

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 164

THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

“And I saw *another angel* fly in the midst of heaven, having the *everlasting gospel* to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, *Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him* that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:6-7).

As we approach this portion of the Revelation let us again guard against a literal conception and interpretation of the text, keeping in mind that the scenes are beheld by John in a vision, and therefore are communicated in symbolism which has to do with spiritual realities. If we understand it literally we would simply read, “Then shall an angel fly in mid-heaven and shall preach the gospel to every creature.” And yet that is certainly not the meaning! John tells us that he sees a vision. And in that vision he first beholds two beasts coming up out of the sea and out of the earth. And, in the second place, he tells us how he sees the Lamb standing on mount Zion, surrounded with 144,000 other lambs who are like Him, exactly like Him. And now once more he beholds three angels, yet he hears one voice. And therefore this part still belongs to the original vision. As such it must not be taken at face value, but must be understood by the mind of the Spirit. The three angels are no more literal angels than the two beasts are literal beasts. If we bear this in mind, we will not reach the absurd conclusion that in this portion scripture teaches us that in the end-time angels will proclaim the gospel of Christ in order to sound a last warning to all nations before God’s wrath is poured out. That certainly is not the meaning. We have no literalism, but symbolism, a vision, in the words of our text. The contents of the symbolism is that the first angel flies in mid-heaven and shouts to all the earth, to all nations and tongues and tribes, that they should fear and worship God. Thus it is in the vision. But the question follows — what is the spiritual significance of this?

“Angel” signifies a *messenger* as well as the *message* he bears. Can we not see by this that even the angels in the book of Revelation are wonderful *symbols*, representing the living word of God communicated by the spirit of revelation! From the very beginning of the book an angel came and showed these things unto John — that is, a powerful word of the Lord came to John out of the heavenly realm of the Spirit, speaking mysteries to his heart and passing before his spiritual eyes visions of wonders to come. The proof of this is found in John’s own statement as to how the revelation was received. “He sent and signified it unto His servant John: who bare record of the **word of God**, and of the **testimony of Jesus Christ**, and of all that he saw” (Rev. 1:1-2). The voice of the angel was merely a figure for THE LIVING WORD OF GOD BY THE SPIRIT! And now, wonder of wonders, God is going to *speak again*, send a *living, quickening word, revealing Himself* to the *earth-dwellers* and to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people!

By the word “*another angel*” a *new message*, a *new thing* from the Lord, a *new working and dealing* of God is signified. The messages of these three angels bespeak that dealing of God by which He shall finish His work in all of His people, not just the elect. After describing the glorious scene on mount Zion, where John saw the 144,000 manifest sons of God with the Lamb, all having the Lamb’s and the Father’s name on their foreheads, and all following the Lamb whithersoever He goes, the apostle then describes another scene, where he saw an angel flying in mid-heaven, proclaiming the “everlasting gospel.”

I would point out that in Greek grammar, when the word “another” is used with a noun before it, it is very significant. It signifies literally, “another who is the same,” and throughout the book of Revelation we find this word descriptive of our Lord. Remember, Jesus told His disciples that when He went away He would send them “another Comforter.” There we have the same grammatical structure in the Greek, indicating “another who is the same.” The Lord made it clear that this “another Comforter” was truly *Himself* in another form! “*And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you **another Comforter**, that He may abide with you for ever; even the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth **with you** (as Jesus Christ in the flesh), and shall be **in you** (as Jesus Christ, the Spirit).*” And then He adds with unmistakable clarity, “**I will not leave you comfortless: I WILL COME UNTO YOU**” (Jn. 14:16-18). Can we not see by this that the Comforter, or the Spirit of truth, was not another or different person, but another manifestation or form of the very same Christ who said, “**I am the Truth**,” while standing there before His disciples! He was “another Comforter,” ah, yes, ANOTHER WHO IS THE SAME!

Commenting on our text my friend Jonathan Mitchell wrote, “John saw a messenger continuously flying in mid-heaven. In our study last night, Lynda observed how the Lord, in using parables to describe the kingdom, would use one picture after another to teach different aspects, or views, of the same subject — the kingdom (e.g. Matthew 13:44-47). We see that here, too, the Lord is using different pictures to describe the same subject — each new scene is just a different view. Thus, I suggest that this messenger *is a figure of these same 144,000, showing a specific aspect of their ministry: they are evangelists!* That they are ‘flying within mid-heaven’ speaks that they are operating in the realm of the spirit. They preach ‘good news pertaining to the ages.’ Notice that this message goes to all the earth dwellers and to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.” The flying angel represents a special ministry of the Spirit, and a special ministration of the Word of God, through a collective body of messengers, outside the mainstream of official Christendom, as emissaries called and chosen by God to minister on behalf of all the Lord’s people who dwell in the “earth-realm.” Their mission is to proclaim and make known in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost the “good news of the ages” — the true purpose of God and the *next step* in God’s great plan of the ages!

The word “gospel” is a translation of the Greek word *euaggelion* from which we derive our word “evangel” and means, simply, “good message” or “good news.” It was a common word in the Greek tongue long before the time of Christ. It should be noticed that the word “angel” is to be found in the word “evangel.” The first was the messenger who brought the second, the good message. In classical Greek it is possible to find the word “angel” applied to men, women, children, birds, the morning star, slaves, ambassadors, and anything or anybody capable of bringing a message, literally, or figuratively. In like manner the word “evangel” was applied to almost any type of good news. Therefore, here in John’s vision it is not a messenger sweeping over the earth with a wail of woe. Oh, no! Instead of such pessimism, we have in *the first angel* a missionary of hope, who preaches what the King James Bible terms *the everlasting gospel*, the good news that is never stale, calling on men *to fear God* as the beginning of wisdom, because the hour is come for *judgment*, that is, for a final correction which will change everything and make all things right, that all might *worship Him*. Ah, truly that is... GOOD NEWS!

Consider the scene, look with me away to the heights of mount Zion where stands the Lamb, together with the 144,000 lambs! Behold the manifest sons of God in the power and glory of sonship! In his beautiful writings on this theme Ray Prinzing pointed out that “There have been many messengers, with all sorts of doctrines and theologies. Some have held fragments of truth and a lot of interpretations of the carnal mind. Some have been totally error, serving only the lust of the flesh. The voices of Babylon have been many — sounding brass and clanging cymbals that are abrasive to the ear and a vexation to the spirit. But now there shall be seen ANOTHER MESSENGER, a company with a message so different from what has been heard, for it is the ‘everlasting gospel.’ The word ‘everlasting’ is from the Greek *aionian* meaning of the ages, or ages-abiding. They shall have the GOSPEL OF THE AGES, the declaration of the GOOD NEWS OF GOD’S PURPOSE AND PLAN OF THE AGES. *‘To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the purpose of the ages which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord’* (Eph. 3:10-11). The ages have been fitted for a purpose, and there is a purpose being wrought out through the ages. This *gospel of the ages* is first of

all GOOD NEWS. It is not a message of condemnation, for it is a word of reconciliation, *'not imputing their trespasses unto them'* (II Cor. 5:19). *'For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved'* (Jn. 3:17). He was not sent to condemn and neither is He sending His messengers with HIS GOOD NEWS to condemn mankind.

"No wonder that when God would bring forth a MESSENGER COMPANY filled with the GOOD NEWS, He must first purify and purge out all the perversion and distortion of the carnal mind, until *'in their mouth is found no guile.'* Then will HE send them to every kindred, nation, tribe, and tongue. *'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation...'* (Isa. 52:7). I heard the account of a certain minister who, in his travels, walked by the door of a place where some of the present 'confused' generation were gathered, and singing a song about 'where will we go when San Francisco falls into the ocean?' And he stuck his head in the door and shouted, 'You will all go to hell!' He thought he was delivering the gospel. Wasn't that good news? Is that the message of the triumph of Calvary? THAT MARS THE IMAGE OF THE CHRIST, who said, *'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,'* and *'come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.'* There is no need to bring in 'heresies of damnation.' Declare the true gospel of hope, truth, peace, joy, and victory as we receive of His life.

"In due time we will FLY WITH A MESSAGE, not repeated by rote as a parrot, but out of a state of being, that which we have experienced IN HIM, we share truth. Back to our opening verse — we declare, 'FEAR GOD.' He finds us, and we would give Him our reverence. Give glory, respect, honor, for HE IS LEADING ON. The HOUR OF JUDGMENT is come — it is INSTRUCTION time, with all of the necessary corrections, as men learn to walk His way. And they all will be dealt with, to become His worshippers. Thus we find a parallel between our own time of processing and development, and the message we will declare to all mankind. Experiencing Him, and receiving divine revelation, there shall be an outworking of His purpose which shall redound to His praise.

"What a contrast between the messengers that *fly through the midst of heaven*, and these earth-self-centered ministries that abound around us. Man wants to be seen, but GOD'S MESSENGERS will continually cry out, 'FEAR GOD, give glory to Him!' With all of our heart we would exalt Him, for as HE is lifted up, He will draw all men unto Himself. And we will recognize that the hour of judgment is instruction time, positive and purposeful, 'When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world *will learn righteousness*' (Isa. 26:9). And then shall we all, from the depths of our being, WORSHIP God...kept, sustained by His eternal life" — end quote.

I cannot help but rebuke the blindness and error of modern Christians, for the Spirit makes the message urgent within me. Most professing Christians are more concerned with their own denominational, sectarian, and doctrinal interests than with God's purpose of the ages. Religious activities and programs, threatenings of judgment, hell-fire, and damnation, with end-time doom and gloom, confirm that the "gospel" preached in most churches is not the pure gospel of Christ — the "good message." It is an adulterated gospel! For the most part it is no "gospel" at all! The preachings and example of Jesus are used not to lead people to Him but to conform Christianity to the antichrist spirit of this world. Organized religion's effort to make the gospel more relevant to the times is nothing more than man's attempt to stultify the gospel of Christ to suit his own ends. To stop and reverse this tide of spiritual corruption, the Lord has HIS FLYING ANGEL! Beholden to no man or group, this ministry is intent on proclaiming the gospel of the ages — not a new or different gospel but the very good news brought into this world by the firstborn Son of God! There is a wonderful surprise concerning to whom this "gospel of the ages" will first be proclaimed in mighty spirit-power by the "flying angel," and we will explore that later. But the message of the flying angel is both clear and emphatic — with a ***loud voice*** — *Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water.*

It gives my heart much joy to know that the gospel proclaimed by God's flying angel is indeed "the good news of the ages." In a world of fast food, live communication, instant messaging, and immediate gratification, it can be hard to think about future blessing. Our world today is often unwilling to wait for anything, much less a revelation of divine glory. But there is a living hope for all who await the glory to be revealed at the manifestation of the sons of God! God does not measure time from our perspective. God

works methodically through history to bring about His plan and His purpose — in His time. Often working through centuries rather than moments, God shapes and molds the future. The present groans of creation are the birth pangs of a new life, a new day, a new order in God's unfolding plan. That new life is nothing less than redemption accomplished and all of creation restored! People who share in communion with Christ are those who know the joy of this living hope. Followers of the Lamb know that even though the claims and blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God have not yet come upon all men, that day will most surely arrive, and they will be part of a glorious future. Aren't you glad!

As pointed out earlier, the King James Bible says that this gospel preached by the flying angel is "everlasting" — the *everlasting* gospel. That is not a correct translation, however. The Greek word here is *aionios* which is the adjective form of the Greek noun *aion*. The noun *aion* nowhere means eternal! In our little booklet on "Eternity" we have unquestionably and incontrovertibly demonstrated this fact from numerous New Testament passages. Now once we understand that *aionios* is the *adjective form* of the *noun aion*, a simple little sixth-grade grammar lesson should once and for all establish the exact meaning of *aionios*. Bear with me while I explain, so that all may understand!

A noun is a word that tells what you are talking about. A noun is a word that names something, a person, place, thing, quality, etc. Boy, water, tree, age, and truth are all nouns. An adjective is a word that is used with a noun to describe it. It is a word that tells you *what kind, what color, which one*, etc. If you wanted to tell me about the hat a woman was wearing you would describe that hat in some way. You might say that it was a *large* hat, a *straw* hat, an *atrocious* hat, or a *red* hat. These are adjectives, words that describe what kind, what color, what quality of hat. When you add one or more of these "describing words" or "adjectives" to hat, you give a clearer picture of what the hat is like. Some words are both nouns and adjectives, that is, the same word can be used both ways. Sometimes the adjective form of the word is identical to the noun form, while at other times the spelling is slightly different. Look at these sentences: "I would like to visit France." "I am learning the French language." France is a proper noun, but the adjective form of the same word is spelled differently — French. But in both cases they indicate the same setting. Anyone with even an elementary knowledge of grammar (English or Greek) knows that the meaning of a noun and the meaning of the same word in its adjective form **MUST CORRESPOND!** It cannot have one meaning as a noun and exactly the *opposite* meaning as an adjective!

Ah, brethren, let's be fair with the basic rules of English grammar and interpretation, and Greek, too, for they both follow the same basic rules. No one can say that *aionios* means *eternal* or *everlasting* without breaking the basic rules of both English and Greek. The adjective *aionios* which is derived from the noun *aion* occurs seventy times in the New Testament. It is a self-evident axiom of grammar that derivatives cannot have a greater force than the parent word. Should you disagree with this, please cite me some examples. When we have an adjective derived from a noun, the meaning of the adjective is dependent upon the meaning of the noun. A *daily* paper is one that comes every *day*. Here *day* is the noun, *daily* is the adjective. They both refer to the same time period (a particular twenty-four hours). A *monthly* bill is one that is due for payment *every month*, not every two months, or once a year. A *yearly* automobile license is good for *one year*, not for a life time or forever.

Thus the adjective *aionios*, a derivative of *aion*, carries within itself its own solution; for *aionios* is simply that which belongs or relates to the *aions* — the ages — hence it cannot carry a force or express a duration greater than that of the *ages* of which it speaks. Let us consider just a few examples out of many. "For the children of **this age (aion)** are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Lk. 16:8). "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more **in this present time**, and in the **age (aion) to come life eonian** (of the ages)" (Lk. 18:29-30). "The children of **this age (aion)** marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain **that age (aion)**, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Lk. 20:34-35). "That in the **ages (aions) to come** He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). "Which in **other ages (aions)** was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is **now** revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5). "Even the mystery which hath been hid from **ages (aions)** and from generations, but **now** is made manifest to His saints" (Col. 1:26). If therefore these ages — past, present, and future — are one and all limited periods which come and go, the word *aionios* **CANNOT MEAN**

EVERLASTING, ETERNAL, OR INFINITY! And yet men who should know better tell us that the Greek noun *aion* means an age, or ages, which is TIME, and then proceed to ridiculously explain that the adjective form of the very same word means exactly the opposite — unending, everlasting, ETERNAL! A child of ten should be able to understand that that is not so!

In our text the adjective *aionios* modifies the noun *gospel* (*Greek: euaggelion*). It tells what kind of gospel John is writing about. It is the “ages-lasting gospel,” or the GOSPEL OF THE AGES — THE GOOD MESSAGE OR THE GOOD NEWS OF THE AGES! Ah, when mankind gets the message that at the end of this present age the ball game is not over, everyone’s eternal destiny is not eternally sealed in either heaven or hell, with the vast majority in hell, according to many thousands of preachers, but that God has a merciful, gracious, wise, glorious, redemptive, and restorative plan far beyond this age and even the next age beyond that one — who can deny that that news of God’s great plan of the ages will indeed be GOOD NEWS — THE GOSPEL — unto the billions of earth’s benighted subjects of ignorance, sin, sorrow, bondage, and death! Isn’t it wonderful!

Upon your table today there is or should be a book we call the Bible. This book alone reveals God’s secret plan of the ages. It unfolds with unerring accuracy the mysteries of ages in the dim and misty past, and points with unerring finger to the purpose of countless eons yet to come. The Christian Church as we know it has been living in a fool’s paradise, propounding pet doctrines, ranting and raving about an endless eternity with golden streets and harps and white nightgowns for some and crackling, searing, tormenting flames for others, while almost completely overlooking God’s wonderful PLAN OF THE AGES. Paul writes of this plan of the ages in Ephesians 3:8-11. “*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and make all to see **what is the fellowship of the mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the **eternal purpose (KJV)** which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

The word translated “eternal” in the phrase “eternal purpose” is the Greek word *aionon* which like its kindred words denotes “ages.” Young’s Literal Translation reads, “*And to cause all to see what is the **fellowship of the secret** that hath been hid **FROM THE AGES** in God, who the all things did create by Jesus Christ, that there might be made known **now** to the principalities and authorities in the heavenly places, through the assembly, the manifold wisdom of God, according to **A PURPOSE OF THE AGES**, which (ages) He made in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” The Emphatic Diaglott renders verse 11 thus, “*According to **A PLAN OF THE AGES**, which He formed in the Anointed Jesus our Lord,*” and Rotherham says, “*According to **A PLAN OF THE AGES** which He made in the anointed Jesus our Lord.*”

God has a plan! Indeed, God has a wonderful plan for this world! It is a plan of which the architectural drawings were made in eternity. It encompasses the minutest detail of all of creation. I assure you that when time has run its course, and the veil is dropped upon the final scene, we shall discover that that plan has been worked out to its very tiniest detail, just as God had planned it in eternity — that His will has been done!

That is an amazing thought because it often seems as if the world is flying off unattended, like a chariot where the driver has fallen off, the horses are running wild, the reins are flapping in the breeze, and it is threatening to go over the precipice at any moment. Yet the scriptures would have us know that God, the sovereign Lord of history, has His hands firmly upon those reins and that His plan is coming to pass. Think about it! Our God is perfect in all His attributes. He is perfect in His power. He is perfect in His holiness and justice. He is perfect in His love and mercy. He is perfect in His wisdom and in His omniscience. Therefore, His plan must be perfect. Indeed it is a perfect plan!

That God might advance His kingdom from one stage to another He has by omniscient wisdom designed dispensations, epochs, and ages. From time to time He brings about a change in dispensations, which means the bringing forth of new means, methods, and revelations, always richer and more glorious and powerful and earth-shattering than the previous ones. There always lies between the closing of one age and the opening of another a season of transition, a short period which partakes of the powers and methods

of both ages, and is especially filled with dramatic manifestations of God's activity. We are now in the very throes of such a time, which lies between the age of the building in the earth of the many-membered Christ body and the age when the kingdom shall subdue and break in pieces all the governments and institutions of man. The rule of the kingdom of God over the nations is about to open in power and great glory! This new age that is even now dawning will witness the most extraordinary move of God, so vast in proportions, so dynamic in power, so revolutionary in its effects that it will transform all the present cultures and society of mankind, switch the currents of civilization, and alter the structure of the nations. The earth will receive such dramatic shock, such a global earthquake, such a divine impact of wisdom and glory and power that the whole world will be changed, completely remodeled!

The *plan of the ages* conceived in the heart of Him who purposed all things after the counsel of His own will is being worked out *one step at a time* in each succeeding age in like manner as you and I have often planned in advance the work for each successive day of a week. Is it not true that many of the wives and business people now reading this paper have plans in mind for today and tomorrow in order to accomplish certain ends, and perhaps even weeks and months into the future? I do! Each week I can tell what I, Lord willing, will be doing on each day of the week. There is mail to answer, days for study and writing, business with the printer or at the post office and numerous other things, and each week is mapped out in advance. Whether consciously or unconsciously we all plan ahead, daily and hourly working toward some human goal. There is nothing that opens the wellspring of love, of understanding and hope and faith, in the hearts of God's people like THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS PURPOSE. What infinite illumination floods our souls, what joy and satisfaction and assurance fill our hearts when by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God our great and wonderful Father is seen to be a God of purpose, knowing the end from the beginning, because He *planned* the end from the beginning! He created all things by His omnipotent power that His glorious purpose might be fulfilled. And the power that made all things is the same power that upholds all things, and fills all things, and controls all things, and shall bring to a successful conclusion the divine purpose in all things. Oh, the wonder of it!

As men with the aid of the holy scriptures have gazed into the vista of the future, it seems to have missed their understanding that God says very little in His Word about eternity, while devoting many hundreds of passages to His will and works wrought through THE AGES. "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in **time past** unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in **these last days** spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He **framed the ages***" (Heb. 1:1-2). What tremendous statements we have here! God has spoken to us through His Son — literally, "*spoke to us **in Son***," or, God spoke to us in One who has the character that He is a SON, revealing within Himself the realm and relationship of sonship to God. That is a new and marvelous revelation! Men knew what prophets declared of God, but now men would see what a *son* would reveal of the Father. Every age has its beginning and its end, its *first days* and its *last days*. Never assume, my beloved, that the expression "the last days" always refers to the end-time of the so-called church age. We must pay attention to *which age* is being talked about. So the writer to the Hebrews tells us that God has spoken unto us in the person of His Son in "*these last days*," that is, in the closing days of the old age of law in which Jesus came into the world. People unthinkingly talk about "the" last days, as though the end of our present dispensation were the only "last days" or "end time" ever to exist! This beautiful principle is vital to our understanding of God's *purpose of the ages*.

This Son is heir of all things and, blessed be God! we are joint heirs with Him. The Greek text says of Him, "*By whom also He **framed the ages***." This goes beyond His being the Creator of matter and its arrangement into multiplied billions of galaxies with their countless trillions of stars, suns, planets, and moons together with their atmospheres and inhabitants. This word lends *purpose* to everything! He is the heir who GIVES THE PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE! He planned and framed the ages, He ordained the end from the beginning; not only did He create everything, He did it for a purpose, and "*known unto God are all His works from the **beginning of the ages***" (Acts 15:18).

The Amplified Bible says, "*But in the last of **these days** He has spoken to us in the person of a Son, whom He appointed heir and lawful Owner of all things, also by and through whom He created the worlds and the reaches of space and the **AGES OF TIME** — that is, He made, produced, built, operated and **arranged them in order!***" So much wonderful truth is obscured by the faulty renderings of the King James Bible. Notice how the Greek text reads in the following passage: "*Through faith we understand that **the***

ages were planned by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3). How very different that is from what the King James Bible says when it declares that by faith we understand that **"the worlds were framed"** by the word of God. Not worlds — AGES! God made, planned, and determined the destiny of all the ages in — and by our Lord Jesus Christ!

The age we are now living in is not the last age, nor is the age to come the final age in God's vast kingdom program. The apostle Paul tells us that God *"hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the AGES TO COME He might show (put on display, exhibit) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"* (Eph. 2:6-7). According to these inspired words there are "ages" **yet to come** — so there can be no less than **two** ages beyond our present age and there could be many, many more! It is during these "ages to come" that God shall take the wonderful work He has so meticulously wrought in His called and chosen elect throughout the past age and **put it on display** in and through them for the whole creation to behold and consider. This will certainly not be to the condemnation of creation, not a taunt in the face of the masses of unregenerated men that have lived and died upon this planet, but rather redounds unto their blessing, deliverance, and transformation: for it is HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US IN JESUS CHRIST THAT IS EXHIBITED THROUGH THE SAINTS THROUGHOUT THE COMING AGES. **Grace and kindness on display!** Think of it! That is no curse, no judgment — it can only mean salvation! The grace of God *always appears unto salvation!* What a word that is! This glorious display is for the instruction and enlightenment of all men. What a marvelous prospect!

The Word of God is crystal clear that there is to be an *increase* of the kingdom from age to age. The very fact that there are yet "ages to come" shows that the kingdom advances from one age to another. Historically, every new age has superseded the previous ones, bringing greater light, a further revelation of God, and more advanced dealing with mankind. Each new age inaugurates a higher dimension of God's purposes in the earth. Nothing is clearer in the scriptures than the fact that **THIS IS NOT THE LAST AGE**. There is no "final windup," no "great assize" at the close of this present dispensation. We can expect, therefore, fresh and greater manifestations and administrations of kingdom dominion as we move from this age into the new one now dawning. What anticipation this evokes in our hearts!

With utmost solemnity I now tell God's precious elect that no one will be qualified, no one will be able, in fact no one will be *willing* to be a part of God's flying angel company to proclaim the gospel of the ages into the age and the ages to come who does not thoroughly understand and joyfully embrace God's wonderful plan of the ages. How could a man who believes the age of grace and the door of mercy is about to end, and who consigns 90% of mankind to eternal damnation in hell-fire — how *could* such an one proclaim the *good news of the ages* to the world of lost and doomed men — he would consider such an action as rankest heresy! I know men who tell me they are called to manifest sonship, yet they deny that there is any salvation for the billions of humanity beyond this present "age of grace." I do not doubt for one moment that when the chips are down, on that portentous day when the flying angel soars through the midst of heaven proclaiming with a loud voice into the ages to come that all men must *fear God* and that now they must *worship Him* — these "angels" will **refuse** to either fly or proclaim! It would mean the denial of everything they have believed and stood for! So sadly they fold their wings as their tongues cleave to the roof of their mouths.

The apostle James made a statement to the council at Jerusalem in which he clearly defines the complete outline of God's purpose for the so-called age of grace and the dispensation that is to follow. *"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, AFTER THIS (after God has taken out of the nations a people for His name) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David (the fullness of God's glory in a people), which is fallen down (following the great apostasy); and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the RESIDUE OF MEN MIGHT SEEK AFTER THE LORD, AND ALL THE NATIONS, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things"* (Acts 15:14-18). Dispensationally, this is one of the most important passages in the New Testament! It gives God's divine purpose for **this age** and the **next age**. James says that the purpose of God during this age now ending has been to visit the Gentiles to **TAKE O-U-T O-F T-H-E-M A PEOPLE FOR HIS NAME**. Clearly that denotes the calling and choosing of God's elect!

One thing that nearly all Christians have missed is the fact that it has never been God's purpose to save the world during this present age. While the gospel was to be preached in all the world as a "witness" to all nations, there is no hint of it being accepted by all. Jesus never led His disciples to expect any such result from their ministry! Wherever the preached gospel is referred to in the New Testament, its limited acceptance is at the same time made clear. "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. **He that believeth...shall be saved;** but **he that believeth not shall be condemned (judged)***" (Mat. 16:15-16). The witness of Paul is equally clear. He says, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation **to everyone that believeth***" (Rom. 1:16). "*I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means **save some***" (I Cor. 9:22). "*For we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, in them that are being saved, **and in them that are perishing.***"

All through the centuries the church has been found holding to the false hope of converting the whole world during this age. Frequently one hears preachers, especially missionaries and televangelists, speaking of "winning the world to Christ." In missionary conferences and evangelistic crusades people are admonished to go forth and "win the world." But as honest and sincere as these persons are, the fact remains that the efforts of those who walk in the spiritual feasts of Passover and Pentecost are doomed to failure. The fact remains that nowhere did the Lord tell His disciples to save the world! Rather, Jesus said, "I will build my *church*." Church means "the called out." And that is precisely what the Lord has been doing for the past two thousand years — *building His church* — *calling out* a people for His name! But never did He say that all would believe or that we should win the world to Him or sweep the nations into the kingdom of God during the age now ending. If He would have said it, it would have happened, for He is the omnipotent Lord with all power in heaven and in earth! The fact that the world hasn't been saved, and the nations have not been subjected to the rule of God, is the only proof needed that it has not been God's plan to do so! He who holds the hope of converting the world by Passover preaching, or by Pentecostal gifts of the Holy Spirit, or by well organized revival crusades, or by forty days of fasting and prayer, is running after a mere phantom. It is wishful thinking — it simply won't happen!

God *has* been calling out a people for His name — saving, delivering, teaching, purging, purifying, dealing, nurturing, maturing, and bringing them progressively unto the full stature of Jesus Christ. It has taken the long and tedious process of two millenniums to bring His people to birth that a manchild, the manifest sons of God, might be revealed. Meanwhile, the Lord has not interfered with the downward course of the world! He has allowed the selfishness of the human race to drag it down into ever lower depths of sin and degradation. Even when His professed people, misguided by their lack of understanding, and motivated by their unscriptural and unspiritual ambitions, have established state-church systems in His name, He has not interfered. And when these have fallen, and when all the misguided efforts of those people who have tried to establish peace for the Prince of Peace by carnal warfare, bloodshed, and tyranny in the Lord's name, God has still not intervened. His plans for the salvation of the world have been separate from all human efforts, and He wants the whole world, including worldly churches, to learn that apart from GOD'S CHRIST and GOD'S TIME they can accomplish nothing beyond the limited work prescribed for this dying age. He wants them to learn that in order to achieve success they must work with Him, and in keeping with *His plans*, rather than expect Him to bless *their plans* and *their efforts* to establish His kingdom.

Therefore I do not judge the governments of this world, or their cultures, or their religions. I do not try to "*sweep nations* into the kingdom of God," as some say. BUT GOD **DOES** HAVE A PLAN FOR THE NATIONS and a glorious day of release and restoration into the kingdom of God! And those called and chosen as the elect of God, as the sons of the Father in this significant hour, are being given *understanding* of the sacred secret of God — His **plan of the ages!** His "flying angel company" is receiving its training and its instructions for this hour. Out from among the billions of earth God is choosing an ELECT COMPANY to bear His name — His nature and His authority. It is here, in the true church, which is His body, that Jesus Christ **FIRST ESTABLISHES HIS GOVERNMENT** that He might rule and reign on the throne of men's lives. And now soon — these sons of God shall be revealed to all creation that the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God unto these sons of His love might be exhibited for all to see and be blessed thereby!

For this all creation eagerly waits, as the apostle has said. *“In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has in store for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God’s sons coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God’s purpose it has been so limited — yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end **the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the sons of God!** It is plain to anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail. And it is plain, too, that we who have a foretaste of the Spirit are in a state of painful tension, while we wait for that redemption of our bodies **which will mean that we have reached our full sonship in Him**”* (Rom. 8:18-23, Phillips).

It is also plain to see that the reason all creation is expectantly awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God is just because the sons of God themselves are the instrument through which creation will be set free from the tyranny of sin and death. We must first be partaker of the fullness of His life, then shall creation be set free! But most Christians will not come to this! They are too busy playing church, rejoicing that they are not going to hell or that they are going to heaven when they die, and blundering around in the carnal programs, immaturity, and shame of a wretched, fleshly, religious system which falsely *calls itself* “the church.” But just as the dispensation of the law, at its conclusion, brought forth that which it typified and pointed to — Jesus Christ the Son of God — so this present church age must, in *these last days*, at its conclusion, bring forth that for which it was intended and to which it pointed — a many-membered **body of Christ**, perfected, matured, overcoming, and full grown into the exact likeness, image, wisdom, power, and glory of the firstborn Son of God, its Head and Lord.

The wonderful truth is: **NO ONE CAN HINDER OR STOP THE PROCESSES OF GOD!** God has a plan! At the beginning of the church age the world was visited by events so momentous in their power and glory that all things were changed from that time onward. In the eternal realm before the ages were formed, and ages before man first saw the light of earth’s day, the almighty Lord set in motion His omniscient and immutable purpose for the ages which were to follow. Let it be thoroughly known that our all-wise heavenly Father planned the events of each successive age from the very first age unto the ages of ages far beyond the comprehension of mortal man. It is not by accident nor by natural evolution that the world has progressed from the darkness of paganism to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is by divine design!

God never intended that Christ should rule over all the earth and all nations during this age. His reign is confined completely to that company of footstep followers who have heard His voice and follow Him all the way unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Baptized in His fullness these sons of God become the embodiment of His government in the earth. This may seem to be an extremely slow method and a very small kingdom for such a great and exalted King, but we cannot overemphasize the importance of this lowly beginning for a government whose authority is destined to “subdue ALL THINGS.” So let us see that not only is God establishing His government in the lives of His elect, but through His dealings with them He is actually **FORMING THEM INTO A GOVERNMENT** — a ruling body of sons of God, sons upon mount Zion, kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, the angel company flying in the midst of heaven having the **good news of the ages** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, **Fear God, and give glory to Him;** for the hour of His judgment is come: and **worship Him** that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters!

God is calling out a people to bear His name, to *be* His nature, authority, and power in the earth! But — to bear His name **WHERE? WHEN? HOW?** To bear His name only through their fleeting years in the flesh? Not at all! James says, “**AFTER THIS** (after the Lord has completed His work of calling out a people for His name) **I will return and build again the tabernacle of David...THAT THE RESIDUE OF MEN MIGHT SEEK AFTER THE LORD, AND ALL THE NATIONS...**saith the Lord.” The “residue” of men simply denotes “all the rest,” that is, all who were not part of the “called out.” I tell you, my beloved, God is now *forming a government* composed of faithful sons (the tabernacle of David) whom He shall use in the age now dawning and in those *ages* yet unborn as kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek to bring God’s kingdom to pass in all the earth and throughout all realms. Through this glorious anointed body of

sons ALL THE REST OF MEN...ALL THE NATIONS...SHALL SEEK THE LORD! What wonderful news that is! While the church world is getting ready to “fly away” to some far-off heaven somewhere, the sons of God are even now being prepared and equipped to rule all nations with a rod of iron. They are being taught, and are learning well, THE GOSPEL OF THE AGES — THAT GOSPEL WHICH WILL BRING HOPE, RELEASE, VICTORY, AND SALVATION UNTO ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH! Great is the mystery!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY