
THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

BY

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Preface

As Truly as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and brought order and beauty and harmony out of chaos-so truly is that same Spirit once again moving o'er all the earth, and brining forth a New Creation out of moral, religious and political chaos. We read in Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God . . ." That is where the Old Creation starts: and that is where the New Creation starts. It begins with the Sovereign God. And how thankful we are that once again God has begun a great work in the hearts and lives of His people. There is a great and mighty Revival in progress. To many people, of course, there is no indication of any Revival-for the simple reason that this is the day and the hour of the Kingdom; and the "Kingdom of God cometh not with observation . . ." It is only by the illumination of the Spirit that men can see and know and understand the great and mighty work that God is now brining to pass in the midst of the earth.

"In the beginning GOD . . ." So it was that in the spring of 1948 God came forth in answer to the prayer and fasting of his children, poured out the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and revealed the fact that now at this time He would bring His body together, and make of His Church one glorious Church without spot or wrinkle. It was a day long treasured up in the counsels of God. On February 12 and 13, 1948, the Revival started. An eyewitness testifies as follows:

"Three buildings on the Airport at North Battleford, Sask., composed Sharon Orphanage and Schools at its beginning in the fall of 1947. About 70 students gathered to study the Word of God, and fast and pray. After about three months the Revival suddenly began in our largest classroom where the entire student body was gathered for devotional exercises. One young man told me that when he was five years old. God gave him a vision of that classroom. Everything in it was identical. He saw God moving in a way he could not understand."

I shall never forget the morning that God moved into our midst in this strange new manner. Some students were under the power of God on the floor, others were kneeling in adoration and worship before the Lord. The anointing deepened until the awe of God was upon everyone. The Lord spoke to one of the brethren. 'Go and lay hands upon a certain student and pray for him.' While he was in doubt and contemplation one of the sisters who had been under the power of God went to the brother saying the same words, and naming the identical student he was to pray for. He went in obedience, and a revelation was given concerning the student's life and future ministry. After this a long prophecy was given with minute details concerning the great thing God was about to do. The pattern for the Revival and many details concerning it were given. To this day I can remember the gist of the prophecy, and will try to repeat some things here as they were spoken.

These are the last days, my people. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and I shall move in the midst of mine own. The gifts of the Spirit will be restored to my Church. If thou shalt obey me I shall immediately restore them . . . But oh, my people, I would have you to be reverent before me as never before. Take the shoes from off thy

feet for the ground on which thou standest is holy. If thou dost not reverence the Lord in His House, the Lord shall require it at thy hands . . . Do not speak lightly of the things I am about to do, for the Lord shall not hold thee guiltless. Do not gossip about these things. Do not write letters to thy nearest friends, of the new way in which the Lord moveth, for they will not understand . . . If thou dost obey the Lord in these things, take heed lest thy days be numbered in sorrow and thou goest early to the grave . . . Thou hast obeyed Me, and I shall restore my gifts to you. I shall indicate from time to time those who are ready to receive the gifts of My Spirit. They shall be received by prophecy and the laying on the hands of the presbytery."

"Immediately following this prophecy a sister who was under the power of God came among us. Great repentance, humbling, fasting and prayer prevailed."

So it was that God began this great work of Restoration. For that is what is happening. God is restoring! He is restoring all that was lost in the fall of the Church, and in the fall of Adam! All creation groans in birth-pangs to be delivered from its corruption-and her travail of tears and sorrow has prevailed upon the God of Heaven to come down and deliver her.

"In the beginning God." Thank God for the beginning; and also for the continuation of the great work which He started a few hears ago. And though men are prone to look for the spectacular, God continues to move silently and noiselessly in the hearts of His people, perfecting that good work which he has begun in them. The place that God chose in which to start the Revival is only significant in as much as it is the most unlikely of places. No man would have chosen either the town, or the school or the students, or the ministers through whom God bestowed His blessing. But that is all most consistent with God's ways; for He chooses what man rejects. Bethlehem was the least esteemed village of the tribes of Judah-but the Son of God was born there. Nazareth was most contemptible in the eyes of the people, but the Great Prophet arose from thence. The Roman cross was an instrument of torture so despicable and so vile, that a great Roman politician once declared it ought never be mentioned in decent conversation; and yet there it was, on a Roman Cross, that God displayed His infinite Wisdom and Power through Jesus Christ.

Let the saints rejoice, therefor, for the mercy-drops of blessing which He has given-but most of all for the sound of abundance of rain. A cloud appears on the horizon! It will not be long ere it covers the earth, and the Glory of God shall be displayed throughout all nations, as the water cover the sea.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We believe the hour has come when the saints should know and understand, at least in part, the meaning of Israel's annual Feasts, for they constitute a very beautiful type and pattern for the Church. There is a time and a season for the proclamation of every Biblical truth, and when God's hour of revelation has struck, the Spirit of God is gloriously present to remove the veil from God's secrets and initiate His people into the mysteries of God. Such is the office work of the Holy Spirit, to lead and guide the saints into all truth, and to reveal the things which are to come. (Jn. 16:13). A consecrated and holy walk in the Spirit, therefore, is the only genuine basis we have for a proper understanding of the Scriptures. Without that consecration and that walk in the Spirit we might acquire a considerable understanding of theology, but it will be theology devoid of Truth. After all, theology is the study about God and about Truth; whereas Truth is a living, vital, powerful demonstration of the Spirit of God, pulsating with Divine life and power and wisdom and knowledge.

JESUS HIMSELF, THE TRUTH

When Jesus declared so emphatically, "I am the Truth," He there and then completely demolished the idea the Truth has anything in common with creeds and doctrines and theories about God and spiritual things. And not only so, for if Christ is Truth, then Truth comes to us in garments of humility and meekness and will find little acceptance at the hands of the learned or the ecclesiastical. It is strange but true that those who lead the masses in the religious realm are those who cast the Truth aside when He knocks at their door and asks for admission. There is only one answer to this strange state of affairs, and it is this: Ecclesiastical success has developed into pride of heart, and with that pride has come that Laodicean spirit so prevalent in all evangelical circles today: "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing..." (Rev. 3:17). Instead of hungering and thirsting after God and righteousness, we find on every hand the boastful claims of various sects as to how much Truth they have, and how much knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Perhaps it is needless to say that such boastful claims merely establish their Laodicean condition, and hinder them from taking their places as overcomers on the throne of Christ. The people of God have yet to learn that the Kingdom belongeth to those who are and have nothing, those who are poor in spirit, and such as hunger and thirst after righteousness. God exalteth the meek and lowly to inherit the throne of princes, and the lofty and noble He sendeth away with empty hands. May God help us each one, as His people, to humble ourselves and pray and seek His face--and above all things to recognize how little we have of Truth and Righteousness, that we might be prepared to receive bountiful spiritual blessings at the hand of Him who giveth liberally to all men and upbraideth not.

GREAT THINGS AHEAD

Truly the Lord hath prepared great and mighty things for His people: things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man. (1Cor. 2:9). If God's true children would only believe this one Scripture with all their hearts, how greatly it would help to release the riches of Heaven, and unlock the flood-gates of Glory! We know, of course, that Christians everywhere loudly profess to believe this, as well as the rest of the Bible; but in actuality they do not believe it. Yes, they will acknowledge that God has some great and mighty things prepared for us when we get to Heaven, but Paul declares in the following verse that these unseen, unheard-of, and unthought-of things are "revealed...by the Spirit," and not by way of rapture or death. (vs. 10).

Let us, therefore, give all diligence to enter into the realm of the Spirit, which realm constitutes the real heritage of the saints. Truly the heritage is ours for the possessing. And if no man from the ascension of Christ until now has entered into it, it still does not make any difference. The fact remains, it is ours for conquest if we can believe for it and receive it. The universal Church has rejected the possibility of possessing it; that is true; but the history of the Church is by no means the pattern of spiritual attainment. Paul did not fully apprehend it either; that is true. But he beheld the glory of it, nevertheless, like Moses who stood on Mount Nebo and viewed the promised land. And furthermore, he pressed forward with all diligence by the Spirit "if by any means" he could apprehend it, and confessed that he had not done so. (Phil. 3:12,13).

Thank God, however, for the assurance that some are going to possess the land! God is not going to close this dispensation until some really enter in and possess their heritage in Christ Jesus. Paul declared, "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein." (Heb. 4:6). The first generation that came out of Egypt by Moses failed to enter in because of unbelief, and God decreed that they would die in the wilderness. However, He had already sworn that Abraham's seed would possess the land, and therefore He raised up a new generation who should go in and possess what their fathers saw but refused to appropriate. And they did. God's purposes cannot miscarry. He will have a people who shall believe their God and possess their possessions. The early generation of Spirit-filled people at the turn of the century took their journey from the blighting wilderness of denominationalism and encamped at their Kadesh-Barnea on the every doorstep of Canaan--but they too failed to enter in because of unbelief. Some saw the vision; the majority did not; and they perished in the wilderness. True, there were a few Calebs and Joshuas who rested in the promises of God and continued to look forward to better things--and God will certainly vindicate His word and His oath, and cause them to possess the land with

the new generation that God is now raising up. But as a whole, the people whom God chose from amongst the denominations and called apart into a new fellowship in the Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost--they failed to enter into the land, denounced those who exhorted the people to do so--and turned back into the wilderness like their predecessors in Israel.

As surely, therefore, as God's Word is true and His oath immutable--so surely is the Lord now raising up a new generation who shall be empowered to take the promised land of spiritual power and authority, and enter into the realm of the Spirit of God. "Some must enter therein..." If this new generation withdraws from the promises in the face of violent opposition, it too will perish in the wilderness, and God will wait for still another generation to take the land. Because, "some must enter therein..." His Word has declared it, and it must come to pass. We feel confident, however, that this time God's people will not fail; that in this great hour God Himself will intervene in wonderful sovereignty on behalf of those who see the vision, and will take them through to complete and glorious victory. We cannot help but believe that this new generation will, by God's Grace, cross over Jordan and possess the Kingdom prepared for the "little flock" from the foundation of the world. The powers of heaven are being shaken, according to the prophetic Word. Great and momentous spiritual battles are being fought and won in heavenly places. Spiritual hosts of wickedness are beginning to feel the impact of the saints who are pressing in by the Spirit and beginning to possess their possessions in "the heavenlies." And above all, the saints of God are receiving gifts of the Spirit, the gifts are developing into ministries of the Spirit--and these ministries constitute God's only method "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4:12,13).

Thank God for that inborn confidence and assurance in the hearts of His people that the "hour has come" for the unveiling of the Sons of God; that the eternal purposes of God in the Church are about to be revealed; that we stand now on the brink of Jordan prepared and ready to follow the priests of the Lord and the ark of the covenant into a new experience in Christ; down into death and humiliation and abasement in Jordan, but up on the other side into life and victory and authority in Canaan. Let us constantly bear in mind the rules and principles of Christian warfare; namely, that we conquer by yielding, we receive by giving, we overcome by being defeated, and we live by dying. There is no other way except the way of the Cross. The Cross of Christ stands out on the horizons of time and eternity, not only as the means of pardon from sin and the gateway to Eternal Life--but as the one and only principle of Christian conduct. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:24,25).

THREE GREAT FEASTS FOR THE CHURCH

We are confident that the hour has come in the history of the Church when Israel's annual cycle of Feasts is about to be fulfilled in the midst of the saints. And inasmuch as the natural observance of the Feasts constitutes a type and pattern of great and momentous spiritual events, it is vitally important that we should understand their meaning. The Scriptures reveal the fact that there were three annual festival seasons in Israel's worship. Other days were added in later years to commemorate certain events, but according to the original Levitical pattern there were three occasions during the year when all Israel was called upon to observe a national religious festival. And inasmuch as the Church of Christ is the true spiritual Israel (a fact which we will establish from the Scriptures later.) and what happened to natural Israel constituted merely a type and shadow of what should happen to spiritual Israel--we can derive great spiritual benefit and comfort by studying the types in the Old Testament, and then discovering by the Spirit wherein they apply to us on a higher and vaster spiritual plane. For the scriptures make it very clear that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples (as a figure, or type): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1Cor. 10:11).

And not only so. For we have abundant evidence from the New Testament to establish the fact that two of the three annual Feasts of Israel's worship have already been fulfilled in Christ and His Church: fulfilled, moreover, in a way so manifestly clear from the Scriptures that we do not hesitate to declare that we are now on the verge of the fulfillment of the last annual Feast of the Lord. If God declares that the Old Testament is to be fulfilled in Christ and His Church, that is certainly sufficient for us. But when we can actually look into the New Testament and see the manner in which two of the three Feasts have already been gloriously fulfilled, what great consolation and comfort it is for the saints who are looking forward to the fulfillment of the last Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles.

In this study, therefore, we wish to present some of the fundamental principles concerning the great events transpiring at this present season, and mention other events that are yet to transpire, by way of fulfilling the Old Testament Feasts. We appeal entirely to the Word of God and the Spirit of God; for it is evident that the natural man cannot receive, much less teach, the things of the Spirit of God. If it is God's Word, then it is infinite and eternal, and far beyond any human understanding; and only the Spirit can reveal and quicken it to us.

We are aware that we have only touched the fringe of Truth relative to this great subject which we have undertaken to explore; and we know that when the Scriptures are openly and manifestly fulfilled before our very eyes--the unveiled Truth and Glory of the Feasts of the Lord shall far transcend anything that we have ever imagined in our contemplation and meditation of the Word. But this, indeed, is cause for great encouragement--knowing that in the hour of the great Unveiling of the Sons of God we shall see and hear and perceive and experience a power and a glory such as we have never imagined to be within the realm of possibility.

May God, therefore, give us guidance by His Spirit to see and understand and contemplate wondrous things out of His Word--the entrance of which giveth light to such as are in darkness, and the appropriation of which giveth understanding to the simple, wisdom to the foolish, and illumination to the blind. We care not for established creeds or doctrines or theological disputes, nor for the marginal notes we find in our various expository and reference Bibles. God has spoken, and that is sufficient. If Christians are content to abide by the revelation they have received at the hands of great men of the past--let them be content. But God is now leading His people onward and upward to higher heights, to greater depths, to vaster expanses of Truth and Glory than the saints have ever enjoyed or appropriated in the past. Therefore we fix our hopes and our eyes upon the God of increasing revelation, even on Him who is ...Able to do ...Exceedingly...Abundantly ...Above all ...That we ask ...Or Think ...According to the power ...That worketh in us.

Let others look at the apostasy of a corrupt church system; but let us behold the unfolding glory of the true Church, and exult with the Apostle Paul, in the face of all opposition; "Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus through all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:20,21).

MANY GROUPS IN THE CHURCH

We make no particular attempt in this study to distinguish between the Church, the Body, the Bride, the Sons, and so forth. That there are many different groups which may be included in the word "Church" is quite evident from the Scriptures, and from Creation itself. But the Lord knoweth them that are His in each particular group, and in His own good time it will be manifest. A building in its formative stages appears to be but one vast conglomeration of scaffolds, framework, brick and steel--and it is not too evident how many rooms there will be, and for what purpose the rooms are intended. But in the day of its completion it is all quite evident. So shall it be with the Church of Christ. For there are celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; one glory of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars--and even one star differeth from another star in glory. So shall it be in the day of Christ, when each man is revealed in His own order according to the plan and purpose of God.

THE CHURCH IN OLD TESTAMENT TYPE AND PROPHECY

Before we begin to deal with the typical significance of the various Feasts of the Lord, it will be necessary for us to establish the fact that the Old Testament, in type and prophecy, is applicable to the Church of Jesus Christ on a spiritual plane. It is quite common among all evangelical circles to hear sermons which are based upon the Old Testament and expounded in the light of the New; but there are so many who would insist on a literal and natural interpretation if and when a spiritual interpretation would conflict with their theological views.

For example, there is no question as to the meaning of the Passover. It is established beyond all question that Jesus Christ is our Passover, who has been sacrificed for us. Then we have the type of the Unleavened Bread--and Paul exhorts the saints to keep this Feast, "not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1Cor. 5:8). All Christians are agreed on this interpretation. Next in order is the waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits before the Lord. That too, is generally recognized as having been fulfilled in Christ on resurrection morning: "Christ, the firstfruits..." Then comes Pentecost, occurring fifty days after the Passover sabbath--and the typical significance of this Feast is definitely established in the New Testament, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the waiting disciples to bestow upon them the promise of the Father. (Acts 2). But for some strange reason this pattern of Biblical exposition is forsaken, and men seek to postpone the last three events comprising the Feast of Tabernacles to some future age, and to a people other than the Church. And whereas the first four events are generally taught as being applicable to the Church in a spiritual way, the last three are given a most literal and natural and earthly interpretation, and consequently the real spiritual meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles is completely obscured and lost. It is essential therefore that the saints know for a certainty that the Old Testament was written for us, and that the truths which once applied to an earthly and natural Israel, are now gloriously applicable to a heavenly and spiritual Israel, only on a much higher and much more glorious spiritual plane. Much could be said concerning this, but we believe a few Scriptures will suffice for the purpose of this study:

Rom. 4:13-16. Here it is clearly and emphatically declared that the Abrahamic promises were not only to the circumcision, but also to the uncircumcision; and in either case to men of faith. Neither the circumcision nor the uncircumcision had any share in the promises of the Old Testament, except they were men of faith: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law; but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."

Rom. 9:6-8. Again the apostle stresses the fact that it is the children of promise, not the children of the flesh, who constitute the promised seed to whom the covenants apply. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Gal. 3:22. "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

Eph. 2:12-14. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."

Eph. 3:3,6. "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote afore in few words...) that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

1 Pet. 1:9-12. This is a most conclusive passage as to verifying what we have said concerning the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the Church. Here Peter plainly declares that the prophets wrote primarily of the grace that was to come unto us, and the glory that was to follow Christ's sufferings. He goes so far as to say that the prophets were not ministering to their day and age, but "unto us...", and that the things they prophesied are now proclaimed unto the saints under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. This is what he says, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (he) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into."

HOW THE APOSTLES ESTABLISHED CHURCH TRUTH

Many, many more scriptures could be quoted to confirm what we have been saying. But perhaps the most conclusive evidence of all is the fact that the apostles, in their writings, refer constantly to the Old Testament to prove the truths they are declaring to the Church, and make innumerable quotations from all portions of the Law and the Prophets to confirm their doctrines of Christ and the Church. Nor do they make any apologies whatsoever, or even intimate that they are taking an Old Testament Scripture out of its context. Therefore if it should seem strange to some that we should quote from the Law and the Prophets to confirm some spiritual truth concerning the Body of Christ--let the reader take careful note when reading the New Testament, as to how the apostles applied the Old Testament to the Church which Christ built, and applied to spiritual Israel what the prophets originally prophesied concerning natural Israel.

THE TRUE ISRAEL

The whole New Testament is literally filled with direct quotations from the Old, by way of establishing Church truth, and the saints of God as the true Israel. Notice this remarkable passage in Romans: "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." (Rom. 9:24-26). Paul has just referred to Jews and Gentiles alike as being the "vessels of glory," and then he quoted this passage from Hosea to prove what he said. Bear in mind that Paul referred to them as the "vessels of glory" taken from Jew and Gentile alike. Then let us refer to the passage he quoted from in Hosea. Here we discover that the people Hosea wrote about constituted the true Israel. Without the further revelation given to the apostle Paul, one would never have discerned that Hosea was actually including the Gentiles in his prophecy concerning Israel's blessedness. First of all he declares God's displeasure with Israel, and affirms that God will not be their God: "Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." That seems to be conclusive: natural Israel is rejected, and they are no longer God's people. However, in the very next verse the prophet declares: "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." (See Hos. 1:9,10). How could Hosea declare Israel had been rejected in vs. 9, then in vs. 10 affirm that the children of Israel should become as the sand of the sea? The apostle Paul quotes this passage from Hosea, and explains why the apparent contradiction. The answer is clear: God had now received the Gentiles into the Olive Tree of Israel. "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles...As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people..." This clearly explains why Israel could be rejected on the one hand, and at the same time become as measureless as the sands of the sea. The natural branches were broken off, but spiritual branches were grafted in from the Gentile wild-olive--and the tree of Israel retained its glory.

In fact, it became even more glorious as a result of Israel's rejection--it brought to pass even "the reconciling of the world." (Rom. 11:15).

Let us bear these truths in mind, therefore, as we study the various types and prophecies of the Old Testament--for unless we understand that the Bible, the whole Bible, was written for us, we are bound to deny ourselves the glory which God intended we should derive from the Word. "Unto us," the prophets ministered (1Pet. 1:12). The history of Israel constituted them as "ensamples (or types)" for us, and the records "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1Cor. 10:11). The Law, we are told, expressed "a shadow of (the) good things to come, and not the very image of the things." (Heb. 10:1). And the saints of the New Testament are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God..." (1Pet. 2:9,10). Here again a simple reference to the Old Testament shows us clearly that the apostle was referring to the true Israel. (See Ex. 19:6, Hos. 2:23).

That God will yet restore the natural Israel that was cast off, and graft back into the Olive Tree the branches which were cut off in unbelief--that is true, and the glory which shall accompany such a transformation is beyond words to express. The apostle simply describes this revival in four brief words: "Life from the dead..." (Rom. 11:15). When and in what manner this shall be fulfilled, God shall manifest in His own good time, and it does not concern us so far as this study is concerned. But the fact remains, Israel never was completely cast off, for "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." (Rom. 11:2). Only this disobedient were cast off; the believing Gentiles in turn were grafted into the same Olive Tree, and became "with them" partakers "of the root and fatness of the olive tree." (Rom. 11:17).

Let us glory in our heritage, therefore, and in the fact that we who once had no share in the covenants of promise, and were without God and without hope in the world, are now "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:12,19,20).

In the following pages, therefore we have no hesitancy what-so-ever in quoting profusely from the Old Testament and New, by way of establishing these glorious Church truths. If the apostle Paul was "rightly dividing the Word of truth" when he made some eighty-five references to the Old Testament in the one letter he wrote to the Romans, by way of establishing the Gospel of the Grace of God and the doctrines of the Church; and at least eighteen such references in the short letter he wrote to the Galatians; and well over one hundred such references in the epistle to the Hebrews; and if Peter would dare make some thirty references or quotations from the Old Testament in his first epistle; and if the beloved John should make direct quotations from, or references to, practically four hundred Old Testament Scriptures in the Book of Revelation: then we care not in the least if orthodox theology forbids us to take Old Testament type and prophecy and apply them to the Church. The apostles have already done so under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and that is sufficient for men who believe in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

THE OLD, THE PATTERN OF THE NEW

There is a simple order that God has established relative to the progression of Truth and to the creation itself, and it is this: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." (1Cor. 15:46). This principle is evident everywhere in the Scriptures. First the old creation, then the New. First darkness, then light. First a garden in Eden and the tree of life, then the Garden of God and the real Tree of Life. First Adam, then the Last Adam. First the Passover, then the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. First Law, and then Grace. First the typical Feast of Tabernacles, then the unveiled glory of God in the spiritual Feast of Tabernacles. And the wonder of it all is this, that the end of the Old is the beginning of the New; and out of that which is destined to pass away there cometh forth that which is destined to remain.

And so it was that God called light out of darkness. It came to pass also that from the first Adam there came Christ, destined not only to become the Last Adam (the last of Adam, the last of the old race), but the Second Man (the beginning of the second creation). Likewise, the Last Passover was the occasion of the true Passover that was sacrificed for us. And when Christ died on the Cross, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain--that was the end of the Law, but it was also the beginning of Grace. God always "taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." (Heb. 10:9).

It is important, therefore, that we should always observe that which is first, and natural, and from the natural learn to discern in what way it typifies the spiritual. If we read of the natural Passover, God intends that from the various circumstances and rituals connected with the natural we should hear what He would say to us concerning the spiritual Passover, even Christ. If it is the Feast of Weeks, then in this God would teach us concerning the true Feast of Weeks, even Pentecost. If it is the Day of Atonement, then let us learn to discern the pattern of the true Atonement. And so likewise, if the Feast of Tabernacles is being observed, it is for the purpose that we might learn great and mighty spiritual truths from the natural circumstances and events transpiring at the Feast. If we bear this in mind we will receive a mine of wealth from the various occasions in the Old Testament and New when the Feast of Tabernacles was observed. There are three occasions in particular that we shall refer to, as having a most remarkable application to the spiritual Feast of Tabernacles which lies just ahead of us. These three occasions are: the dedication of Solomon's Temple, the restoration of the temple following the captivity, and the presence of Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles in the time of His earthly ministry. These three observances of the Feast will be dealt with in detail in the last three chapters of the book. The particular characteristics of all three events must find their glorious fulfillment, only on a much higher and vaster spiritual plane than when they were first observed--in this great hour in which we live.

THE ORDER OF THE FEASTS

As we begin this study, we would exhort the reader to carefully read all that we have to say in this first section of the book, for it is written to form a foundation, as it were, for some of the glorious truths which are to follow. We realize that much of the information that is given concerning dates and seasons may appear insignificant and unimportant, but they are necessary, nevertheless, in order that the reader may more readily appreciate the glorious truths concerning the third and last Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles.

The three great annual Feast of the Lord in Israel's worship are set forth in considerable detail in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. In a very real sense these Feasts prefigure and typify the whole Church age beginning with the Cross and consummating in the manifestation of the Sons of God and the glorious display of God's power and glory. It is, of course, this great unveiling that we are chiefly concerned about--for the eternal purposes of God begin to be accomplished in that glorious event. But we cannot have a proper understanding of the end, unless we know somewhat of the beginning. We cannot appreciate the Glory, unless we learn about the Cross. We cannot enter the Kingdom, unless we first learn obedience by the things which we suffer. The Feasts therefore begin with the Passover, and end with the Feast of Tabernacles; and in between we have the various steps and degrees by which the Church is brought out of death and into life, out of rejection and into exaltation, out of suffering and into the Kingdom. The three Feasts in Israel's annual cycle of religious ceremonies were:

1. The Feast of the Passover.
2. The Feast of Pentecost.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles.

These three Feasts, moreover, consisted of seven major events, three of which comprised the Feast of the Passover, then one stood alone--Pentecost, and then the remaining three events comprise the Feast of Tabernacles. A brief summary of the Feasts with their various festival events may be helpful:

I The Feast of the Passover, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

This Feast consisted of:

1. The Passover. (See Ex. 12:1-23; Lev. 23:4,5; Deut. 16:1-3).
2. The Unleavened Bread. (See Ex. 12:18; 23:15; Lev. 23:6-8; Deut. 16:3-4).
3. The Sheaf of Firstfruits. (See Lev. 23:10-14).

II The Feast of Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, of Harvest, of Firstfruits.

(See Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:15-21; Deut. 16:9-12; Acts 2:1).

III The Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Booths, or of Ingathering.

This Feast consisted of:

1. The Blowing of Trumpets. (See Lev. 23:24-25).
2. The Day of Atonement. (See Lev. 16; 23:27-32).
3. The Feast of Tabernacles. (See Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:34-44; Deut. 16:13-15).

All Israel's worship seemed to center around these three great annual Feasts. They were the occasions of great convocations, the keeping of sabbaths, the eating of certain foods, the performance of certain ordinances and rituals, and a time of great consecration and sanctification:

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty." (Deut. 16:16).

It is our intention to deal at some length with each of the seven festival events comprising the three Feasts, and to show in what manner they have been fulfilled, or shall yet be fulfilled, in the Church of Jesus Christ. Our primary purpose, of course, is to present the last great Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, in the light of the New Testament--and especially in the light of what God is now doing in the formation of His Body, the Church. For truly the Lord is moving by His Spirit, moving o'er all the earth--brooding dovelike over the distressing state of affairs existing in the Church today, that He might bring order and harmony and peace out of chaos and darkness. And as surely as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep in the beginning, and commanded light to shine out of darkness, and life to spring up out of the place of death--so surely will the voice of God once again in the ends of the ages restore the glory of Zion, and give unto her "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

CHAPTER 2

THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

The first Passover was observed by the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, on the eve of their departure out of the house of bondage into the wilderness. It was the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month. God had raised up a deliverer for the people in the person of the Man Moses, and had equipped him with such power and authority in the Spirit that he was to Pharaoh even "as God." Many and dreadful and great were the signs and wonders which were wrought by his hand, so that Egypt became utterly wasted at the hands of a God of judgment. One by one the plagues fell upon the land; and time and again Pharaoh promised to let the people go, only to harden his heart when the plague was lifted. Finally God declared His judgment upon the firstborn of all the land of Egypt--and then Egypt was literally "glad" to see the people depart, so dreadful and far-reaching was the destruction of the Almighty.

A NEW BEGINNING

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Ex. 12:1,2). As from this date Israel was to have a new calendar. It was to be the first month instead of the second, because God was going to deliver them from Egyptian bondage, and bring them into a new experience and into a new land. Israel's old associations were to be gone forever. No longer would they serve the Egyptian taskmaster under hard bondage, but they were to serve the Lord their God. No longer were they to eat the leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt, but they would feast upon manna from heaven, and drink water out of the flinty rock. No longer would they abide in the houses of their little world in Egypt, but they would henceforth follow the cloud of glory from one place to another, from one experience to another, even from "glory to glory." Had not the Lord plainly declared, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." (Ex. 3:7,8). And so, to deliver Israel from the judgment of the firstborn, and to prepare them for a new life as a separated and holy nation, God instituted the Passover. And this event would mean the preservation of Israel in the hour of God's judgments upon the land of Egypt, and the beginning of a new era for the people of God.

So it is that the Cross of Christ becomes the beginning of a new era for the children of God. Old things begin to pass away, and all things begin to become new. The bondage of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, gives way to a liberty in the Spirit, and a life of servitude to the God of our salvation. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:18). From the time we receive Christ as our personal Saviour, and really partake of the benefits of Calvary's Cross--from that very hour we begin a new life in God. And whereas, we once served the enemy of our souls under cruel bondage, now we have become the voluntary bond-slaves of Christ. And after all, the only liberty man will ever find in this world is the liberty which he drives in becoming the "slave" of the Lord Jesus. Paul delighted in calling himself a "doulos," a "bond-slave" of Christ. Man is only free when he is bound to Christ with a chain of love and friendship which neither the cares of life nor the attacks of Satan can sever.

A LAMB FOR AN HOUSE

Our Passover Lamb is sufficient for all our needs. And though men have appropriated His grace and blessing from the foundation of the world even until now--still there remaineth grace sufficient for any sinner who comes to Christ. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; the ye, always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work." (2Cor. 9:8).

THE LAMB TO BE WITHOUT BLEMISH

This was necessary because it typified the true "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (Jn. 1:29). "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your

vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1Pet. 1:18,19).

THE LAMB MUST BE KILLED

Modernism will accept the Lamb of God as He teaches in the temple, lives a life of righteousness and purity, and expounds His parables. But they will have nothing to do with the Lamb who was crucified for their sins. And therefore the door of salvation is closed to them. For there is positively no acceptance for any man before God except by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22).

THE BLOOD MUST BE APPLIED

It is not even sufficient that the lamb should be slain; the blood of the slain lamb must be applied to the doorposts of the house. In other words, there must be an individual and personal appropriation, by faith, of the work of the Cross. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (Mercy Seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Rom. 3:25,26).

THE FLESH MUST BE EATEN

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (Jn. 6:53-55). It was a hard saying then, and it is a hard saying today. How can we eat the flesh of Christ? So reasons the natural man. But we can do so by the Spirit, through faith. We may eat His flesh in daily meditation and appropriation of the Word. We may eat His flesh in prayer and communion by the Spirit. And we may eat his flesh as we discern the Lord's Body in the Communion. Jesus said, and incidentally it was on the occasion of the last Passover, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." (Lk. 22:19). For He was the fulfillment of every Passover Lamb which was ever offered in Jewish ceremony; and the Substance having been revealed, the type has passed away.

THE PEOPLE MUST DEPART

The children of Israel were to eat the Passover lamb with their loins girded and with their shoes on their feet--ready to depart from Egypt. The moment a man receives Christ as his Passover Lamb, he must there and then be prepared to depart from the world and all of its allurements. He is not saved by works, and it is entirely unscriptural to teach holiness as the means of salvation. For it is not within the power of any man in Adam's fallen race to present himself acceptably before God. There is none righteous, no not so much as one; and by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. (See Rom. 3:9-31). He receives the efficacy of the blood, and eats of the Passover Lamb by faith--and that constitutes his salvation. But when one identifies himself with Christ he must depart from the world and its corrupting influences, and be prepared to follow his Lord in the pathway of separation and consecration. Then only, by the works of grace produced in the heart, do we behold the scriptural signs and evidences of the salvation of Christ.

THE BLOOD IS THE SIGN

"When I see the blood I will pass over you." (Ex. 12:13). For our part we must apply the blood by faith to our hearts. Our feet must be shod, and we must be ready to leave the old ways behind. We must participate in Christ, and give evidence of the fact that we are true disciples. But so far as God is concerned He beholds this

one token: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." God is eternally satisfied with the work of Calvary's Cross, and we as God's children are "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:6). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2Cor. 5:21).

‘Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary,
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly plead for me;
Forgive him, O forgive, they cry,
Nor let that ransomed sinner die.’

O, there are so many, many things that we have left unsaid concerning the Passover Lamb. He is the theme of the whole Bible. All spiritual blessings stem from Calvary, and all power and glory and majesty pertaineth to the Lamb that was slain, and He is therefore "Worthy...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:12).

CHAPTER 3

THE UNLEAVENED BREAD

The observance of the Unleavened Bread followed Passover and was associated with it. So much so that the two events were regarded as being one and the same Feast. We read therefore, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover." (Lk. 22:1; Matt. 26:17). The Passover event itself was on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening. Then the Unleavened Bread continued from the fifteenth day until the twenty-first day, seven days in all.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEAVEN

As to the spiritual significance of the Unleavened Bread we are not left in doubt. Says Paul to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1Cor. 5:6-8).

The penetrating and spreading characteristics of leaven make it to be a fitting type of malice and wickedness in a believer or in an assembly. Paul likens the persuasive and corrupting influence of the Judaizers upon the Galatians to "leaven." "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Gal. 5:8,9). Again, our Lord likens the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees to "leaven," because of their evil influence. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees." (Matt. 16:6). To observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, therefore is to live a life that is free from the corrupting influences of sin and the flesh.

HOW TO BE FREE FROM LEAVEN

When the children of Israel departed from Egypt they gathered up their dough before it was leavened, for they did not have opportunity to leaven it, "because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry." (Ex. 12:39). Had they lingered in Egypt, they would have had plenty of opportunity to leaven their dough; but because they were thrust out in haste their bread was unleavened.

So it is with the child of God. As long as he is pressing on with God, and fleeing from the corrupting influences of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--his life is free from sin. He does not have "time" for sin to work within him. He is too busy following his God and following on in the pathway of obedience. But let him linger by the way, lose the vision of the glory that is set before him, and yearn for the good old days when he had plenty in Egypt--and leaven will begin to work afresh in his life. Let any child of God, or group of saints, lose the vision of God's glory, and before long that man or that assembly becomes filled with the leaven of malice and wickedness. There is only one sure way by which a stream of water can be kept pure and clean--and that is by flowing. Let it be diverted into an open pit, and before long the water becomes a stagnant pool and will breed corruption and death. So it is with Truth. When an individual, and assembly, or a group of assemblies settles back in self-complacency, satisfied with their condition, and content with the thought that they have arrived at the Truth--stagnation immediately sets in, the leaven begins to function, and "malice and wickedness" characterize the whole denomination. You simply cannot expect to keep a sect clean from the corrupting influences of the flesh, because if they linger behind when the glory-cloud moves forward, they have plenty of time to leaven their dough. On the other hand, if you proceed from "glory to glory" there is no opportunity for you to become leavened.

MODERN PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

That is why Jesus warned the disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now the doctrines of the Sadducees were definitely false, for they denied the resurrection, the fact of angels and spirits, and so forth. They were the predecessors of our modern religions which have a form of godliness but "deny the power thereof." They denied the supernatural; and we have plenty of Sadducees in the world today. But the Pharisees, on the other hand, were quite orthodox in their teachings; so much so that Jesus commanded His own disciples to observe and do what they said. (Matt. 23:3). Why then did He tell the same disciples to "beware" of their doctrine? For this simple reason: "They say, and do not." What they said was all right, generally speaking, but their works gave the lie to their teachings. So it is with our modern Pharisees, our orthodox Christian teachers. They teach about the power of Jesus' blood; they lift you to heights of praise as they expound the glories of the celestial, and the power of Christ's resurrection; they speak much of the miracles of Christ, and the power of the early Church; they will expound the doctrines of healing, and miracles, and the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. But "they say, and do not." And not only that: for they condemn and denounce the man who wishes to go in and explore the glories of resurrection life and the "powers of the age to come." They think it is all right to talk about resurrection and life and the heavenly realm--but when one suggests that this is the heritage of the saints here and now, there are loud protests from the Pharisees. Then the leaven begins its subtle influence, and an orthodox theology develops into malice and wickedness.

O saints of God everywhere, let us launch out into the deep! Let us lift our anchor which has gripped the earth for so long--and let us become anchored to Christ in the heavens, where we ought to be anchored. For God has intended that our anchor should pass into the heavens, behind the veil, whither the forerunner has for us entered. (Heb. 6:19,20). If we are anchored to earth, and to the doctrines of men, we will be earth-bound creatures; but once we anchor to Heaven and to the Man behind the veil, we are Heaven-bound creatures--and we are constantly rising higher and higher and higher into the realms of the Spirit. Then one day, thank God!--the veil of the flesh shall be rent asunder, and we shall see Him as He is! And when we speak this way, we are not talking about physical death, nor about the rapture; but we are speaking of seeing Him "who is invisible," as Moses did of old. We shall see Him, even though the world sees Him not. Did not Jesus say, "The world seeth

me no more; but ye see me..." (Jn. 14:19)? And was He not speaking of seeing Him in the Spirit, because of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the disciples?

THE LORD'S SUPPER

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover." (Lk. 22:1). It is most significant and enlightening when we discover that Jesus used the natural observance of the Feasts of the Lord by which to explain and reveal their spiritual significance. So it was on the occasion of the last Passover that Jesus revealed its true spiritual significance. To fulfill the righteousness of the Law on the one hand, and to establish the new Covenant on the other, the Lord kept this Feast with His disciples. "With desire," He said, "I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Lk. 22:15). He greatly desired to do this that He might introduce His disciples into a new order of worship and fellowship in the Spirit. On the eve of the Passover, when He Himself was about to be slain as the true Passover Lamb, then it was that our Lord gathered His disciples together and gave them the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. He finished the old ceremony that He might establish the new. For it is always consistent with God's plans and purposes that He takes away the first before He establishes the second. (Heb. 10:9). And again, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." (1Cor. 15:46). First the earthly, then the heavenly. First the flesh, and then the Spirit. Christ was therefore desirous to eat the last Passover with His disciples, that He might take it away and establish the new Feast, the Lord's Supper. "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you." (Lk. 22:19,20).

THIS IS THE HOUR OF RESTORATION

It is certain that God is now preparing His people for the greatest Feast of her long history--the Feast of Tabernacles. And therefore it is not without significance that in this day and hour of restoration God is stressing the spiritual significance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that we might be prepared to go on to the fullness of Pentecost, and then to Tabernacles. And this must be so, because it is always God's plan to lead us from "glory to glory" and from one experience to the next in Divine order. And though it is true that the Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, both found their fulfillment in Christ and the early Church--we have now come to the "ends of the ages" when the glory of the past must be restored and absorbed in the last great Feast of the Church. Truth having been largely lost or obscured during the Dark Ages, the Spirit is now as never before bringing forth out of God's treasure-house things new and old, re-establishing the walls and foundations of Truth, and rebuilding the Temple of God. And so from Reformation days and until now, God has graciously been restoring lost Truth; and the Reformation is by no means finished yet.

Therefore, with the corruption and division of God's people, the true meaning of the Lord's Supper has been lost. That is why Paul said to the Corinthians, rent asunder as they were with strife and heresy: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not (or, it is not possible) to eat the Lord's Supper." (1Cor. 11:20). The fact is this: the Lord's Supper, when observed in the Spirit, and in spiritual union and fellowship with the saints, is actual participation with Christ. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of (participation with) the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of (participation with) the body of Christ?" (1Cor. 10:16). Therefore, without that spiritual participation and fellowship, it is really not the Lord's Supper. True, the Corinthians partook of the elements of the Communion just the same as our churches do today--but it was not really the Lord's Supper, because in their carnality they did not understand its true meaning, and instead of appropriating Christ they became weak and sickly, and many even died.

This however, is the day and hour when God is moving by His Spirit to restore His Church, to perfect the saints, and to establish unity in the Body of Christ. This is the day and hour that God has chosen to restore the walls of

the heavenly Jerusalem, and turn again the captivity of Zion. And therefore, it is beginning to become possible, once again, for the saints to eat the Lord's Supper in reality, and partake of Christ in so doing. "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1Cor. 10:17). Perhaps we have often wondered why there are so many sick and weak saints of God. But how could we have anything else with a Church filled with malice and wickedness and disunity and bitterness? Under such conditions the Church has been doing nothing more nor less than eating and drinking condemnation to itself--and consequently many have become weak and sickly, and many have died. For it is only in discerning the Lord's Body that we can expect to derive healing and health and life from the Table of the Lord. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (condemnation) to himself, not discerning the Lord's body..." (1Cor. 11:29).

THE REAL UNITY IS SPIRITUAL

This Feast is pre-eminently a spiritual Feast, and consequently a spiritual unity that God is mostly concerned about. Let us not be deceived into thinking that great mass rallies, with hundreds and thousands of people from various sects assembled together in one building, constitute the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is a spiritual Body, and the unity in that Body is a spiritual unity. In this Body, Divine life can flow from one member to another, and from Christ the Head to all members--as the various members minister one to another by the Spirit, and Christ the Head ministers to the whole Body by the same Spirit. Feasting upon the Unleavened Bread, therefore, is living in real genuine fellowship and communion with all the saints, recognizing their God-ordained ministry in the Body of Christ, and giving honour one to another in meekness and humility. May our constant prayer be, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread. Make us one, even as thou didst pray in the gathering darkness of the Cross. Purge out of our midst the old leaven, that we might become a new lump. Rid us of all our carnal ways--from divisive tendencies, from the chaos of doctrinal disputes, from hatred and variance and emulations and strife. Restore unity to Thy people, that we may become that holy and glorious Church of which all the prophets and apostles have spoken since the world began. Give us the mind of Christ, till we all think and say and believe and understand the same things.'

And rest assured, child of God, that this prayer is going to be answered; for it is the burden--not only of the holy apostles and prophets who penned the sacred pages of the Bible, but also the prayer of the Son of God Himself, who testified concerning His Father, "I know Thou hearest Me always."

CHAPTER 4

THE SHEAF OF FIRSTFRUITS

The waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits before the Lord took place "on the morrow after the sabbath." Hence it would be on the sixteenth day of the first month. All the events, therefore in connection with the Feast of Unleavened Bread find their perfect fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Christ. The Passover event itself was on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening. That is the day of the crucifixion, which in the New Testament is called the Preparation, or the day before the sabbath. (See Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:56). Then followed the days of Unleavened Bread, beginning on the fifteenth day, and continuing for seven days. Then on the sixteenth day, which was "the morrow after the sabbath" the Sheaf of Firstfruits was waved before the Lord.

It is clear from the New Testament that Christ rose "the third day." (Matt. 16:21; Lk. 23:54-56; 24:46), and according to the generally accepted terms of the day this was equivalent to saying he rose "after three days." (Matt. 27:63; Mk. 8:31). Therefore, to fulfill the type of the Old Testament, it is clear that Christ was crucified on the day of the Passover, the sabbath followed the next day, and the Sheaf of Firstfruits was waved before the Lord on the "morrow after the sabbath."

CHRIST, THE FIRSTFRUITS

Here we have a beautiful type, therefore, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the "morrow after the sabbath." Mark tells us, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week..." (Mk. 16:9). It was the beginning of the harvest season, when the fields were beginning to show the first signs of a ripening harvest. Before there was any general harvest, however, one sheaf was garnered and waved before the Lord on the first day of the week, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And therefore in the waving of that one sheaf, Israel would be reminded of the fact that soon a great harvest was to be gathered in.

Perhaps there was not a single person in the camp of Israel who saw anything more in that ordinance than the promise of a great harvest--but in type it spoke beautifully of "Christ, the firstfruits." (1Cor. 15:20,23). And just as assuredly as the one ripe sheaf testified to Israel that a great harvest was soon to be garnered, so surely did the resurrection of Christ testify to the fact that soon after that event there would be a great spiritual harvest of souls. And so there was! Thousands upon thousands came to know the Lord in the weeks that were to follow, when God sent forth the Holy Spirit and empowered His waiting disciples to preach the Gospel. Soon the revival spread to the Gentiles, and the apostle Paul was raised up to evangelize practically the whole Roman Empire.

THE CORN OF WHEAT MUST DIE

Jesus Himself testified, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (Jn. 12:24). Except He die, there could be no harvest. And the fact that He did die and rose again was positive proof that there would be a great and mighty harvest. "Christ the firstfruits..." And if He was "firstfruits," then certainly there must be a great harvest to follow His resurrection. This explains, in part, the strange reply that Jesus gave to Philip and Andrew when they told Him of certain Greeks who desired to see Him. Incidentally it was the Feast of the Passover, when these God-fearing Greeks had gathered to observe the Feast of the Jews. Jesus' only reply was: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In other words, in His present position He had no ministry for them, for He had nothing in common with them. He must first go down into death before He could mean anything to them. If and when His death was accomplished, then He would be able to minister life to all men, irrespective of race or nationality, in the great harvest that would follow His resurrection. That great harvest constitutes the Feast of Pentecost.

CHAPTER 5

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

The Feast of Pentecost was the second of Israel's three annual Feasts. As the Scriptures reveal, the Feast is also called the Feast of Harvest, of Firstfruits, or of Weeks. Pentecost is the New Testament name, and is so called because Pentecost means "fiftieth." An examination of Lev. 23:15,16 will reveal why the Feast is called Fiftieth. It was because the Feast began on the fiftieth day after the Passover sabbath, or "the morrow after the seventh sabbath." This, of course, parallels exactly with the fulfillment of the type in the New Testament. When Christ arose from the dead, He continued with the disciples for the space of forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3). Then He departed into Heaven, and after ten days (at the time of Israel's Feast of Pentecost), He sent forth the Holy Ghost upon the waiting disciples.

THIS IS THE AGE OF PENTECOST

Pentecost! What a vast subject looms before us as we contemplate the tremendous implications of the word! Many books have been written on the power and glory of this Feast, and men who have appropriated in some measure the experience of Pentecost have proved by the Word and by experience its reality, and the Word has been confirmed with signs following. We could not begin to adequately explain the meaning of the Feast in this

study, nor is it our intention to do so. Our prime concern is to prepare to ground for truth concerning the Feast of Tabernacles, which surpasses the glory of Pentecost even as the noon-day surpasses the glory of early dawn. How strange, it seems, that good men of God who have discerned by the Spirit the fulfillment of Passover and Pentecost in the Church, should now close the door to further revelation and deny that the last Feast has any application to our day and age! At the turn of this century, when God began to restore pentecost--and right up to the present time, many evangelical circles have gone to considerable trouble in an attempt to prove that Pentecost was an event of ancient history, and that its power and glory were not for present-day experience. But a large group of hungry souls have proved by the Word and by experience that Pentecost was and is for personal appropriation by faith, just as the Passover was. Therefore let us not stop at the Passover; but let us go on to enjoy the fruits for which Christ died, even the glories of Pentecost. And let us not stop at this partial restoration of Pentecost, but let us go on to enjoy the fullness of the Pentecostal experience as recorded in the Book of Acts. And even then, let us not stop at the fullness of Pentecost, but let us go on to appropriate and experience the glories of the Feast of Tabernacles--for which Pentecost has paved the way.

Even among the saints who are hungering and thirsting for more of God there is a tendency to believe that a restoration of early apostolic Pentecost is the hope of the Church, and many will be satisfied with a return of apostolic power and blessing. True, we have a long way to go yet to equal the power and glory of the early Church; but that power and glory is by no means the sum and substance of genuine Christianity. That was Pentecost in the early hours of dawn; the Church must go on to the Pentecost of the noon-day sun; and then on, and on, and on to the Feast of Tabernacles, which will utterly eclipse the glory of any people in any past dispensation. Of course, we must enter into this glorious experience one step at a time. And we will certainly have to enter fully into the glory of Pentecost before we can hope to enter the glory of Tabernacles. Our generation has had a foretaste of Pentecost, that is true. But we have by no means seen the fullness of the Pentecostal experience, as recorded in the Book of Acts, when tongues like as of fire came down and sat upon each of the disciples, and they were given the ability to speak the languages of all nations.

But thank God, He is continuing the great work of restoration which He began in the days of Luther. The former foundations must be relaid, the gates re-established, and the walls of the Temple re-erected. "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept: line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear." (Isa. 28:10-12).

An examination of the passages concerning the typical Pentecost are most enlightening, especially in view of the real spiritual Pentecost in the New Testament. Having a historical record of the actual fulfillment of the Feast, it is comparatively easy for us to look back into the type, and see exactly what it was intended to signify.

PENTECOST WAS A NEW FEAST

"Ye shall offer a new meat (meal) offering unto the Lord." (Lev. 23:16). The Passover was wonderful--and an experimental appropriation of the Passover produces pardon and justification from all our sins. But that is really a negative experience: the old is taken away, sins are forgiven, the past life is forgotten, and the sinner is left with a clean record before God and ready to start a new life. In conformity with this happy state, therefore, the God of grace and glory invites the justified man to receive a new experience in the Holy Spirit, whereby he can offer a "new...offering unto the Lord." He is invited to drink into God's Spirit, and be baptized with the Holy Ghost. In justification he is pardoned; in this new experience he is empowered for service. The early disciples were cleansed by the Word which Jesus had spoken unto them during His earthly ministry. (Jn. 15:3). Furthermore, on resurrection day "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost." (Jn. 20:22). The original Greek of the word "receive ye" proves conclusively that right there and then the Spirit of God entered into the disciples--and that imparted life brought them into the experience which we call regeneration or new birth. Just as truly as God in the beginning breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life

and man "became a living soul,"--so now the Last Adam (who had now become, by virtue of His death and resurrection, a 'life-giving Spirit'--1Cor. 15:45)--so now the Last Adam breathed into the disciples the breath of spiritual life, and they passed experimentally from death unto life.

This experience, however, was not sufficient by way of equipping them for the great and mighty tasks which lay just ahead of them; and so the Lord "commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:4,5). And so they tarried in Jerusalem for the "promise of the Father," and after ten days the Holy Ghost came down upon them, and literally revolutionized their whole concept of life and service by transforming weak and humble vessels into the mighty apostles of truth and power and authority.

PENTECOST WAS A HARVEST FEAST

In one instance it is called "the feast of harvest." (Ex. 23:16). It was so called because they had just completed the harvesting of their grain. The sheaf had already been waved before the Lord fifty days before, heralding the coming of the harvest; and now the harvest time had come. And what a tremendous harvest there was! Peter preached his dynamic sermon under the "dunamis," the "power" of the Holy Ghost, and some three thousand souls were added to the disciples. A few days later there was another harvest, and we are told "the number of the men was about five thousand." (Acts 4:4)--to say nothing of the hundreds or thousands of women and children who also must have believed at the same time. The revival continued with ever-increasing power from day to day, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:14). Great and mighty signs and miracles were wrought amongst the people, until--in very short order--Jerusalem, and then Samaria, and then the uttermost parts of the earth literally rocked under the mighty impact of the Holy Ghost through His anointed ministers. Truly the Day of Pentecost was a great Day...but the Day is not finished yet...that was but the dawning of the Day. We have yet to witness the noon-day splendour of the Feast of Pentecost.

PENTECOST SIGNIFIED THE FORMATION OF THE BODY

"Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord." (Lev. 23:17). The loaves of bread would speak to us of God's people in union with Christ. "For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1Cor. 10:17). The number "two" is quite significant in that it refers to Christ in the fullness of His Body. It would be interesting to follow the meaning of the number "two" through the Scriptures. There is Adam and Eve, two and yet, one,--Eve being the complement, the likeness, the counterpart of Adam. Then there is the sun and moon--the latter being the glory of the former, having no light of its own. Then there were two rows of bread on the table of shewbread in the holy place of the tabernacle; and the two tables of stone in the ark of the covenant--the law written first on the heart and mind of the only begotten Son, and finally on the heart and mind of His people. Then there were the two trumpets that were used for the calling of the assembly and for the journeying of the camps. And so we read concerning Christ and His Body, that He died and rose again that He might "make in Himself of twain one new man." (Eph. 2:15).

Hence in the "two" loaves of this new meal-offering we have the completion of this new Body of believers known as the Church, wherein all the believers were "made...one" by the grace and Spirit of Christ. (Eph. 2:14). The grain had been harvested, and now instead of a sheaf we have two loaves, a body of believers. The loaves were "baked with leaven" because from the time of Pentecost right until now, the Church of Christ has never been really free from division, sectarianism, and carnality. How wonderful it is to know that God knew exactly what the Church would be like throughout her long history, and made the type to fit accordingly!

PENTECOST SIGNIFIES THE GATHERING OF THE FIRSTFRUITS

Pentecost signifies a great harvest, that is true. But compared to the coming glory, it is really but a harvest of firstfruits. "The feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours..." (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:17). And so Christ as the Sheaf that was waved, was the "firstfruits" of a great harvest to follow. Pentecost is that harvest. But even the harvest of Pentecost is the firstfruits of the coming harvest of the Feast of Tabernacles! Pentecost is wonderful, as we shall discover--when the real fullness of this experience is restored to the Church. But wonderful as it is, Pentecost is but the firstfruits of great and mighty things awaiting the Church of Jesus Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles.

PENTECOSTAL POWER

If there was to be a great ingathering of souls at Pentecost then truly it would require the power of the Holy Ghost to accomplish so great a task. Therefore God imparted not only great miracle-working power, but a new language to the people--that men of all nations might hear the wonderful works of God proclaimed in their own tongue, and be won to Christ. This was a day when a "new meal-offering" was to be presented to the Lord; hence God imparted a new language. See what a great secret remained locked up in the counsels of God until the Day of Pentecost was revealed! For if it was God's plan that the nations should at first be scattered abroad over the face of the earth by means of the confusion of languages--why should it be thought incredible that God should now restore the gift of languages to His disciples, that they might preach the Gospel in the tongues of many nations, and reverse the order (or shall we say the disorder) of Babel? And that is exactly what the all-wise God did. In the beginning He confused the languages of the disobedient, to scatter them over the face of the earth and make many nations out of one. (Gen. 11:1-9). But now in the time of the harvest, God in grace and wisdom imparts to His own disciples the gift of languages (languages which came into being because of Babel), that He might gather together a people for His name, and create one holy nation out of the midst of many nations--a nation that would serve Him in obedience and love and unity, even the holy nation and the holy priesthood of the Church. (Some would object to the statement that God gave His disciples the gift of languages to preach the Gospel to the nations. They insist that the disciples declared "the wonderful works of God," and not the Gospel! As if there was a more "wonderful" work of God than the story of redeeming Grace!)

And so the pattern of Pentecost takes on real meaning. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come (was being fulfilled), they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind (a violent impetuous blowing), and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." (Acts 2:1-6).

THE DISORDER OF BABEL REVERSED

Notice the contrast between Pentecost and Babel. There the Lord did "confound the language of all the earth," but here at Pentecost harmony is restored by the gift of languages, and the people are "confounded." At Babel the people were "confounded" because they could not understand the language of their own fellow-workmen and fellow-citizens; here at Pentecost the people are "confounded" because they can actually hear and understand the tongue of foreigners! O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Shall a God of wisdom and power bring judgment upon the nations, and shall He not bring grace? Shall He curse and not bless? Shall He slay and not make alive? And shall He not bring grace out of the midst of judgment, and blessing out of cursing, and life out of death? Should we deem it an incredible thing therefore, that in the fullness of the Pentecostal experience the

saints of God shall receive a gift of languages so perfect and so real and so genuine, that just as the people of Babel were "confounded" by hearing strange languages they could not understand,--so now in the day of restoration the people of Babel shall be "confounded," but this time even unto repentance, by hearing their own languages from the lips of foreigners?

Thank God for the truth of Pentecost, and for the hope and confidence that the Lord has implanted in the hearts of His people, that we are yet to receive and experience a real Pentecostal experience, when the saints of God shall go forth into the world preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ in all the languages of the heathen. Praise His Name!

But even then we must go on, and on, and on...on from Pentecost to the greatest Feast of the Church, the Feast of Tabernacles.

CHAPTER 6

THE BLOWING OF TRUMPETS

AN INTRODUCTION TO TABERNACLES

The Day of Trumpets was really an introduction to Israel's third Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles or of Ingathering. Like the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles is of a threefold nature. The Passover included (1) the Passover itself, (2) the Unleavened Bread, (3) the waving of the Sheaf. Then Pentecost stands alone, between the Passover and Tabernacles. And finally Tabernacles is observed, likewise in a series of three ordinances, (1) Trumpets, (2) Atonement, (3) Tabernacles.

It might be interesting to consider the three Feast of the Lord in the light of the creative work in Genesis. When God commanded "let there be light,"--light sprang forth out of darkness, and we had the beginning of the old creation, the first day. And so it was said concerning Israel at the time of the Passover, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex. 12:2). Then on the third day, God commanded the earth to bring forth her produce, "the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself." (Gen. 1:11) Hence Pentecost occurred in the third month, the time of harvest and fruitfulness, when the precious fruit of the earth was to be gathered in. And finally we come to the seventh day, when God "rested from all his work." (Gen. 2:2). So it was that the Feast of Tabernacles was observed in the seventh month. Furthermore it was not only observed in the seventh month, but it was the seventh event in Israel's series of Feasts and their accompanying ordinances:

1. Passover
2. Unleavened Bread
3. Sheaf of Firstfruits
4. Pentecost
5. Trumpets
6. Atonement
7. Tabernacles

In other words, it is the feast of rest for the Church--the consummation of God's glorious purposes in His people so far as this dispensation is concerned. We have much more to say regarding this rest which "remaineth for the people of God," but we will deal with it later when we consider the various characteristics of the Feast of Tabernacles.

A NEW HARVEST

From the earliest days in Israel, time was reckoned not only from the month of the Passover, but there existed what was called a Civil or Agricultural year, which began in the seventh month. It is evident from Ex. 23:16 and 34:22 that the seventh month was the end of the old and the beginning of this new year. Also, from Lev. 25:9 we discover that the year of Jubilee began in the seventh month. All this helps us to understand more clearly Joel's prophecy: "He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." (Joel 2:23). The "first month" mentioned here is not the Passover month, but the beginning of this Agricultural or Civil year. A good translation is, "At the beginning of the season..." It was the end of the year, when the corn, the wine and the oil were gathered in, but it was also the beginning of a new Agricultural Year, when the rains could be expected.

All this is beautifully significant so far as the Church of Jesus Christ is concerned--for she has now come to the end of her long--and in many ways, discouraging career, and is about to enter a New Day in the Spirit. We thank God for her beginning at the Cross--the fountain and source of every spiritual blessing that we have ever enjoyed in the Church, or shall ever enjoy in eternity. We thank God also for the great harvest which began at Pentecost and has continued in considerable measure ever since. But the real harvest is just ahead! A harvest not only of souls, but of the fruit of the Spirit in the midst of the saints. Pentecost was a harvest of Firstfruits. This Feast of the seventh month constitutes the real ingathering of God's great harvest field: "The feast of harvest, the Firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." (Ex. 23:16).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRUMPETS

"Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them..." (Num. 10:2). In the verses which follow it is clear what the blowing of the Trumpets signified to Israel:

1. Calling the assembly. (vs. 2)
2. Journeying of the Camps. (vs. 3-6)
3. Preparation for war. (vs. 9)
4. Celebration of the Feasts. (vs. 10)

We will deal with each of these later; but first, what about the significance of the "silver," and the fact there were "two" trumpets? It is evident that "silver" in the Scriptures speaks of redemption. Whenever Israel was numbered, every man was required to give by way of ransom a half-shekel, and the money thus collected was used in the service of the sanctuary. (See Ex. 30:12-16; Lev. 25:48). The number "two," as we have discovered, speaks of Christ in union with His people, the "one new man" who was "created in Himself." Hence the significance of the blowing of the two silver trumpets on the first day of the seventh month. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation." (Lev. 23:24). It is the day and hour of the fullness of redemption's story, proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit by God's people. Yes, the trumpets were blown for all the Feasts as their seasons came around; but there was a day and an hour when the blowing of the

Trumpets took on what you might call a seasonal significance, hence a dispensational significance. And that hour is upon us. From the historical standpoint the Church has enjoyed her Passover and her Pentecost--and the age of Pentecost is now about to reach her glorious climax, giving way to the Feast of Ingathering. We stand now in fields "white unto harvest," when the corn and wine and oil must be gathered in, and God is beginning to send forth his ministers as never before--for this is the Day of the blowing of Trumpets. As one age or dispensation draws to a close, and another follows, there is always that overlapping and merging of the one into the other. Thus the Law merged into Grace through the ministry of John the Baptist and that of Christ. And so it is, we believe, with the Feasts. Even as Pentecost draws to its climax, the Day of Trumpets is being ushered in. And even as the full glory of Pentecost is about to break upon us--so also the Trumpets are beginning to blow, heralding the coming of a still more glorious Feast. The Trumpet ministry, as we have mentioned, is fourfold:

1. CALLING THE ASSEMBLY (Num. 10:2)

Once again is the Lord raising up a John the Baptist ministry to declare the Day of the Lord, and the approaching Kingdom. Again there is the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Again the cry goes forth from God's anointed ministries everywhere for the saints to assemble themselves together in the unity of the Spirit, to cast aside their carnal sectarian ways, and to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. John on Patmos was caught away in the Spirit and heard the words of One like unto the Son of Man calling the seven churches, and the voice "was a great voice, as of a Trumpet." (Rev. 1:10). With clarion call is the Lord now speaking unto His people through the various ministries which He hath established in the Body of Christ, calling the assembly together that they might hear "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Not only does this refer to the seven churches of Asia, nor yet to the seven historical church periods from Pentecost until now--but it refers to the seven-fold church of this present day and hour. That is to say, He is addressing the complete Church of this day and hour in which we live, "seven" being the number of completion. With trumpet voice the Spirit calleth to His people everywhere: to patience, to love, to repentance, to endurance, to faith in Christ in the midst of Satanic opposition, to holiness of life. In this great Day of Trumpets we should all study carefully the first three chapters of Revelation, and pay heed to their trumpet-like appeal to the people of God. They constitute the burden of the Spirit to God's people everywhere, wooing them to repentance, and promising them great and mighty things if they will "overcome" the world, the flesh, and the Devil. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness..." (Isa. 58:1,2). This is no time for pretty sermons and soothing words to a backslidden and corrupt Church; this is the Day of Trumpets.

2. THE JOURNEYING OF THE CAMPS (Num. 10:3-6)

The Church has camped around this mountain long enough. Said God to Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give them." (Josh. 1:2). God is calling His people to go forward, as never before in the history of the Church. Only men who have ears to hear have been able to hear the call of the Spirit, but the Trumpet is blowing nevertheless, and many have heard the call. Thank God for the manna which has sustained us throughout our pilgrimage journey, even unto now. Thank God for the water out of the rock, to quench our thirst. Thank God for the Holy Spirit, the cloud that has gone ahead of us, and directed us all through this great and terrible wilderness. But there are better things ahead! We must leave the manna, and the water out of the rock, and enter into a new realm, a new experience. Instead of manna there is the old corn of Canaan. Instead of water out of the rock, there are ceaseless, perpetually flowing waters from springs and rivers and lakes of the land of rest. Instead of drought there is the dew of heaven every morning, and rain in due season. Instead of barrenness and heat there is fertility and life and blessing in the realm of the Spirit, in the heritage of Beulah. Let us go forward as we see the Ark of the Covenant crossing Jordan, with the priests the Levites bearing it.

3. PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE FOR WAR (Num. 10:9)

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth..." (Joel 2:1-3).

Joel's prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end. In this passage he is sounding the alarm for war: calling God's people together to prepare for battle, for the great Day of the Lord is at hand. It shall be a Day of darkness and gloominess to the unrighteous and disobedient, but "as the morning spread upon the mountains" to the people who know their God, and are therefore "great and strong."

THE CHURCH'S FALSE HOPE

The Church of Christ is literally filled with carnal, earthly-minded Christians who sit back in ease and self-complacency and await a rapture that will translate them out of the midst of earth's Great Tribulation at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. To this generation of world-conformers God speaks in no uncertain terms: "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light." (Amos 5:18). In the vast majority of evangelical circles we are taught that any moment all God's people shall be caught up, raptured, to be with the Lord in the air--to escape the Great Tribulation which soon shall visit the earth. It is not true. The saints shall be "caught up" all right; but "every man in his own order." (1Cor. 15:23). What that order is does not concern us right now; but the fact remains, we are nowhere taught that the saints are going to escape the hour of Great Tribulation by way of rapture.

WHY WERE THE THESSALONIANS TROUBLED?

If it is true, as we are generally taught, that the Thessalonian Christians thought they had missed the rapture because of the supposed letter they had received from the apostle Paul, then how is it that the apostle Paul must have missed it too? Apparently they had received a letter bearing Paul's signature, stating that the Day of the Lord had started or was about to start. (2Thess. 2:2). And the common explanation is that they were "troubled," because they expected they would have been raptured when this Day began. Now if the Thessalonians actually thought that Paul wrote that deceptive letter--and it is clear that they did,--then why should they be "troubled," for if they missed the rapture, then Paul must have missed it too!

But no, Paul had never taught them that they should be taken away from the earth when the Great Tribulation started. What he did tell them was that they should not be "moved" by afflictions or tribulations of any kind, "for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (1Thess. 3:3,4). Knowing, therefore, they they were to go through the Tribulation, they were particularly "troubled" about this deceptive letter they received, because according to this letter the Day of the Lord, or the Great Tribulation, was just about to start. Paul therefore would comfort them again by informing them that this great and terrible Day of the Lord "shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." (2Thess. 2:3). The Day of the Lord, Paul would tell them, was not imminent, because the man of sin had to be revealed before that great Day. It is not our purpose to prove, or to disprove that "the man of sin" has been revealed. The fact remains that a "rapture" is not held out to the saints as their hope in the hour of the Great Tribulation; nor are we taught that the saints who are walking in the light are going to be caught unawares when the Day of the Lord begins. On the contrary we are told, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1Thess. 5:4).

AS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH

As for the hour of the Great Tribulation, Jesus said it would be as in the days of Noah. What happened, then, at the time of the Flood? Those who were spared the wrath of God were left right in the very midst of the wrath of God, but protected by the ark. So shall it be in the Day of the Lord. "The one shall be taken, and the other left." (Matt. 24:40). Now who were taken at the time of the flood? We read, "The flood came, and took them all away,"--all except those who were in the ark. (Matt. 24:39). In the very same way, Jesus said, would men be taken as in a "snare" at the time of the Day of the Lord. (Lk. 21:35). The powers of darkness and the wrath of God shall be poured out with such sudden fury over all the earth, that men shall be caught unawares, as if in a trap, and shall not escape. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (1Thess. 5:3).

Just in what manner this sudden destruction shall come upon men, perhaps we do not understand; but it shall be as in the days of Noah. Sudden cataclysmic judgments shall fall upon the earth, the ungodly shall be "taken" suddenly as in a "snare," but the righteous shall be "left" in a place of safety. They shall be "in Christ," hidden away in "the secret place of the Most High." With their eyes they shall see and behold the reward of iniquity, for they shall be right on the earth; but they shall be in safety. What very few people understand is this: that this great event which shall constitute a snare and a trap to earth-dwellers or earthly-minded Christians, shall become a glory and a power and a means of victory to the one who is walking with God. Jesus promised "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3:10). And if God's people will but study the Scriptures carefully, they will discover in what manner the Lord keeps His own from temptation and from trial. One thing is sure; it is not by carrying them aloft in celestial chariots of ease to some Elysian fields--but by becoming their shelter and protection in the very midst of trouble and distress. Behold the children of Israel in the very midst of Egypt's desolation, but protected by the glory of God and the rod of Moses. They had flies throughout all Egypt, but there were none in the homes of Israel. Frogs everywhere, but not in the humble cottages of the Israelites. Hail and pestilence on the fields of the Egyptians, but not on the fields of Israel. Darkness and gloominess throughout all Egypt for three days--a darkness so dense that it could be felt--but light in the homes of Israel. The death angel passes through all the land of Egypt, even over the homes of the Israelites, but passing or "fluttering" over the blood-sprinkled door posts of the covenant people of God. See Daniel in the lion's den, but it is no torment to him; the very beasts became his best friends. Behold the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, but they are not consumed. Yea, the very fire which was intended for their destruction became their light and their life--it consumed the cords which bound their arms and legs, and lo the form of one like unto the Son of Man was seen walking side by side with them in the midst of the flames.

Thank God for this great and mighty truth: the day of the Lord to the wicked is "not light...but darkness." But to the righteous, and those who have appropriated the fullness of the Spirit and are walking with God, the Day of gloom and Great Tribulation is not darkness, but a light and a glory. To the disobedient, "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." But to the great and mighty army of the Lord it shall be "as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong." (Joel 2:2).

THE DAY OF GOD'S POWER

The Church and the world are both going to be greatly surprised when they discover that the Great Tribulation, unleashed in all its fury, is nothing more nor less than the greatest display of Divine power and glory that this world has ever witnessed. (We should, perhaps, call this day the Day of the Lord, instead of the Great Tribulation; for it is only Great Tribulation to those who have not discovered "the secret place of the Most High.") We have heard it said that Heaven would be Hell for the sinner, if he were allowed to enter its pearly gates. And that is exactly right. The unveiling of the might and power and glory of God in the midst of this

crooked and perverse generation is going to produce on the one hand the Great Tribulation, and on the other hand the power and glory of the saints.

"Yet once more," saith God, "I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven." (Heb. 12:26). And this shaking is going to cast Satan and his principalities from their heavenly throne, while the Sons of God ascend into "the heavnlies"--first of all in the Spirit--to take upon themselves the authority which belongeth to those who are overcomers. And entering into this place of power and authority, the Sons of God shall be able to administer protection, and comfort, and help, and deliverance, and blessing to such as are in need. All this is confirmed by the prophecy of Joel the Trumpeter, concerning the Day of the Lord.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope (shelter) of his people, and the strength (refuge) of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 3:14-18).

What can be more clear than this: darkness, the shaking of heaven and earth, judgment,--but in God there is shelter and refuge and new wine and milk, and refreshing waters from the house of the Lord! And why is this? Because the shaking of the heavens is in reality, not merely the shaking of the natural sun and moon and stars, but the shaking from their celestial thrones of the powers of darkness and the hosts of wickedness, and the rising up of the Sons of God in the power of the Spirit, to take the Kingdom which Satan has usurped and occupied for so long.

That Satan's kingdom is situated in "the heavnlies" is Paul's teaching to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:12). From there he rules and reigns over the world and its many religions, as "prince of the power of the air" and "god of this world." But "the heavnlies" is also the heritage of the children of God; for God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (in the heavnlies) in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). The child of God is therefore called upon to war against these evil hosts of wickedness who have usurped the authority of Christ and His Church. Says Paul, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (the heavnlies)" (Eph. 6:12).

THE CHURCH--DEFEATED

Can you see, child of God, what a tremendous heritage is ours, and how Satan has completely usurped the authority of the Sons of God? Paul says, "We wrestle..." True, Paul did so to a certain extent, along with some of the saints through the ages--but as a whole the Church of Christ has suffered defeat from the powers of darkness for century upon century. Deceived on every hand; afflicted with all manner of sickness and disease; demon-oppressed and demon-possessed; filled with carnality, sin, bitterness, bewilderment, sorrow, fear, and torment. The surging masses of humanity, including many of the real saints of God, have been taken captive by the "god of this world," and instead of a glorious Church one needs only to visit a great healing meeting to behold a veritable Museum of the Devil displaying his exhibits: children of God twisted into the most gruesome forms; hobbling on crutches; dragging themselves; crawling on the ground; men with tortured minds; oppressed by demons; and cast into Satan's mould of deception, fear, torment and filth. Thank God for the measure of deliverance we can see beginning to come to pass, and for the mighty healing power of God that is being delivered unto mankind through His anointed servants--but Oh, how little we have seen yet in comparison with

the tremendous need that presents itself! And yet the saints really think they are telling the truth when they stand religiously on a Sunday morning, and sing to the charming peal of the organ:

"Like a mighty army, moves the Church of God,
Brothers, we are treading, where the saints have trod.

We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Onward, Christian soldiers!

Marching as to war!

With the Cross of Jesus,

Going on before."

The exact opposite is just about the truth of the situation: a defeated band of slaves, divided into a thousand sects, all having different hopes and different doctrines, and knowing nothing of charity. "Bow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain..." Arise, Church of God, from the dust of defeat and desolation. Put on your beautiful garments, and the whole armour of God! The Trumpet call goes forth in this great hour, calling for a Gideon's band who shall be "more than conquerors" through Christ that loved us. And the bank is being prepared, for which we are thankful; an army whose power is not in themselves, but in the Sword of the Lord.

WAR IN HEAVEN

The Book of Revelation is in reality, not the Revelation of John, but as John himself stated: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ..." The word "Revelation" is "Apokalupsis," the very same word that is translated "The manifestation (apokalupsis) of the Sons of God..." (Rom. 8:19). Literally, it is the Unveiling of Jesus Christ that John was told to write about there on the isle of Patmos. It is lamentable that the Church should have become so deceived as to refuse to believe the Book is for them; so many are teaching that just the first three chapters are for the Church. However, it is enough for us that John should have said, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass...Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:1,3). If you want to be blessed, then, read this wonderful book and believe it is for you. God is speaking by the Spirit to as many as have "ears to hear." If you can hear its message, then it is for you.

And so we are told in the Book of Revelation what happens when the powers of heaven are shaken: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old (ancient) serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Rev. 12:7-9). The powers of heaven shaken! Yes, and that means Great Tribulation for the earth-dwellers, but glory and honour and salvation for the saints! "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night...Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the

sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:10-12).

And then what happens? "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child" (vs. 13). By this time this man-child company, this group of overcomers brought forth by the travail of the Church, is in a place of power and authority in the "heavenlies;" and the Church that brought forth the man child through much pain and spiritual travail, is left in the earth. For a time she is persecuted by the Dragon who lost his heavenly throne, but soon a place is prepared for the "woman" in the wilderness, where she is nourished and protected.

THE MAN-CHILD

The whole picture is a wonderful description of the Church of this hour. We cannot deal at length with the subject here, but a few Scriptures will help us to see the picture more clearly. As we mentioned before, Satan rules and reigns over the earth from his exalted position in "the heavenlies." That is his fortress; but it is likewise the heritage of the saints. There it is that God hath blessed the Church with all spiritual blessings, even in "the heavenlies" (Eph. 1:3), and there it is that we are called upon to wrestle with Satan, as we become clothed upon with the "whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:12,13). Now when the saints of God begin to really press into their heritage in Christ Jesus, Satan is going to object--and there will be "war in heaven." Hence the great "wrestling" that Paul speaks about. Michael the Archangel himself is going to enter the fray on behalf of God's people in this great Day of the Lord, and he is going to take up their cause in this heavenly warfare. God has promised he would. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1). Then angelic hosts are ministering spirits sent forth to wait in service upon the elect; and Michael is one of their chief princes. Consequently the hosts of Satan are cast down; the overcomer takes his place of authority in the place left vacant by these evil hosts of wickedness; and hence the triumphant shout, "therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them..." But the Dragon, having lost his kingdom, roams through the earth in great wrath, tormenting men, and attempting to persecute the Church which was responsible for bringing forth the overcoming man child. But God in mercy has a place prepared for her "in the wilderness"--some secret, spiritual hiding-place, and there she is protected and nourished. God, therefore, promised Daniel: "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." As we shall discover later, when we deal with the priesthood of this overcoming group, they shall be in a place of power and authority with God, and shall be able to administer the help and protection and sustenance that the Church needs.

4. THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEASTS

This brings us to the fourth purpose for which the silver trumpets were made. They were also used to call the people together to observe the solemn Feasts of the Lord. Joel's prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end--and in addition to calling God's people to repentance, and to prepare themselves for war, he likewise call the saints to the Feasts of the Lord.

"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet...Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen...Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the

rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil..." (Joel 2:15-24).

The whole passage speaks loudly of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the coming glory of the Lord when the corn and the wine and the oil are to be gathered in; and at the same time, the hour of the rain from Heaven--the former and the latter rain combined.

LAMENTATIONS OF THE PROPHETS

God's people everywhere should pay heed to the solemn exhortations and lamentations of the prophets. Jeremiah, who lamented over the desolation of the earthly Jerusalem, cried in the anguish of his spirit; "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies" (Lam. 1:1,2). And again, "Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider, and behold our reproach. Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows..." (Lam. 5:1-3).

If we could but take time to examine in detail these and similar Scriptures, how clearly we would see the true condition of the Church! Once married to Christ in the days of the early apostles, now a widow. Once a great and mighty spiritual power, now a tributary to the nations--and to the denominations. Once possessors of a rich heritage in the Spirit, now Satan holds authority in the "heavenlies" where the Church should reign. Once nourished by spiritual fathers with apostolic meekness, love, and authority; now the Church is full of orphans, having very few who really cherish her children, and the children themselves being loathe to recognize God-appointed leaders and fathers. No wonder Joel blows the Trumpet, and calls for repentance and lamentation: "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God..." (Joel 1:10-13). In other words, Pentecost has lost its meaning--because the harvest has failed. There is no Feast of Tabernacles--because there is no early or latter rain, and the vineyards and the olive trees have perished. The fruits and graces of the Spirit are woefully lacking; and the flesh practically reigns in the Church.

THE DAY OF TRUMPETS IS UPON THE CHURCH

In view of what we have seen regarding the meaning of the Trumpet, and its significance in calling the people to repentance, there is no doubt that we are beginning to see the Blowing of Trumpets fulfilled before our very eyes. Perhaps we have not witnessed much yet by way of causing an alarm: only those with ears to hear and eyes to see have been able to discern the voice of Him that speaketh with the sound of a Trumpet in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. But His voice is beginning to be heard, nevertheless, and the saints are mustering for battle.

Psalm 81 is very significant of this day and hour in which we live, for it refers directly to the Day of Trumpets. Indeed, it is thought by some to have been composed especially for the Day of Trumpets. A careful examination of this Psalm will reveal just why the Trumpet-call of the saints thus far has failed to produce any notable results.

"Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: Where I heard a language that I understood not..."(Ps. 81:1-5).

That seems to have been the trouble with those who have been blowing the trumpets of present-day revivals: the language has been a foreign language, and consequently there has been no genuine preparation for battle. Our language has been one that men have not understood.

THE UNCERTAIN SOUND

Says Paul, "For is the Trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" (1Cor. 14:8). From this verse, and the verses that follow, we find that Paul is exhorting the saints to minister in the Body of Christ in such a way that the saints shall be edified. Such a ministry is the only Trumpet-call that will work a real work of preparedness in the hearts of the saints. We must have a genuine ministration of the gifts of the Spirit if the call of God is to go forth with power. For many years now the Church has enjoyed a foretaste of Pentecost, with a partial restoration of the gift of tongues. But it has been a language that we "Understood not." And that in itself would not be so bad, were it not for the fact that no one else has understood our language either. And this is not only true concerning the "tongues" which the saints speak by the Spirit as they commune with God, the unknown tongue,--but it is also true of the language which we live before men. God's plan for the saints is that they should become the veritable "epistle of Christ...written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2Cor. 3:3). On the contrary, the Church has done everything but reveal Christ from the pages of the heart and soul. Rather do men look upon us and read a story of carnality, sin, wickedness, division, disunity, bitterness and strife. They know the Church is supposed to be God's Bible, and therefore they read it intently, but they understand not the language which they read. It is absolutely contrary to their conception as to what Christianity should really be. And consequently, they turn away in disgust. The Trumpets are sounding--but to most people the sound has been one of "a blaring trumpet or a clanging cymbal" (1Cor. 13:1, Weymouth). The Trumpet has been giving forth an uncertain sound from all the various branches of the Church, who profess to have the baptism of the Spirit, and the gifts and ministries of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit--but no one prepares himself "to the battle" because of the uncertainty of the sound.

THE CERTAIN TRUMPET CALL OF THE MINISTRIES

This uncertainty of the Trumpet is going to cease, and in the near future. God's pattern has not been observed, and therefore we could not expect much more than confusion. But the pattern is being revealed, and God is raising up His own ministers who shall sound the Trumpet with such clarity, that men will know the voice of God and the meaning of the voice, and they will prepare for battle. God said, "The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets" (Num. 10:8). Ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are being established in the Church, established moreover by God Himself, and their Trumpet-call shall not go unheeded. Their word shall be with authority, and not as the Scribes. And their authority shall not be by self-appointment, nor by human-appointment, but rather by the appointment of the Holy Spirit, and the ordination of Christ. Soon there will be a "language" uttered in the congregation of the saints which men shall understand; for it shall be the Trumpet-call of power and authority, even as the very oracles of God.

Therefore, as we contemplate the coming glory of the Feast of Ingathering, how we rejoice in what God is now doing in the Blowing of the Trumpets. For there can be no latter rain, no vintage, no ingathering of the oil and corn and wine--without the blowing up of "the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." It is the Feast of the New Moon! The new moon! Yes, it is the same old moon that God established in the heavens from the foundation of the world, but now it doth enter a new phase! The very same Church that

was established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone...but the Church doth now enter a new phase of her existence. A new day is about to dawn! A new life is to be our portion! A new heritage in the Spirit looms before us! "Blow up the trumpet" therefore, ye ministers of God, sound an alarm in God's holy mountain of Zion, shew God's people their transgression, and call them to mourning and to repentance because of the desolation of God's heritage. It will not be long ere the Day of Trumpets shall have served its purpose, and the Church of Christ shall enter into her rest.

CHAPTER 7

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

"Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer and offering made by fire unto the Lord..." (Lev. 23:27).

That full and complete Atonement was made for the whole human race by Jesus Christ on the Cross, there is no doubt whatsoever. But it is only too evident, as we consider our own individual lives, as well as that of the historical Church, that we have never really appropriated any real measure of the great atoning work of the Cross. And it is this experimental appropriation of the Atonement that the Church must now enter into. As there is a historical Pentecost, as well as an individual Pentecostal experience for all who will believe for it, so it is with the Atonement. All through the ages men have, by faith reached out and appropriated some measure of deliverance from sin; but as a Body and as a Church we have never really done so. But the Church's deliverance from sin, as a Body, is just ahead--in the fulfillment of the great Day of Atonement by way of experience. The sin and carnality of the Church's long career must be taken away from her midst before she can enter into the full blessing and power of the Feast of Tabernacles. Thank God for the Passover, in the first month, in virtue of which God has "passed over" the saints, not imputing their trespasses unto them. But the Church has been groaning with the apostle Paul for about two thousand years: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). God has certainly heard our cries, and soon He shall bring His people into a glorious liberty in the Spirit, wherein they shall be completely delivered from their sins and their carnal nature. This shall be the experimental fulfillment of the Day of Atonement for the Church.

ON THE TENTH DAY

The Day of Atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month. The seventh month is the sabbath month--the month of rest. Even now the saints who are entering into the unfolding plans and purposes of God for this hour, and are becoming established with gifts and ministries in the Spirit--they are experiencing a rest which they have never known in the past, despite all the perplexing problems which might arise from time to time. And we may rest assured, there will be many more problems and trials arising in the near future. The Day of Atonement will be a time of great trial and sifting for God's people. The number "ten" signifies trial and testing. The greatest test ever submitted to man, the Law of Moses, was written on tablets of stone and comprised ten commandments. Then we find that Daniel made this request, "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days" (Dan. 1:12). And again, Jesus promised the Church in Smyrna (which signifies "bitterness"), "Ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Then you will remember how the early disciples tarried for the Holy Spirit from the Ascension until Pentecost, a period of ten days--and what times of trial and sifting they must have been, knowing practically nothing of what they were to expect. There is no doubt, therefore, that from now till the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement in the Church, God's people are going to be subjected to great times of testing and trial--with a view to perfecting them, and rewarding them as overcomers. The hour has come for judgment to "begin at the house of God" (1Pet. 4:17). God is sifting, sifting, sifting His people as never before, in preparation for the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

YE SHALL AFFLICT YOUR SOULS

There is no question as to what God would teach us by the Day of Atonement: it is the actual taking away from the congregation, of their sins and carnal ways. Israel could rejoice in the fact that the Passover Lamb had been killed in the first month, and the Feast had been observed according to all the ordinances of the Law. And that was their acceptance before God as a nation: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." But now, six months later, we have the Day of Atonement--the day when Israel is called to a new repentance and a humbling of themselves before God in preparation for the Great Feast of Tabernacles. Israel had to have a new Passover every year, and a new Day of Atonement every year--because their sacrifices served only to call sins to remembrance, and to revive their sin-conscience. But Christ died once-for-all, and so effectual was His redemptive work that there is "no more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10:2). And yet we are constantly giving the lie to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, by falling into sin and being hampered by the works of the flesh, and harboring a sin-conscience. We testify on the one hand that God has taken away our sins and nailed them to the Cross--and that is true--but the next moment we are beset by sin and suffer defeat. We rejoice in the righteousness of Jesus Christ which has been placed to our account--and that is true--but how little of that righteousness have we been able to reach and appropriate. How little do we know and experience of real, vital holiness of life, and purity of thought, word, and deed.

Thank God, therefore, for the pattern we find in Israel's Feasts, and for the knowledge that there is a place of real victory over sin and the flesh for the Church of Jesus Christ. We know that many have been preaching this for years, and testifying to having received it; but actually men have never experienced it to any degree of fullness. Those who have sought to go on with God can testify to having received a measure of victory, that is true enough; but real victory over sin and the carnal nature is still ahead for the Church of God. This, then, is the day and hour when God would call us to repentance, that we might receive from His hands that real, genuine victory over sin that the Bible teaches.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THIS VICTORY?

Let us stop trying to justify ourselves, and insisting on our holiness of conduct, when it is apparent to everyone about us that we do not possess it. "Living epistles" of Christ do not have to tell the world how holy they are. The world will see it and will be amazed to discover something real and genuine in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation. This victory of which we speak is the very victory of Christ Himself. When we attain to this victory, there will be no need to formulate weak excuses why the victorious Christian can again fall into sin and suffer defeat--for this place in Christ knows no defeat. We will not have to explain how Satan gained an advantage over us and planted a new seed of sin in the heart, and the victory we once had was lost; for this victory is the very victory of Christ. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once..." (Rom. 6:9,19). He that overcometh according to the Bible enters into the very victory and triumph of Christ--a victory which can never be lost or forfeited. It is the very victory of Jesus Christ Himself, and the overcomer is therefore "more than conqueror" through Christ that loved him.

Here again the history of the Church is positively against us, because we cannot point with positive assurance to any person in the Church age who has really appropriated this blessed condition of holiness in its fullness. However, we are not going to take the history of the Church as our pattern--for it is a sad story of defeat, and worthy of far more lamentation than the weeping prophet ever expressed over Israel. If this glorious victory is declared in the Word, that is sufficient; and thank God, it is. And it shall be attained by the overcomer--not by the flesh, but by the Spirit. The experimental Day of Atonement is at hand for the Church of Christ. The promise, therefore, is held out to us at the ends of the ages, as to no other people in any past dispensation. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart..." Let us examine, therefore, some of the Scriptures which clearly promise this victorious, triumphant, overcoming life in the Spirit.

Lev. 16:29-31. "And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever."

Matt. 5:48. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Jn. 17:21. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us..."

Jn. 17:23. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..."

Rom. 6:4. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Notice this passage: the newness of our walk is to be comparable to the very resurrection life and glory of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 6:5-7. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." Some would like to believe that the "likeness of his resurrection" refers to a future physical resurrection. The whole passage teaches to the contrary. God is speaking about the righteousness and life that overcomes the "body of sin" so that "henceforth we should not serve sin." It is the appropriation here and now of the fruits of Christ's death and resurrection.

Rom. 6:11. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is no suggestion here whatever of suppressing the old nature, keeping the "old man" under your feet so that he will not be able to raise his head, or constantly dying out to self. It is a finished work; and just as Christ died and rose again once for all, so those who have appropriated His death and resurrection enter into a new life, a new sphere in the Spirit, a new victory.

Rom. 8:2. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Freedom! And when God speaks of freedom, He means you are "free indeed" (Jn. 8:36). As long as the world, the flesh, or the Devil can bring you into any measure of servitude, you are not "free indeed."

Gal. 5:24. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

1 Jn. 3:3. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure."

1 Jn. 3:6,7. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."

1 Jn. 3:9. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

There is no argument against the direct, plain, indisputable truths here presented. The righteousness which God has in store for us is not merely a partial appropriation of God's righteousness, or a certain degree of attainment whereby we measure ourselves with others, and we conclude we are victorious because we have ceased from our bad habits, conquered over anger, and no longer harbor ill-feelings against another. As likely as not, such claims of holiness are a sure sign of pride rather than of meekness and contrition of spirit. This life of which we speak is a life far beyond anything the Church has yet seen in her most glorious saints. It is God's very own: "even as he is pure," "even as he is righteous," "he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

THE BIRTH OF THE SPIRIT

"He cannot sin..." This is the plain Word of God. However, as God's children we all can testify that we are born of God, and that we do sin. And therefore we present some very plausible arguments to prove that God does not mean exactly what He said. Let us forever cease trying to justify ourselves. "Let God be true and every man a liar." The only scriptural explanation of this verse is that we are not "born again" in the fullness of this regenerating experience. Our new birth, by the Spirit, genuine as it is, has not developed into maturity. We have been reproduced after God's likeness like the seed which is produced by the flower, or the egg that is produced by the bird. That seed or that egg is a genuine birth, containing all the potentialities of a new flower exactly like the flower that produced it, or a new bird exactly like its parent. But the full glory and the potentialities of that new life lie dormant within the seed or the egg--and are by no means manifest, or even apparent to our observation. One can see no similarity whatsoever between the tiny seed with its black crusty covering, and the beautiful red poppy which waves its petals in the breeze; no similarity between the little blue egg in the nest, and the bird that flies aloft into the atmosphere on wings of liberty. In fact, if we did not understand the mysterious processes of nature, we would consider one a fool to suggest that the seed and the poppy are one and the same thing; or that the egg and the bird are one and the same thing. And yet they are--in kind, in nature, in possibility.

So it is with the birth of the Spirit. Thank God for the seed, the incorruptible seed, in virtue of which we have become "partakers of the divine nature" (2Pet. 1:4), or "born again" (1Pet. 1:23). But that seed in the hearts of God's people has scarcely developed beyond the germ state; it has not grown and developed to the place where we can testify, "his seed abideth" in us; and therefore we can and do sin.

A NEW MAN IS TO BE BORN

Let the saints of God who have eyes to see and ears to hear, rejoice in the plan and purpose of God which even now is unfolding before our very eyes. God is hastening the day and hour of Christian perfection. We do not have it, nor have we seen it in any person anywhere at any time. For we are not speaking merely of a life made from this particular sin or that particular sin, from a bad temper, or a bitter spirit, or sinful habits. We are speaking, rather, of a life which is the very life of Jesus Christ reproduced in the fragile earthen vessels of this human clay. Our prayer, therefore, should be as Jesus commanded, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in Heaven." It is, first and foremost, the birth of the Kingdom of God in our own little earth, in the clay of our flesh; for the "Kingdom of God is within you..." It is the perfecting unto maturity of the Christ who came into our hearts as the Seed when we received Him as our Saviour. It is the springing forth of the water of life into glorious liberty and spontaneity--even the water that we drank when Christ came into our lives. Jesus promised it would become a "Fountain of water leaping up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14, Literal). It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory," rising up unto maturity, and being "formed within you" (Gal. 4:19).

HOW SHALL IT COME TO PASS?

This life shall not come by fleshly striving. Nor shall it come merely by prayer and repentance and seeking God's face. This, of course, is most essential, and God will hear that prayer of sincerity and reveal the channel and means by which perfection shall be attained. But prayer and repentance in themselves are not the means by which the saints are to be perfected. Neither is the rapture of the Church the plan of God for the perfecting of the saints, and their deliverance from sin and carnality. God has another plan--a far more glorious plan, and yet a very simple plan; and here it is:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in (unto) the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of

the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). The Church may proclaim an imminent rapture as much as they will, and teach that any moment the saints will be snatched away from earth to escape the gathering clouds of Tribulation. But this is not the teaching of God's Word. True, we must always be waiting and watching for His Appearing--but this is not the "Appearing" of modern evangelical theology. This glorious Appearing must first of all be manifest in the saints.

How thankful we are, therefore, that God is revealing the pattern of perfection. The Ascension gifts, the ministries in the Body of Christ--these are the means of perfecting the saints,--and as we have read, they are to remain in the Church till we all come unto unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man! Notice too, that these ministries were given "when he ascended up on high," and not when He was here on earth. He gave twelve apostles when He was here on earth; but here we find that He gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers after His ascension.

The perfection of the saints unto maturity, then, is just as mysterious as the growth and development of the members of the human body from birth unto manhood--and just as real. Spiritual gifts in the saints, exercised by the recipient in the power of the Holy Ghost, develop into ministries of the Spirit. And these ministries are vital, living spiritual faculties in the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ, therefore, shall nurture and edify itself. Just as the human body has within itself the God-given and God-created ability to grow, to develop, to heal its own wounds, and to reproduce itself; so the Body of Christ, by means of these spiritual faculties, has the God-given and God-created power to grow into holiness, to develop into sonship, to heal its own sin-wounds, and to reproduce its kind. Says Paul, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:15,16). "Unto the edifying of itself in love!" That is God's pattern.

WHAT HAPPENED ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT?

Briefly, this is what happened on the great Day of Atonement. The high priest, clothed upon with the holy garments, was designated to make the atonement for himself, as well as for the people. Besides the offerings for himself, two goats were chosen for the atonement of the people. Lots were cast upon the goats, the one being set apart for sacrifice, and the other as the scapegoat. "Scapegoat" signifies "the goat that went away." The first goat was slain, and the blood brought within the veil in the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat. Then Aaron as high priest laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, confessed over it all the iniquities of Israel, and sent it away into the wilderness.

In type the whole ordinance speaks of the Atonement which Christ effected on the Cross. In the fulfillment of a type, of course, we may expect to see a contrast as well as a parallel. In contrast, we are reminded that Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" and therefore needed not "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" (Heb. 7:26,27). Nor did He offer Himself often, as the high priest offered sacrifices year after year; for the sacrifice of Christ is eternally efficacious, and He offered Himself once-for-all.

But as there was a great contrast between the imperfect sacrifice of Israel, and the perfect Atonement of the Cross--so also is there a beautiful parallel. Here we can see what took place potentially at the Cross when Christ made an eternal Atonement for the Church. It cannot be without significance that the Passover occurred in the first month, Pentecost in the third, and the Atonement in the seventh. It is simply because the Church of Christ as a Body has never been experimentally cleansed from her sins. We may close our eyes to the age-long sin and corruption of God's people if we wish--but the fact remains, the Church did not go on from early apostolic power and blessing to really appropriate Divine life and holiness as a Body. Thank God, however, that He knew all about it, and planned a great Day of Atonement for the seventh month--this Sabbath of the Church, when she

shall be purified and made white and made to cease from her own works. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you..." (Lev. 16:30,31).

And so the one goat was slain, and the blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and "without the shedding of blood is no remission." Nor was that all: for upon the head of the scapegoat all the sins of Israel were laid (in type), and it was sent away into the wilderness. Thank God for the Day of Atonement, when God's people shall be made free, and free indeed, from all their sins.

CHRIST, A MANY-MEMBERED BODY

We believe there is a special significance in the fact that there were "two" goats used on the Day of Atonement. As we have discovered in a previous chapter, "two" would speak of the Head and the Body, Christ in the fullness of His people. For Christ is one, but a many-membered Body. This is a great mystery, as Paul tells us, that the Church should be bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh. Christ the Head, therefore, is not complete without Christ the Body. In the "two" goats, therefore, we have (in type) Christ in the fullness of His Body. That the saints are to become thoroughly identified with Christ in His sufferings and in His Cross, is clearly taught in the Scriptures; but the mystery of it is almost too much for us to comprehend, even in the slightest degree. It is only as we can begin to see the truth of the Body, that we can in any measure comprehend the fact that when He died, we died; and that when He rose again, then we rose again with Him.

To many, of course, this truth of our identification with Christ the Head is nothing less than blasphemy. But this is to be expected. When Jesus called Himself the Son of God they said "Thou blasphemest." And yet now we hail Him King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Man of very Man, and God of very God. And the ages to come are going to reveal, what is now revealed by the Spirit to those whose understandings have been quickened, that Christ is the Body,--the whole Body, and not just the Head. The Church is said to grow up "into Christ" (Eph. 4:15). Just as a "man" signifies a body with many members, and not just a head; so the name "Christ" also signifies a Body with many members. Paul therefore says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members,...so also is Christ" (1Cor. 12:12). Using another illustration, Christ is the Vine, the whole Vine. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (Jn. 15:5). He is the Vine, the root, the stalk, the branches, the leaves, the fruit--the whole vine; and we are part of that Vine. The Lord does not intimate here that He is one thing, and we another. But He is the Vine, and we are part of Him. The Son of Man in Heaven is not complete without the fullness of the Son of Man on earth, even the Body, "The fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

THE BODY, THE FULFILLMENT OF JACOB'S LADDER

You will recall the story of Jacob's ladder, how Jacob dreamed as he lay there at Bethel, with his head on a stone for a pillow--and saw in his dream the heavens opened, and a ladder set up on the earth, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder. Jacob awoke out of his sleep in fear and dread, and cried: "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). And so he changed the name of that place from Luz to Bethel--because Bethel signifies "House of God." Little did he realize that in this ladder-vision he actually beheld, in type, the fullness of the Son of Man in Christ and His people.

This is brought out in the Gospel of John. You will recall how amazed Nathanael was when the Lord remarked how He had seen him under the fig-tree. Actually the Lord may have been miles away and Nathanael knew that. How could this Man, thought Nathanael, be able to manifest such Divine omnipresence as to have seen him under the fig tree, when He was perhaps miles away? And so he pronounced Him the Messiah without any further questioning. But Jesus replied: "Thou shalt see greater things than these... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (Jn.

1:50,51). In other words, Jesus said: "Why that is nothing, Nathanael, comparable to what you shall yet discover about the Son of Man. That is nothing that the Son of Man should have been miles away, and yet have observed you under the fig-tree. The time is at hand when the Son of Man shall fulfill the type of Jacob's ladder, His feet shall stand on earth, and His Head shall reach even unto Heaven; and the angels of God shall ascend and descend upon Him..."

Now there is only one way by which the angels of God could ascend and descend upon the Son of Man; and that is, if the Son inhabits Heaven and earth at the same time. And such is the case. The Son of Man is the glorious and wonderful fulfillment of Jacob's ladder; and no wonder Jacob called the place "Bethel" for this is the House of God of which we speak, even the Body of Christ. The Head is in Heaven, but the Body is upon earth; and according to the Scriptures the Head hath sent forth the celestial hosts as ministering spirits, ministering to such as shall be heirs of salvation, ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, this "new Man" that Paul speaks about, "created in Himself..." It is Christ in the fullness of His people.

PARTAKERS OF HIS SUFFERINGS

"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1Pet. 4:13).

It is commonly recognized that some day the saints are to become so thoroughly identified with Christ in His resurrection that we shall be exactly like Him, having bodies like unto His own glorious body, and sharing His very own life and glory. But the corresponding truth concerning our identification with His death, has scarcely dawned upon us: that we must share His Cross so vitally that it actually becomes our Cross. This is hard to really comprehend; but God is going to bring His people into that place where they shall become actually identified with the death of Christ, so much so that with this experience we shall testify, "I am crucified with Christ..." For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5). The word "planted together" signifies "grown up with," and therefore thoroughly one with Him in His death. It is identification with Him, so vital and real, that His death becomes our very own.

We cannot comprehend these things yet, any more than the disciples could comprehend the approaching Cross of Christ. They understood not what He said to them, even though He told them plainly that He must die, and rise again the third day. Nor could they understand of what profit His death would be, when they were so anxiously looking forward to a Kingdom and a King. But Jesus explained, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). This is a great mystery, and as true concerning the Body as it was of the Son. It is only as we enter into, and appropriate, His very Cross that we are going to be of any profit to others. Inasmuch as Paul was able to appropriate this experience, therefore, he could testify: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:24). And again John the beloved exhorted: "He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1Jn. 3:16).

We cannot atone for their sin; the Head alone could do that; but as members of His Body we can share His suffering and His rejection, and in that way transmit its efficacy to others. We can suffer for the Truth, and in our sufferings the Truth will shine forth. We can enter into the pangs of Gethsemane, in this evening hour of Christ's betrayal--and in so doing share His Cross for the sake of the brethren. For just as truly as Christ the Head was betrayed some two thousand years ago, so once again Christ the Body is being betrayed today. Christ the Head meant no more to Judas or the Scribes and Pharisees than thirty pieces of silver. Today, Christ the Body means no more to the ecclesiastical authorities than large, costly church buildings, big salaries, pipe organs, choirs, orchestras, creeds, dogmas, and the applause of men. And if we, as God's people, are going to be

prepared to share His betrayal, stand true to Him even unto death, and follow Him "without the camp," then we shall share His death. The Head died on a literal Cross; the Body is being nailed to a spiritual Cross.

No man with spiritual insight can behold the Body of Christ and fail to see that it is even now being crucified, as truly as was Christ. Stripped of its clothing, even the purity and righteousness of Christ; helpless to walk, its heel bruised by the Serpent; helpless to serve, its hands bleeding from the nails of ecclesiastical tyranny; powerless to love and to shew mercy, its heart thrust through with a sword of hate; all its bones out of joint--and therefore unable to supply strength and vitality "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." Every imaginable device of ecclesiastical tyranny has been used against the Church, to make her completely helpless and useless and powerless so far as functioning as a Body is concerned. Every conceivable form of sin, carnality, division, schism, and sectarianism has been foisted upon God's people--largely by men in the pulpit who have been proclaiming a lie for the Truth. As truly as Christ was betrayed by the religious leaders of His day, so truly is His Body being betrayed and crucified today.

No amount of fleshly striving can produce this Death experience within us. All we have to do to share His rejection, His betrayal, and His death, is to recognize the Body, identify ourselves with the Body, minister in the Body according to our God-given ability, and refuse to associate ourselves with anything that will injure another member of that Body. If we do this we will automatically partake of Christ's sufferings and death in this hour of His betrayal. And we will be doing it for the sake of the brethren. Then the resurrection follows: the hour of the Church's triumph, the spiritual resurrection of those who share the betrayal of the Body. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5).

These truths, we realize, are difficult for us to grasp. Of necessity this must be so; for as yet we see "as through a glass darkly." But as truly as Jesus said, "Father, the hour is come...", the time is at hand when the Body shall be able to say, "Lord Jesus, the hour is come..." Identification with Christ is a truth of infinite and eternal significance. It means much more than the fact that we are justified by His blood and saved from wrath through Him. It goes on to embrace not only the work of Redemption, but the Person of the Redeemer Himself: so that the Body becomes thoroughly one with Him in the "eternal purpose" which God hath purposed "in Christ Jesus." Does not the apostle Paul affirm, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening (a life-giving) spirit" (1Cor. 15:45)? A life-giving spirit! Creative power! Such is the heritage and the attributes of the Last Adamic race. And should some insist that this refers only to Christ, the Last Adam, let us continue: "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly" (vs. 48). So thorough and real and vital is our identification with the Last Adam, that in all respects--His work, His ministry, His death, His life--we are to become like unto Him.

ENTRANCE BEHIND THE VEIL

It was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest was granted access into the Holy of Holies behind the veil. After the sacrifices, after the slaying of the sin-offering, once in the year, the high priest was permitted to go behind the veil and there commune with the Lord who dwelt above and upon the mercy seat. (Lev. 16:2). True picture, indeed, of Christ's atoning sacrifice and His entrance "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). But here again, there is a glorious contrast, as well as a true parallel. Israel's high priest entered the Holy of Holies only once a year; but Christ has entered the Holy of Holies, not just for a few moments, but to abide there forever. "By his own blood he entered in once (for all) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). And again, Aaron alone went in, while all the rest of Israel were excluded. But Christ went in as the "forerunner"--one who runs on ahead of others who shall follow later. (Heb. 6:20). "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh..." (Heb. 10:19,20). It is this unveiling for which all creation is longing and looking forward to with great anticipation, even "the

unveiling of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). It is having the veil removed, even the veil of His flesh, the veil of the flesh of His Body, the rending asunder of our carnal nature that the glory of Christ might be revealed. Some fear to enter...fear that this would be intruding into spheres of holiness and life and glory and power that God has not intended for us. But let us assure you, child of God, that God invites us to enter into this realm with all confidence: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest..." And why may we enter with such boldness, we who are but worms of the dust? Because of the precious "Blood of Jesus!" Let us not depreciate the glory and the power and the efficacy of the Blood. We have no right of our own to enter this wonderful sphere, this holy place, this Holy of Holies. But the Blood of Jesus has made us worthy. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Furthermore, God will never be truly glorified until His Sons believe what He has said, and reach out and appropriate this "new and living way," this holy life behind the veil "whither the forerunner is for us entered..." God will be glorified in this wonderful experience; and God alone will be glorified. For His blood alone has made us worthy, and His Name alone shall be exalted.

This brings us now to the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of the seventh month--the culmination of the Blowing of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. These two events, in fact, are really part of the Feast of Tabernacles in that they prepare and open up the way for the glory that is to be revealed.

CHAPTER 8

TABERNACLES--THE FEAST OF UNITY

"And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, the branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days...Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths..." (Lev. 23:40,42).

In the Feast of Tabernacles we have a beautiful picture of the unity of the Saints. On this notable occasion every Israelite must leave his place of dwelling, his farm, his flocks, his place of business--and assemble together in the streets of Jerusalem or along the highways, and dwell for seven days in the humble little booths which they were to construct with branches and willows and boughs of trees. They all had one common purpose in mind, to keep the Feast of the Lord in its season, and to celebrate the ingathering of their wines and oils. And if some would fear lest the enemy would attack their homes during their absence and take away their property, God promised that obedience to this ritual would be their safeguard. "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." (Ex. 34:24).

If the saints of God could only see the glory of the Feast of Tabernacles which even now looms before us, they could not possibly be in doubt or fear concerning their little fenced plots of sectarianism and division; and they would joyfully assemble together in the streets of Jerusalem and keep this glorious Feast. Let us be assured of this, our only safeguard rests in obedience to the Lord and a willingness to follow in the path which He shall choose for us. And if God reveals, as He does in this present hour, that the Body of Christ is being firmly knit together by the Spirit to form a vital, living organism, operating in the power of the Holy Spirit--then obedience to that revelation is all that matters. God will look after our property; our pet doctrines, our theories, our little churches, our opinions, our ambitions, and so forth. If any of these are of God, He will preserve them for us; if not, then who is concerned about maintaining them?

What then is involved in the revelation of the Body of Christ? Briefly and simply it is this: that henceforth we must learn to minister and function as members of that Body, and not as members of a sect or a denomination. In other words, we must recognize that the Body of Christ is a spiritual organism, whose Head is in Heaven, and whose very life and being is in the Holy Spirit Himself. If any individual or group of individuals is unwilling to recognize the Holy Spirit as the life of the Body, and His ministries as the faculties of the Body, then a "sect" is born. The word "sect" from the original Greek means 'opinion', 'sentiment', 'party'. Therefore it is quite

possible to have non-sectarian sects, as well as sectarian sects. That is to say, it is not necessary to belong to a religious system in order to be a "sect." There are many sects who loudly denounce the whole ecclesiastical system--but they themselves are the most sectarian of any. To be a member of a "sect" all one has to do is to refuse to recognize the ministries which God is raising up and setting in their place in the Body of Christ. To be non-sectarian it is not sufficient to withdraw from the maze of religious schemes abroad in the world today; but we must become a vital member in the Body of Christ, functioning according to the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the place and ministry which God has ordained for us in the Body.

IS THIS UNITY POSSIBLE?

It is amazing how unbelieving a believer can become. One might as well call Christ a liar, and his apostles false witnesses of God, as to deny that God is going to have a Body functioning in absolute unity of the Spirit, with each member in his proper place, and all members working together as one harmonious whole. Here again, there is only one reason why "believers" refuse to believe it, and it is because we have never seen it either in our own experience or in the history of the Church, and it is scarcely visible in the days of the early apostolic Church. When will the saints of God realize that the sins of Israel are recorded in the Word "to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted" (1Cor. 10:6). The story of strife and division and corruption that is recorded in God's Word concerning God's people is for one purpose, namely, that we should not follow in their pathway of disobedience. And the Church's long and bitter history of disunity and strife does not prove that God's Word means disunity when it speaks of unity. If God said it, it is going to come to pass; and if Jesus prayed for it, not all the devices of Satan can prevent the glorious fulfillment of that prayer of faith.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST

Let us examine briefly John 17, where we have the request of the Son of God for this vital union among the saints:

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are..."

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Surely this marvelous prayer needs little comment. The unity for which Christ prayed, and which the Father is duty-bound to create, is going to be fulfilled. It is a unity both inexpressible and exquisite: "Even as we are one..." As surely as the Father tabernacles in the Son, speaking through Him, thinking through Him, walking in Him, working with Him...so shall it be in the Sons of God. They shall have "the mind of Christ," and therefore they shall be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1Cor. 1:10; 2:16). The many members shall function as the members of the human body, in unity and harmony of purpose (1Cor. 12:13,14). They shall "be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). They shall have the mind in them "which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Unthinkable! Yes, but God is able to do exceeding and abundantly above all that we can ask or think!

THE MEANS TO THIS END

It is because such a measure of unity and harmony is so positively beyond us, and almost inconceivable, that men refuse to believe it is possible. And of course, it is impossible. But with God "all things are possible." Let us not limit the Holy One of Israel. For God has established a sure and a certain means by which this

inexpressible unity is going to be brought into being, even the ministries of "apostles, ...prophets, ...evangelists, ...pastors, ...teachers." These are given, we are told, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry,..." Step by step the work is brought to pass: the ministries perfect the saints, and they in turn are empowered "for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Thank God the hour is at hand when this glorious unity for which Christ prayed, and for which He ascended on high and bestowed gifts unto men, is about to be manifested. Ministries are being raised up and established in the Body of Christ--and these constitute Christ's love-gift to the Church for their perfection. Will they bring this unity to pass? To doubt it is to doubt God's Word. It is not a case of rejecting man, because of his faults and failures; but to reject the God-ordained ministry is to reject God who gave him. Many would much rather prefer to perfect themselves through prayer, fasting, reading the Word, and so forth. These, of course, all have their place, and will do much to prepare the heart and soul. But in themselves they will not produce this perfection. God has ordained ministries in the Body by which this perfection shall come to pass. To refuse the ministries, then, is to say to Christ: "I don't need your Ascension Gifts. I prefer to be perfected some other way."

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CHRIST'S MINISTERS?

The sincere saints of God are being subjected to a great test; of that there is no question. For they are being called upon to receive God's ministers on the one hand, and to refuse the false minister on the other hand. And in this great hour when God is establishing His ministries in the Body of Christ, Satan is likewise sending forth His ministers of light; and we must learn to discern the true from the false. Truly the saints are like the multitudes over whom Christ yearned in the days of His earthly ministry--for He beheld them as sheep having no shepherd. Yes, there were Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, men who loved to wear the garb of religion, and say long prayers, and receive greetings in the marketplace, and to be called "Father," and receive the applause of men. But there were no true shepherds. Even Paul in his day was forced to testify: "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2:21). It is therefore with the greatest concern and tenderness that the Holy Spirit doth now raise up true ministers in the Body of Christ to establish the saints, and to lead them in the path of righteousness. And though it might be difficult for us to discern the true from the false, if we will pay good heed to God's Word, and the pattern of the true minister as outlined therein, we shall not go astray. Here are a few ways and means by which we shall be able to discern the true from the false:

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL LOVE THE FLOCK

The good shepherd, Jesus tells us, will be prepared to lay down his life for the sheep. (Jn. 10:11). In this hour of comparative security and ease, there are thousands of hirelings ruling over the sheep. But let persecution come our way, or let some difficulty arise in the assembly that is apt to prove dangerous to the minister,--and the hireling will flee because he is a hireling and careth not for the sheep. But the true shepherd will lay down his life for the sheep.

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL NOT BE COVETOUS

The size of the congregation, the amount of money one is to receive, the kind of place a man will have to live in--these will not matter to the true minister. He will as readily preach to the ones and the twos, as to the hundreds and thousands. And if necessary, he will work with his own hands to sustain himself, rather than burden the flock. Paul said, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound..." (Phil. 4:12). Very few "know how to abound." Riches have deceived many and ruined their ministry. The true minister, as a pattern of the flock, must know how to suffer hardship in times of difficulty, and to use the world without "abusing it" in times of plenty.

THE TRUE MINISTER WILL SHOW THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." We must admit there is a woeful lack of the real fruit of the Spirit everywhere; but it is beginning, nevertheless, to become manifest in those who are going on with God. And this fruit shall be the final test: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (fulness), meekness, temperance (self-control)..." (Gal. 5:22,23).

THE TRUE MINISTER SHALL NOT SEEK HIS OWN GLORY

"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true..." (Jn. 7:18). It is usually not difficult to discern whether the minister is taking the glory unto himself, or ascribing all the glory unto Christ. The true minister will exalt Christ, and Christ only; and not merely with lipservice, but from the heart.

THE TRUE MINISTER SHALL DISCERN THE BODY

He shall recognize the ministries which God is beginning, and will continue, to establish in the Church. God is going to vindicate his true ministers so that there will be no confusion in the minds of those who are really seeking to follow the Lord. The ministries will be contested, as with any ministry God ever established in Old Testament or New. They contested the authority of Moses, of Aaron, of Elijah, of Elisha, of David, of Solomon, of Jeremiah, of all the prophets, and of Christ Himself. But God vindicated them all in one way or another--and in such a manner that the people feared God, knowing that of a truth they were His chosen. The ministries will not be established by self-appointment, nor by human-appointment, but by Divine Appointment; their word shall be with power and authority, and not as the Scribes; and the servants of Christ shall recognize and acknowledge them.

CHAPTER 9

TABERNACLES--THE FEAST OF JOY

"And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates" (Deut. 16:14).

Israel continued to live in peace and prosperity as long as they obeyed God and walked in His ways. But with disobedience came drought and famine and depression--and the Feast of Tabernacles ceased to have any real meaning to them. It is just as true with the Church of Christ. And though the Church as a Body has never really observed this Feast, there were nevertheless periods in her early history when she had a foretaste and an earnest of its glory. Our testimony is therefore that of Joel:

"The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted; the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men" (Joel 1:10-12).

The new wine, the corn, the oil, the wheat, the barley, the palm, the apple: all these speak of the abundance of spiritual blessings and the joy which they impart to the saints. And because of the spiritual drought in the Church: "Joy is withered away..."

THE BLIGHT OF BABYLON

This hilarity of our modern churches is not the joy of the Holy Ghost. In most cases it is the song of Babylon. In other words, it is an attempt of the enemy to lull the saints to sleep and to cause them to forget their heritage in the Spirit. By Babylon we mean what it meant to Israel; bondage in a strange land. When Israel walked in disobedience they lost their glory, their beautiful temple, their place of worship, their prominence as a nation and kingdom. And when the Church of Christ walked in disobedience, she too lost her glory, her beautiful temple was destroyed, and from her lofty position as a "holy nation" and a "royal priesthood" she degenerated into a nation of slaves and bondservants. Her people were taken captive at the hands of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--and her joy departed.

And so the Babylonians came to the children of Israel in their captivity, and said unto them, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." Perhaps many of them consented. The Church, likewise, has been too willing to accommodate the world in this manner, and to partake of her false joy. But the godly remnant in Israel refused to do so, because they knew they had nothing to sing about. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion..." How could they rejoice as they contemplated the desolation of their beautiful temple and city? "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" was their reply. (See Ps. 137).

We ought to have been mourning and howling for the desolations wrought in the Church, instead of trying to generate a false joy in our midst. And yet this continues unto this very hour: the world is invited to come and hear "one of the songs of Zion." You may read in the advertisements in the "church" section of the newspapers about good orchestras... lively singing... so-and-so will play the sleighbells, or anything else that might produce a tune. Why not? they would argue. Get the sinners out to "church" and then preach the Gospel to them. But "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Far better that the Church should mourn and howl before God, and her priests be clothed in sackcloth and sit in ashes.

Israel did not have one percent of the glory that the Church had in the beginning, and yet her people expressed far more sorrow and repentance in their desolation than we have in ours. "The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground. Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?" (Lam. 2:10-12).

Where is corn and wine? Where is purity of thought and conduct? Where is holiness of life, and separation from the world and its charms? Where is victory over sinful habits, freedom from covetousness, from lying and falsehood, from malice and bitterness? Where is the desire to pray and seek God? To intercede on behalf of others? To deliver those who are held captive by Satan, and set the oppressed free? Where is the mind of Christ, the life that is hid with Christ in God? Where is corn and wine?

But Babylon has been good to us; so good, in fact, that we are one with them, participating in her pleasures, her politics, her wars, her earthly programs, her strife, and her religious systems. Consequently, as it was with Israel, so it is with the Church; as the cry goes forth in this hour for separation from the world and its systems, there is dismay. God says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Babylon means "Confusion." It speaks of this whole world-system, political as well as religious. But we have been utterly deceived by her veneer and her charm, not realizing that "her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:5). In her there is no good thing. Satan is "prince of the power of the air," and "god of this world,"--and the whole world-system is anti-God and anti-Christ. Her doom is sealed. "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit..." (Rev. 18:2). "The abundance of her delicacies" have deceived all nations,

including the majority of God's people. "She hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously," and all nations of the earth have "committed fornication and lived deliciously with her" (Rev. 18:9). Has the Church of Jesus Christ not followed hand in hand with the course of this world for centuries, befriended her in all her devilish programs, and lived as her captive slaves? "Ye adulterers and adulteresses," says the apostle James, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (Jas. 4:4).

But what else could we do? We were captives in a strange land, with no power to deliver ourselves. However, the cry goes forth, "Escape from Babylon..." Let the Church arise from the dust and shake herself, and return unto her land and Temple, even "Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." And God will abundantly pardon, and give grace to re-establish the praise, the worship, in the Temple of the once-glorious Church.

THE LORD TURNETH OUR CAPTIVITY

With the turning of the captivity of the Church, joy is once again being restored, even the joy of the Holy Ghost. Songs of Zion can be heard once again in the congregation of the saints, and the Choir of Praise has been restored to the Church. Singing in the Spirit is one sure evidence that Zion's captivity is coming to an end. Says Paul, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). Surely it is significant that Psalm 126 has now been restored by the Spirit, music included:

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,

We were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter,

And our tongue with singing:

Then said they among the heathen,

The Lord hath done great things for them.

The Lord hath done great things for us;

Whereof we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O Lord,

As the streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,

Shall doubtless come again,

Shall doubtless come again,

Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,

Bringing his sheaves with him."

This, then, is a time for rejoicing. "Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (Isa. 65:18,19). A faithful remnant are returning from the captivity to raise again the walls of Jerusalem and restore the gates of Zion. And God is in the midst of her to bless and to impart the joy of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 10

TABERNACLES--THE FEAST OF INGATHERING

"And the Feast of Ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field" (Ex. 23:16).

If the Passover was wonderful--and it certainly was--how much more wonderful shall we expect Pentecost to be in its fullness? And if Pentecost is wonderful, how much more shall we expect Tabernacles to exceed it in glory? In the Passover we have but the Sheaf of Firstfruits by way of harvest, and not the harvest itself. But Pentecost was the harvest. And what a tremendous harvest there was! And so now the Feast of Ingathering must far surpass Pentecost, even as Pentecost surpassed the harvest of the Sheaf of Firstfruits.

A GREAT ECLIPSE

The Cross and Pentecost--this was but the dawning of the great Day of the Church. That Day has already extended some nineteen hundred years and more, and the sun rises higher and higher and higher in the heavens of God's eternal purpose. We are not inferring that the glory of the Sun continued to grow more brilliant as it rose in the sky. It should have done so, but through the disobedience of the reapers the sun was darkened, and the moon (even the Church) did not give her light. The history of the Church is a history of darkness and sorrow and bitterness. What happened? Did the Sun of Righteousness set in the heavens, and was the Church swallowed up in defeat? Ah no! It was not the setting of the Sun, but it was a great eclipse that caused the darkness, even the eclipse of the Dark Ages.

First there was the eclipse of the moon, the Church. In her circuit about the heavens she was caught in the shadow of the earth, and the corruption of the earth transformed her beautiful glow into blood and sorrow. And then there was the eclipse of the Sun. The apostate Church in her circuit obscured the glory of the Sun, so that earth-dwellers witnessed the eclipse of Truth himself. Truth perished from the earth; and joy withered away from the sons of men. Hence the Dark Ages! A few godly saints were left, for God has always had His believing remnant; and how they must have thought the Sun had set forever upon the once-glorious Church! But no! It was just an eclipse, and in due course--according to Divine pattern, the moon began once again to take on her celestial glow, and the Sun began to shine brilliantly in the heavens of the Church Age. The Reformation had started. Light began to dawn upon the darkened understandings of men, and truth began to be restored to the Church. And the Reformation has not ended by any means. Indeed, it too seems to have gone into partial eclipse. But rays of promise are again breaking forth from the heavens. "The darkness is passing away, and the true light now shineth" (1Jn. 2:8, Literal).

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Song 6:10). She is the group known as the overcomers. She is the "undefiled," "the choice one of her that bare her." As we mentioned before, there are many, many groups in the Church, according to God's plan and purpose; and we are not attempting to make any particular distinction between them. "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one" (Song 6:9).

There is a place for all God's people in His great House; but shall we not seek after that intimate place of fellowship and communion with Him in the very "secret place of the Most High?" Says Paul, "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor..." All the saints have a place in God's Church; but one company receiveth the highest prize. The challenge is therefore thrown out to the saints everywhere, to rid themselves of the corrupting influences of the flesh and of the natural, and to diligently seek the things of the Spirit of God. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2Tim. 2:20,21).

THE CHURCH, THE GARDEN OF GOD

Jesus testified, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth (pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn. 15:1,2). The Church, the Garden of God! Surely this truth alone is sufficient to establish the fact that the Church's day must end in great fertility and unparalleled prosperity. If we constitute God's Garden, then nothing shall prevent the great Husbandman from bringing His heritage to abundance and fruition. It is His responsibility to look after it, and to see that it brings forth a harvest for His glory. "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa. 51:3).

God always brings light out of darkness, life out of death, joy out of sorrow, strength out of weakness, and fruition out of barrenness. We can rejoice, therefore, as we see the desolation of Zion, knowing that her "desert" shall become like the very Garden of the Lord. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing..." (Isa. 35:1,2).

WINDS OF JUDGMENT AND BLESSING

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed...Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices there of may flow out" (Song 4:12,16). Both winds are necessary for God's Garden: the blighting cold wind of the north to test and try the saints; and the warm breezes from the south, to bring forth the fragrance of the Spirit. We can be thankful, then, that in all the strife and bitterness of the Church's history, God's sovereign purposes have been fulfilled. For God has reserved the time of the "south wind" until now. "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth" (Song 2:11,12).

THE LATTER RAIN

We are looking forward with anticipation for the coming of the promised "latter rain." The saints of God are thirsting for these living streams from heaven. But how little do we realize that God is more anxious for the "latter rain" than we are! And why? Because He is the Gardener; and He is waiting for the Feast of Ingathering, when He might gather in the precious produce. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he (it) receive the early and latter rain" (Jas. 5:7). God is waiting for the hour when He shall bestow His latter rain, just as anxiously--and even more patiently--than we are. James says, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord," for in a very real sense the coming of the latter rain is the coming of the Lord into the midst of His people. That is exactly what the prophet Hosea declared: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hos. 6:3). The time is at hand when we may with all confidence expect the latter rain, for this is the last day, and God's triumphant Church

must be a glorious Church. However, it is not only the latter rain for which we are looking, but the latter and former rain! What does this mean?

JOEL'S PROPHECY

Let us refer to Joel's prophecy concerning the former and the latter rain. This refers to the seed rain and the harvest rain. God promised that His people should have both in due season as they walked in His ways: "The first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil" (Deut. 11:14). This is what James was referring to, and it is that which Joel prophesied about:

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil" (Joel 2:23,24).

Of course, this passage did have a partial fulfillment at Pentecost, inasmuch as Peter declared: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel..." and we have already pointed out that Pentecost is a harvest of Firstfruits. The fullness of the harvest, however, is the Feast of Ingathering in the seventh month, when the wine and the oil were gathered in. You see, Israel observed two different calendars: they had the Sacred Year which began with the Passover in April, commemorating their departure from the land of Egypt, and their beginning as a redeemed nation. But they also had what has been termed a Civil Year, or an Agricultural Year, which began in October. This, then, was the first month of the Civil Year, but at the same time it was the seventh month of the Sacred Year--the month of the Feast of Tabernacles.

What Joel prophesied then, was this: "Be glad then, ye children, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately,..." Dispensationally this was Pentecost, when God first poured out His Spirit in copious showers of the former rain. Peter therefore could testify: "This is that..." But it was only part of what Joel had prophesied, for he continued: "And he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain, in the first month." The period from October to April was the rainy season. Then followed the long summer months when no rains were to be expected. The October and early November rains were called the former or the seed rains--the rains which prepared the ground for the seed; then the rainy season ended with the latter rains of April, or the harvest rains--that which caused the grain to ripen; preparatory for the harvest.

Joel's prophecy, therefore, speaks of Pentecost--but it goes on to embrace the fullness of Pentecost, even the Feast of Tabernacles. God did give the former rain moderately--in the Pentecostal Age extending from the early Church until now. But here is something very unusual. Right here in the "first month" of the Agricultural Year (the seventh month of the Sacred year) God has promised to do something most unusual; for He would give, not only the former rain which belongs to that month, but He would give the former rain and the latter rain combined!

Can we not see from this what God has promised His people in this great hour? Not only the fullness of a great and glorious harvest, as in Pentecost. And not only the wonderful harvest of Tabernacles, the Feast of Ingathering. But all the glory and power of the early Church combined with all the glory and power which rightfully belongs to the triumphant Church of the last days! All her former glory combined with all her latter glory! Truly we cannot begin to imagine the great and tremendous things which God hath prepared for them that love Him! "And he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain, in the first month,"--Or, "in the beginning of the season." It is the promise, not only of the early and latter rain in the hour of the Feast of Tabernacles (the "first month" of the Civil Year, but the seventh of the Sacred Year)--but it is also a promise of the great day of harvest. "And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil" (Joel 2:24). The normal procedure is: the early and the latter rain, then the harvest which culminates at Pentecost, then the long summer months of dry weather, and then the final ingathering at the

year's end. And that indeed is the way it has happened dispensationally in the Church: the former rain at Pentecost, but only moderately-- producing only a moderate harvest, and followed by a great period of drought for century upon century. Now the Lord will do a quick work in the earth. This is the focal hour of Church history. Now we shall have not only the great and mighty harvest of the seventh month, the Feast of Ingathering, but the former and the latter rain combined! A veritable deluge of rain from the gates of Heaven! No wonder the prophet prophesied, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former..."

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

"And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil." Or, literally, "New wine and oil," beautiful symbols of the fruit of the Spirit in the saints. Said Paul, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). And the oil, as we know, is a symbol of the anointing. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you..." (1Jn. 2:27).

This great ingathering is the harvest for which the husbandman has been waiting ever since the foundation of the Church. Gifts of the Spirit are really no evidence of spiritual attainment; God bestoweth His gifts freely by His grace upon whomsoever He will. But with fruit it is entirely different. Fruit must grow; and God has never intended that the Body of Christ should ever bring forth fruit except through a continual Divine growth in the Spirit of God. The Ascension gifts that we mentioned are for the purpose of adding growth to God's Garden, that we "may grow up into Him" (Eph. 4:15). God will not come to us looking for gifts, but for fruits of the Spirit. He gave us His gifts freely by His grace, and all we had to do was to receive them and use them. What God wants now is fruit, because that is something which He can receive from you. That is something which must grow upon you by your patient and continual walk with God and your appropriation of His Spirit. Until now the Husbandman has come into His garden, pruning, cultivating, watering--without expecting anything in return. But now the harvest time is approaching, and soon He shall visit His garden for one purpose and for one purpose only: seeking for fruit, and trusting that His tender care over the vine has produced genuine fruit of the Spirit.

Let us never forget that the fruits of the Spirit, and not the gifts of the Spirit, constitute the real test of spiritual life; for the latter are given to produce the former, and it is the fruit that is the embodiment and expression of Christ-likeness within the heart and soul. That is why Paul exhorted, "Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts..." (1Cor. 14:1). Gifts are absolutely necessary, for they are the means to the end; but Love is the end, the consummation, the fruit for which God is waiting. Love is the Ultimate, because "God is Love," and it is His purpose to conform the saints even unto "the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Love is the End: but it is an End which knows no beginning or ending, for it is God himself; and when we become thoroughly united with Him we are in a realm which is eternally progressive.

O what a grand and glorious day awaits the Church in the Feast of Ingathering! The Day of the fruit of the Spirit! Because we do not have the fruit of the Spirit in any degree of fullness, we cannot appreciate its glory. Before the gifts of the Spirit were restored to the Church we had a faint conception of what they would be like, but what a revelation it is as we see them gradually unfolding before our eyes! So with the fruit of the Spirit. We know what they are: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22). But we shall never appreciate any measure of their real glory until the fruit of the Spirit becomes visibly manifest in the saints of God.

CHAPTER 11

TABERNACLES--THE FEAST OF REST

"Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath" (Lev. 23:39).

THE SABBATH FEAST

All the Feasts of the Lord were observed in connection with sabbath days, for they were a time when Israel (in type) must cease from their own works, and rest in the work of Christ. However, the Feast of Tabernacles is the real Feast of Rest, of which the others were but the earnest and foretaste. In the first place it was in the seventh month, even as God "rested on the seventh day from all his work." The first day of the Feast was the fifteenth, and it was observed for seven days. The last day of the Feast was therefore the twenty-first day of the seventh month, twenty-one being a triple of seven--Rest in the absolute sense, God's Rest which "remaineth" for the people of God. Then the next day was likewise a sabbath (the eighth day of the Feast); and though it was connected in some measure with the Feast, it was not one of the seven days of their festivities. The eighth day would speak, no doubt, of the completion of God's purposes in the Church, and the beginning of a new day.

O child of God, if we only had eyes to see and ears to hear what the Spirit would say unto the churches. God has "unspeakable" things that He would like to declare unto us by the Spirit, but we cannot receive them now. "Unspeakable," because there is no earthly language by which He could describe them to us, and therefore we would have to be caught away in the Spirit like the apostle Paul in order to receive them. The plans and purposes of God for the Church are far, infinitely far, beyond our highest imaginations. "That in the ages to come," said Paul, "He might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). How we need "the spirit of wisdom and revelation" and to have the eyes of our understanding "enlightened" that in some small measure at least we may be able to grasp and understand the secret--which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

THERE REMAINETH A REST

It is noteworthy that as we begin to read the ordinances of the Feasts in Leviticus 23, God reminds the saints of the sabbath--the weekly sabbath--"Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation" (Lev. 23:3). Then immediately He begins to give the order of the Feast, and the sevenfold events involved in the Feasts:

1. The Passover.
2. The Unleavened Bread.
3. The Sheaf of Firstfruits.
4. The Feast of Pentecost.
5. The Blowing of Trumpets.
6. The Day of Atonement.
7. The Feast of Tabernacles.

And so, just as the weekly sabbath was the end of Israel's week of toil and labor--so the Feast of Tabernacles is the end of the Church's week of strife and turmoil: the Feast of all Feasts, the Sabbath of all Sabbaths. The

natural, weekly "sabbath" means nothing now, because the Substance has been revealed. "There remaineth therefore a rest (A Sabbath) to the people of God"(Heb. 4:9).

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

Again, we feel we should exhort the saints concerning the rich heritage that is theirs in the Word of God. So many have denied themselves the joy and glory of the Word because of the myth that has been raised around Paul's advice to Timothy, when he exhorted this young minister to "rightly divide" the Word of truth. It is commonly taught that Paul was exhorting Timothy to draw a line of demarcation between various dispensations, and not to confuse one with the other. In other words, according to this teaching, the Old Testament is practically all for Israel, and must not be applied to the Church.

In the first place, when Paul gave this exhortation to Timothy, he was not urging him to take a course in theology; but what he said was "study." In other words, "give diligence...", as he said in other place, "Study to be quiet..." Let that be your desire and ambition. And if you want to know what Paul meant by "rightly dividing the Word of truth," all one has to do is to examine his own epistles and see how he applied the Old Testament. Over and over and over again he takes an Old Testament scripture completely out of its "context" as men would say, and applies it to some glorious Church truth which he is expounding.

We could give many, many examples of this. For instance we read much of the blessing of the nations through Abraham; and until this day Bible expositors will insist that this must apply only to the blessing of natural nations through natural Israel. And yet Paul does not hesitate to quote directly from the book of Genesis, and apply these Scriptures to this Gospel Day, and to the Gentiles who are to be justified by faith in Christ. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3; 18:18). Again, men will insist that the seed of Abraham is natural Israel, and that the promises are for them; whereas Paul tells us, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Then again, Isaiah 54, speaking of the fruitfulness of Zion, must only apply to natural Israel; but Paul quotes the first verse and applies it to men of faith, Jew or Gentile: "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not..." (Gal. 4:27). And then we have Isaiah 52, speaking of the glory of Jerusalem: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; but on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city..." That means Israel and not the Church, we are told. Strange is it not, that four of the New Testament writers apparently didn't know this, and actually made as many as twelve references to it, or quotations from it.

"There remaineth therefore a rest (A Sabbath) to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9). We could go through the Old Testament and cite many examples of God's rest, and show how they typify this heritage of the saints in the Spirit which God has prepared for this hour. But space would not permit a detailed study of them all. We could mention the seventh day of God's creative work, when He rested from all His work which He had made, and show how this rest was but a type and shadow of this glorious rest of the believer--the one who ceases from his own works and rests in the finished work of Christ. We could mention Noah, whose name signifies "repose" and show how the dove which he sent forth from the ark found no "resting-place" for the sole of her foot; and how God smelled an "odour of rest" when Noah offered up the sacrifice on the top of the mountain. We could mention Ruth, and Boaz her kinsman-redeemer who would not "be in rest" until he had completed the transaction and redeemed Ruth, that she might become his bride. We could deal at length with the ark of the covenant, and show how it typified the presence of God and the Holy Spirit, and how God would direct it on ahead of the children of Israel in the wilderness journeyings, searching out a "resting-place" for the people of God. We could mention how David prepared a place for the ark when his kingdom was established, and pitched for it a tent--and how they invited the God of glory to come into their midst. And then later, how the temple succeeded the tent of David, and how Solomon prayed on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles: "Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy saints rejoice in

goodness" (2Chron. 6:41). In fact, from Genesis to Revelation we would discover how God has not only ordained rest for the people of God, but how He has called us to precede from rest to rest, from glory unto glory, even unto the very fullness of rest itself.

THE UNEXPLORED REALMS OF THE SPIRIT

Man's chief difficulty seems to be simply this: in his limited and finite understanding he does not have the vision of greater and vaster and higher and deeper and broader expanses of God's Truth. He has failed to see that God is both infinite and eternal, and therefore in finding God one must be prepared to go ever onward and upward into the vast expanses of the Spirit of God. If God is infinite, there is no limit to the experience which we might have in union with Him by the Spirit. And if God is eternal, there is no end to the measure of Truth into which He would lead us by the Spirit. When Columbus began his explorations, it was not sufficient that they should have begun his explorations, it was not sufficient that they should have taken ship and sailed for a day or two. True, they were in the ocean the day they started. But the ocean was vast--and they must sail on, and on, and on, and on,....even to the shores of America. Nor is it sufficient that a man should drill miles into the earth and discover oil, and then promptly shout, "We've found oil," and proceed to cap its flow. It must flow, and flow, and flow, and flow...if mankind is to be profited from it.

Now God has invited us to become partakers of His Holy Spirit, and that simply means He has invited us to explore the eternal recesses of the deep things of God and infinite heights of His glory. For the Spirit of God is given to us for that very purpose: "That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God..." We cannot know these things in the natural; hence the Spirit of God is imparted to search out and explore "all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1Cor. 2:10,12). But those depths of God are unsearchable, for God is both infinite and eternal. It is not very clear, therefore, that it is going to take all eternity for us to fully explore the immensities of the Divine attributes? "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!

THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE

We are not suggesting that God has not done much for us in the past; but we are confident of this: anything we have had in the past by way of experience has been but the foretaste and the earnest of what God would now lead us into by the Spirit. The solemn exhortations of Hebrews 4 are therefore most applicable to us in this great day of opportunity. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached (Or, the word of the report) did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 4:1,2). The reference, of course, is to the first generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt, and crossed over the Red Sea and came into the wilderness. It did not take them long to reach the door-step of their inheritance--it was just eleven days journey from Horeb to Kadeshbarnea, the doorway of Canaan. And when they got there Moses sent forth spies to spy out the land and search out the riches of their inheritance. Twelve spies went forth into the land and explored it for forty days. As to its wealth and fruitfulness there was absolutely no question. They knew the people would not believe what they found, so they cut down a branch of grapes in the valley of Eschol, and carried it between two upon a staff; and they also brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. "Surely," they testified, "It floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." And they showed them what they had found. (See. Num. 13:17-33).

Now, who would suggest that the spies had taken the land just because they had explored it for forty days, and brought back a little fruit to Kadeshbarnea? And that is just exactly the position the Church of Jesus Christ is in today. We are still in the wilderness. It is true that God has given us of His Spirit; but only as a "foretaste;" only as the means by which we might search out the depths of God, even as the spies explored the land of Canaan. God has even given us a little taste of the realm of the Spirit; for in bestowing upon us the Holy Spirit we

receive "the earnest of our inheritance," or the "firstfruits of the Spirit" (Eph. 1:14; Rom. 8:23). Moses is careful to inform us: "Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes" (Num. 13:20). Wonderful, indeed, is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Wonderful foretaste and earnest of our heritage in Christ Jesus! We have actually made a little raid into Canaan, and have come back with the fruit of the land. And if the first ripe grapes and the figs and the pomegranates are good--what must it be like to literally live in Canaan, to drink refreshing waters from wells which we have not digged, to eat the fruit of vineyards and olive trees which we planted not, and to inhabit houses which we built not. That is the rest that remaineth for the people of God. It is entering into a place that has already been prepared for us by the Spirit. It is the fullness, of which the Pentecostal blessing is but the firstfruits. It is the laying hold of that for which Christ hath laid hold on us, apprehending by the Spirit that for which Christ hath apprehended us. (Phil. 3:12). It is entering into, and appropriating, this resurrection-life by the Spirit.

ISRAEL'S MISTAKE IS THE CHURCH'S MISTAKE

Israel's mistake consisted in disobedience and fear, and hence in unbelief. Had they believed in their God, they could not have feared the enemy and their strongholds. Let us notice these facts about Israel:

They searched out the land for forty days; they knew it was a good land, a land that flowed with milk and honey; they knew that God told them to go in and possess it; but they refused to obey God on the basis that they did not have the power and the authority to take it. It is not difficult for us to draw an exact parallel between this generation of Israel and the generation of the Church in which we live. For some years now God has enabled the saints to reach out by the Spirit and explore the realms of their heritage. The restoration of Pentecost at the beginning of the century opened up a new life in the Spirit, and thousands upon thousands of saints were forced out of the old religious systems because they grew discontented with the manna and the wilderness life and wanted more from God. God was very gracious and gave the grapes of Eschol and the figs and pomegranates--glorious provisions of His Spirit, to all who hungered and thirsted for the things of God. They have proved by experience that it is a good land, and one that floweth with milk and honey. They know, too, that God has commanded them to go in and possess the land. But sad to say, this same generation has refused to believe that they could take it, and God has allowed them to perish in the wilderness like their predecessors in Israel. Israel searched out the land for forty days; and so God said, according to the number of days, a day for a year, would they wander in the wilderness until they were consumed. Likewise has it happened in the Church. For well over forty years this latter day generation of Spirit-filled people have wandered in the wilderness, hundreds of thousands have gone back to the old denominational systems because their blessing did not last--(and how could it last? God just intended that it should be a foretaste), and by and large the whole movement is worse off than before, and has less success in the way of evangelism than many of our fundamental evangelical movements. We are not speaking of any particular sect, but of the whole movement of Spirit-filled people during the last forty or fifty years.

Of course God will bless them; for it is His responsibility to look after them as long as they are in the wilderness. There was daily manna for Israel throughout the whole wilderness journey; there was water out of the flinty rock to quench their thirst; God preserved the very clothes on their back and the shoes on their feet; protected them from the enemy; healed them of their diseases or afflictions when they cried unto Him; and bore them on eagle's wings throughout that long and arduous and bitter journey in the wilderness. But the fact remains, the generation that refused to take the land died in the wilderness.

How gracious and wise is our God in all His ways! Little did the children of Israel realize that in all they were doing, they were really fulfilling an eternal purpose for the instruction of the Church. These things happened unto them "for ensamples" of us. By their fall, and by their sin, and by their disobedience, God was trying to teach us the path of righteousness and faith and victory. Thank God for the type. It gives us great boldness to enter into the new and living way which God hath now opened up for us through the veil. The wilderness

experience has been bitter for those who have hungered and thirsted for God. But God has had a sovereign purpose in it all, that his hungering saints might now be prepared to enter into the land of rest. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no" (Deut. 8:2).

A NEW GENERATION ARISES

The old generation who disbelieved God perished in the wilderness. But God sustained the new generation for forty years, humbled them, proved them, and prepared them for the conquest of Canaan. And so it is that a new generation under new leadership arises out of the wilderness of modern evangelical circles, to succeed a dying generation. "Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them..." (Josh. 1:1,2). Moses must give way to Joshua. The Law must give way to Grace; and Grace must be swallowed up in the Kingdom. Joshua is the Hebrew word for Jesus. It signifies "Jah Saves." His generation is to be a conquering, a delivering generation. The former generation said it was all right to go in and spy out the land--no doubt they enjoyed the grapes and the figs and the pomegranates immensely--but they did not want to go in and possess the land. It is all right, they would tell us today, to speak in tongues, or receive gifts of the Spirit, or heal the sick, or perhaps raise the dead occasionally, or prophesy, or sing in the Spirit--these things are all right. But they do not want to hear any of this talk about Christ appearing in the saints, and "being formed within you." And as for the "manifestation of the Sons of God," that is definitely not for our day and age. True, they will admit, God has it for us; it is part of our heritage; but not for now. That will take place at the rapture, or the resurrection. We cannot possess the land; there are too many obstacles. There are cities with high walls surrounding them, wooded mountains infested with giants, fearful enemies using iron chariots. It is positively ridiculous to suggest that we can take the land. It is all right to be filled with the Spirit, and enjoy the blessing of the Spirit occasionally; but it is impossible to really enter into the realm of the Spirit to such an extent that you live there constantly. You can take some grapes from the valley of Eschol, but you must not attempt to dwell in Eschol. You can receive an anointing on your mind, and receive thoughts from God that are holy, and speak His words occasionally; but you cannot have the "mind of Christ" in any degree of fullness so that you can actually think His thoughts, and say His words, and perform His works, and live His very own life. It is all right to be healed, but not to enjoy real Divine health or Divine life to such an extent that your days will be lengthened excessively, without pain or feebleness or the abatement of your natural faculties. It is all right to get free from this habit or that, or conquer your temper, but not to be so positively free from the sin nature that "sin hath no more dominion" over you. That would be perfection, and you cannot have perfection until you get to Heaven. It is all right to talk in tongues in a language that no man understandeth, but not to go out to the nations speaking their language, with their accent, and understanding exactly what you say, and what they say. It is all right if you preach the Gospel with signs and wonders, and see certain miracles performed occasionally; but we cannot be caught away in the Spirit like Philip or Elijah in this day of modern travel. It is all right to fight Satan here on the earth and cast out a few devils, but you cannot ascend up in the Spirit into "the heavenlies" and literally topple Satan from his throne, and enter into the realm of power and authority "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." We don't mind tasting the grapes of Eschol, and the figs and pomegranates which the spies have brought back, but we refuse to make any attempt at conquering the whole land!

Perhaps many would not like to admit it, but this is just about the sum and substance of all the turmoil that rages everywhere concerning these great truths. The whole question resolves itself into this: Are we going to remain in the condition of those who have been saved and baptized with the Holy Spirit? Or are we going to arise from the dusty sands of this great and terrible wilderness and follow our Joshua across the Jordan into real, triumphant, overcoming power in the Spirit of God?

Thank God there ariseth a new generation that has caught the vision. A few Calebs and Joshuas have survived the blight and the dearth of the wilderness, and are leading the saints in the power of the Spirit into realms of glorious victory. For God has promised the land is ours if we can only hear His voice and voice and obey: "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 4:7). There is only one real enemy, and that is Fear. But God has promised: "Be strong and of a good courage...I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee..."

WHAT ARE THE LIMITATIONS?

What then? Are there no limitations to the measure of power which the saints may appropriate? Yes, indeed; but they are the limitations that they themselves erect in unbelief. With God all things are possible; we know that is true. But Jesus adds, "All things are possible to him that believeth." When a certain man brought his lunatic son to Christ, and the son wallowed on the ground in torment, the father said to the Lord in anguish of soul, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." But Jesus turned the whole responsibility back upon the father, and said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk. 9:22,23). The if-thou-canst is a condition which must be directed at your faith and mine; it is not a question as to God's ability or His willingness to do the things of which we speak. But the glory of it all is this: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And therefore if we, in this the greatest hour of Church history, will but hear the Word of God--that is, give it a place in our heart and life, then faith will spring up, overcoming faith, faith that will enable us to take possession of our heritage in Christ Jesus.

The extent to which we might reach out in the Spirit, and the limitations of our heritage, are very clearly taught in the Word. God said to Joshua, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you, as I said unto Moses" (Josh. 1:3). It is not a case of "How much will God give," for He has already given us "All things,"--even accounting to us a heritage with Christ "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Henceforth the question remains, "How much can I appropriate?" God says, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you..." And lest there are some fearful saints, who think the measure of our heritage must be confined within certain limits, then God tells us exactly what those limitations are:

"...And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places..."(Eph. 1:19,20). There is the measure of the power that is available to the saints! Not the power that Moses exercised in Egypt, or at the Red Sea; not the power that Elijah had when he locked the heavens for three and a half years, and then opened them again; or when he called fire down from heaven; or opened the Jordan river that he might pass over; not the power that Elisha exercised when he caused the iron to swim, the waters to be healed, the hungry to be fed, the dead to be raised; not the power that David had over wild beasts, to slay the lion and the bear single-handed; and not even the power that Christ exercised in His earthly ministry when He healed the sick, cast out devils, walked on the sea, called the dead back--even from corruption. But even the "working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places..." And still we could go on--for Paul continues to enlarge upon the immensity of this power which Christ has, and which is ours: power and authority over all principalities and powers, both in this world and the next, power to put all things "under his feet," even His Church, for He is the Head, and we are the Body.

O the immensity of these words! And what is more, Christ is going to remain right where He is at God's right hand until there shall arise a group of overcomers who shall conquer over all God's enemies. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1). And yet the majority of Christians are looking for a rapture any moment, when Christ is supposed to catch away a miserable, defeated, disease-ridden Church. God says Christ is going to stay right where He is until all His enemies are under His feet. And His enemies include the "last enemy," which is Death. There must arise a

group of overcomers who shall conquer and become absolutely victorious over all the opposing forces of the world, the flesh, and the Devil--before this dispensation draws to a close.

HE BROUGHT US OUT, TO BRING US IN

"And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in..." (Deut. 6:23). God's purpose in delivering us from our sins and from wrath is that He should bring us into our heritage in Christ. The one is not complete without the other. He died that we might be delivered from death and live in the realm of the more abundant life. We thank God for what He has done for us in virtue of His Cross: nailed our sins to the tree; delivered us from sin's wrath and punishment; accounted to us a perfect righteousness, and made us to be the very righteousness of God in Christ. Such is justification: that blessed and happy state of the man who believes in Christ, whereby God's own life and righteousness is placed to his account. In consequence, therefore, of this blessed condition, the believer in Christ has a standing in Grace, before God and all the celestial hosts, as one who has never sinned; and he is held to be as righteous as God Himself is righteous. All this is very wonderful.

One question remains: Is this righteousness and life to avail us anything now, or are we to wait till death or resurrection in order to appropriate it? Says Paul, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..." What a blessed condition! But can we appropriate it? Let Paul continue: "...By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1,2). Access into our standing! Is that not what it says? That is possessing our possessions; and that is exactly what God expects us to do. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon shall be yours. God wants us to receive that Divine ennoblement whereby we shall be "able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:18,19).

JONATHAN'S HONEY SHOWER

There was a time during the reign of Saul, when the Philistines were massed in great strength against Israel, that Jonathan, Saul's son, was impressed to make a single-handed raid against the enemy. So he and his armour-bearer went over to the Philistines' garrison, climbed up the sharp rocks which were in the passes, and contacted the enemy. He did not tell his father anything about it, because he knew what would happen. Just imagine what a stupid idea he had! He and his armour-bearer going over to fight a whole garrison of the Philistines--when the whole army of Israel was in utter fear, having scarcely a weapon in the whole nation because of the terrible servitude to which they had been subjected. But Jonathan knew what faith could do. "It may be that the Lord will work for us," he said. "For there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." (1Sam. 14:6). And so Saul tarried at home under the pomegranate tree, and Ichabod's nephew was wearing the ephod. He was Saul's priest. What a picture of a powerless, defeated Church, resting at ease and self-complacency, with a priesthood that is devoid of the glory, and their people in complete bondage and servitude to the enemy. They even had to go down to the Philistines to get their axe or sickle sharpened, for there was no smith in Israel. Complete dependence upon the world and its systems!

But Jonathan's faith led him into a great place of victory and fruitfulness. All he did was to start chasing the enemy, and his armour-bearer followed. One by one the enemy fell before Jonathan, and the armour-bearer did the slaying. Thank God for the Holy Spirit who stands by our side, confirming every Word of God with the sharp Sword of His mouth. Then a great fear gripped the Philistines, and there was a trembling in the host and amongst all the people, and the earth quaked. And Saul looked on in amazement, for the Philistines were melting away. There seemed to be no reason for all this: so he numbered the host to see if any were missing. Sure enough, Jonathan and his armour-bearer were not there.

First of all, of course, Saul had to know whether this thing was of God or not. If it wasn't then he would not have anything to do with it. So he called forth the ark of God and Ichabod's nephew to see if they could help him. While they argued, the Philistines continued to melt away in utter confusion, even beating down one another. Finally he could stand it no longer, and he ordered the priest to withdraw his hand. He saw that he was going to miss out on the victory if he did not get into the battle at once. So he mustered his men and started the pursuit. There was the shout of victory; the Philistines were in utter confusion; and every man's sword was against his fellow's. Whenever there is a shout of victory there are a lot of people who will join the battle. They may not know what is going on, and how the move of the Spirit started, and the purpose of it all--but there is a shout of victory, and that is about all that matters. And so Saul wanted everything God had for him, and joined the battle. It was a great victory; and of course Saul was king, so it was his victory. He was right there in the thick of battle.

The strange part of the whole thing is this, that the whole purpose and plan of God for this day and hour is completely lost and obscured amidst the shout of victory, and most of the saints do not know what it is all about. They can see healings, miracles, prophecy, laying on of hands for the bestowal of gifts, singing in the Spirit...and so forth; and they do not understand that it is God in mercy preparing His people to enter into the very heritage of Canaan. They do not realize that this is but the foretaste and earnest of their heritage, and that God would now lead them in to possess the land. And so King Saul--for he was king, and this was his battle, and his victory--he charged the people with a strange oath, forbidding them to eat any food until he was avenged of his enemies. (Just that very morning he was resting under a pomegranate tree with no thought of pursuing the enemy at all. But he must maintain his kingdom and show his authority and keep the people under his rule and sway.)

The battle continued with ever-increasing momentum, the people pursuing the enemy, and the backslidden Hebrews coming out of their hiding places and joining the battle along with their comrades. But it was a hard struggle, and the people became faint as the battle wore on. How hungry they were! But they could taste nothing, because Saul had charged the people with a strange oath. This was no time to eat; this was a day of battle. This is no time to talk about Divine life, and freedom from sin and the carnal nature, and appropriation of resurrection blessings; those things belong to the rapture!

And so they fought; and as they pursued the enemy they came into a wood. The trees were literally flowing with honey, but they could not touch it. A curse was pronounced upon any man who would taste any food until victory was complete. Is it not strange how men in high places are constantly charging the people with strange oaths as to what they shall accept and what they shall not accept? And the people are hungry for the heritage of Canaan, but they fear the oath. Saul has made the decree, and that is enough. "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening." This is the hour of the Church's struggle, we are told, and it is no time to be talking about our heavenly heritage and trying to enter into it.

But like Jonathan there are some that "heard not" when this curse was laid upon the people. And like Jonathan they have discovered that the fruit of Canaan is to be their strength and sustenance even while they fight the Devil, and not after they go to Heaven. In fact, it is part of the spoils of victory; it is right in our pathway as we pursue the enemy and throw his ranks into utter confusion. And so Jonathan simply put forth his rod and took a little honey (for the trees "dropped" or literally "flowed" with honey), and put the honey to his mouth, and "his eyes were enlightened." Just as simple as that! The people argued with him that he was doing wrong, because the king had said so. They themselves were really hungry for the same thing, but that did not matter either. If the king said so, that was enough. Jonathan was under the curse.

God's people everywhere should know this; and all our religious leaders should know it; that if the saints are barred from their heritage in Christ and forbidden to eat of the good things of Father's table, sooner or later they are going to eat of the flesh-pots of the world. The people, we are told, became so ravenously hungry that they

"flew upon the spoil." They took sheep and oxen and calves and slew them, and ate the flesh with the blood. This was a great sin, so far as Israel was concerned, for it was contrary to Mosaic law. But the truth of the matter is this: if we do not go on to appropriate and enjoy the honey of Canaan, sooner or later we will return to the ways of the flesh. After all, why should Jonathan not have partaken of the honey of the land? It was in Canaan, was it not? And had God not given Israel the whole land of Canaan for their heritage, even the land that floweth with milk and honey?

There is a Jonathan group in the Church that has believed their God, and they are determined to pursue Satan and his hosts unto the end. Perhaps they are no match for mighty Lucifer and his hosts, but they are not trusting in their own natural weapons; they are not relying upon their wisdom, their knowledge, their theology. Their trust is in God alone. For them God will cause the earth to quake, the evil hosts to tremble, and confusion to grip their ranks. It really doesn't matter what our resources are in the natural. In the wisdom of God, Satan and his hosts are going to become such fools that they will flee in utter confusion and will even destroy each other. If men will believe their God, God will send a great trembling into the ranks of the enemy; and then the victory is ours. Furthermore, these men know that their victory was through faith, and not by the arm of flesh. And therefore they do not hesitate to stop and taste "a little honey" along the way, while others labour feverishly in the power of the flesh to defeat the enemy before sundown. Certainly the need is great; Jonathan knows all about that. But he knows also that God gave him the victory through quietness and confidence and through much waiting on God. And he can afford, therefore, to withdraw from the hustle and bustle of Saul's battle, and take time off to enjoy some of the spoils of victory.

For many years the saints have been singing about what they are going to do after the battle is over. They are going to be with Christ, in Heaven, enjoying the peace and rest of the lands of their inheritance. They are going to drink at the eternal fountains, and eat of the tree of life. But the fact of the matter is simply this: the fruits of victory are to be appropriated here and now while the battle rages. The woods are literally "flowing" with honey; and you don't have to go out of your way to find it either; it is right in your very pathway as you pursue the enemy.

But what about the curse? Well, God must have turned the curse into a blessing, as He is accustomed to do on behalf of those who love Him. It never did Jonathan any harm. Saul even insisted on killing him, because-- according to all the signs, Jonathan was to blame for the Lord's displeasure in Israel. Prayers were not answered any more. Saul inquired of God concerning a matter, and God refused to hear him. So he cast lots to see who was at fault, and Jonathan was taken. We may be sure that when Saul takes the pathway of disobedience, and walks in his own way, he is left open to great deception. Those who have refused to go on with God in the pathway which He has chosen, and choose the way of the flesh rather than the heritage of the Spirit, they will receive many sure signs and tokens to prove that Jonathan is in the wrong. Once a man enters the path of disobedience, and closes the door to revealed truth, he has thrown himself open to greater deception; and the most conclusive signs and evidences that he receives will be utterly false and unreliable.

Here is Jonathan's simple explanation of his "sin": "I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die." At best all the saints have yet done in their attempt to appropriate the heritage of Canaan, is to "taste" a little honey. But the whole land is before us. May God help us to press in by the Spirit and possess our possessions even now in the day of battle. By His grace we are well able to overcome.