

*Δεφινιτε Σιγν Ποστοσ Οφ Τηε Ενδ*  
Gene Hawkins

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” Daniel 8:23-25

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” II Thess. 2:3,4

The above portions of scripture prophesy the exact same conditions that will prevail in the end time. Daniel tells us plainly that “in the latter time,” the transgressors will “come to the full.” Paul informs us that there shall be a falling away, wherein the man of sin is revealed as he sets forth himself to be worshipped in the temple of God. Daniel also calls this act an “overspreading of abominations.” Dan. 9:27.

Both these citations attest to the overall climate of sin and unrestrained ungodliness that will exist in the latter days. The great difference is that Daniel 8 shows the revelation of the false prophet, while Paul’s words are a direct prophecy of the antichrist. Neither of these ungodly Satanic foes have been revealed at this present time, but the conditions so prevalent in our day, surely announce the arrival of both. The major tool used by the false prophet is that of “craft,” that is deceit, fraud, treachery, and all these terms describe the religiousness of our day.

We could easily exhaust the pages of this entire magazine with news items flashed across T.V. screens, in this country and around the world, announcing the reprehensible

behavior of sinful man. Newspapers and magazines are also filled with stories of high profile Hollywood celebrities being arrested for spousal abuse, while others boast of illegitimate pregnancies. Other reports include children being kidnapped, raped, and murdered. Drug related crimes have become nothing short of hideous, and life in many cases deemed worthless and expendable. We read, see, and hear, further, of politicians and well-known athletes being caught in rather complicated and on-going sex scandals. Often great sums of money change hands in an endeavor to cover up such blatant transgressions. Still others are “excused” because “what they do in their own personal lives is deemed “irrelevant to public service.” Same sex relationships and marriages are also prevalent in our day, as men do their best to make “legal and righteous” what God declared long ago to be an abomination. Add to that recent and numerous headlines revealing that armed forces officials are being hard pressed to deal with the very explosive issue of gays in the military. “The transgressors” coming “to the full,” in basically every sector of life, are even now coming into full bloom.

One condition that prevailed in the days of the Judges, gives us tremendous insight as to why this end time transgression continues unabated, for we read twice, that “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Jud.17:6, 21:25. Godly preachers of former generations have used these words to describe the environments of their own times. They are however, more applicable today than ever before, as men try desperately to completely ignore the tenets of Scripture and establish righteousness according to the standards of men.

The great tragedy of our day is that so much of The Church has followed exactly this same path. Many Christians have apparently adopted the standards of the world and see nothing wrong with premarital sex, because “we are going to get married anyway. Others are proponents of simply “living together” to see if “we are compatible.” Rejoicing in children born out of wedlock has become absolutely right and proper, and “perhaps we will get married at a later date,” but there is no remorse for sinful conduct and no mention of repentance, or

any acknowledgment of fornication or wrongdoing. Some true believers even excuse gay or lesbian conduct as simply being “a sexual preference,” which should be no one else’s concern.

Worship in The Church has also adopted the philosophy: “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Rather than being a place of edification and glorifying The Lord, many Churches have become establishments of performance and entertainment. Highly respected Christian author and speaker, Chuck Swindoll, made the assessment some weeks ago on his radio broadcast, that “audiences, have replaced congregations,” in the Church, meaning that Christians now gather to be entertained, rather than to be edified and built up in God’s Word. Many who have read these pages know that we have been very critical of so-called Christian Rock Music, for though it may have certain scriptural lyrics, the hypnotic beat in The Church is absolutely no different than that which is experienced in the most ungodly of rock concerts held in the world, and it produces the exact same effect on the body and emotions as mere entertainment. Such music has the power to stir an audience into frenzy, be it Christian or secular. This is a part of the Satanic “craft” or fraud being promoted in The Church today.

The leader of a certain “praise and worship” team declared on a recent telecast, “we can worship God any way we please.” This too falls into the same deceptive vein of “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Jesus emphatically told us that “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24 That does not sound like we can worship Him any way WE please. We have often emphasized that depth of worship is directly dependent upon depth of truth. Worship in spirit means that we must worship as energized by The Holy Spirit, and John 16:14 plainly asserts “He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” Note again the reference to “truth” as He “shall receive of mine (truth of God’s Word) “and shew it unto you.” We glorify Jesus in direct proportion to that which is shown to us.

Sadly, as we have oft reported, music has replaced the deep ministry of God’s Word in The Church today, and it is

deemed to be that which is right in the eyes of men.

Both the world and the Church are in dire straits today and neither of them seems to know it. Political leaders are determined to “right the ship” and bring about peace and utopia for the entire world. Likewise there are many in the Church today proclaiming a message of “world wide revival.” We wonder how men can ignore Paul’s declaration in our opening text which prophecies plainly that these last days will bring “a falling away” rather than a revival. Many other scriptures portray the exact same scenario, such as; “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;..” (II Tim. 4:3) or “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” II Tim. 3:1 Paul continues in this chapter with the fact that “.... evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” V. 13 This is none other than the deceit that will come to full fruition at the hands of the false prophet. Let us be warned that this day of deception, has already begun and rather than diminishing, it will grossly increase.

We can in no wise allow ourselves to be duped into the thought patterns described above, be they political or religious. Neither can we become very passive and develop the attitude “whatever will be will be,” thus ignoring the signs of Jesus coming. The Apostle Peter gives us valuable exhortation in regard to these very momentous days in the third chapter of his first epistle to Jewish believers. “Knowing this first that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” I Pet. 3:3,4 These “scoffers” are not all unbelievers, and those walking after their own lusts are the same as those “doing that which is right in their own eyes.” Peter continues this chapter, describing the horrendous destruction that is coming on this world which is “.....reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” V. 7 This full devastation will not occur until well into the seven years of tribulation, but as we have seen repeatedly, such days have already begun. Peter

agrees perfectly with the apostle Paul that "...the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night...." V. 10 He then gives to us this valuable admonition as to how we must conduct our lives at this present hour. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,....." V. 11,12 Contrary to what many proclaim today, neither an army of godly prayer warriors, nor a drove of the most skilled politicians, will save this planet from the promised destruction. Thus Peter focuses our attention on our own personal lives as he declares "what manner of persons ye ought to be...?" We cannot become complacent in our thinking or actions, and just fold our tents surrendering to the inevitable. "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God," means that our very lives must revolve around the coming of Jesus. Our energies are not to be spent trying to evangelize the world, a ministry God has reserved for Israel during the millennium, but rather to conduct ourselves as though Jesus were coming at this very hour. When we have that attitude, all our actions and desires will literally be motivated by that very momentous event. This, in no wise, means that we are oblivious to the spiritual needs of those around us. Jude also beautifully describes "what manner" of men we ought to be and how we are to "occupy till I come," (Luke 19:13) in these same last days. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, (I choose to dwell in the atmosphere of Divine Love rather than the pit of men's philosophy and ill will) looking for the mercy (literally immersed in the complete realm of Divine Grace) of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some (individuals rather than the whole world) have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. (men obsessed with their own lusts) V. 21-23 Such a "manner" will ensure that we are in no wise lazy, complacent or oblivious, to these days when "the transgressors are come to the full." Our lives are rather "on fire" with the passionate desire just to see Him Whom we love.

# THE FALLING AWAY

A.S. COPLEY

*"LET NO MAN BEGUILE YOU IN ANY WISE: FOR IT WILL NOT BE, EXCEPT THE FALLING AWAY COME FIRST, AND THE MAN OF SIN BE REVEALED, THE SON OF PERDITION" -*

II Thessalonians 2:3 Revised Version

The time that the apostle intimated in these words is certainly upon us. The apostasy of the last days is near. We will consider several citations leading up to our text.

1. THE WORDS OF JESUS, "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away: - Luke 8:13. This describes the second of the four kinds of hearers in our Lord's first parable. Some folk give mental assent to the truth. They believe it to be the truth, and enjoy hearing it; but they are not saved. Elsewhere we read that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness" - not simply with the head. Some people fall away from superficial joy and interest when temptation arises. Perhaps they never get saved. Now here is a remarkable fact. The same Greek word in this parable translated "fall away" is what Paul uses in our text. There have been many apostasies, or many have fallen away: but my text speaks expressly of a time termed "the falling away."

2. "FALLEN FROM GRACE." "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" - Gal. 5:4. The Galatian saints had not ceased to be religious. Paul did not condemn their walk, but their attitude of heart to the Truth. Being misled by false teachers, they put themselves out of the sphere of grace and under the dominion of the Mosaic law and ritual. They became circumcised, observing a religious rite that had ended with the death of Christ - Col. 2:11. Circumcision was required of Abraham - not as a means of justification, but as a sign and seal that he was already justified by faith - Romans 4:10,11. They also observed days, as means of perfecting their salvation. All that was equivalent to saying that Christ had not come and died for their sins, or that His sacrificial death was insufficient; hence, they had to add their own fleshly works to His great work of redemption.

Many people have a twisted understanding about falling from grace. They think if a man beats up his wife in a frenzy, or goes on a drunk, or commits adultery, he is fallen from grace. Oh, no, that is not the meaning at all. Of all men, such a one needs the grace of God. He has fallen from his own steadfastness. He has failed of the grace of God, and a root of bitterness has sprung up. Some folk raise a loud cry against adultery and drunkenness; but they are only two of the dark catalogue of seventeen "works of the flesh." How about "hatred" and "strife" and "envying and "emulations"? How about lying and gossip and exaggerations and misrepresentations? Legalists boast of living above some of this catalogue, but are manifestly guilty of others. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" - Gal. 6:14. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" - I Cor. 1:31. So wrote our beloved Brother Paul. Every saint needs the grace of God in order to hold complete victory over all the works of the flesh all the time; and if one fails to appropriate preventative grace, what else can he do but lay hold of pardoning and restoring grace? There is no other way out, no other hope. Thank God, "He giveth more grace," said James. If believers "fail of the grace of God," and thus "fall from their own steadfastness"; if they fall from grace and do not recover from such conditions, they are paving the way for the apostasy or "the falling away," Of course, they themselves who are saved cannot apostatize.

3. FALLEN FROM FIRST LOVE. Consider the deplorable departure of Ephesian believers - Revelation 2:5. The candlestick Examiner, "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" or churches, brings them on the carpet. First of all, He commends them for their "labour" and "patience," discipline and fortitude. They had even tried and condemned apostles. But the keen eyed Judge exclaimed, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." What a severe incrimination. They did not lose their first love. They left it, departed from it, deliberately walked away from it. Exactly what was that "first love"? The Greek word "protos," here rendered "first." means foremost or first in importance or value or place. The same word is translated "chief," in Acts 16:12 - "the chief city"; and in I Timothy 1:15. The word "first" in the next verse should be

“chief,” as in the Revised Version. Paul called himself the chief of sinners in his unsaved state; that is, the first or foremost sinner in point of guilt.

The Church in Ephesus had heard the deepest teaching from Paul. He offered to them the first and highest place in God’s great plan of grace; and evidently they accepted that teaching. They saw the unique privilege of becoming members of the Bride of Christ, and laid hold of it. Study with me Ephesians 5:24-32. Christ will have presented “to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” This cannot refer to the whole Church, or Body of Christ. Adam, to whom the apostle refers, did not marry his entire body but a rib, builded into a woman of whom he said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” - Genesis 2:23. Accordingly, Paul says, “We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” Then he adds these very significant words, “This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and the Church” - Ephesians 5:32 R.V. He had spoken in Ephesians three, of the mystery of the Gentiles having a share in redemption; but here he writes of the greatest mystery of all - a company of people chosen to be the Bride of Christ. A bride possesses bridal love. A bride loves her bridegroom more that she loves all others. She loves him far more than others can love him.

The “first love” of the Ephesian saints was bridal love. It was not simply the love that their salvation brought to them; not the love for Christ because they were justified and had eternal life. It was the superlative love wrought within them by the prospect of being in the Bride of Christ. The Lord saved me when I was fourteen, and made me very happy, I laughed with great joy. But, years passed before I learned of this sublime and supreme truth which thrilled me with glory. Now for years, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” - that is, the climactic glory of knowing Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom - has been a great beacon light and an unceasing and sustaining inspiration to run “for the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” - Phil. 3:14. This foremost, pre-eminent love is what the Ephesians “left.” This means far more to our beloved Lord, than laboring for the salvation of souls, which we are not to neglect nor omit. It means more to Him than being concerned about the conduct of our brethren. Out of

perfect bridal love for Christ flows a fellowship with him in all His marvelous interests; hence, we have a wholesome concern in behalf of other people, saved and unsaved. To do His will is our controlling ambition. Let us not forget that the Lord's loudest eulogy of the Ephesians did not compare with the foremost love from which they had departed. Unless they repented of that departure and returned to the former fervency of devotion, the candlestick would be removed from their midst. Patient toil and firm discipline would not prevent it.

4. THE FALLING AWAY OF THE HEBREWS. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" - Hebrews 6:4-6. This has no reference to the common backsliding of saved people. If it did, they could never be restored from their backslidings. This citation has direct and primary reference to the Jews. They heard the Gospel from Jesus' own lips. They heard it also from the twelve apostles after they were filled with the Holy Spirit and from Stephen. Thus they were enlightened. They tasted of Christ and the Word of God, and partook of the power of the Holy Spirit, and of the age to come; that is, of the Millennial Age. But, they fell away (literally, fell beyond the reach of grace) , from the privileges offered to them. They denied the Deity of Jesus Christ, and refused His sacrificial death. They said that He was not the promised Messiah. They had received the knowledge of the Truth, because it was poured upon them from every side; but they willfully turned away from it. Therefore, they were left without hope; for "there remained no more sacrifice for sins" -Hebrews 10:26-29. They refused the one and only Sacrifice that Infinite Love has provided - the death of Christ for mankind. The Gentiles are doing the very same thing today. This leads us to the next point.

5. DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (that is demons) - I Timothy 4:1. It is a striking fact that the Greek noun "apostasia," rendered "falling away" in our text, is the same as the verb "apostesontai," rendered "shall depart

from” in this citation. The latter is the future tense of the Greek verb: “aphistemi,” which means “to put away, separate, hinder, frustrate, to make revolt.” Hence, the noun means “standing away from, a defection, a revolt, apostasy.” (The critical student will enjoy these Greek cogitations). Thus, the apostle explains that “the falling away” means “a departure from the faith of the Gospel.” Exactly what the Jews did in the beginning of this Church Age, the Gentiles are doing at the end. The Catholics still have “a form of godliness,” and accept the fundamentals in theory; but they apostatized centuries ago. They deny the power and living reality of the Gospel. Most Protestant churches are modernistic, the fundamentalists are fast drifting away from the old-time life and power of the Gospel. They refuse the necessary Pentecostal Gift of the Holy Spirit and the attendant nine gifts. Spiritual power is waning everywhere.

There is a deplorable decline among the Pentecostal people. The simple childlike faith, the whole-hearted surrender, the untiring self-sacrifice, the flaming evangelism in dependence upon God without begging, the mighty precipitations of miraculous power, the absence of “big preachers” - characteristics of years ago - have fled. Big things, great rallies, orchestras, ear-ticklers, immense unpaid tabernacles, radio flatteries and braggadocios, psychological begging and maneuvering, religious machinery galore - anything to get a crowd in order to get a name and the money. We receive letters frequently, complaining of the lack of spiritual food and life and power. They beg us to send someone to preach the Gospel of grace in their midst. The falling away is here. It threatens Pentecostal grace meetings. Satan will cool us off and make us formal, if we let him. Legality will creep in and bind our hands and seal our mouths, if we are not aware. If he cannot make folk worldly, or careless, or lascivious, he will try to make them overmuch pious; and impose upon them restrictions and legislations contrary to the Spirit of grace. Conditions are alarming; but we need not be surprised nor discouraged. We have already seen that it is written, “Some shall depart from the faith.” Rather, we should rejoice that the Lord shows us the facts. In the last days, these things are due to come. “The falling away,” which was prophesied, is here. Therefore, we know that the end of the age is at hand. The coming of Jesus is

imminent. Let us “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” - Romans 5:2.

6. HOW MAY WE NOT FALL AWAY? We find the answer in these verses - “The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever” - Revelation 4:10, 11; 5:8-14. Instead of falling from grace and being again entangled with the yoke of legal bondage, we should fall down before our Maker in adoring worship. Keep formality and legality on the run, by continually magnifying God’s mighty power to save and keep saved; even as He was more than able to make and maintain all things. There will be no falling away from our steadfastness if we give ourselves much to worship the Lord. This is the remedy against failing the grace of God, against any root of bitterness springing up to trouble and defile the saints. Here we read that “the four beasts (the four living ones) and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” - Revelation 5:8-10.

Those living ones and twenty-four elders represent the full overcomers who will, doubtless, constitute the Bride of Christ. John saw them, in his vision, at their chief engagement in Heaven, that is, worshipping God with all their hearts. In the first citation, we see them worshipping God as Creator of all things. They adore Him for His wisdom and power. In the second, they worship the Son of God the Lamb, as the glorious Redeemer. By considering their language, we learn how to worship the Lord; for we expect to be among that

triumphant throng in glory. See also Rev. 11:16,17; 19:4. Not only during the first days after the translation will we worship Jehovah and the Lamb; but also, at the marriage of the Lamb, we will fall down and worship. In fact, the living ones and elders lead out in the worship. Therefore, let us not forget nor neglect this grand privilege. Let us worship God in our closets at home. We must not allow worldly business and carnal pleasures to interfere with this chief business and supreme pleasure. Now is when we qualify for that place and company that John beheld. We dare not even be working always. He wants some of our time for his personal fellowship. If we spend overmuch time in reading and writing, or visiting the sick and scattering tracts, we become dry and joyless. We need to be in the Presence of our coming Bridegroom. Adoring and worshipping Him for his wisdom and might and marvelous grace.

Mark the language recorded - they "fall down before Him." If we do not learn the holy and glorious art, and practice it continually, we too may fall away in some measure. We might leave our first love. What a calamity that would be. Sad but true, that the vast company of believers do not learn to worship God. They are not found much on their knees. They are not acquainted with knee oil. Their joints are poorly lubricated. They may be eloquent preachers, able teachers, or seraphic singers, but shallow worshippers. I believe it is not enough to stand and praise the Lord; but we should actually go down on our faces in melted and broken adoration of our gracious and glorious Lord and Bridegroom. The innumerable company of Revelation seven will stand before the throne with palms in their hands, and praise God for salvation; but the living ones and elders go far beyond that. Five times we read that they "fall down" before the Lord. Shall we not do likewise?

7. JUDE'S BENEDICTION. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" - Jude 24,25.

Hallelujah! The God of all grace is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him. He will keep us from falling from grace. He will keep us from failing of His grace. We need not fall from our steadfastness. Grace abounds to enable us to run with speed and triumph for the glorious Prize

of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He is able to make us overcome the highest mountain of difficulty, and scale the dizzy heights of blood-bought privileges.

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**OUR TIMES ARE IN THY HANDS**

***Our times are in Thy hand;  
Father, we wish them there!  
Our life, our souls, our all we leave  
Entirely to Thy care.***

***Our times are in Thy hand,  
Whatever they may be;  
Pleasing or painful, dark or bright,  
As best may seem to Thee.***

***Our times are in Thy hand;  
Why should we doubt or fear?  
Our Father's hand will never cause  
His child a needless tear.***

***Our times are in Thy hand,  
O Lord, our Advocate!  
Nor is that hand outstretched in vain,  
For us to supplicate.***

***Our times are in Thy hand,  
We'll always trust in Thee,  
Till we have left this weary land,  
And all Thy glory see.***

*--Anon*

\* The words "think" and "thank" come from the same Latin root. If we take the time to think more, we will undoubtedly thank more.

\* Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night. (Pocket sayings)

# *The Sparrow And The Swallow*

Bernard G. Croft

***“As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.” - Proverbs 26:2***

Perhaps you feel, “I was born outside the promise; I am never blessed, in fact I feel cursed.” And this is true, for you were born in sin and shaped in iniquity, and under God’s holy law you stand condemned; cursed you may say, for you have sinned and the soul that sins shall die. And even if you try your best and keep 99% of the law but offend in one part you are guilty of all.

But I’ve got good news for you. If you truly repent and believe with all your heart on Jesus, then you are no longer under law, but under Grace. So the curse has flown away from you, and as far as the East is from the West, that is how far He has taken that condemnation from you. Now, consider another verse --

“Yes the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, my God” - Psalm 84:3. So listen Christian, there is a safe refuge from judgment, a place where you can even raise your young in peace and safety. And it is at His altar, the Cross. How does the Cross make the curse without a cause? BECAUSE all the things written against you were nailed to it. God delivered His own Son to die on His altar for you and me. “Who is he who would condemn us?” Because it is Christ who has died for us, and what’s even greater, He has risen again, and furthermore, right now He sits at God’s right hand making intercession for us, or pleading for us as our advocate.

He sees the sparrow fall, and He also sees when you fall, but He does not cast you off because you fail; He restores you to get up and start again and again. He wants you air borne in this supernatural life in Christ, and not earth bound. And remember, you are of more value than any sparrow - Matthew 10:31.

Lastly, God does not just want you to succeed now, but to be sure of your future, and of His coming judgment. Here’s another Scripture about birds and in which the swallow is

included. "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle dove and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" - Jeremiah 8:7. It is true sometimes that the birds are more aware of God's ways for their lives than many Christians, even today. (The birds follow their instinct of migration to warmer lands in early autumn to avoid a killing winter). Jesus has freed us from the wrath to come upon the world.

Jesus said about the Pharisees, "When it is evening you say: It will be fair weather, for the sky is red. But you cannot discern the signs of the times"- Matthew 16:2-4. But remember you are not like those Jewish leaders. You may be ignorant of many things, but you need not be, for you have been born again into the Kingdom of Light. "Brothers, you are not in darkness, so that that day should overtake you as a thief; you are sons of the light and of the day" - I Thess. 5:4-5. Many signs are happening and increasing in our days that tell us that Jesus is coming soon. But one thing Jesus said has now happened in our time. "Jerusalem will be ruled (trodden down) by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This generation will not pass away until all these things be fulfilled" - Luke 21:24,32.

Soon we will fly away and migrate to a summer land, and even those who have died in faith, will be among that number. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" - I Thessalonians 4:16-18. We are going up higher than the "swallow" and the "sparrow", beyond the clouds, even higher than the eagles, for "we shall mount up with wings as eagles" - Isaiah 40:31. Then even higher, into the very presence of God -- Forever.

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\* In dealing with people, always be prepared to go the extra smile.

\* Take care for your life and the Lord will take care of your death. - Whitfield

## Editorial March 2010

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” Acts 2:1,2

The above is just one example of how the direction of lives can be changed in a mere heartbeat. The 120 gathered there began to experience drastic changes in their lives, as exemplified by Peter. Just a scant 50 days earlier, he had denied that he even knew Jesus, yet after this experience he spoke boldly and forcefully as the Holy Ghost gave him utterance. Likewise the other apostle proclaimed the Name of Jesus despite the persecution that would follow.

Scripture is filled with other examples of those whose paths were changed in a moment of time. Witness the lowly shepherd boys the night the birth of Jesus was announced on the countryside outside Bethlehem. “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Luke 2:13,14. These same shepherds became the first heralds of Jesus’ birth. Saul of Tarsus was forever changed as he journeyed on the road to Damascus, “.... and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Acts 9:3,4 This murderer, this persecutor of the Church, was irrevocably changed in that brief instant. Saul of Tarsus, a man very much a commander, accustomed to issuing severe orders to be obeyed, now asks “...Who art thou, Lord? .....what wilt thou have me to do?” V. 5,6. From that moment, he who had been chosen the chief apostle to the Church, began a journey that would take him through many uncharted waters into experiences of persecution, which he had once inflicted on others. It was however, a journey he would never regret as he learned to glory in those infirmities realizing that they were working for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Job likewise learned by bitter experience how quickly

his “normal” existence could come crashing down around him, when his substance and his children were suddenly taken from him. Three times we read the words “while he (the servant) was yet speaking” another would come with more catastrophic news, and the die for the rest of Job’s life was cast.

Many of God’s people are looking for another “suddenly” as we are promised that “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” I Cor. 15:52 Until then, however, we will most likely witness many other sudden changes in our lives, some perhaps bringing grief, heartache, and often physical pain. Like Job, and Paul, we must take them as experiences for our good as from the Loving Hand of our Father. James describes this same experience, and tells us to “....count it all joy when ye **fall** into divers temptations;...” Jas. 1:2 Such a fall happens, so many times, in a very brief instant, and more often than not, our lives will never be the same.

It is with a mixture of both joy, (for him) and sorrow, (for ourselves) we announce that our beloved Bro. Smith, went home to be with The Lord on February 12, 2010. Though it may not have been altogether unexpected, many lives, including our own, have suddenly been altered, and will now take a different course, as we shoulder responsibilities he had borne heretofore. We are confident that the same God of all grace whom Bro. Smith served, will also prove Himself Faithful in our behalf.

Due to the constraints of time, his “Memorial Issue” will be published next month coinciding with his birthday April 29. GH

#### ANNOUNCEMENT:

Labor Day Fellowship Meeting to be held in Grandview Missouri September 4-6, 2010. This will also be a time wherein we will celebrate 100 years of the continuous ministry of Grace and Glory. Further details will be made available at a later date.

## A Great Mystery!

Ray Quintana

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Rev. 19:7

Do you know what Jesus' Bridegroom name is? It is Lamb. “The marriage of The Lamb is come!” Many other titles could have been ascribed to Him, such as the marriage of the King, Jesus, or Mighty Counselor, but it was the Lamb of God. So also, the Lamb's wife will be Lamb-like. God is preparing a heavenly company that will have the same inward yielding, deep sweetness, and gentleness as the Lord Jesus Himself. Jesus was crucified as the Lamb of God, with the ultimate result being, a preparation for the bride.

God had this in mind from the beginning, as He made Eve to complete and share in the good purpose He had for Adam. This is the Father's will and God's first and highest purpose for marriage.

It is also the Father's will for Christ to have dominion over all creation, visible and invisible, in heaven and earth. Christ will not have dominion alone, but will share His purposes and works with His bride.

Rom. 8:17, promises that if we suffer with Christ, we will be joint heirs with Him, reigning with Him, and sharing His glory. This is the place afforded every child of God, who would accept this place as “the bride, the Lamb's wife.” We must, however, be completely and perfectly involved with all His spiritual desires, if we would occupy this close place with Jesus. Are we willing to satisfy and be satisfied by Jesus Christ?

We must be mindful that Christ does not yet possess a bride. I Cor. 12:27 emphasizes: “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” But we do not read that “the marriage of the Lamb is come,” until Rev. 19. These two figures, the body of Christ and the bride of the Lamb, speak of two different aspects of God's plan for us. I Corinthians 15:45, defines Christ as “the last Adam.” The Church as a whole is the spiritual body of this last Adam. Eph. 1:22-23 declares the

Church is His body. Only Eve, out of all creation, was brought forth from the body of her spouse. This was not done without purpose and thought on God's part. Where will the Lamb's wife come from? As the first Adam's wife came from only a small portion of His body, so the bride will comprise but a rib portion of His mystical body, The Church.

Paul uses natural marriage to portray the spiritual, in the fifth chapter of Ephesians. "As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it;..... that he might present it to himself a **Glorious Church**, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing....." V. 25 -27. Consider this: those presented to Christ are called "**a Glorious Church.**" The original states, "That He might present it **beside Himself the Assembly glorious.**" Paul announces further that; "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." V.32. The way God made Eve would have no particular significance, and the meaning of the bride would be unclear, if the whole Church is to be the bride. The Church as a whole, was espoused to Christ, but only a small portion of it accepts that espousal.

Eph 5:30 declares plainly: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." All who believe on the Lord Jesus during this age are members of His mystical Body, which is called the Church, but Paul indicated in our present chapter, that he was writing in regard to "a great mystery." V.32. "This," (the mystery) is great: but I speak concerning Christ and "the Assembly" glorious" V. 27. We must consider this mystery carefully. The Church is a mystery not a "great mystery," as Paul further explains in Eph 3:1-11, especially v.6. "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel:

The great mystery, beyond this mystery of the Church, is described thus: "For this cause shall a man leave his father (the old Adam) and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." Eph 5:31 Just as Adam slept, so the religious sleepiness or the Laodicean condition grows

more and more over believers today. Many are overcome with the religious drowsiness of the times. "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph 5:14 Many saints are neither hungry for the Truth nor thirsty for the "rivers of living water," of the Holy Spirit, (John 7:38) but the bride, in mystery, is being built.

"They two shall be one flesh;" and this is a completely different body. The two are now one. First, the man and then he becomes one flesh with his wife. As God took a rib out of Adam's body while he slept, so He is separating a company of believers from the Church, the Body of Christ today.

What is Christ's will for the Church today? "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Eph. 5:26. He gave Himself for us, which was a preparation for the bride. No one has been excluded from entering into His will, but not many Christians want to take this path. Are there many Christians, like those at Berea who, when Paul preached things they had never heard, searched the scriptures daily to see if what he said was true? How many are willing to let go of their own ideas when the Word of God teaches differently?

Christ is our Head. Jesus Christ was nailed to a cross, but He was always Jehovah. He is Divine and never will cease to be so. He is our Head or Guide. Your head hears, smells, taste and sees. None of the rest of the body has these qualities. My head guides or directs my body, my hands and feet. So Christ is a Director to every believer. He is also the Head of the whole Body of Christ. He is Head over all things, to the Church. That is why all things can work together for your good.

There are many who are caught up in legality to the point that their Head does not direct them any longer. How is it that we see? It is by faith! Ga 3:12 and the law is not of faith: Ga 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. Would we cut our head off from our body? We do not agree with error and in love we must instruct, but we do not need to apply rules

that we ourselves cannot keep. Why are we going to put this burden, or yoke of legality, on someone which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. Provision is made for all, but a part of the great mystery is that only a few partake of it.

The Corinthians were a large and prosperous Church. Outwardly, they had all the marks of spiritual success, yet Paul was concerned for them. Remember what took place after Satan had beguiled Eve? There was a misinterpreting of God's Word, then doubting, and then disobeying it. "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid from the presence of the Lord God." Gen. 3:8. When Eve was beguiled away from simple trust, her relationship with God was damaged and permanently changed. Paul was concerned that something like this would happen to the Corinthians. His concern was not that they would lose their salvation, for they believed on Jesus Christ and had received the gift of eternal life and nothing can take that away. It is settled forever and if the life God gave, could ever perish, it would not be eternal.

His fear for them concerned their espousal, their engagement to Christ. Marriage arrangements in that day were made through a mediator. Paul told them about Jesus. He showed them His spiritual wealth and eternal glory. He invited them to share it with Him. He had espoused them to Christ. Paul's godly jealousy or zeal was foolish to the Corinthians, if every Christian is guaranteed a place in the called-out group referred to as "the bride." Scripture teaches that Paul's concern was not foolish, we too should be concerned not to be careless with our espousal to Christ, lest we foolishly throw away the very best that God has offered to us.

What does Paul mean by the statement: "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ?" "Simplicity" means "singleness." Eph. 6:5-6; Col.3:22-23. We know that Christ is gracious and will not cast out those who come to Him (John 6:37), but He will not enter into the highest and best spiritual union with those who are not committed to Him alone. The Corinthians, like many Christians today, love the Lord, but they were allowing other persons and things to compete for

their devotion.

Paul's singleness of heart toward Jesus is shown in Phil. 3:7 "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." The Apostle was wholehearted in his relationship with Christ and he made sure that his heart was clear with things which might interfere. Knowing Christ was Paul's desire. Let our hearts be drawn in love to possess such knowledge, as that which will win Christ, even as He has won our hearts. It saddens me to say this truth, but those believers who care little about knowing all they can about Jesus Christ will not win Him, even though they possess the free gift of eternal life which has been fully secured by faith.

This "great mystery" of the bride was not revealed in ages past. It was a revelation given to the chief apostle for this age. Though it was clearly intimated in the Old Testament, it was never explained. Paul, however, beautifully enlightens us in this matter, and issues this glorious assurance. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil 1:6 What is it that we can do? We can know His Word, reckon it so, and yield to His work in us. "For we are his workmanship, (masterpiece) created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph 2:10. Psalm 138:8 promises: "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." His love for you and your love for Him will assure the finishing of the work. As we "let Him" His wife will be made ready. Lord enable us to yield and be made ready for your soon coming!

### ***HIS CLAIM OF LOVE***

**Let heathen rage and stand in unbelief --  
My heart, my thoughts are fixed, O God, on thee!  
Though self or friends or world shall bring me grief,  
The love of Christ alone hath claim on me!**

**Let voices call--not one shall turn my face  
From Him who gave Himself to set me free--  
My ears are deaf to everything but Grace  
That binds my life to God eternally.**

**-- Eltha N. Furman**

# Lessons in HEBREWS Continued

Chapter 12 Concluded

## The Glorious Goal

**“Ye have come to Mount Zion and a city of the living God**, a heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to a universal festive gathering and to an assembly of firstborn ones enrolled in the heavens, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men who have been made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel” - Vs. 22-24, Greek. The Apostle prefaces these statements (Vs. 18-21) by painting a picture of burning, blazing, quaking, thundering Sinai, when the law was given. He thus describes the nature of the law. It is stern, unfeeling, unrelenting, unbending. Law shows no pity, no mercy, does not give another chance. Consider Paul’s words. Israel came that day to **“a mountain that burned with fire and unto blackness and darkness”** - law brings conviction, not light: **“and to a tempest and a trumpet’s sound”** law gives neither peace, nor quiet: **“and to a voice of words**, which they that heard entreated that not a word should be addressed to them; **for they could not bear that which was commanded”** - law is cold, hard, exacting, terrible. **“And if a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with a dart”** even the flesh of innocent animals, being corrupted by the sinfulness of man, cannot come into God’s presence. **“And so fearful was the spectacle, that Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake”** - however safe we are in the folds of grace, the very sight of law produces a feeling of terror.

Law is the fixed and relentless expression of divine justice against sin. Therefore, if Moses, as a mediator, and Aaron, the high priest, as representing the basis of mediation (both figuring Christ), had not stood between God and the sinful people that day, they would all have been slain by that fiery law. But Jesus Christ stood in the breach 1500 years later; for there was another Mount Sinai, if I may so say, called Mount Calvary. The vengeance that quivered and shook, leaped and flashed, surged and rolled, raved and roared, all with holy and just impatience (Ex. 19) - God’s righteous indignation against sin, displayed with such flaming majesty

that day - was wreaked out upon the holy Son of Man on the Cross. There the voice of the law was hushed forever; for the stern demands of divine justice were met once and forever. **“Christ died for the ungodly and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”** Therefore, Paul exclaimed to those Hebrew believers, and of course to us also, “Ye are not come to the mount that burned with fire, etc.” but to the glorious mount of grace.

### **The Text Unfolded**

First, observe the meanings of several names. **Sinai** means, **“my thorns, a bush, a cliff,”** and it was located near a wilderness. There Israel was congregated when the law was given to them. How expressive of religious people. Law-keepers have more, or less of a wilderness experience, rugged, or cliff-like and thorny. They have a bushy, thorny message. If they seem to have victory, it is by force of their own will, and not by resting upon the Arm Omnipotent. **Zion** means, **“a fortress, a projection, a monument.”** Just outside Jerusalem, which is situated upon Mount Zion, Jesus was crucified. Thus Zion, so near the cross, became the mount of grace, a fortress against sin and sickness. From thence is projected the glorious Gospel of grace; and Zion stands as a monument of redemption through grace. Hence, David exclaimed prophetically, “The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion - Psalm 48:2. **Jerusalem** means, **“vision of peace, founded in peace, possession of peace”** and finally, **“double peace shall be taught there.”** Peace is the first conscious result of faith in salvation by grace - **“peace with God.”** We see it; we have it; we enjoy it and it soon flows like a river. War is over; peace is declared. No thorns, no dangerous cliff, because it is all of grace. All of Paul’s epistles save his one are introduced by **“grace and peace.”** Now let us study eight wonderful words in detail. Paul says to Israel, Ye are come to eight prominent objects.

1. **“To a city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.”** From the city on earth, where Christ was crucified, the Apostle flies quickly upward to the **“Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all”** Galatians 4:26. Redemption originated in heaven; and all who believe on Jesus are “born from above.” The earthly city was not to be despised; but Paul would have his kinsfolk know that they are brought to a higher, a greater city than that one, not simply to

the city of David, but to that of the living God, even where His throne is, which through redemption, has become **“a throne of grace”** - Chap. 4:26. When he wrote this epistle, David's city was in bondage; but the heavenly **“Jerusalem is free,”** hence, we are free also, being “free born.” “Sin shall not have dominion over you (neither shall law); for ye are not under law, but under grace” - Romans 6:14. “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee: - Psalm 84:12. The Scriptures speak of three Jerusalems. 1. The heavenly Jerusalem, where God's present throne is, from which all blessings now flow. 2. The earthly Jerusalem, the capital city of God's kingdom over Israel. 3. The “New Jerusalem,” which will be our Lord's headquarters in heaven during the millenium and where the heavenly saints will dwell with Him in glory. Therefore, Paul sought to show to his Hebrew friends, that they were not under law, but under grace, and that they might understand what great privileges and wealth redemption had brought to them as well as to us.

**2. “And to myriads of angels.”** This indicates how near to the inhabitants of heaven we are brought by redemption. Concerning angels, the Apostle asks, “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?” - Ch. 1:14. That is, God causes the angels to guard those whom He knows will believe, even before they do believe. Wondrous grace! This age was introduced by angels. Gabriel announced the advent of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ. And a host of angels gave glory to God at the birth of the latter. During this age, angels continue to serve the saints in various ways. As truly as demon forces are present some times to disturb the gathering together of God's people; just so truly are angels sent to protect and defend His people. Saints are kept from many dangers, pitfalls and sorrows by the intervention of these unseen messengers.

**3. “To a universal festive gathering.”** The phrase in our version, “to the general assembly and church of the firstborn,” is an insufficient translation; for it expresses only part of the truth. Two facts are expressed, differing widely from each other. The Greek word, “panegurei,” translated, “general assembly,” properly means “a gathering of a whole nation, **a high festival, a solemn assembly.**” It is made up of two words - “pas,” meaning all, and “aguris,” meaning a

gathering. The Apostle uses it here to define the nature and glory of the superb meeting to which saints are called under the new covenant. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means a universal banquet, where angels from heaven and redeemed humanity from the earth of every age and nationality meet in a holy and sublime festival. It describes the universal festive character of the Gospel age.

Jesus called it **“a great supper.”** For nearly 2,000 years this Gospel supper has been spread, to which the Lord has been inviting folk from everywhere. In God’s reckoning, heaven and earth are brought nigh, even into His very presence. We are fanned with the wings of angels. We could not know these precious things but for this blessed Word. This is not spiritism; for we have no communication with departed spirits, not with angels. “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” - I John 1:3. This Scripture indicates the high altitude and spiritual atmosphere into which faith in God lifts us because of the amazing provision of grace. God “hath raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” - Eph. 2:6 - a unique provision of grace, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” - Ch. 11:1.

**4. “And to an assembly of firstborn ones enrolled in the heavens.”** This refers to believers of the present church age, or dispensation. Here again is a contrast. “Ephraim is my firstborn” - Jeremiah 31:9. That is, Israel was God’s firstborn enrolled on earth. Comp. Psalm 69:28. But Paul speaks of the firstborn ones registered in heaven. Thank God, our enrollment is in the city from which we were born and to which we are going. These firstborn ones are not yet in heaven with their glorified bodies; though the spirits of some of them are already there - II Corinthians 5:8,9 and Philippians 1:23. Jesus was **“the firstborn from the dead”** - Colossians 1:18 and Revelation 1:5. Doubtless this refers to a special company of believers whom God sees in the same rank with Jesus Christ. They will be the firstborn ones from among the dead, and enjoy the “out resurrection” - Philippians 3:11. If Jesus was the firstborn from the dead, there must be others also born from among the dead. And if some are called **“firstborn ones,”** certainly some others are not firstborn ones; but they will be raised after these are raised. The Holy spirit employs the identical same Greek word “prototokos” in ch. 1:6

as referring to Christ in resurrection - "And when again He bringeth (see margin) **the firstborn** ( 'prototokos') into the habitable world, He says, And let all the angels of God worship Him." But before Christ is thus worshipped, a company of saints will be with Him, in and around His throne, whose resurrection will be counted as in the same order with Him. Therefore, they are termed "**firstborn ones.**" This is solemnly wonderful.

In Revelation 5, we have the positive proof of this interpretation. The angels are silent in heaven until the Lord is on His throne and the full-overcomers are with Him. He is found worthy to open the book of God's final purposes and loosen the seals thereof. The full-overcomers (firstborn ones of our text) will break forth in exultant praise. They sing a new song - Revelation 5:9. Then the angels follow in obedience to Hebrews 1:6, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb, etc." Observe that Paul's Hebrew auditors are not expected to be a part of the "firstborn ones;" but they are come to the great festive banquet in which the "firstborn ones" have such an honored place. He had cited this difference in explaining the tabernacle furniture (chap. 9:1-5); but he passed by "**the cherubims of glory,**" which figure the four living ones and twenty-four elders of Revelation 4 and 5. He could say only, "The cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat, **of which we cannot now speak particularly.**" As long as they did not understand the simpler shadows, they could not understand this one. They who are in any measure under law, or are lawless, or lascivious, will not be among the "firstborn ones." Reader, consider!

**5. "And to God the Judge of all."** Yes, God is present in His own city. He is Judge of all men. He grades His people. His decisions are righteous, according to the deeds done in the body. No one can make-believe himself into the highest rank; and no one need be hindered by another from being in it. Neither does the ignorance, or unbelief of any disprove this precious doctrine. Let us heed our Bridegroom's entreaty. "Hold fast that which thou hast (the vision and faith of an out-translation), that no man take thy crown" - Revelation 3:11. Let us yield to the judgment of God upon the old creation and judge our own flesh continually (I Corinthians 11:27,32), trusting in Christ only and always; then "**the Lord the righteous Judge**" will give us our due portion and place

in "that day."

**6. "And to the spirits of just ones made perfect."**

Old Testament believers are the "just ones." In Habakkuk 2:4 we read that "the just shall live by faith." Peter termed Lot, "Just or righteous Lot," as to his standing. The perfection mentioned here refers to the resurrection. Jesus, referring to His three years ministry, His death and resurrection, said, "**The third day I shall be perfected**" - Luke 13:32. Paul refers to his own resurrection in Philippians 3:12. Hence, "the just ones made perfect" are Old Testament saints who have already received their glorified bodies. No doubt they are those recorded in Matthew 27:52,53, who "**obtained a better resurrection**" - Hebrews 11:35. That was to them an out-resurrection; but the multitudes of Old Testament saints are still in their graves, awaiting the general resurrection of the just - Daniel 12:2.

**7. "And to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant."**

The Hebrew fathers came to Moses; but New Testament Jews came to Jesus. Moses was a prophet and a great leader; but he could not save. He was only a type of Christ - Deut. 18. He was a typical mediator. Jesus only could die for the sins of the people and redeem them. He alone was the true Mediator, and of the better covenant, even the covenant of grace. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" - John 1:17. Israel were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea - I Corinthians 10:1. But we were baptized into Christ - Galatians 3:27.

**8. "And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."** Elder Abel shed the blood of a lamb, which was accepted of God for him, because it pointed to "**the Lamb of God**, slain before the foundation of the world." The blood of Abel's offering had no merit in it. Behold the wisdom given to the Apostle. He points out all the attractive features of the great festive gathering; then names the foundation of it last. Of all the dozen betters in this book, "**the blood of Christ**" is the superlative better. It is the cornerstone of redemption upon which the glorious superstructure of full and eternal salvation is built. Thank God, we have not come to a mountain burning and terrible, but to the unspeakably wonderful mountain of grace, even to the throne of grace. With us is a day of gladness, of feasting, of plenty, a banquet which will never break up.

**“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh,** etc - vs. 25-27. In giving the law, God shook the earth, and showed His wrath against sin. He is about to shake both heaven and earth. He will shake the devil out of heaven; then shake him and his fiendish followers out of the earth into hell and the lake of fire. No one but Christ and His people will remain after he puts down all rule and all power and all authority, and after His Son shall reign for a thousand years. In verses 28 and 29, the Apostle speaks especially to Israel. They had a kingdom, but it was removed because of disobedience and rebellion. When Jesus comes, they will receive the millennial kingdom, which never again can be overthrown or removed. The church will be a part of “a heavenly kingdom,” which also cannot be removed - II Timothy 4:18. Finally, it will be said, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Anointed, and He shall reign forever and forever” - Revelation 11:15.

(To Be Continued)

### **THE EMBROIDERY WORK OF GOD**

My life is but a weaving,  
Between my God and me  
I do not choose the colors,  
He worketh steadily.  
Ofttimes he weaveth sorrow,  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper,  
And I the underside.  
Not 'til the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas  
And explain the reason why.  
The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.  
--Author Unknown

## **A NATION - A BOOK - A MAN**

Edward Drew

These are the world's three phenomena. They cannot be explained on purely natural grounds. Each of the three has a Divine origin, a divine history, and a predicted future. Through this Nation, this Book, and this Man will all the purposes of God be fulfilled. Through them will come the world's reconstruction and peace, and the earth be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 35:2: Habakkuk 2:14.

### **The Nation is Israel**

Through this **Nation**, Divinely chosen, there have been to the work, both the **Book** and the **Man**. Temporarily cast aside by God, It has been kept for two thousand years, a standing miracle. Scattered and peeled, and hated in every land, they live on until God shall gather them again - Romans 11:11-15. They are the only nation with a sure future. Other nations may have a future, Israel must have. They will be gathered by the hand of God from all lands, and their glorious predicted future will come to pass.- Jeremiah 23:7-8: 32:41. It is impossible that God's hand of blessing should be upon the nation's to restore and build up and abolish war, while the chosen instrument to bring these things to pass, the Jew, is kept out of the land. The Jew must be head of the nations - Deuteronomy 28:12-13. The nations will then seek the Lord in Jerusalem, and Israel shall be counted the most glorious among all people - Zechariah 8:22-23.

### **The Book is the Bible**

In it God has spoken. Nowhere else is the pure Word of God found; and neglect of this Book has brought our nation to its present confusion. In it was written beforehand the history of the world for three thousand years, and the course of the nations has run in that mold - Daniel 2. Its pages alone tell us what is yet to come. In the present darkness and confusion it is a Light - II Peter 1:19. This Book has been saved from all its enemies, and God has declared that it is to be preserved from every generation. It is forever settled in heaven - Psalm 119:89, and in a world where change and decay and death reign supreme, it is the only thing that lives - I Peter 1:23.

### **The Man is Christ Jesus**

Lifted up on a Roman cross He became the world's Savior. Pouring out His blood that the world's sin might be

washed away. He has been the hope of the sinner whose stain is scarlet, and the "fountain filled with blood" has cleansed the multitudes of the redeemed who will sing His praise through all eternity. As lifted to a cross, He became a Savior; lifted to the throne of David, He will be the world's King - Luke 1:31-32. While Scripture predicts a glorious time of peace on earth, it also tells us that this time shall not come until He appears to reign. Through this Man will the Book find its fulfillment, and all the plans of God be completed.

So the **Book** testifies that when the **Man** shall appear in His glory, then shall the **Nation** of Israel be built up, and all the nations shall then seek the Lord - Acts 15:13-18, and the earth be filled with His glory. Men shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks and learn the art of war no more - Isaiah 2:4.

Let us believe the Book, pray that the Son of Man come, and Israel again be called of God, "My Glory" - Isaiah 46:13.

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### The Victim

The victim cried, "Lord hear my plea!  
The way they treat me, you must see.  
I've been libeled, slandered; they brought me hurt,  
And my family name, dragged through the dirt.

"The wounds are real, I feel the pain;  
With emotions torn, and my life restrained.  
I need you, Lord, speak to me,  
And from pain and anger set me free."

The victim sought for just a word;  
Then a still small voice came from The Lord.  
"FORGIVE – My child, and freedom reigns,  
As Jesus blood removed your stains."

No greater life a victim lives,  
Than when another's sin forgives;  
An act of love – then joy abounds,  
The victim wears a victor's crown!

David Albrecht



