

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 175

THE SEVEN ANGELS WITH THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES (continued)

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and *them that had gotten the victory* over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand upon the sea of glass, having the harps of God” (Rev. 15:2).

We are inclined to lightly pass over many profound statements of truth in the word of God. In glorious rapture John beheld the awe-inspiring scene of the sea of glass mingled with fire, and that illustrious company of “them that come off victorious,” or literally in the Greek text, “*those conquering away from*” the beast, and from the image of him, and from the number of the name of him, standing upon this sea. The King James Bible says that they had gotten the victory “over” the beast, but the Greek preposition is *ek* meaning “out of” or “away from,” signifying the “exodus” of the saints from the bestial nature of the flesh, from the world and all its power, and from the carnal church systems of man. The word, also, not only indicates a victorious emergence from the conflict in these realms, but points to the eternal separation from all these by an abundant entrance into a new and glorious place in God. They are no longer in the fight, but victors returned from it. They no longer utter prayer, the symbol of struggle. Prayer has been turned into song! They sing the song of Moses the servant of God — that song which is the type of thanksgiving for every deliverance from the oppressor that is given to men here below. And the song of the Lamb — which gathers up all earth’s songs of deliverance into one mighty hymn of praise. They have overcome, and the power and wrath of the beast can reach them no more! They now stand upon the glassy sea and behold with unveiled face the beatific vision!

This people, this corporate people, this praising people, this overcoming company, those who had harps and were singing, had been delivered *out from* the beast of the old Adamic nature and its world system; *out from* the image of the beast — the man-made church systems incorporated, organized, and fashioned after the institutions of the world; *out from* the mark of the beast — the idolatry of all human wisdom; and *out from* number of the beast — the fullness of the strength of man.

If you can see it, my beloved, this victory *away from* the beast is that work which the apostle sets forth in Galatians 6:14, wherein he says, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*” There are vast multitudes of believers in the church systems today who may have grasped the concept of the death of Christ for them, and go about glibly declaring that Jesus died for them, and yet they do not even faintly perceive the fact that this also means that THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED UNTO THEM. When the Bible speaks of the world in the New Testament, it is not referring to planet earth nor to the created universe, not to the seas and clouds and mountains and flowers, but almost always to the **world system** — the corrupt world order with all its evil devices, with all its vain and false and selfish and corrupt desires, with all its flesh-oriented goals and purposes, its self-centeredness and egotism. The “world” in scripture is this whole carnal system of man’s invention that passes from father to child down through the centuries. It finds expression through government, politics, religion, education, economics, military, culture, tradition, and institutions by the

thousands. The result of man's departure from the life and leadership of the Spirit has been the establishment of a whole vast *system*, which the Holy Spirit testifies is *passing away*.

If we are God's called and chosen elect the world has been crucified to us; it is dead. It is somewhat like a man who loves a woman. He greatly loves her and is ravished by her beauty and grace. But one day she dies, perhaps even in his arms. He looks down at her body which just a moment ago was warm and moving. Now all is still and silent. The light has gone from the eyes. Perhaps, if he really loved her, he might even yet smother her face with his kisses. Wait but an hour or so and that body will grow cold, and a little longer and it will no longer be soft, but now stiff and cold. Wait but a few days and it will begin to rot and stink. A week later one would not be able to stand to go into the room with it. That is what the Lord says should be happening in every saint's life concerning this whole world system, with all its vaunted success, all of its lofty goals, with all its economics, politics, and religion. The world has already received at the cross, its death blow. Our Lord Jesus not only gathered the whole race of men into himself upon His cross, but also the whole world system of man, and all was crucified with Him and in Him. That is what Paul is telling us in the plainest of words! Even its king, the devil, has received a wound in his forehead from which he will utterly perish. So this system is crumbling into oblivion. It still looks quite beautiful to those who love and adore it, but even now we can smell the putrefaction of it. For the sons and daughters of the Most High it has lost its allurements together with all its tinsel and successes which men in the world count of great value and of high esteem.

Ray Prinzing commented on this passage: "While experimentally the world becomes crucified unto me — so that we no longer have any desire for the things of the world, no lusting for friendship with the world, no latent feelings that can be awakened and stirred up by the world; to make it even more complete, *'I am crucified unto the world.'* Thus, as far as the world is concerned, you become dead to them also. They have no more desire for you — there is nothing in you that appeals to them, you are as useless to them as a corpse. You cease to exist in their realm. Don't be amazed, then, if they no longer seek you out or try to fellowship with you. Only those who are quickened to the same new life which you are receiving, can fellowship with you in that life. To all others you are a stranger and a foreigner." What a word! Truly this identifies "them that have gotten the victory *out from* the beast..."

Indelibly stamped upon my memory is the time, many years ago, when we were involved in a mighty and glorious move of the Spirit of God. At that time we were flowing with a group of brethren in Florida who had been led out of the Mennonite denomination as well as various other church movements by the blessing and leading of the Holy Spirit. Those were days of heaven-sent glory and how fresh, how powerful, how awe-inspiring was the word of the kingdom of God and the great truth of sonship that flowed out from the spirits and lips of men anointed and quickened by the Holy Ghost!

Sadly, however, I must report that it was not long until the harlot of Babylon rose up in the midst with her wanton seductiveness and men of God began to be drawn aside by her fleshly allure and enticements. One of the key brethren in that move was invited to attend an Oral Roberts Ministers Conference where he, with many other ministers, was instructed by supposedly Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered, and Spirit-led men *how to promote a ministry*. Worldly methods of public relations, promotion, fund-raising, etc. were introduced as instruments of the Holy Spirit to accomplish great things for the kingdom of God. Use your name, put your name to your ministry, promote yourself, post your picture on every page of your publications, always have a project — make that project bigger and more grandiose than any that have gone before — and make it far beyond your financial means, as a tool for raising *more money* to do *greater things* for God. With such cunning craftiness the ministers of God were taught worldly-wise methods and techniques to induce the Lord's people to send them their tithes and offerings in order to build their ministries into an empire and propel their influence into regions of recognition, fame, and fortune — all in the name of Jesus!

When this dear brother arrived home from that conference he was literally *full* of these carnal, Babylonian ideas! Under his leadership the work began to move away from the liberty, leadership, and power of the Spirit into flesh-oriented channels of man's invention. Some precious brethren made their way into this brother's office, weeping, pleading with many tears, even prostrating themselves before him,

entreating him in the love of Christ not to follow this new course. But he hardened his heart against them and set himself to promote himself and carry the work with him.

As we sought to follow God and walk in the glorious liberty and leadership of the Spirit and the beautiful light of revelation and truth as He shed it upon our pathway, it was not long before we knew within ourselves that we could no longer walk with God and walk with this ministry, too. The spirit within was calling for a separation. We had no inclination to create confusion, strife, division, or disorder, or to endeavor to draw people unto ourselves or have them follow us out to another pasture. We were content to quietly and unpresumptuously slip away to follow the paths of Father's leading in our lives. While we sensed in our spirits the way of the Lord for us in this, we had not shared our convictions with anyone but continued to walk softly, waiting upon the Lord.

I shall never be able to forget that bright Sunday morning when, standing in front of the church building just before the morning service, a sister in the Lord approached me and said, "Brother Eby, I have a word from the Lord I must share with you." She continued, "The Lord gave me a dream and I saw a funeral in this church. The casket was in place before the platform and the building was packed with people. You were sitting in the first pew in front of the casket. Suddenly, I saw you slip down out of your seat — you crawled under the pew and began to scoot your way under all the pews until you reached the front (entrance) of the auditorium. Then you stood up and simply walked out the front doors." I thanked the sister for sharing the word while within myself my heart was giving thanks to God for this beautiful confirmation I had been waiting for. The message was just this: There is *death* in the pot! There is *death* in the camp! The move of God in this place has come to an end — the revival is dead. You are now attending the funeral. You are sitting in a prominent place in the presence of death. You are not to cause a stir nor even raise your voice publicly in protest. It is time to simply disappear from the scene. "Come away with me, my love!" And so we did.

Ah, yes, we had gotten the victory "away from" the beast, from the beastly system of man, away from the allure of the harlot, away from the path of the flesh, the world, and the devil! To come "out from" is to free oneself to "come into" union with Christ in the Spirit! It is indeed wonderful!

George Warnock wrote in one of his books: "We are told that 'the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for *the manifestation of the sons of God.*' Paul tells us that the creation was 'made subject to vanity'...not of its own will. But when man who was put in charge of planet earth, lost his fear of God — God subjected the rest of creation to vanity. Yet He did so in hope! For He purposed that this defiled creation would arise in new splendor, and into 'the glorious liberty of the children of God' (Rom. 8:19-21). Creation does not know why it is groaning, or if there is any hope. But God knows why, and He tells us why: it is because they have hope of deliverance in *the unveiling of the sons of God...which is nothing less than the Son of God Himself being revealed and shining forth in His many brethren.* And it is for this unveiling that creation is groaning and travailing. For these sons will radiate the glory of THE SON, not their own glory. Their glory must come to ashes, that the Son alone might be glorified in them.

"It was not the fault of the lower creation that the animals became wild and fierce, and the land of fruitfulness became dry, barren, and desolate — it was man's fault. The animals only tear and rend their prey because man lost his fear and respect for God, and in so doing his authority over the animal world and over nature, has been greatly eroded. As the hearts of men are changed, so are the hearts of the wild beasts. We see a touch of this from time to time — as a foretaste I believe, of the glory of the kingdom that is yet to be revealed, when the fear of God returns to God's people, and His sons radiate His glory in the earth.

"Many years ago I read this story about Sadhu Sundar Singh, a man of India who ministered in the early part of the last century. One evening he was sitting outside on a log, near the mission home where he was staying — and the people inside suddenly saw something that startled them. It was getting dark, and a leopard was climbing up the hillside, coming toward the Sadhu who was sitting there enjoying the evening air. They saw the leopard walk over to him, and the Sadhu reached out his hand and gently stroked his fur. Why should wild beasts fear a man such as this, who was walking in the fear of his Creator — and their's? I heard William Branham tell a story something like that. When he was a park warden he had occasion to go into a certain wilderness area. He left his truck and walked some distance, then suddenly he saw this wild

bull charging him. The owners had transferred the bull to this wilderness area because he was a valuable animal — but he was a killer. Brother Branham reached for his gun...but he had left it in the truck. Then he said something very unusual happened. Immediately there came over him a tremendous wave of the love of God for that poor creature — not a prophetic word of power, but a surging of God's love for this ignorant beast. Then he turned to the bull and apologized: 'I am sorry for having disturbed you this way — now go and lie down.' We call situations like this miraculous...because they are infrequent. But when man returns to God from disobedience and rebellion, the authority that he once had over the planet will return. Our Lord Jesus already has this power and authority, and *reigns as a conquering Lamb on the throne*. And He will share His dominion with His many brethren, *in the day of His power*.

"Perhaps many who read these words are asking, When will God manifest His sons in this manner? But the real question is not WHEN it will happen — but **HOW** must we prepare our hearts for it to happen? How senseless it would be if we could tame the wild animals that sneak around our home — but **have no power to conquer the wild beasts in our own natures, or subdue the beastly hearts of men that fight against the Lamb and His people?**" — end quote.

Ah, there you have it! If we cannot overcome the beast within us, nor the bestial system of the world, nor the beastly system of man's religion, there is no need to think about the wild lions and tigers! The natural is always a picture of the spiritual, and nowhere is this more true than in the imagery of the book of Revelation.

Long ago, back in seventeenth century England, an anointed preacher of London, John Everard, spoke the following words of truth and wisdom: "Beloved! I tell you, if you but take this key, to unlock this book (Revelation), the precious treasure chest of God, you will find precious jewels come tumbling down to your hand. Every man, before he becomes a spiritual man, was a carnal man, a natural man. And this natural man *possessed his house*, and he is the *strong man* of whom our Lord spoke in Matthew 12:29. And whenever I speak of the *strong man*, or the *old man*, or *sin*, or the *devil*, or *satan*, or *lucifer*, or *antichrist*, *etc.*, I mean and intend one and the same thing, and so does the scripture (as I conceive) and I would have you well to consider this thing; for they are those enemies the scripture most minds us of, and gives us warning to be aware of, and watch against, they be our bosom enemies, that betray us. As for outward enemies, we meddle not with them, for these are our grand and mortal enemies. But the scripture has given these enemies, or rather this enemy of ours, *several names*, that thereby we may come to know him, or by some of them at least; that we may see in ourselves the several effects of all those names, although all is but one and the same thing, even the body and person of Antichrist. So long as this *strong man*, or this *antichrist*, or this *wild beast* keeps the house, that is so long as our own wisdom, gifts, strength, abilities of nature, reason, understanding, will, affections — so long as these keep the house, Jesus Christ is crucified. But when the strong man is bound, and cast out, then is there the revelation of the true Master of the house, the revelation of the spirit of the living Christ" — end quote.

The manifestation of the sons of God is not a doctrine, it is the revelation of the wonderful purpose of God for the next step in the development and triumph of His kingdom. And while it is true, He sets HIS SEAL upon those He has called unto His purposes, there must be also a response on our part, and this is the kind of act that the Lord Jesus is speaking of when he says, "He that has received *His testimony* hath set *his seal* to this, that God is true" (Jn. 3:33). Praise God, there is a people, even in this dark hour, who are setting *their seal* to the truths the Spirit is revealing, agreeing with God, not willing to accept the emptiness of man-made religion as God's instrument for this hour, unwilling to be content to possess only an earnest of the Spirit or to settle for anything less than HIS FULLNESS, and living in daily anticipation of the GREATER GLORY to be revealed in God's sons.

There is such a deep desire within to be freed from every aspect of the character of the beast, cleansed and purified, transformed into HIS IMAGE, until the life and glory and power of God shall flow from our lives setting all creation free. Our spirits shout, AMEN! Those who put *their seal* to the word God is speaking to His chosen ones in this new day of the Lord have a single eye unto HIM. Not a divided vision, for "a doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways...let not that man think that he shall receive any thing from the Lord." Today he wants to be a son, tomorrow he wants to serve the flesh, or join himself to some harlot system, and in all the vacillating between he will receive nothing from God. All who cherish the

beautiful hope of sonship now face the hour of TOTAL COMMITMENT UNTO CHRIST AND TO THE TRUTH, even though it means taking a stand against our own flesh, and all we hold dear, while it is dealt with by His cross.

I have said it a thousand times and will now say it again — I believe I speak the truth when I say that many of us have reached the point of no return — there is nothing to go back to, not in the flesh, not in the world, not in the church systems, there is nothing out of which we have been drawn to which we would return, it is all empty, meaningless, lifeless, worthless, it has all been crucified unto us, and us unto it, and we feel that in some measure we have ***gotten the victory away from the beast, and away from his image, and away from his mark, and away from the number of his name.*** It is vain to come out unless we are committed to ***enter in.*** We are committed to a course which cannot be altered, for even now as we stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire, receiving the harps of God in our hands, it is fixed in its destination — His throne! “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). Precious friend of mine, have you set YOUR SEAL to the inward testimony of God’s purpose in this hour, and His will in your life? “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the ***prize*** of the ***high calling of God in Christ Jesus***” (Phil. 3:13-14).

I have sometimes wondered if after Adam and Eve sinned, they sensed that all around them God’s creation was falling. Did they recognize that creation was already or would soon begin groaning in pain? Adam and Eve did know that they were now different, and that difference was not good! Their nakedness made them feel ashamed. Their hearts wanted to avoid God rather than embrace Him. For the first time in his life Adam looked for a way to place blame instead of affection on his wife, and Eve passed blame along to the serpent, who had deceived her. For such thorough and complete damage to be reversed, something drastic would have to happen. Something powerful. Something unaffected by the creation-wide disaster that had just occurred. God’s words to Adam and Eve hinted at what that ***something*** would be and do: a descendant of the woman would crush the head of the serpent! How would that happen? What offspring of the woman would God send to restore all of creation? Amazingly, God would send A MAN to be the crusher! That man is Christ! Ah — it is Christ ***in you***, the hope of glory! “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me,” affirmed the apostle. “Greater is HE that is ***in you***, than HE that is in the world,” John wrote. THE CRUSHER IS WITHIN US!

In the Olympic games, to which Paul so often refers, there were prescribed regulations for each competitor to observe and obey in order to become eligible to race or to play in the games. These were: (1) Freemen only were eligible. (2) Ten months’ training under a professional trainer or tutor. (3) Particular attention to one’s diet. (4) Special discipline to one’s habits. (5) Repeated and continual exercise and practice.

An experienced trainer or tutor was required for the competitor to become knowledgeable of every need and detail. The scriptures reveal that our trainer and tutor is Christ Jesus our Lord, who is the Firstborn among many brethren, the Captain of our salvation, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and the Head of the body of sons. In His own experience and victory He BECAME all of that — and as we concentrate on the hope set before us, looking to that which is beyond the veil, and looking unto Jesus — Christ arises within us in our own experience and leads us to victory! With a trainer and tutor like this, how can we fail? Let us therefore give the more earnest heed, for the words that He speaks to us He speaks within — in the crucible of experience — and the words that He speaks unto us, they are spirit, and they are life! Isn’t it wonderful!

Every child of God called to sonship is now in school — under the tutorship of the indwelling Christ. For those who are consciously growing up into the image, stature, and fullness of Christ, your daily life and walk with Christ ***is the classroom*** in which we have special opportunity to learn to live as kings and priests in the government of God. We may feel that we graduated from school a long time ago, but that is a mistake; we hadn’t even started to school at that time. When you received the call to sonship and began to be drawn out of your former life, out of your former understanding of God and His purpose, and out from your former religious associations, it was then, and only then, that you entered the school of sonship under the tutorship of the Christ. When God drew you out of the religious system and separated you unto Himself you may have

felt that you “graduated” into a new realm — and you certainly did. You graduated from *kindergarten!* And immediately you were enrolled in the first grade of God’s SCHOOL OF SONSHIP. In this school there is only one course taught, and that is the course of *overcoming*, which is the hardest course to master and finish known in any curriculum in the world today. This matter of disciplining one’s thoughts, desires, emotions, habits; of training one’s spirit and soul and body to function on the level of the mind, nature, wisdom, and power of Christ is of the greatest importance and spells the difference between success and failure in the kingdom of God. To finish this course marks the difference between being in the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus, or remaining a babe in Christ, a nominal citizen in the kingdom of heaven.

Kelly Varner in one of his sermons shared these challenging and penetrating words: “The Spirit without the Word is fanaticism. Revelation without possession is delusion. Doctrine without reality is vanity. Power without righteousness is treachery. I remember a convention I was in one time with all these air-heads, helium-heads, space cadets. They knew the Bible. And those were the days when I wasn’t as sweet as I am now and I said, ‘You know, y’all wear me out. You’re preaching overcoming, and half of you sitting in this congregation haven’t been able to even overcome in your own marriage.’ There were people sitting there married two or three times (and I’m not condemning anyone who has a second marriage), their finances were all messed up, their kids rebellious and undisciplined — and they were going to rule the world! If you can’t rule your own spirit, if you can’t rule your own lusts, if you can’t rule your own checkbook and credit card, if you can’t rule your own children — how are you going to rule the world? Give me a break!”

There are certain basic principles of the kingdom of God that must be a part of the mind-set and experience of all who press forward into sonship to God. We must learn to think like God! We must begin to RULE WITH CHRIST IN THIS LIFE! Too many saints are weak, frustrated, and defeated. May the dynamite of God’s Spirit blow us all out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression, and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of peace, joy, and triumph in the kingdom. “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 this 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 far 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, as Kelly Varner has pointed out, how can a man rule over principalities and powers and worlds and universes if he is unable to *rule his own spirit and his own affairs?* “He that ruleth His own spirit,” said the wise man, “is better than he that taketh a city” (Prov. 16:32). The awful betrayal, trial, mockery, 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 more bravely borne. Through that fierce and heated hour our Lord bore Himself with quiet dignity. Others were convulsed with uncontrolled passion, He alone was calm and self-possessed. Can you not see it — 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.” Ah, yes, we have within us today not only the One who **can** overcome in all things, but the One who **HAS** overcome! He that is *in you is mighty!*

Our 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 a result of the use or abuse of the principles of the kingdom of God. Learn this, beloved, 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 (consequentially) give power over the nations: and he shall rule them...” (Rev. 2:26-27). “To him that overcometh will I grant (consequentially) to sit with me in my throne” (Rev. 3:21). As I have pointed out many times before, the journey to the throne of the universe begins in that small and undistinguished place where you are. The kingdom of God is *within you*. The enChristed who are to reign with Christ from sea to sea, then from planet to planet, and finally from universe to universe, are being

prepared. Think not in your heart, precious friend of mine, that you may pass your life here careless, indifferent to the dealings of God, suddenly to awake one fine morning to find yourself sitting with Christ governing the galaxies, because such a thing will not be. Begin today to **MAKE WAY FOR THE KING!** This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies. And the place which He is preparing for each one is not only an age and a world to come, and a kingdom of life and light, but a place **IN HIM**, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, heart of His heart, mind of His mind, nature of His nature, life of His life!

To those who love God and revere His word, to those who are enrolled in His great School of Sonship, to those who finish the prescribed course, to those who learn all the lessons, gaining the knowledge within themselves proven in their own experience — there is a glorious ***graduation day!*** In a very real sense, was this not what John beheld in transfixed wonder that long-ago day on Patmos! Methinks he saw the graduation exercises for all the holy sons of God out of the ages. Not in an auditorium, not in a stadium, not in a vast amphitheater was this celebration carried forth, but upon a shimmering sea of glass mingled with fire! There stand all those blessed ones who have gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, and they have the harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb! They are “*him that overcometh.*” What a divine extravaganza!

Some time ago I read the following story in one of the many magazines that come across my desk. There was a farmer who had an old mule who fell into a well. The farmer heard the mule braying and came to its rescue. But after sizing up the situation, the farmer decided that neither the mule nor the well were worth the trouble it would take to save either. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened along with what he had decided to do; bury the old mule now (in the well) and put him out of his misery. This, the farmer said, would be the humane thing to do. The men immediately got to work and began burying the mule. Of course, the mule became panicky at first. However, as the farmer and his neighbors continued to shovel dirt on him, a thought came to the old mule: every time the men shoveled dirt on his back, he would shake it off and take a step up!

Now the mule did this following each shovelful of dirt that was pitched into the well. ***Shake it off and step up. Shake it off and step up. SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!*** No matter how distressing the situation seemed or how painful the falling load of dirt felt, the old mule fought His panic and just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up. Thus, it wasn't very long before the old mule stepped triumphantly over the wall of the well! What appeared to be the end for this mule was just another chapter in its life and what was meant to bury him actually blessed and saved him! And that, dear one, **IS THE LAW OF OVERCOMING!** The fiery trials, the testings, problems, difficulties, painful situations, onslaughts of the adversary, persecutions, obstacles, stones in our pathway — all can be stumbling blocks that trip and defeat, or we can make them ***stepping stones to the throne!*** Ah, yes, we can allow these obstacles to overcome us, or we can draw from the mighty strength of the ***Victor within*** and **SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!** We will soon begin to see that the adversities of life that threaten to “bury” us are laden with potential benefit and blessing — the stepping stones that carry us to a higher realm in God! And when we step out of our own personal well of entrapment, when we step over the wall of that well, we step out into the bright glory of God upon the sea of glass mingled with fire; we receive the harp of God and the divine ability to play its majestic chords of praise while we sing the mighty song of deliverance and triumph — song of Moses and the Lamb. It is graduation day, and now the hour has come to receive the judgment, the authority, the dominion reserved for the sons of the Most High. Oh, the mystery of it!

THE HARPS OF GOD

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, *having the harps of God*” (Rev. 15:2).

Let us now for a moment pay attention to their song. It must not escape our attention that they sing their song upon “the harps of God.” This means “harps provided by God,” just as in the phrase, “the righteousness of God.” Miriam’s timbrel was made by man; so were the harps constructed by David’s order, and used in the temple service of earth. But these are the harps of God! That is, God Himself has given them their instruments of music. He is the craftsman of their harps. He is at the same time the author of their song. Never would they have sung this song were it not for the grace, purpose, and power of God! Never would they have persevered and remained steadfast through the intensity of the fire unless God through Jesus Christ had raised up the stability of the Christ within them. Never would they, therefore, have been able to sing this song, were it not that God Himself had formed them to be His people. **THEY HAVE THE HARPS OF GOD!** It is *His harp* and it is *His song* just as it is *His sea of glass* and *His throne* to which they have now been brought!

It follows that these melodious instruments reveal the great truth that we, as God’s elect, are called and chosen to be instruments of praise in which there is found only perfect tuning. As we receive these harps there is no more of the carnal discord of egocentricity, professional form, and fleshly zeal which have marred our praise. Our spirits, perfectly tuned to the will and way of our Father, will sound a perfect unison with all of creation. As we ascend into the throne zone in our high calling in Christ, there is no dissonance in that glorious rendition, for every fiber of our being vibrates with the praise of the Lamb who has made us kings and priests unto God!

Surely now we can plainly see that the idea is not that everyone will one day go to heaven and learn to play a harp, but that there is a *realm in God* where our entire nature and being throbs with heavenly harmonies, for the strings of our inner son are perfectly in tune with the mind and heart of our Father, because of the mighty transformation wrought by the life of the indwelling Lamb. As this is accomplished in us we all begin to fulfill the injunction of the Psalm which says, “Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto Him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth” (Ps. 33:1-4). You say, “But I can’t sing and I don’t know how to play the harp or any of those other instruments.” That’s *not the message!* The “harp” is a symbol of perfect praise pouring forth from all of God’s elect. And not merely the act of *praising*, but the very *becoming a praise* and the *being of praise*, as it is written, “Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He *make Jerusalem a praise* in the earth” (Isa. 62:6-7). Again, “So have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah (praise), saith the Lord; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and *for a praise*, and for a glory...” (Jer. 13:11). Yet again, “Having predestinated us unto placement as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself...*to the praise of the glory* of His grace...in whom also we have obtained an inheritance...that *we should be to the praise of His glory*” (Eph. 1:5,6,11,12).

The harp in scripture is also symbolic of the prophetic ministry. As the incense connects with the priest’s ministry, so the harp connects with the prophet’s! We read that the prophet Samuel informed king Saul, “Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, *and a harp before them*, and they shall prophesy” (I Sam. 10:5). We read that king David set apart the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthan, “*who prophesied with a harp*” (I Chron. 25:1-3). And in Psalms 49:4 we read, “*I will open my dark sayings upon the harp.*” The harp, therefore, is symbolic of the prophetic ministry in the highest sense of the word! It bespeaks THE REVELATION AND UNVEILING OF THE DEEP MYSTERIES OF THE WORD, WILL, AND WAYS OF THE LORD! Thus the prophetic harps of the overcomers, as they stand upon the sea of glass, are the prophecy contained in the song of Moses and the Lamb which they sing! THEY have overcome, and now their prophecy proclaims that God’s works are great and marvelous, His ways are just and true, and ALL shall fear Him and glorify His name! ALL nations shall come and worship before the Lord, for His judgments are made manifest! Oh, yes! The overcomers, the manifest sons of God, have been brought to their victory for this very purpose — that through them all creation might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God! Their song is the prophecy proclaiming the great truth that God’s company of king-priests shall bring the triumph of God’s kingdom to pass in all realms from sea to sea and from pole to pole! It is truly wonderful!

It is interesting to note that when Israel was in the Babylonian captivity, their harps were silent (Ps. 137:2). That the vast company of God's sons are seen standing upon the sea of glass, approaching the throne, playing their harps and singing their song of deliverance indicates the finality of their deliverance and the fullness of the joy of the Lord in their hearts as well as their prophetic and creative word unto creation. By the victory of the Lamb they have joyfully and authoritatively entered into their ministry from the throne of God to deliver and restore *all things*. These victorious overcomers are seen celebrating the true joy and power of the kingdom of God! They are experiencing within themselves the reality of the kingdom which is righteousness, peace, and *joy in the Holy Ghost!* With kingdom joy, vision, and power they are ready to reign! This is what is happening in the lives of God's called and chosen elect in this hour! Has not God brought us out of Babylon? Have not the heavens been opened to us? Has He not made known to us His great calling, His wonderful plan, and His great purpose in the earth, in His elect, and in the universe? Is not God establishing His throne of dominion within our hearts? Has He not imparted to us a vision and a word for the nations? Are we not playing our harps and singing our song by the unction of His Spirit within? There is power in those harps and there is deliverance in our song! We only play these harps and sing this song in the **throne zone**. It is here that we declare the creative word of the Lord through prophetic worship and praise which has the power to break every yoke, delivering and transforming all creation. Even now we see the power of God's arm which is stretched forth through the prophetic worship and praise of His people! And it is this mighty power of prophetic praise that shall devastate the carnality of the earth realm in preparation for the revelation of the glory of God!

We met these harps and the song earlier in Revelation chapters eight and fourteen. We identify these harpers and singers with the one hundred and forty-four thousand on mount Zion (Rev. 14) and with the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in Revelation 5:8 — it is the same emblem only varied in details. The harps are *always* in the book of Revelation associated with the overcomers, the sons of God. There is a significant difference, however, between the harpists and the song sung in chapter 14 and the scene in our present text. In closing, let us consider this difference.

When John saw the hundred and forty-four thousand standing upon mount Zion he also heard and saw the following. "And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard *the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand* which were redeemed from the earth" (Rev. 14:2-3). As John stands enthralled by the scene of the hundred and forty-four thousand on mount Zion, he hears a voice, a sound *from heaven*. This sound does *not* come from mount Zion. It seems distinguished from the voice of the hundred and forty-four thousand. It comes out of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! It is a voice apart from the mount Zion realm, as we shall see. If you read the text carefully you will notice that it is the harpists out of a heavenly dimension who are singing to the music of their harps — *not* the hundred and forty-four thousand on mount Zion.

"*They sing*" refers to the harpists whose sound comes from heaven — out of a realm of the Spirit. Thus, the song is sounding forth from the "voices in heaven" and not from the Lamb and His followers on mount Zion. Can we not see by this that the song is for the *benefit* and *blessing* of God's king-priest company on mount Zion, but it is not they who are at this point actually singing the song! Instead, they are *hearing* the song — it is as though a great orchestra and choir have been assembled out of a heavenly realm to perform before God's called and chosen elect who are following the Lamb up the mount Zion in order to inspire, quicken, and renew within them the message and revelation contained in the song! Isn't that marvelous!

And now comes the final proof. "*And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*" Can you see the picture — the hundred and forty-four thousand are standing on mount Zion *listening* to this "as it were a new song" *in order to learn it!* And no man — no man in heaven above, no man in earth beneath, no man anywhere at all in all of God's vast universe, could *learn* that song *except* the hundred and forty-four thousand which were redeemed from the earth! On the part of the followers of the Lamb on mount Zion this was not a *singing* experience, it was a *learning* experience! Let us now see the enormous depth that streams to us out of this sublime scene. The hundred and forty-four thousand have just been redeemed from the earth realm, raised up out of a natural,

earthly, limited, human, carnal consciousness, identity, and state of being into the heavenly, spiritual, divine, infinite consciousness, identity, and state of being of quickened, changed, transformed Christ-men. And in this heavenly state there immediately falls upon their spiritual ears the majestic chords and powerful message of a song which is “*as it were* a new song,” which at first *seems* new to them — yet, somewhere, far away in the depths of their spirit, it stirs a chord, they have the sense that it is not really new — that indeed, somewhere, sometime, somehow THEY HAVE HEARD THAT SONG BEFORE! And now they must *learn*, actually *re-learn* it, just as in all of our spiritual experience we are being *re-deemed, re-newed, re-generated, re-surrected* — that wondrous song!

And now in chapter 15, the very next chapter of the book, the hundred and forty-four thousand overcomers have been *handed* the harps of God and they have thoroughly *learned* that song for they are now *singing* the song. Here we are even given the name of the song — The Song of Moses and the Lamb! Having passed through all the testing and provings of the sea of glass mingled with fire, these now stand triumphantly by the sea, holding the harps of God, and rapturously intoning the victorious song which not only expresses their glorious triumph but prophetically heralds God’s new day of salvation and deliverance for all the nations of mankind! Isn’t it wonderful!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY