

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

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

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 225

THE FIRST RESURRECTION (continued)

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and *bound him a thousand years...and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years...this is the first resurrection*” (Rev. 20:4-5).

“*I saw thrones.*” With a single stroke of the pen the apostle John sets before us a contrast which is sharp and strong in the extreme. There is Satan, bound and cast into the noiseless depths of the bottomless pit, shut up and sealed securely for a thousand years — and here are the thrones of those who now sit in judgment! This is not an outward, natural scene, but a glorious spiritual reality. The message is really

quite simple and yet mysteriously profound — when Satan is bound in our lives — *we are reigning!* We have seen previously that the term “a thousand years” is the code-word for the DAY OF THE LORD. Satan is bound in and by the arising of the day of the Lord in our lives. Satan is bound *a thousand years* and the overcomers *live* and *reign* with Christ *a thousand years*. To the degree that Satan is bound, to the same degree the overcomers live and reign! The measure of the one is the measure of the other. These two *one thousand year* terms are like the North and South Poles — the distance of the North Pole from the equator is also the distance of the South Pole from the equator.

A literal interpretation of that time expression would greatly reduce the spiritual meaning, power, and impact of the overcomer’s victory. It is quantity, quality, and degree, and not time, that is signified by the symbolic term of *a thousand years*. Time-wise, a literal thousand years would be a most inadequate measurement of the overcomer’s *life* and *reign* with Christ over Satan, sin, and death. In chapter 22:5 of the Revelation the *length* of their reign is said to be “*for the ages of the ages.*” If *a thousand years* in our text must be taken literally, then they not only cease to *reign* at the end of the thousand years — they also cease to *live!* A thousand years is not a very long time to live in view of the countless ages and eternity that lie before us — I have already lived almost one hundred years in this one very brief life-time! But when we understand that our living and reigning is of the quality and completeness and fullness of the accomplishment of the illumination, power, glory of the day of the Lord in our lives, we can appreciate its blessedness! When Satan is bound within us he is bound or restrained by the authority, power, and victory of the day of Christ within our

lives. Therefore we are reigning for a thousand years — reigning IN THE DAY OF THE LORD! That is the mystery.

“And judgment was given unto them.” This expression is not a common one. John sees thrones and the “souls” sat upon them, and they did what all men do on a throne — they reigned as kings. But here the reigning kings are also *judges!* Ordinarily the offices of kingship, priesthood, and judgeship are three distinct positions executed by different people. But in the kingdom of God, and in the Person of God’s Christ, all three offices are combined into one. Jesus is the “King of kings.” He is also “a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek,” indeed, our High Priest of that order. And He tells us that the Father judges no one, for “all judgment is committed unto the Son.” So our Lord is the King, the Priest, and the Judge! And of the overcomers it is written, “Thou has made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign over the earth.” And now we find them reigning upon thrones and “judgment is given unto them.” Thus, the sons of God are also God’s kings, priests, and judges! There seems to be a direct reference to the words of the prophet Daniel, “But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever...and *judgment was given to the saints of the most High;* and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (Dan. 7:18,22).

The word “judgment” carries negative connotations in most people’s minds only because we have viewed judgment through the law of Moses, we have filtered it through the fleshly judicial systems of natural men, and through the old paradigm of the carnal mind.

Judgment is a wonderful thing when viewed from the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord! To *judge* is to discern, to understand the true nature of a thing, to evaluate, assess, appraise, render a decision, think, conclude, determine, resolve, mediate, or arbitrate. When God raises up judgment in one's life He enables that person by the spirit of wisdom and revelation to *discern* between heavenly thoughts and earthly thoughts, between flesh and spirit, between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness. When you are given *spiritual discernment* then you know what it truly means for *judgment to be given unto you!*

The thing God is after in this hour is the total and complete revelation of Jesus Christ in and through the many-membered Christ of God. God is preparing something to be loosed in the earth that men will be unable to control, manipulate, orchestrate, or in any way usurp and use to their own carnal ends. This isn't about us setting ourselves up as kings and judges in the earth, ruling by fleshly means and methods. Many years ago in the days of the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit that began in 1948, there were in certain places men who rose up in a carnal spirit and put their hand of flesh to the thing God was doing. Great power in signs, wonders, miracles, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost were being manifested through various ministries throughout the land, and some began to prophesy themselves into positions as the "rulers" of particular regions of the earth. Literally they were exalting themselves as the prophetic and spiritual rulers over Tulsa, Oklahoma, Cincinnati, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, or any number of other cities and places. It became almost like a land grab as they competed to see which city or area they would be given spiritual authority and power to reign

over! Looking at the conditions in our country today I would conclude that their “reign” was a colossal failure!

As we approach the hour of the manifestation of the sons of God, the Father has purged all such vain and fleshly imaginations from the minds and hearts of all who have followed on to know the Lord. The carnal movements of “shepherding” and “discipleship” fell into similar delusions, where men felt God had set them up as shepherds and coverings and rulerships over other men’s lives, and it got so carnal and ridiculous that one could not buy a car, get married, have children, get a job, take a vacation, or a hundred other personal decisions apart from the spiritual approval or prophetic word from their “shepherd.” Later the twisted teaching of the “set man” in different cities across the country asserted that God is setting up a certain and specific ministry in each city as *the divine voice and authority* for that city. If God is going to do anything in that city it must come through that “set man.”

While all this is just the same old Babylonish hybrid of flesh and spirit it is actually called “KINGDOM” by many! This is nothing more than an evidence, an open display to us that carnality and flesh are alive and well, still lurking in the hearts of some who profess to be in this word of sonship and the kingdom of God. There is still *ego* and the *desire to rule* over men in a lesser realm than *true* spiritual authority and power! They would make themselves kings and judges before the time and without a perfected soul and the mantle of sonship anointing. The rule of the sons of God is not the rule of dictating to people what car or house they should buy, or any other of the mundane decisions of men’s lives. How that trivializes the kingship of the sons of God! We are not

paying the price and suffering with Christ in the deep dealings, strippings, purgings, and refinings of our Father just to do that kind of petty “reigning.” That’s the lowest form of reigning. The great truth is that this is the type of reigning that the authority of Christ is coming to tear down! It is all wood, hay, and stubble to be consumed by the Holy Ghost fire of God! Those are the heavens that are going to burn up and pass away with a great noise! There is a new heaven and a new earth — a new order of divine government, in the spirit and by the spirit, that shall be established in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost! And it is truly only as our *souls* are “made alive” and our old carnal soulical life is “beheaded” with Christ that we are able to **reign in life** by One, even Jesus Christ!

THE SOULS OF THE BEHEADED

“And I saw the *souls* of them that were *beheaded* for the witness of Jesus...and they *lived* and *reigned* with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4).

This is awesome! After Satan has been bound in the bottomless pit, and the seal is set upon him, then the overcomers appear as “souls” who “live” and “reign” as kings and judges, but — they have been BEHEADED! All the garbage that the church systems have taught are a stench in the nostrils of God, and in my nostrils as well. They tell us that if you miss the “rapture” you can be saved, but you’re going to have to be beheaded. It never ceases to amaze me how shallow and spiritually stupid so-called teachers of the Word can be! In all their carnal-minded literalism they completely miss the truth! You see, if

missing the “rapture” means you must face beheading, and if being beheaded then uniquely qualifies you to sit on the throne and reign with Christ for a thousand years, then being so carnal that you miss the “rapture” actually ends up exalting you to a higher position in the kingdom of Christ than those spiritual saints who were translated! Not very sound reasoning, is it?

Furthermore, it is not losing your physical head that qualifies you to reign — if that were the case, most of the Lord’s people, including many of the Lord’s original apostles, don’t even stand a chance of sitting on the throne! The first physical martyr for Christ was Stephen who was stoned to death, not beheaded. So I guess he can’t reign with Christ! History records that Peter, when he was about to be executed, requested to be crucified up-side-down, not feeling worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. A shame, isn’t it, that he failed to ask to be beheaded — then he, too, could have reigned with Christ! In the early days of the church untold thousands of people gave their lives rather than renounce their faith in Christ, but only a few were beheaded — some were crucified, and many were burned at the stake, while vast numbers were fed to the hungry lions in the arena in Rome. In our day Russia and China, especially, have much blood on their hands from the many thousands of believers martyred under the communist regimes. We would not for one moment depreciate or make light of any of these sacrifices offered up to the Lord in this way. I’m sure that their reward is great! Yet, the truth is that to gain our deliverance from the old Adamic mind and nature, the old man of sin, we have to lose *our head!* We present our bodies a living sacrifice, we make up our spiritual minds that we’re not going to live our life for Self any more, that our Father

shall now live in and through us and that His mind shall be established within us.

In Jesus we see the incarnation of God dwelling in and expressing life through one man. We never knew what it was to be a man before Jesus. But now God still doesn't know what it is to fully express Himself *in me* and *through me*, so I must yield my body as a *living sacrifice*. What is a LIVING SACRIFICE? John tells us plainly, "And I saw the *souls* of them that were *beheaded...*and they *lived* and *reigned...*" Beheaded and living, all at the same time — *that* is a "living sacrifice!" So here I am Father, walk around and live your life in me, do the things you want to do in me, touch the things you want to touch, see the things you want to see, live and experience your life in me and through me. We have to be beheaded, our own mind *cut off*, which means, "...be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the *renewing* of your mind." The *renovation* of your mind, is how the Greek says it. That means your old mind-set, your old way of thinking, your carnal understanding, your own ego and self, the old paradigm has to be removed. We have to stop thinking with Adam's mind, we stop judging by Adam's standards, we stop acting out of Adam's head, we put on the mind of Christ, and begin thinking, judging, and acting out of HIS head! This happens again and again in our experience until Christ is fully formed in us!

Those who reign in life with Christ are those who have been *beheaded* for the witness of Jesus, that is, so they can *be witnesses* of HIM; and those who have gotten the victory over the *beast* of the Adamic nature, and over his *image*— those imaginations and

characteristics raised up in our lives which display the Adamic likeness — and over the carnal *mark* that that nature stamps upon our forehead (mind) and upon our hand (actions). Unfortunately, the Greek word rendered “beheaded” in the King James Bible is not fully understood. It appears nowhere else in the scriptures except here. But one fact stands out plainly: It cannot allude to only those who *physically died* as martyrs. This, too, is a *symbol!* The beloved John who penned these words of inspiration did not himself die a martyr’s death. However John intimately knew Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings and the fact is, he suffered more by living than if he had actually been beheaded! Legend tells us that he was once boiled in oil in an effort to kill him. He was exiled to the isle of Patmos there to die as a slave, where he was given the Revelation. When you read church history you find that a martyr’s grave was very often but a blessed relief from terrible persecution, an easy way out. So martyrdom does not necessarily mean an untimely death.

As I searched the mind of the Spirit about this, it came to me so powerfully. You remember that Jesus said that he who would lose his life for His sake and the gospel’s, would keep it unto life age-enduring. The head of every man, to begin with, is that old Self, the mind and consciousness of Adam, the man of flesh. When I was in school I was taught that self-preservation is the first law of nature. And how we do try to take care of, and preserve, this outer flesh man! We live for him, for his needs, his wants. These are the things most men, and even the vast majority of believers, are concerned about — what Self thinks, wishes, and desires. If we are to truly become manifest sons of God, **this old head, the Adamic mind and consciousness, must be chopped**

off and a new head take his place! That is the mystery. This old Self must be put to death, with his will, desires, concepts, and values, and the mind of Christ have complete Lordship over our beings.

Merely believing on Him does not produce this, it requires complete and absolute surrender and consecration to Jesus Christ, the putting off of the old man, and putting on the new; forsaking the old mind and image of the flesh, and putting on the new mind and nature which, in the image of God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. The Lord Jesus must become the new head if we are to sit upon the throne with Him! That is what it means to be “beheaded” for our testimony and the word of God! But notice, these are *beheaded in soul*. John didn’t see any bodies either possessing heads or not possessing heads. Only *souls!* John the Baptist and others were beheaded physically, but here the beheading takes place in the soul. Literally speaking, the soul does not have a head, but as the seat of man’s personality it embraces our will, intellect, emotions, and desires. To be beheaded in soul is to experience death to the self-life, death to the flesh, death to the world, death to the carnal mind, death to the ego, death to our own way and will, death to the religious spirit — *living the crucified life!* Death to self is imperative upon all who shall have the revelation of Jesus Christ out of their lives!

Those who take up their cross daily and follow Jesus, who lay down all claims to their *own lives*, to know Him in the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, always bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, are those who are “beheaded” for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God! Those

blessed ones **lose their own heads** that they might **put on the mind of Christ**, thus **making the Lord Jesus Christ their Head**. If we have not died to self, my friend, we cannot reign in life with Christ! That is what John saw in vision and that is what John is telling us. And when you begin to live and reign with Him, you live and reign with Christ **IN THE SURPASSING GLORY OF THE DAY OF THE LORD** — the thousand years. This is not the “letter” of the Word that I now share with you, my beloved, but this is the **spiritual meaning of the vision!**

KINGS, JUDGES, AND PRIESTS

“And I saw *thrones*, and they sat upon them, and *judgment was given unto them*...and they shall be *priests* of God and of Christ, and shall *reign* with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4,6).

Many outstanding things are noticeable in this majestic scene of the “living souls” John saw seated upon thrones, but I would now draw your attention again to the *three-fold* nature of their administration. John beheld them endowed with *judgeship*. He pronounces them *kings* and *priests*. They are judges! They are kings! And they are priests! They reign with Christ. It is the “salvation of the soul” or the total transformation of their nature, character, thought processes, desires, ambitions, emotions, and the uniting of their wills with the will and purpose of God that has prepared, equipped, and qualified them for such a calling. These are not mere names or empty titles. No meaningless ceremonials or hollow designations find a place in the kingdom of God. The children of the first resurrection are no sham kings, no mock judges, no pretend priests, but everything which these high titles and offices

imply. They are not co-regents and co-shepherdizers with Christ, without *being* and *doing* what such words import and express. The dignity is transcendently exalted, but it is all very real. As kings they are to do the work of kings by exercising authority and dominion. This they have first done *within themselves* by binding the dragon in the pit. As judges they are to judge and administer judgments. As priests they are moved with compassion, and with mercy and truth reconcile men to God. They not only have the name and place of sovereigns, but they *reign*. The end of their salvation is not to sit on clouds and sing psalms or spend their days dancing merrily over the hillsides of glory. They are redeemed and transformed and made one in Christ for sublime work in the universal kingdom of the Father! Kingdom life is an intensely busy and productive life! And it is powerful on behalf of all humanity!

The scriptures reveal that the church is the body of Christ, and God's blessed Christ must include both the Head and the body. All true saints must be aware of this sacred secret — that the body is the body of ALL THAT THE HEAD IS. If Christ the Head is Saviour, then the body of Christ the Head is the body of the Saviour — a body of SAVIOURS. If Christ the Head is King, it follows that the body of the Head is the body of the King — a body of KINGS. If Christ the Head is the High Priest of the Melchizedekian Order, then we understand that the body is the body of the High Priest — a body of PRIESTS. And armed with the knowledge that Christ the Head is the great and universal Judge, it should be perfectly clear that the body of the Head is the body of the Judge — a body of JUDGES! The purpose of the firstfruits *being judged* is that they in turn may be qualified *to judge*. The judgments of God shall be executed upon the human family and the

ages to come by this glorious CORPORATE CHRIST, Jesus Christ the Head and all the sons and daughters of God, His body, the completeness of *His Throne* which shall smite the dark kingdoms of this world, and the saints shall take the kingdom and reign with Christ in power, authority, glory, and blessing.

God is preparing a mighty *company of judges* whose responsibility it shall be to *judge the world* in righteousness! The prophet Daniel sheds much light upon this subject. “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and *judgment was given to the saints of the most High*; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (Dan. 7:21-22). Again, “And he that overcometh...to him will I give *power over the nations*: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:26-27). The apostle Paul adds, “Do ye not know that the *saints shall judge the world?* and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that *we shall judge angels?* how much more things that pertain to this life” (I Cor. 6:2-3). Jesus spoke of this same beautiful truth when He said to His disciples, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations (testings). And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and *sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel*” (Lk. 22:28-30).

Most of the Christian world is waiting for Jesus to come at “any minute” and bring judgment upon the earth. In the greater light of present truth we now understand that the judgment which HE IS, and which is now wrought out in the lives of His saints, the firstfruits of His

redemption, will ultimately be manifested to creation in and through the sons of God. The judges for this day are even now in preparation for their awesome task! Yes, YOU shall judge the world, precious elect of God...but you will do it in humility and with a broken heart full of compassion and love! The *judges* are also *priests*! The *priests* are also *kings*! Authority to act as judges...authority to reconcile, restore, and redeem. That is the mystery!

All who judge must be possessed of that same anointing of the seven spirits of God that rests upon the firstborn Son of God. “These things saith He that *hath the seven spirits of God*” (Rev. 3:1). Isaiah enumerates the seven spirits thus, “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:2). Thank God! The very thought of a universe governed by the sons of God who are filled with the seven-fold intensified Spirit of the Lord leaves me absolutely breathless! Words become totally inadequate and human ability to articulate the wonder of such a thing fails completely. Our faltering minds cannot fully appreciate nor comprehend the wonder of Enoch’s prophecy: “Behold, the Lord cometh with *ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to **convince all** that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him*” (Jude 14-15).

There are several points of interest in the passage just quoted. “Behold, the *Lord cometh **with ten thousands of His saints.***” The original would be better expressed, “The Lord cometh ***IN holy myriads***

of Himself.” He comes in that people who are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, mind of His mind; the extension and projection of all HE IS — HIMSELF CREATURES. “To *execute* judgment upon all.” To execute means to carry out, to fulfill, to pursue to the end. Holy myriads of Himself shall carry out judgment *upon all*, and pursue it unto the end, until the full fruit and effect of that judgment shall be manifested *in all*. “And to *convince all* that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds...” To convince means to *convict, reprove, and fully persuade* all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against the Lord. This is conviction, my friend, HOLY GHOST CONVICTION that must be ministered into the minds and hearts of men before they will submit so that the cleansing process can begin in them. I have seen it many times, when Holy Ghost conviction came upon men and women with the hardest of hearts and the most wicked life-styles, they were utterly broken before the Lord, weeping as it were buckets of tears, repenting, and being washed and cleansed from all their rebellion and sinfulness. Hallelujah! What a judgment! And it is no longer upon one here and there, a few who encounter the Lord in His movings, but now Jude says when the Lord comes in those holy myriads of Himself the judgment shall be UPON ALL! Thus the Lord comes in His holy ones to bring an ending to the long reign of sin, darkness, and death, praise His wonderful name!

Day by day we are learning the ways of the Lord. Only God can teach us these things and equip us to judge with righteous judgment. It would be well here for us to take particular notice of a divine principle

set forth by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians. All who earnestly desire to acquire the wisdom and attributes of THE JUDGE and possess the nature which dispenses RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT should give prayerful consideration to these words. “For I know nothing by myself...but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come...*” (I Cor. 4:4-5). Judge nothing before the time, UNTIL THE LORD COME. What is that? In the blindness of church tradition someone’s mind will immediately jump to the conclusion that Paul is talking about waiting to judge until the so-called “second coming of Christ.” But that is by no means the meaning here! Hear it! “Judge nothing before the time...until the Lord come, who (when He comes into the situation) both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise from God.”

Judge nothing...until the Lord come...until the Lord shows up, manifesting Himself — to judge. In any situation, circumstance, problem, or trouble where judgment is required, it means just this — MAKE NO JUDGMENT APART FROM THE MIND AND MOVING OF THE LORD! Judge not, my beloved, by the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear. Judge not by the outward appearance, by carnal reasoning, natural understanding, fleshly wisdom, man’s psychological training, nor by religious tradition. WAIT UPON THE LORD! Render no judgment about anything until the Lord draws nigh with the precious wisdom that is from above, until the light of His presence brings divine understanding, until the glorious mind of Christ gives spiritual discernment. Judge nothing until the Lord appears in the matter,

disclosing the counsels of *His mind*, making bright the pathway before your feet. The wisdom which is from above teaches us that this coming of the Lord in judgment is a *present action*, not a future event. When the Lord comes He “brings to **light** the hidden things of darkness, and makes manifest the counsels of the hearts,” that there may be righteous judgment. Jesus is the true Light that is come into the world and when this penetrating Light enters into our hearts, we have understanding.

No man has a right to judge anything until this Light has shined into his intellect. Otherwise he is judging in darkness and will do just as Paul says, “For wherein thou judgest another, *thou condemnest thyself*; for thou that judgest doeth the same things” (Rom. 2:1). No one has any right to judge anyone else when he is himself in darkness and doing the same things he is judging in another. But when the entrance of the Lord occurs, then our whole being will be filled with light and we can know surely that the first one judged will be **ourselves**. The faults and failings of others will fade as the darkness before the shining orb of the morning sun when God begins to reveal ourselves to ourselves!

There is a great *purpose in judgment*, and it is always a purpose of love. Our dear brother Vern Goss explains just why the earth and all people should rejoice and be glad in the face of God’s determined judgment. He writes, “But doesn’t God hate sin? Yes, but not for the reason that many would suppose — that He is aloof, holy, and wants to pound on any that do not measure up to His standard. Simply put, God hates sin because sin brings death, the antithesis of life. Anything that is the enemy of *life* is the enemy of God! But doesn’t God bring judgment on sin and sinners? God brings judgment not for destructive purposes, but for constructive and corrective purposes. If you want to see

destruction, death, chaos, lawlessness, mayhem, and murder, allow man to go his merry way *without intervention*” — end quote.

Again, there is great *purpose in judgment*, and it is always a purpose of love. There is a deep, clear purpose in everything that God does! And His love for us, deep and tender, is the fire burning under that purpose. The character of God must be kept ever in mind. The leading trait in His character is expressed, not by the word “purity,” nor “righteousness,” nor “justice,” but by the word “love.” Though if we knew the real meaning of “love” we would find it includes these others, and more. The purpose in judgment is two-fold. It is a purpose *toward sin*, to get rid of it. And God’s attitude here is relentlessly uncompromising. No exceptions are ever noted. And there is a purpose *toward men*. Now regarding the purpose toward men, it is *corrective* and *redemptive*. The whole thought is to change the man. It is love working, love for the man. The purpose is the same as the surgeon’s. He thrusts in his keen-edged blade, not to destroy life, but to save it. He is driving hard against the disease. The knife that cuts and hurts is held steady by the kindly purpose in the heart.

So it is in regard to the coming of Christ in judgment. Strangers to the grace of God and His ways are always alarmed by the portents of divine judgment. But those who have drawn close enough to the heavenly Father to know His mind and heart understand that all His judgments are corrective and redemptive, and therefore altogether desirable, beneficial, and glorious! The ecstatic exclamation of joy and gladness at the prospects of the coming of God’s righteous judgment into the earth is found all through the psalms and the prophets. If you

are truly destined to stand among the company of the sons of God, the long-awaited liberators of creation, you will most assuredly thrill at the heavenly vibration of David's inspired song: "Say among the nations that the Lord reigneth: the *world also* shall be established that it shall not be moved: HE SHALL JUDGE THE PEOPLE RIGHTEOUSLY. Let the heavens rejoice, and LET THE EARTH BE GLAD; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees (people) of the forest REJOICE before the Lord: for He cometh, for He COMETH TO JUDGE THE EARTH: HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THE PEOPLE WITH HIS TRUTH" (Ps. 96:10-13).

"Make a JOYFUL noise unto the Lord, ALL THE EARTH: make a loud noise, and REJOICE, and SING PRAISE, Let the sea (raging, surging multitudes of humanity) roar, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. Let the floods (armies) CLAP THEIR HANDS, let the hills (small kingdoms, institutions) BE JOYFUL TOGETHER before the Lord; for HE COMETH TO JUDGE THE EARTH: WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL HE JUDGE THE WORLD, AND THE PEOPLE WITH HIS EQUITY" (Ps. 98:4,8-9).

We are living in an hour when God is moving mightily in the hearts of His called and chosen people preparing them to bring forth righteous judgment in the earth. "For the time is come that *judgment must begin at the house of God*" (I Pet. 4:17). Judgment begins at the house of God, saith the Lord! Oh, how that message has been butchered by the ministers of Babylon! Do you know what most folk believe it means? They think it's saying that God is going to bring the hammer

down on His people. To them it speaks of severity or an awful day of accountability and reckoning. That's not what the inspired apostle is saying at all! First of all, as we have noted, "judgment" is not a negative, it's a positive. It translates the Greek word *krisis* from which comes our English words crisis, critical, and criteria. A *krisis*, a crisis or critical time, is a **turning point**. Very sick people often reach the point of crisis where they reach and then pass through their most critical point following which their fever breaks, or they regain consciousness; it is the turning point in their illness, the crisis where their condition begins to improve. God's judgments do not themselves save us, but they condition and prepare us for HIM who IS our salvation. They cause us to turn to the Lord in repentance and we find that He has been drawing us to Himself through it all.

People quote the scripture, "Judgment must begin at the house of God," and their first thought is, "Oh, my, Ananias and Sapphira are going to fall over dead any minute now!" But that's not what this passage is saying. The King James translation is faulty. "Judgment must begin *at...*" "At" is the Greek preposition *apo* meaning "away from." It is not a picture of God bringing wrath down upon the people of God, but it's a picture of His righteous, redemptive judgments flowing like a river *out from* or *away from* the house of God! It is not the house of God *receiving* the judgment, but it is the house of God *dispensing* the judgment! Young's Literal translation reads, "It is the time of the beginning of the judgment *from* the house of God." The Concordant New Testament says, "It is the era for the judgment to begin *from* the house of God." The Emphatic Diaglott renders, "Because the season is coming for the judgment to begin *from* the house of God." The message is clear — contrary to what we have been taught and have

believed — God is not moving us toward the time when His judgment must begin upon the house of God, even though we have certainly been experiencing His judgments in our lives; rather, all He is doing now within us is moving us towards that time when His judgments can begin to PROCEED FROM, FLOW OUT FROM THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD!

As the prophet has said, “But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain (kingdom, government) of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains (above, over all the strong kingdoms), and it shall be exalted above the hills (weaker kingdoms, institutions); and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house (people, body of Christ) of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the *law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And HE SHALL JUDGE among many people...*” (Micah 4:1-3).

Can we not see by the passage above that the house of God, the mount Zion of God, which is the sons of God, and the holy city Jerusalem, the bride of the Lamb, are the *source* of the law of God, the word of God, and the judgment of God! Oh, yes, the judgment does indeed begin or start with each one of us as He does His wonderful work within; then as our own house has been thoroughly judged and made right, and the sons and the bride are perfected and made ready, this judgment goes *from* or *out from* the household of God to bring correction and blessing to the nations. It cannot flow out until it has first been wrought within! It is within God’s own people that the judgment

of God first does its perfect work. Therefore do we stand upon the glassy sea singing with all our hearts, “All nations shall come and worship before Thee; FOR THY JUDGMENTS ARE MADE MANIFEST!” Where are God’s judgments — their reality, power, purpose, and accomplishment — made *manifest*, made apparent, visible, plain, clear, discernable, perceptible? IN THE LIVES OF GOD’S ELECT!

Ah, here is a people that knows the ways of His judgments, a people in whom and through whom the righteous judgments of God can be executed! The scriptures are continually revealing this grand and glorious truth. The Lord Jesus Himself explained it on this wise: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath *committed all judgment unto the Son*...and hath given Him authority to execute judgment...because He is the Son of man” (Jn. 5:22,27). To the faithful in Christ Jesus we now proclaim this message — that judgment which is committed to the Head Son is *executed through His body*, His many brethren, just as John saw in vision: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and *judgment was given unto them*...and they reigned with Christ” (Rev. 20:4).

Many people hesitate to believe that the saints will judge the world (and even angels) because of the words of Jesus wherein He said, “Judge not that ye be not judged...” (Mat. 7:1). But Jesus wasn’t telling us not to judge! He went on to say, “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Mat. 7:2). If you consider with reverent honesty these words of the Lord, who Himself is the righteous Judge, you will see that Jesus was not telling us not to judge; rather, He is showing us HOW to

judge! At another time Jesus said, “WHEN ye judge, judge *righteous judgment.*” Ah, that is the crux of the whole matter! DO NOT JUDGE UNLESS YOU CAN JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT, because *you will be judged by the same standard by which you judge!* That is why the judgment is given only to the *saints*, to the overcoming *sons*, to the purified and perfected *house of God*, to the *holy city Jerusalem*, and to the *mount Zion company!* It should be plain to every understanding heart that divine judgment will not be given into the hands of the immature, irresponsible, or hypocrites. That is the point the Lord is making!

If we are not judging by the nature of Jesus, if we are not judging in the same spirit He does, if we are not the personification of His goodness, forbearance, mercy, long-suffering, and redemptive power, then we are not the manifestation of HIS JUDGMENTS and are worthy of being censured and removed from the throne of judgment. Judgment doesn't flow out of what you know. Judgment doesn't flow out of a title, position, or office. Judgment flows out of the life and nature of the Son of God! “...for *THY judgments are made manifest.*” Ah, my dear brother, my precious sister, do you desire a part in the glorious ministry by which the world shall be judged? Then my prayerful recommendation to you is that you draw very close to the heart of Jesus, sit at His feet, tarry long in His presence, fall intensely in love with Him, learn His ways, be filled with His Spirit, be joined in one mind, life, and nature with Him and He will create within you the heart of a redemptive sonship judge! His judgments will be made manifest IN YOU. The wonderful result will be that all nations will come and worship before Him! That is the mystery.

It is the uncovering of that people in whom God has inwrought and birthed His righteous judgments to deal with the sin, ignorance, and rebellion of men, bringing deliverance, producing a mighty change unto salvation and righteousness. He will deal with every man according to the measures needed to correct and make right what is wrong in him. Is that not how He has dealt with us, His firstfruit company? If you yet entertain the carnal notion that by judgment God will *sentence* every man according to what he deserves, then Jesus would have to apologize to those men who crucified Him, because He didn't give them what they deserved! Rather He prayed for them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Do you believe God answered that prayer? The lovely One from whose gracious lips these redemptive words fell also said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I know that *Thou hearest me always...*" If I were to say, "I am sincerely convinced and truly hope that I shall see every reader of these lines get exactly what they deserve," would it not strike terror in your soul? Let us then stand assured of this marvelous fact: **BECAUSE OF CALVARY you deserve the best God has to give and all men deserve the best of God through you!** "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee, *for Thy judgments are made manifest.*"

To be continued...

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