction to those who, in Revelation 13:16, take the mark of the beast in their foreheads. The mark of the beast denotes that those who bear it have subscribed to the mind — the doctrines, ways, methods, spirit, blasphemy, idolatry — the nature of the bestial system of

this world, including the carnal, man-made, religious systems. The only people who could possibly reign with Christ will be those who through death to self have become one with His mind, and are not defiled with the antichrist doctrines, philosophies, and shame. All through the ages there have been a minute few who by the grace of God have been enabled to crucify self, put off the religious mind, the worldly mindset, and become LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD. These can be found standing upon mount Zion!

The opening work of this new day of the kingdom is the preparation for reigning of the sons of God! The great work of the *seal of God in the forehead* is the *change of our mind*, or more accurately the *taking of another mind*. The taking of a new mind brings about the existence of a new being, and a new being brings about the existence of a new order! The work that God is doing in His sons in this present hour is not about power. It's powerful alright, but it's not *about* power. It's about *character!* The mark of the sons of God is in their *mind* and in their *nature!* The present mind of man is polluted and there is no denying the fact. All the appropriations of all the governments, all the laws and ordinances, all the wars and change of governmental systems, all the charity, relief, and social organizations and programs, all the rituals and promotions of religion, will do little good whatever in correcting the problems of moral pollution or any other kind of pollution, until the *mind of man* is cleansed and renewed. The sons of God, having the seal of the living God upon their foreheads, and the Father's name and the Lamb's name encoded within their foreheads, are the **FIRSTFRUITS OF AN ENTIRELY NEW ORDER OF MEN TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF THEIR MINDS!** What glorious hope and expectation this inspires in our hearts!

The nature of God is written in the forehead or mind of every son of God! When the nature of God is written in one's forehead, how will that one act and react in relation to the enticements of the flesh, the pressures of the world, the needs of mankind, and the snares of the devil? *They will act like God!* That is why God has no problem in turning His kingdom over to His sons to judge and rule over all things. They possess His mind and heart! The sons will not, and cannot, act any differently than the will and purpose of the Father! All the sons want is what the Father wants! That doesn't mean, as some suppose, that a son must run to his Father every hour, or every day, or every week inquiring, "Father, what do you want me to do? How should I handle this situation?" and then wait there for an answer. Oh, no! The sons have the *mind* of the Father, they inherently possess the *knowledge* of His will, ways, and purpose. Sons instinctively, spontaneously *understand* the plans of the Father! This sacred knowledge is inborn and inbred in the very constitution of the new creation man!

We used to think that in order to get a "word" from God we had to hide out in a room and pray for an hour. Now don't misunderstand what I say — I do believe in prayer and the power of prayer. It is part of the cosmic order of God. No man on earth has walked out this life of sonship more perfectly than our elder brother, the Lord Jesus, and He prayed often, sometimes all night. But He wasn't praying to "get" something from the Father; He prayed *because He was a Son* and shared that intimacy of fellowship with the Father. It was the *Father in Him* that showed Him the works! That is plainly what He Himself said. He knew the Father's voice within Himself at all times, for the Father was in Him as His very life and reality. Oh, the wonder of it! When God dwells in His temple He speaks *out of His temple* at all times. "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...*" (Col. 3:16). That's not talking about memorizing scripture verses or getting an occasional "word of knowledge"! It's talking about the true experience of every son — the voice of the Son of God speaking out of His habitation in our spirit by the mind of the Father within.

All that God is doing in His called and chosen ones in this hour is preparation for the manifestation of the fullness of His glory. Therefore God is teaching us His will, He is instructing us in His word, and He is making known to us His ways so that we *become* the revelation of Himself in the earth. **BECOMING** — that's what He's after!

The wise man has given us the order by which we mature into the full stature of the mind of Christ. "*The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens. By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew*" (Prov. 3:19-20). Let us note three things from this beautiful passage. One is wisdom, another is knowledge, and the third is understanding. God by wisdom, by knowledge, and by understanding accomplishes a specific work in the cosmos. We find

that God by *wisdom* has founded the earth; by *understanding* he has established the heavens; and by His *knowledge* the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down dew.

I now share this great truth with you in the way the Spirit has communicated it to me. We begin with understanding, for understanding is the first principle in this framework. It is not the first thing the writer names, for he speaks first of wisdom by which the Lord founded the earth. But in the opening verse of the Bible, we find that in the beginning God created the *heavens* and the *earth*. The heavens come first, and then the earth. Scientifically, that is the correct order for the formation of the solar system. So we must begin with the establishment of the heavens, and it was by understanding that He established the heavens. This order is further confirmed by the fact that understanding is the instrument by which we discern the word of the Lord. Understanding of necessity *precedes wisdom*. One can never attain wisdom apart from understanding! Neither can you obtain knowledge until first you possess understanding. If a child in school is unable to *understand* the material he is studying, he can never gain knowledge. So understanding must come before both knowledge and wisdom!

The apostle John expresses this truth so clearly when he writes, “*And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an **understanding**, that we may **know Him that is true...**” (I Jn. 5:20). These words teach us the sacred truth that it is only by understanding that we can truly **know** God! Not by our human understanding, but by the understanding *He gives us* — the understanding of the spirit! The first step in our journey into the fullness of God is *spiritual understanding*; we *perceive* the Lord, we *perceive* the word, the will, and the ways of the Lord. Knowledge, then, is the fruit of understanding! Have we not often had the cart before the horse? Have we not supposed that knowledge came first, followed by understanding? But such cannot be! If one does not understand a thing he cannot know it! Someone says, “Well, I know a thing but I don’t understand it.” I reply, “When you do understand it, then you will truly know it!” Can you not see how that works? So God first gives us an understanding, that out of that understanding may be birthed knowledge. Understanding is the conception in the womb, knowledge is the development of the organism. First we understand, then we know. And God has given us an understanding that we might **know Him!** Thus the HEAVENS OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE ARE ESTABLISHED BY UNDERSTANDING, as the wise man said! By understanding we perceive spiritual truth and reality, by knowledge that truth is made substance within us, which in turn leads us to *wisdom*. That is the order!*

Webster defines wisdom as “the faculty to discern right or truth and to *judge and act accordingly*; sound judgment; common sense.” Wisdom bespeaks the correct application of knowledge. Wisdom, therefore, can never precede knowledge; yet one can possess knowledge without wisdom! One may have all the knowledge in the world, but apart from wisdom he cannot correctly apply that knowledge. The divine order of the Spirit is just this — God gives us understanding that we may know Him. He then teaches us wisdom that we may properly express and correctly apply our knowledge of Him.

These great and eternal principles are true in us because they are true in God! God has not established an order for us, His sons, that is different from the order that exists within Himself. What God is doing in this hour is taking all the principles and attributes that are true in Him and establishing them as life and reality within the experience of each of His sons. He is causing us to know Him *as He is!* That does not mean to know Him by acquaintance, but to know Him in union of life — to know Him in our very state of being until there is nothing more to know! We are coming to know how He is, to know His nature, to know how He thinks, to know how and why He acts, to comprehend His plans and purposes, His will and ways, until *nothing is hidden or withheld from us*. This is not a knowledge of something outside of ourselves, something true in a God in some far-off heaven somewhere. It is knowledge gained by His incarnation within us, in the union of life, so that all that is true in Him is raised up within us as our very own reality. Servants know God by acquaintance; sons know God by the power of His life within! Oh, the wonder of it!

I am explaining these things in some detail so that together we might clearly see how our Father operates, and therefore how the sons of God function. “*The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens. By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.*” How did God establish the heavens? He established the heavens by understanding! And by wisdom He founded the earth. And in the process of that creation how did God cause the depths to

break up, and the clouds to send down rain? By knowledge He did it! If we think carelessly about these things we will miss much beautiful and significant truth.

Understanding, knowledge, wisdom. Looking at these three we notice that each of them represents a *word*. Words are the expression of thought. Thoughts are perceptions of reality. In our thinking we perceive, in our words we speak, and the words are simply the verbalization of thoughts. Understanding, knowledge, wisdom — all exist in the realm of mind. If a man has wisdom he has it in his mind. His feet possess no wisdom. His hands possess no wisdom. The wisdom of the mind is channeled through the members of the body by means of words and actions. The same is true of understanding and knowledge. All these exist *in mind*, and all three bespeak a *word* — that is the *spoken mind*. Thus, in relation to God, the *mind* of the Lord is the fountainhead of understanding, knowledge, and wisdom! In the wonderful work of creation God brought forth out of the omniscience of His mind. God understood, God possessed knowledge, and He correctly applied that knowledge by wisdom. Therefore, by understanding, knowledge, and wisdom God created all things!

With these thoughts in mind we can better understand that it was not by *power* that our almighty Father created the universe! Did you ever stop to think about that? “The Lord by *wisdom* hath founded the earth.” Yet, for many years I supposed that God founded the earth by power! “By *understanding* hath He established the heavens.” Did you not think He did so by power? “By His *knowledge* the depths are broken up, and the clouds distill the dew.” But we all imagined that such wonders were wrought by God’s omnipotent power! What awesome power God must have sent forth to do these things! But the wise man says nothing about power. He never mentions it! The deep mystery is that it was from the *mind* of the Lord, and by His *spoken mind* (word), that creation appeared. “*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the WORD of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*” (Heb. 11:3). “*And God said, Let there be; and it was so*” (Gen. 1:3-26).

Many of the Lord’s apprehended ones have intensely desired and have earnestly sought after God’s power. In the early days of my ministry I sought for power. I fasted and prayed for signs, wonders, and miracles. And the Lord graciously blessed us with great and mighty things! God is still performing signs, wonders, and miracles at times and in places throughout the earth. I have experienced the move of God in that dimension. I have witnessed miracles that to the natural mind are incredible. In those early days great numbers of God’s ministers stepped into that manifestation of divine power. Many who read these lines remember those days when the lame walked, blind received sight, deaf ears were opened, tumors fell off, huge goiters disappeared instantly like the bursting of a balloon, and things needed appeared by the creative miracle of God. Oh, yes! I have witnessed all of those things with my own eyes, and some were even wrought at the laying on my hands. We have seen batteries charged, gasoline created in the tank, and know of many other creative miracles, even fish appearing in a frying pan!

Consequently, I spent a number of years in those glorious days seeking for more and more of the power of God. I knew that the manifestation of power we were seeing was merely a foretaste, a sample, an earnest and firstfruit of the power yet to be revealed in the kingdom of God. I understood by revelation of the Holy Spirit that God would one day move in a far greater way. But I equated God’s move only with *power*. I did not understand at that time, as I now understand, that should God commit to us great power — unlimited, omnipotent power — apart from understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, we would wreck the whole kingdom of God! We saw this in the move of God that came in the 1940’s and 50’s. Many a minister of God has made shipwreck of their lives and ministry, and done great damage to the people of God, because they received power apart from understanding, knowledge, and wisdom. They desired power, sought power, got power; they misused power, misdirected power, became arrogant with power, using the power for their own aggrandizement and selfish and fleshly ends. With their power they raised money, fleeced God’s sheep, lived luxuriously, made a name, built a kingdom, and with power they did everything except bring the glory and honor of God into the earth.

During the past few decades there has come to many of the Lord’s elect His word of counsel and instruction, saying, “Listen, hearken, my sons, for I will now teach you something very real. Do you want to know me? I will tell you how I am. I am a successful Creator. I made and established the whole universe unto the vastnesses of infinity. I have made both good and evil, I formed the light and created the darkness; I brought forth man and placed him in a garden with two trees and a subtle serpent. I have framed the expanse



of the ages, and not only can I do all these things and millions more, but in the end I can bring it all together; every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess, every heart shall surrender, and throughout all the unbounded heavens there will be peace, joy, righteousness, divine order and glory forevermore. You will discern that in all the interplay between the good and the evil; in all the processes of my purposes, there was divine understanding, divine knowledge, and divine wisdom! I knew the end from the beginning, and by my understanding I established the heavens, by my wisdom I founded the earth, and by my knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds distill the dew.”

Our great and glorious heavenly Father now makes known to His sons the great and eternal principles upon which He works in creation, redemption, and restoration. We are His sons! As He is, so are we destined to be. As He works, so shall we work in the ordering of His kingdom. Once we comprehend how He works, we are blessed with the wonderful knowledge of our own place and role as heirs of His kingdom. When the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of the *mind of Christ* possesses us, we will comprehend the mystery that *within* that understanding, knowledge, and wisdom **lies the power**. This dimension of power is not the limited, fragmented power we have known and experienced in the past in the “in part” realm of the *gifts*. This is the whole, full, complete, unlimited, unbounded, omnipotent, creative power of the kingdom of God! This is not the “by measure” power of a prophet or an apostle, this is the “without measure” power of *manifest sons*! This is the governmental authority and power of mount Zion! Oh, yes! The sons will have power. But the only ones standing on that mount of Power are those having THE FATHER’S NAME WRITTEN IN THEIR FOREHEADS! By the mind of the Father we now know that neither God nor His sons will ever manifest the fullness of power apart from understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, for within that divine understanding, knowledge, and wisdom is found the secret of His power. That, my beloved, is the reason God doesn’t say that He established the heavens, founded the earth, and caused the skies to water the earth by power. You will never discover that kind of power until you have fully put on the *mind of the Father*, the *character of the Father*, and the *nature of the Lamb*! That is the mystery.

*“Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches”* (Prov. 24:3-4).

What a blessed confirmation this passage is! Again the three-fold creative process of understanding, knowledge, and wisdom is presented to us. You will surely notice that the passage does not tell us that a house is built by either ability, skill, strength, or power. Oh, no! In these significant words is contained the revelation of what God is doing in, and imparting to, His called and chosen elect who are being raised up to build the kingdom of God in the earth. Every house, the writer to the Hebrews tells us, is built by some man, and He who built all things is God. God builds, establishes, and orders all things in the heavens and the earth by understanding, knowledge, and wisdom! And now, in this great day of the Lord, our wonderful and wise Father is raising up within us the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of His own glorious mind. He is giving us *understanding* that we may fully know, perceive, discern, fathom, and apprehend HIM WITHIN OURSELVES. He is unfolding within our spirit the sacred *knowledge* of all His ways — His plans, purposes, procedures, processes, intents, means, and methods. And He is maturing in us His divine *wisdom* by which we shall go forth and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things into God again. Oh, sweet mystery of the ages!

Have you ever wondered, dear one, why the Lord has led you down a pathway, not of blessing, glory, and riches, but of temptation, testing, trial, purging, stripping, proving, and suffering? Let us see by revelation of the Spirit that the experiencing of all these things, and our breaking, melting, molding, transformation, and triumph in them, is the very means by which the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of the Lord is established within our reality. Nothing God has been doing in us through the crucible of His dealings has anything to do with power. In fact, we seem to be stripped of all power, and reduced to nothingness! Ah, but it has everything to do with understanding, knowledge, and wisdom! *“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience through the things that He suffered”* (Heb. 5:8). These holy things are not learned by the hearing of the ear or the seeing of the eye. It is not by reading these lines that even one of God’s elect will be blessed with understanding, knowledge, or wisdom. Nor do they come through study, searching, listening to sermons, attending meetings, burning the midnight oil, seeking, praying, fasting, or having hands laid on you. They cannot be gained through any self-effort of any kind. They are obtained

only through the sovereign inworking of God! Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time!

The great truth that the power of God only flows and functions out of understanding, knowledge, and wisdom powerfully reveals to us how it is that the 144,000 standing with the Lamb upon mount Zion, the pinnacle of rulership and dominion in the kingdom of God, have no scepters in their hands, no crowns upon their heads, no swift horses carrying them into battle, no swords proceeding out of their mouths. All of that comes later, but the deep mystery the Spirit is unfolding to the elect of the Lord is just this — *before* we can be crowned with authority or gain the scepter of power and dominion, WE MUST HAVE THE FATHER'S NAME WRITTEN IN OUR FOREHEADS!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY