

# *The Wedding Supper and Festival*



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## THE WEDDING SUPPER AND FESTIVAL

Long has the church awaited this momentous event and many have been the guesses made with respect to the wedding supper by the members of the church. But we are now living in such close proximity to this greatest of all feasts, that we need not guess any longer; for we can see the Biblical setting-forth on this subject, so clearly, that we can recognize its delicacies set before us, upon the Lord's table, even now. Those who recognize the truthfulness of this statement, also can testify that the joy that this supper affords is expressed most fittingly in the word "ecstatic" although even this does not entirely represent the experience in a satisfactory manner.

Those of you who have thoroughly masticated, digested, and assimilated the eighteen studies that have preceded this one, will have the concrete evidence of the truthfulness of the subject that we are about to set before you, even though you may not have thought of it in just this light. As it was in the life and experience of Jesus, some followed him for a while and then ceased so to do, due to some statement he had made; and later on others likewise dropped out, becoming offended at what they had heard; so it is with the truth even today. As more truths open up and greater light shines, to our rejoicing and blessing, some become offended and drop out; so we shall not be surprised if some of our readers likewise fall out and cease to enjoy the onward march of truth and light. The only responsibility that is ours, as the Lord's people, is to be faithful to the light as it is revealed and not the acceptance or rejection by others.

As we take up this subject, let us do as we have done before, i. e., see that we "Do not reject him that speaketh from heaven;" for the evidence will be nothing other than that which comes from the infallible Word of God. What you and we may think, amounts to nothing when God speaks his mind clearly upon that matter. Are we of that class who fear and tremble at his Word, or are we of those who try to twist that Word into coinciding with our preconceived ideas and thoughts? Let us see to it that we find God true, even though it make every man a liar, even including ourselves. This kind of love for the truth is the only kind that will be rewarded under the statement, with reference to the Holy Spirit, telling us that HE shall guide us into all truth and will show us things to come. This is the kind we trust and feel that the vast majority of our readers are, and so we shall speak without reserve that which we see to be the plain statements of the Word of God.

### The Wedding Supper in Type

The trouble with us, in getting at this matter of the wedding supper, seems to lie in the fact that we use present day customs and practices in trying to understand the picture of the wedding supper of the Lamb. With us, the wedding supper comes after the marriage ceremony, which ceremony is the marriage with us; whereas, in the old Jewish practices, no ceremony, in which some priest or other person of authority was an important item, was necessary. A Jewish man and maiden were married by simply taking upon themselves the relationship of man and wife. This method of marriage is now known as a common law marriage, and the law recognizes it and makes it binding. After Jacob had labored seven years to obtain the lady of his choice, Rachel, he discovered, the next morning after the wedding supper, that he had been tricked, for; when the morning light dawned upon his companion with whom he had now instituted conjugal relations, he found he had Leah for a wife instead of Rachel. It was too late to make any remonstrance with the purpose to right the wrong, for they were now man and wife. This trickery was possible because the bride was not seen by the bridegroom, for she wore a heavy veil, even at the wedding supper; and in that way Leah was given to him in place of Rachel. Gen. 29:20-25.

condition, and the difference is that we who love him now, first, will finally have this treasure in a divine body; whereas, those who love him later, get it in some other body; but the joy will be the same joy. So this wedding feast is to be spread for all God's people and they shall all be invited thereto, but each one in his day.

### The Parable of the Royal Wedding Supper

To set forth some facts relative to this first wedding supper, that one which precedes the marriage, we wish to take up the parable of the wedding supper as it is recorded in Matt. 22:1-14. The parable is opened with the statement, "The Kingdom of the heavens may be compared to a royal person, who prepared a marriage (Greek "marriage feasts") festival for his son." This, doubtless, has reference to the great festival which God has prepared for his son, Christ. Being prepared by a "royal person" implies it will be a grand affair. "He sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the festivities; and they refused to come." This feature found its fulfilment in the sending forth of the seventy who were bidden to go not unto the Gentiles, nor into any way of the Samaritans, but only unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; for Israelites were the ones originally invited. But these refused to come.

Then the next step is presented in the words; "Again, he sent other servants, saying, 'Inform those who are invited, behold I have prepared my intertainment (Greek, 'to ariston' the best, meaning the best meal); my oxen and fatlings are killed, and all is ready; come to the festival.'" This call took place after the death of Jesus, when he sent them forth again, but only to Israel. "But they disregarded." "And the rest, seizing his servants, insulted and killed them." Here are depicted the persecutions of the early church and the apostles at the hands of the Jews. The destruction of the Jewish order, which followed as a just retribution upon that nation, is set forth in the words; "And the king was indignant; and having sent his military forces (the Roman army) destroyed those murderers, and burned their city." This was fulfilled on the city of Jerusalem in the year 71 A.D.

Next, the parable sets forth the sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles; "He then says to his servants, 'The entertainment (Greek word for feast in the singular number) is ready, but those who have been invited were unworthy. Go, therefore, into the public roads, and whosoever you may find invite to the nuptial feasts.' And those servants went out into the roads and they brought together all that they met, good and bad; and the feast was well supplied with guests." So the call having gone to the Gentiles for almost nineteen hundred years, now past, the number to fill up the body of Christ has been made full. Note that the wedding supper could not be begun until all the guests were in; the house had to be full. Now the work, which God started and so successfully prosecuted through Pastor Russell, has been done and the feast is now well supplied with guests. The truth has done its work in calling into this consecrated condition the foreordained number to make up the bride class.

### The Wedding Garment a Necessity at the Supper

But, note well from the account, the feast has not yet started, but the necessary number has been brought in. Now the king goes in to inspect his guests, and he finds there a man without a wedding garment. Upon such occasions each guest is presented with a garment, called the wedding garment; this is his badge of eligibility, and represents that which God has given us and which will make us acceptable at this wedding supper. We have been taught, in the past, that this wedding garment is the robe of Christ's righteousness. We do not want to leave the impression that we are out of harmony in any single particular with all that has been set forth regarding the necessity of this robe at the wedding supper, but we do think that there is a better thought that fits the picture and the present fulfilment of that picture. So permit us to suggest that this wedding robe might represent the truth that has been given to us, without which we cannot get those spiritual things which go to make up the wedding supper. "Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment."

When Pastor Russell had brought us all the fundamental truths that were necessary for our spiritual feasting upon God, as is now our blessing and great joy, God took him away as a test to all of us. We see that many have taken off this wedding robe of the truth, and discarded so very much that he gave us through the Pastor that they cannot be privileged to feast upon the spiritual things that come

out of the truth, and for which the truth has been given us.

How few there are who still believe these fundamentals! and how few there are of these who will use this truth to the end for which it was given us by God! If we take the application of this parable as fitting the present time, would we expect God to be examining his people now as to whether they had on the robe of Christ's righteousness? Is not the test now, whether one still has the truth he was once given by the Lord? It is right now that the guests, individually, are being examined prior, to their participation in the great supper, and those who have this pure truth, still bright and fresh in their minds, have the basis upon which, and the channel through which, God can give them the precious viands of the wedding supper. Those who lost the robe of righteousness lost all relationship with God, immediately. God does not continue to bless such until the last and then examine them, when it is time to make final inspections to see whether they have such as is a necessary fundamental. So we feel that the truth is here referred to rather than the robe without which we could have no dealings with God whatsoever.

Now, those who have held fast to the truth, and who have waited for him until he should come and bring in the final feast, are the ones who are entering into this great wedding feast or supper. The testing time has been since our Pastor has fallen asleep. It seems that this same thought -- being found without the truth at this very time, the time for partaking of the wedding supper -- is again brought to our attention in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The foolish had no oil to provide them with light when the time came to enter into the festivities. The two offices of the Holy Spirit are; guide us into all truth, and to implant its own spirit within our hearts. The first office is the basis for the second, and represents the oil that gives us the light necessary to see the bridegroom (represented by the wedding robe) and enter the banquet hall. But they did not enter for they had not the truth with which the spirit blesses us, and, like the one without the wedding garment (present truth), are left out of this grand feast. We expect to discuss these two offices of the Holy Spirit, later on in this article, so merely mention them at this juncture.

The weeping and gnashing-of-teeth condition into which this one is cast, represents the two classes who will experience the time of trouble; namely, those who have sorrows and regrets, -- the Great Company mourning their loss in spiritual things -- and those who gnash their teeth -- the rest of the human race in their disappointment and hatred and wrath. Neither is indicative, especially, of the second death, unless some of the Lord's people should join the class who are angry and resentful toward God and, therefore, gnash their teeth. Those who take off the robe of righteousness are neither sorrowful nor angry, at the time. They think they have advanced to greater light, and pity the rest.

#### The Supper of the Great King.

Having merely mentioned the fact that the wedding supper is now to be enjoyed by the church class, a feature to which we shall return a little later for more consideration, we shall now endeavor to show that the rest of the world of mankind also will be invited to these great feasts of the wedding for the seven days that are to follow, picturing the entire Millennial Age which lies out in the future. To get the matter before us in this form, we shall be required to go to the book of Revelation for further light. We will take up the 19th chapter for consideration; not in a verse by verse study, but in a way that will serve our subject only. In verse 17, the statement is made, "Come, assemble yourselves to the great supper of God." This statement, "the great supper of God," seems to be parallel in its designation to the one made in Matt. 22:2; "a royal person who prepared a marriage feast for his son." The royal person here referred to is none other than God, Jehovah, who prepared this festival for his son's marriage. And to show that it was not to be a single supper and for the immediate bridal party only, but was to last for days, we refer you to the statement in verse 4, "My OXEN and FATLINGS are slain, and all is ready, come to the marriage FEASTS." Please note that the words "feasts," "oxen," and "fatlings" are used in the plural, and refer to the week's celebration. Why would there need to be OXEN and fatlings, if only the immediate wedding party were to be dined? The fact that these animals were killed in abundance lends credence to the fact that there were "feasts" that were to be enjoyed, and these by many, and over a period of time. The first supper of this festival of feasts will be enjoyed by the church, the remainder of these feasts, which we are trying to explain now -- the supper of the Great King, in this paragraph -- will be enjoyed by all the spiritual ones in the next age. By spiritual

we refer to that condition of spirituality that has no reference to a spirit body, but is, instead, a heart condition. In Rev. 19:17; these spiritual ones are referred to as being called to this great supper of God, in the words; "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all those birds which fly in mid-heaven, 'Come, assemble yourselves to the great supper of God.'" Birds are used to symbolize spiritual persons, for they fly in the heavens. These are spoken of as "those birds which fly in mid-heaven." Yes, they are the class who are not bound to earth, and earthly, or material things; but wing their flight up into the spiritual and heavenly things. These are the class who will be seated with Christ in heavenly places, those of the world of mankind in that time who become Christ's, when the world shall be his in the time of his one thousand years presence. 1Cor. 15:23.

In Gen. 1:20; we read that God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." This seems to imply that the birds were created, originally, possibly by some process of evolution -- as science teaches -- out of the waters. Spiritually applying this thought, we see that the spiritual ones, those who soar into the heavenly things, are they who become such from their living in the truth, the waters of truth. There are some who never arise out of the elementary truth, but who swim about in it for years and years, studying chronology and types and prophecies, and never awoken to the least degree of spirituality; but just remain "poor fish" all their lives. Some, however, awoken to spirituality and get into this higher medium of existence, and become new creatures. It will be thus also in the next age; as quickly as they awoken to the spiritual, they will come into the new creature condition, and will be invited to assemble at the great supper of God -- the feasts of the wedding festivities prepared by God for his son, for whom all things were created.

#### This Picture, a Kingdom Picture.

Now, to accept this picture of the wedding feasts as applying also to the Millennial Age, it will be necessary to see that this great supper of God is to take place after the time of trouble is over. A proper examination of the first part of this chapter will show, we think beyond a shadow of doubt, that the setting of this great supper of God is after the time of trouble is over and the Kingdom is the kingdom of our Lord Jesus and his church.

In the first verse of this nineteenth chapter of Revelations, we read, "I heard a loud voice of a great crowd IN HEAVEN saying, 'Hallelujah! the salvation . . . . of our God.'" This class, a great company, are in HEAVEN, not literally, but in the sense that they have part in the new heavenly order that has been established. The preceding chapter shows the destruction of this present Gospel Age Heavens, and verse two of this chapter confirms that point, stating that the harlot has been judged, and the blood of his servants at her hands, has been avenged. Since they praise God for salvation, it must be evident that they have attained unto their salvation, and they are not a little flock, for they are referred to as a "great crowd."

In the sixth verse of this chapter we have this same "great crowd" again set forth as saying, "Hallelujah! because the Lord God, the Omnipotent, REIGNED." Please note carefully that it is a thing accomplished; God has REIGNED, and not just begun. Almost all translators set this forth to the effect that God has commenced to reign, while the Greek word plainly tells us that it is past -- "reigned." Some of those who so mistranslate this word explain, in a foot note, that the original text states it as "REIGNED." The trouble with these translators is that they do not understand sufficiently what God's program is, and thinking that God and Jesus are one and the same person, are confused in this matter of reigning; and against the plain statements of the Word, they set forth their idea even though it is in direct opposition to the Scriptures. They do not leave the responsibility of teaching the Bible with God, but think it is necessary to correct the utterances of the Holy Spirit.

#### The Reign of Jehovah Ended.

The Bible tells us that this period of trouble and tearing down of Satan's empire is called, "The Day of God's Vengeance." It is elsewhere called, "The Day of Jehovah." It is the day when he shall arise to the prey and destroy all evil institutions. Speaking to his son, God says, "Sit thou on my right hand

until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In the seventh chapter of Daniel we read of this very situation, where, after the four beasts, which picture the four universal empires of earth, the last one representing the present evil order; the Ancient of Days is shown reigning and destroying these evil governments and institutions in the form of the last of the four beasts. When he had finished, the Son of Man is brought near and is given the dominion of earth by Jehovah, the Ancient of Days. "Thy God reigneth," is the message of this day of transference of earth's power to the Lord Jesus from that of Satan. If the Bible is studied with this thought in mind, great harmony will be attained in the Bible references to this particular time. We will not then proclaim this Christ's kingdom as so many now are doing, for it is Jehovah REIGNING to establish Christ's kingdom. Dan. 7:7-18.

When the nations will have been subjected to Christ, the reign of Jehovah will cease. Then this great company will announce the glad message that God has REIGNED and will praise him for the beneficent results that have materialized therefrom in the form of Christ's kingdom. Then they will continue in the words, "We may exult and rejoice and give the glory to God; because the marriage of the Lamb CAME, and his wife PREPARED herself." Please note well that the marriage of the Lamb is an accomplished matter at this time, and from this we understand that the church shall have been united with her Lord in heavenly glory, and that the preparing time for that great event is a matter of history. This preparing time is, principally, the wedding supper time, when the richest things that God can prepare are set before the church for their eternal rejoicing. These are the things that prepare them to be the Lamb's bride. This will be discussed in detail later.

In verse 11 we read, "And I saw heaven OPENED, and behold, a white horse; and he who sat on him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he judges and makes war." When the new order of the Millennial Age will be fully in Christ's hands, it will become an OPEN matter, APPARENT and UNDERSTANDABLE to all, that Christ is the new king of earth. The pure righteous doctrines of truth will go forth, basic to all this new arrangement, no more to be persecuted by the harlot, the false church system, which was destroyed, AS A SYSTEM, during Jehovah's reign. Upon this white horse the Christ will go forth and judge the world in righteousness, and make war against all the evil that is IN man when he comes from the tomb. Verse 12 tells us that on this rider's head were MANY crowns. Yes, he is now the king who has supplanted all the kings of earth; for their crowns are on his head. This shows us conclusively that the kingdoms, at that time, shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and that they will have been destroyed and he reigning in their stead, as the Daniel picture, above referred to, sets forth.

The next verse, 13, again gives us unmistakable evidence that the time of trouble will have passed, by this time, for this rider, the Christ, will have on a mantle dipped in blood. In Isa. 63:1-6 we read how it came about that our Lord had his garments dipped in blood. We there learn that it was in this time of trouble that he stained all his garments, by sprinkling upon them their blood, as he trampled Babylon, as one tramples grapes in the winepress.

We have just reviewed nine separate reasons that locate this picture in the next age, after the time of trouble is over; and we feel any one of them is enough to prove this is the case, and certainly nine should be a great plenty to establish that fact. The rest we shall have to say upon this chapter is corroborative of the fact that this is a picture of future blessings upon the world of mankind; that it refers to the great benefit and blessing that they shall derive out of the things that have been permitted during this evil world and the one just preceding it. This we shall endeavor now to set forth.

#### The Great Supper of God -- a Spiritual Feast.

The angel standing in the sun, calling all the birds who fly in mid-heaven to this great supper, has very comprehensive signification. If the time of the fulfillment of this chapter should lie in the present period of trouble, we would be face to face with some glaring inconsistencies; for the sun, under the sixth seal, which pictures the time of trouble into which we are now entering, is pictured as being "black as sack-cloth of hair." Rev. 6:12. The sun in which this angel stood, must picture another period, and what else could it picture than the sun of righteousness with its world enlightenment, spreading its beams of light over the entire new world, when one will not need to say "know the Lord" for all

shall know him from the least unto the greatest."

The angel who was standing in this light seems to represent the Holy Spirit, which is the most prominent thing in the light of truth. It is this Holy Spirit, the character of God, his love, that is so prominently displayed therein, that is inviting us to the wedding supper today. And it will be this same sweet spirit that will appeal to all in the next age, inviting, enticing them to this great supper of God, the marriage feast of this Great King--royal person who made a marriage festival for his son. Notice, also, that this angel, who stood in the sun, cried out only to those birds, which fly in mid-heaven, telling them to come to the great supper of God. Yes, it is only to the spiritual, those who ascend into the heavenly things, who are invited to this wedding supper, and it is to this class alone that the spiritual things of God, his Holy Spirit, can have any appeal.

This feast is to be made up of the flesh of kings and commanders and mighty men and of horses and their riders and freemen and bondmen, both small and great. This takes in all classes, even the religious and their leaders--horsemen. Yes, in this coming age, the spiritually inclined, as they become awakened to that condition, will get a sickening sufficiency -- be "gorged," as the Greek word implies -- of all flesh. St. Paul, who had everything wherein to boast that human flesh could have, as pertains to life and its righteousness, tells us that he counted it all vile refuse -- dung -- so thoroughly was he gorged therewith. This gorging was brought about by his having become acquainted with Christ--the spirit of God -- as it was given him through a knowledge of the truth. This knowledge of the truth, through which a knowledge of God is to be received and entertained, is pictured in this incident by the angel standing in the sun. The sunlight represents the truth itself, and the angel, the spirit of God calling them to joys and their corresponding effect -- the gorging on, and the undesirability of the humanity. When that which God has for them in the spiritual realm, is once received and appreciated, all else that is material will be unsatisfactory forever; they will have enough thereof for all times, even of the religious doctrines and that which these supported.

#### The War between the Beast and the Christ

Following this we are told that the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war with him, who sits upon the horse, and his army. The one sitting on this white horse is the completed Christ, and his army is made up of all who espouse this great cause, including the great company and other heavenly beings and earthly ones as well, the ancient worthies and all who are in harmony therewith. But, one might ask, was not the beast destroyed in the great time of trouble, and these kings of the earth as well? To answer this question we will have to find out what this beast is and who those kings of the earth are and how they make war at this time, and this we shall now attempt to do.

The beast was an organization of manpower that flourished during this Gospel Age, and which was controlled by the woman, churchianity. This beast is presented in Rev. 13:1-10; as the first beast and in Rev. 17; as the scarlet beast on which the woman sits. The kings of the earth seem to represent all the other governments and man-made political institutions which existed before and during the time that the beast flourished, but who were not under the direct influence of this church-power. And that they would align themselves with this beast is set forth in this verse; and that it would be for the specific purpose of making war with the Lamb. Please do not confuse this with what is recorded in Rev. 17:14; which we may explain at some future time.

When the great time of trouble shall have destroyed present institutions, will the spirit of these institutions be destroyed in the people? It must be apparent to those who think a little that this will not be the case; for there are millions who went to death fighting for the beast and who will be awakened in the next age with that same spirit within their souls. When they awaken will they not have the same purpose and determination as they had when they fell asleep? Will they have experienced any change while they were in the grave where there is no wisdom, device, knowledge, nor works? Will they not be at war with righteousness and all that Christ stands for, as much when they awaken as when they fell asleep, probably when they were attempting to uphold their ideas by war, as millions of them did? Thus this beast and the kings of the earth will exist in the fallen and depraved spirit of mankind when they come again from the sleep of death. And will this not have to be eradicated from their souls by

the Christ and the ancient worthies and the great company, and all the agencies -- army -- that is with the rider of the white horse?

The Millennial Age will be a time of war in this respect, until this beastly spirit and the spirit of the kings of this earth -- those who wish to continue to lord it over others -- shall be taken (Greek "seize gently by the hand", officially, "arrest") and shall be cast alive into the lake of fire and brimstone. But, if the Christ is warring, we can see that this will be an entirely different war than is waged by men of today. The weapon which this rider upon the white horse will use and the only one he has, is the sharp two-edged broad sword that come out of his mouth. This weapon, we are told, is the Truth. 2 Thes. 2:8; Heb. 4:12. Note also that this citation shows how it, the Bible, can judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. If it can do that, can it not also destroy these beastly thoughts and intentions that are in the souls of mankind, when the beast that is in them comes back and again attempts the nefarious practices that it once caused them to attempt?

#### The Winepress of the Wine of the Indignation of God's Wrath

Since this sharp two-edged sword is the only weapon to be used in this war in the next age, we can see that the time of trouble, that did besprinkle blood upon the garments of this rider, is not the thing referred to in this chapter; this is to be a war of the right spirit against the wrong spirit, in which victory will perch upon the banner of the former. While the winepress is referred to as being trodden, let us call to your attention the exact expression of the Greek text as it appears in this instance. This "wine-press" is that "of the wine of the indignation of the wrath of God Almighty." Rev. 19:15. (Diaglott) A wine press of God is referred to elsewhere but never in such terms. Rev. 14:19. The wine-press of the wine of the indignation of the wrath of God seems, at first examination, to be a meaningless expression; but upon closer investigation emits a wonderful flood of light for us.

Wine represents doctrine, or the spirit of that doctrine, as it is used in the Word. The Apostles, at Pentecost, were thought to be full of wine, when they were filled with the truth and were showing some of the spirit that was within them. We have just set forth above that the Lord is going to remove the beastly spirit that is in the world when they die and which will be in them when they are awakened. This evil spirit and its evil doctrinal foundation is the wine of his indignation. It is against this evil doctrine and spirit that his indignation is aroused, this indignation that is in his wrath; and he will use the Christ to trample this out of them in the winepress arrangement that he will use in the Millennial Age. The sharp two-edged sword will divide between them and their evil spirit, when it shall have divided between their evil doctrine and them through the presentation of the truth. Heb. 4:12.

These two instances of the winepress have a relationship that they bear to one another. The first winepress will be in the very end of this Age, into which the clusters of the vine of the earth will be cast and therein will be trampled and crushed into destruction as clusters. The vine of the earth is the system of error that is not of God's planting, but is of Satan's planting and fostering. Its CLUSTERS, represent the various aggregations into which the people of Christendom have been assembled. These clusters are the church organizations, the governments, the lodges, societies, business organizations, and all other assemblies that have not the spirit of the Lord as basic to their establishment. Grapes, unlike most other fruits, come in clusters, and these clusters very beautifully represent the assemblies of men, called into existence and organized and permeated and actuated by the spirit that is fundamental to this world, all of which lies in the Evil One.

In this first winepress God will destroy all these earthly organizations, as organizations. It is because these organizations have supported these wrong doctrines that they have prospered as they have. It is because of these organizations that all the persecutions of the dark ages have been meted out to God's people. Almost any human being has a good streak within his soul, and can be appealed to along that line, but let him get into an assembly of his kind, and the mob spirit develops and he will be capable of fostering almost any unspeakable crime. Our young people are all good-natured when met singly, but when a group or crowd of them form, they are capable of lynching an innocent victim upon the slightest evidence and pretext. The individuals of the nations do not sanction war, but the nations as nations do and have carried on wars from time immemorial, and will continue to do so until God gets them as



nations into the great winepress of his wrath. The purpose of religion is to make people better, but religious organizations have committed the most heinous crimes against and upon their fellow religionists of slightly different persuasion. Can we not see, then, that organizations out from under God's influence are evil, and that God's casting of these CLUSTERS into the winepress of his wrath is the only way to effectually begin to rid the earth of these evil influences? This is just the purpose of the great time of trouble.

This destruction of these evil organizations is elsewhere pictured in the slaying of the first-born in Egypt. The first-born of Egypt do not represent individuals to be destroyed, but they, being the heirs of their fathers', and, therefore, the ones to perpetuate what their fathers fostered and protected, indicate, in their destruction, that the organizations of this anti-typical Egyptian order is to be brought to an end, once and for all times.

When this time of trouble, the first winepress experience for the world, wherein these organizations, of every description are to go down forever, is over, then the human beings who composed these organizations will be brought back into existence in the kingdom time of the Christ. They will not be permitted to exist as organizations then, but will be treated as individuals; nevertheless, they will have the spirit of these organizations and their doctrines within them, in addition to their natural spirits, and if they do not lose these spirits under whose influence they have been, there will be no possibility of them ever receiving the spirit of God, without which they can never have God's approval for life on any plane. The removal of these spirits, and the teachings upon which they are based, is pictured in "the winepress of the WINE of the indignation of the wrath of God Almighty.

Since wine pictures doctrine and the spirit fostered by such doctrines, we can analyse this statement and see that God's wrath is not against individuals, but that his wrath is against these evil doctrines and spirits that are contained therein. There the "wine of his wrath" is the expression used. Now, God has had this wrath against these evils from their very beginning, for we are told that "God is angry with the wicked every day." Psa. 7:11. But he has not shown the indignation against these evil doctrines and spirits, that is in his wrath; and he will not manifest this indignation until he gets rid of these organizations in the first winepress arrangement and time, and, when this is over, then he will get the individual into this winepress in which the indignation of his wrath will be manifested against the evil doctrines and spirits that have used his brain and body to do these evils. There, in that winepress time of the Millennial Age, God will get this evil entirely out of them, and displace it by the Holy Spirit, thus making new creatures of them; if amenable to his powers.

If we examine the other uses of the winepress we shall see that this thought of wine is omitted from the expression there used, for God is not after the doctrinal and spiritual part of evil in connection with the world of mankind, until he has them in the kingdom of Christ. At this present time, when "the winepress of the wrath of God" is being used, Rev. 14:19, in which the organizations that are contrary to his arrangements must be dealt with, neither doctrinal nor spiritual matters are taken up, and therefore the word "wine" is not used as it is in this specific instance. Note that this winepress of the wine of his indignation is to be trodden by him who already had his garments stained with blood, and therefore this winepress must be entirely another matter. Yes, it is the trampling of the doctrines and spirit of the antichrist system in every phase, out of the minds and souls of those who had been actuated thereby during this time of Satan's Empire. The Millennial Age will be the time when this purging out of all evil will take place.

During this supper, in which all those who became spiritual are invited to participate, such spiritual enlightenment from the Holy Spirit is gotten out of the truth, pictured by the angel standing in the sun, that they will have a sickening sufficiency of all that is material, human, godlike, and natural, and will choose the spiritual, the godly, as their eternal portion. They will die to all else that is not spiritual or new creature, and live, henceforth, unto God and unto him alone. This state is that which alone can be considered life by God. This dying to all else and living only to God's Word and his spirit, is set forth in the last verse in this nineteenth chapter. There we read, "And the rest were killed with that broad-sword of him who sits upon the horse, which went forth out of his mouth, and all the birds -- spiritual ones -- were satiated with their flesh." -- gorged with materialism, godlikeness, humanity.

The statement, "and the rest" is made in contrast to the beast and the false-prophet, who were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Now we know that this casting into the lake of fire and brimstone represents the second death into which all are cast who are not worthy of continued existence. But the rest who are "killed", do they go into the second or into the first death? We know that none will go into the first death, and if they do not go into the lake of fire and brimstone what death is this that they go into when they are killed? It is, therefore, apparent to all, we feel certain, that this killing must be symbolic of some kind of dying other than physical dissolution; and so we find it. This killing has reference to their dying as old creatures -- dying to all that is not up to God's ideal and standard. These were slain with the broadsword of the spirit, the Word of God, which came out of the mouth of the rider on the white horse. The love of God, which is so wonderfully set forth by the Word of God, will slay every selfish tendency that is in the heart and mind of man; and thus he shall die to his old self and become a new creature, becoming spiritual; and then, as the birds were satiated, gorged with their flesh; for they were once of the freemen or the bondmen, of the kings or the commanders, of the ones who once sat on these symbolic horses, of the small or of the great; they will have had a filling that will last forever of what the old creature state is and its undesirableness, and be everlastingly appreciative of the new creature condition, which is one of righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit; and not of the old nature, of food and drink and material possessions. Rom. 14:17.

In Heb.4:12; we are told that this two edged-sword cuts to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. Soul here has reference to human, animal, the godlike that is in us. Spirit here has reference to the godly or new creature. The Word of Truth can divide between these, eternally separate the one from the other, thus making new creatures of us. Thus the two edged-sword kills us as old creatures, soul-actuated beings, and it does this by showing the incomparable superiority, and unsurpassed desirability, of the spiritual to the fleshly, thus satiating or gorging the birds -- spiritual ones -- on the old creature, the flesh or godlikeness, forever, and causing them to choose the spiritual forever.

This is the wonderful feasting that God has prepared for all who will permit him to so prepare them that they can enjoy this best of all food. Morning after morning, as the resurrection power brings its quota from the dead, these may enter into the wedding feasts prepared for them at the greatest possible cost to God and his son Jesus Christ, in the slaying of the oxen and the fatlings, symbolic of Jesus and his church being given over into death to provide this spiritual revelation of just what love really is, and which has been delineated upon for your rejoicing in the two articles that immediately preceded this one of this third series -- the Passover and Memorial numbers. What we are now feasting upon of these "depths of God" and which thrill our hearts and souls through and through, are just the same things that God will set before all who will ever be invited into the wedding feasts that are to follow the first one, which immediately precedes the marriage of the Lamb.

The war with the two-edged sword, the supper of the great king, and the winepress of the wine of the indignation of the wrath of God Almighty, are three pictures of the same thing, each bringing different thoughts and views to our attention. The "becoming gorged with flesh" and thus satiated by the spirit of flesh and humanity is having the doctrine and spirit of the beast and kings of earth trampled out of us in the winepress, and this is done by having the influence of the two-edged sword operating in us, separating between soul and spirit -- godlike and godly.

Is it any wonder that the Revelator was instructed to write, "Blessed are those having been invited to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb." We know what the blessedness is, and all the rest of God's intelligent creatures will, in due time, experience this same blessedness. Is it not just as we wish to find out God -- infinitely unselfish and impartial, dispensing that which makes life everlastingly a joy to every one of his intelligent creatures? While he gives his church the divine nature, he gives it to them so that he may bless others the more; for his unselfishness could never have been revealed unto mankind and thus its spirit implanted within their hearts, had he not manifested it in bestowing the divine nature upon the church. Thus we see that the giving of his nature to this church, is the means of giving his greatest blessing unto all.

## The Two Offices of The Holy Spirit

To the one who has intelligently followed this line of thought as it has been developed thus far, the question might present itself, "If the wedding supper is the reception of the Holy Spirit, how does this differ from Pentecost which was the outpouring of that Holy Spirit upon the church? This is a very pertinent question and should find a good and proper answer; and, if the reader will give us his otherwise unoccupied attention for a while, we think he will receive a line of Scriptural evidence upon this point that will set this matter before him in an entirely satisfactory manner, placing it in a light that will answer many questions in his mind, and giving him a foundation for the harmonization of many other points that have been, to say the least of them, slightly hazy.

This matter of the Holy Spirit is a large subject and no human mind can search it all out at one time, and it will remain for us to appreciate it as God assists us to see and understand it; and this will be our blessing as God sees it will serve his cause and our future welfare to the greatest extent. The Holy Spirit has been differently set forth in God's plan as it was needed to serve his purposes. First, it brought about the creation of things mundane, as it brooded upon the chaotic mass of materials, bringing order out of confusion; and then, when it had these material things properly prepared for earth's King, it brought into existence him who was created in the likeness and imagery of his creator, endowing him with the godlike attributes which made him God's representative upon the earth. First it prepared the material, then the life upon the basis of that material.

After this had been done to the entire pleasure and satisfaction of God, he further sent his spirit into this earth to enlighten man as to what his immediate purpose for him was, and this he did through the medium of the prophets; and as a result of this blessing from God, we have the Bible. But this was again a step in the right direction, for it was basic to the deeper truths which are related to them as type is to anti-type. Israel after the flesh was only a means to bring forth Israel after the spirit. Here we have the two offices of the Holy Spirit paralleling the work of its mundane creation, preparing for the higher or human creation which was to follow in the form of Adam.

Just so we shall find the Holy Spirit has been operating in this Gospel Age; viz. first preparing the basis for its later and complete work; the complete creation of the new man, the complete ideal that was in God's mind from before the beginning of creation in its most elemental form. To illustrate this matter let us call to your attention the building of the temple by Solomon. The Lord directed and prepared in all details, through his spirit, for the erection of this temple and it was not until it was dedicated, when fully completed, that the glory of the Lord filled the temple. For, when the priest's came out from the Holy -- picturing when the begetting time is over and the church is complete -- they could not stand, to minister, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. 1 King 8:10,11.

If this happened to Israel for our admonition, and this temple is to be a picture of the real temple, the church of Christ, can we draw any other thought therefrom than, that which is the glory of God, his glorious and Holy Spirit, will come into his completed temple and so fill it, that the humanity of the priest's shall be prevented from manifesting itself? so manifest will God's spirit and glory be. Yes, we look for this blessing of his spirit to far out shine the Pentecostal manifestation; and this we propose to show, will be the wedding supper blessing that God is now preparing for his people. The building of the temple was only a preparation for the indwelling of God's spirit, and while his spirit overruled in its construction, the glory of God was not put into the temple until it was completed. 1 Ki. 7:51. So God's spirit, during the age, since Pentecost, has been preparing the church, the temple, and when completed, the glory of God, his character, love, will come into and fill it completely.

Now, if this is to illustrate anything, it unmistakably is that the Holy Spirit has performed a different office in connection with the church down through the Gospel Age than it is now beginning to preform upon that body. But we do not wish to base any important teaching upon a type alone, but must have the plain statements of the Word to see what they say along this line. Since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, we feel that the strongest proof, outside of the Word itself, will be in the richness of the food of which we have already partaken, as it has been spread before us to our hearts' rejoicing.

The Holy Spirit ABIDING WITH us SHALL be IN us

When Jesus was about to leave the apostles, he spoke the wonderful words of the Gospel of St. John, recorded in chapters 14-17. There he told them that he would not leave them orphans, but would send them the comforter who would preform all the offices toward them that they should require. In John 14:17; he speaks of "the spirit of the truth" (literal translation of the Greek text). Here he tells them that this spirit of the truth ABIDES with you, and SHALL BE in you. Note well the different tenses of these two verb forms -- "abides" and "will be." The first one is present in time and the second one is future. If we must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, we should give careful attention to these differences. From this statement by Jesus we realize that the spirit of God must be WITH US for a time before it can get INTO us; just as the temple had to be completed before the glory of God could take up its abode within. The glory of God did not get into the temple measure by measure, as that edifice was completed by degrees. Neither will the Holy Spirit get INTO this spiritual temple until it is completed. These two offices of the spirit of the Lord were called to our attention foregoing in that the earth was prepared by God's spirit before man was created, and so the type had to be instituted by the spirit of God before the substance or reality could come into existence; and so here we find that the spirit of truth had to abide with the church throughout the Gospel Age before it could get into them and make of them new creatures in a completed sense; and by this we have no reference to the body in which the church shall eternally exist.

These two offices are again brought to our attention by our Lord in John 16:13. There he states the matter thus: "But when he may come, the spirit of the truth, he will lead you into all the truth . . . and declare to you the coming things." Here we have the office of the Holy Spirit to all the stages of the true church, and this office has been wonderfully fulfilled unto us in recent years. This has been but a means to the great end God has in view; namely, getting the Holy Spirit into us. This office is presented in the next verse in the words, "He will glorify me; for he will take of mine, and declare to you." And to make it more explicit he adds, "All things that the Father hath are mine. On account of this I said, that out of mine he takes, and will declare (in detail, Greek) to you." Now, we know that at this time Jesus had none other of God's things than the things of the Holy Spirit; for he had not yet been given the divine nature, so we can readily see that the things that the Holy Spirit will declare unto us, are nothing other than a clear insight into the things of God, as he has recently blessed us with, and is continuing to bless us as we keep ourselves near to him. The Greek word translated "declare" means "to announce" or "declare in detail." Certainly God has opened up to our understanding, in such detail, the things of his spirit and things related thereto, that the careless ones have thought it was hair-splitting. It is impossible to get the things of God into our hearts unless we have a clear-cut detailed insight into them and all things related thereto. God does nothing half-way, but builds upon a foundation of truth in its minutest detail. All God's works are based upon laws of the infinitesimally small basic elements.

The first office to which reference is here made, is that of being guided into all truth, by the spirit of the truth. This must be completed before the second office is performed; for, how could the spirit of the truth be given before the entire truth had been set forth before us? Manifestly this is an impossibility, and what is more, God is a god of order; and he will not enter to dwell in his temple before it is completed. Has the church had all the truth before recent years? Has God not used Pastor Russell to guide the last of the church class into all the truth? Do we all not recognize that this has been the office of the Holy Spirit? Could any human being extricate himself, unassisted, from such a horrible pit of error and superstition, as the religious world is in, unless God helped him? When we think of this wonderful work performed to-us-ward, by God through our Pastor, we cannot think of it without realizing that the Holy Spirit must have been his guiding assistant.

You who have followed the course of these lessons that have been sent you; you who have used your reasoning faculties together with the Bible and the truths that the Holy Spirit has given us through our Pastor; can you not see that without this groundwork of truth, the blessings of seeing the details of the spirit of God would have been an impossibility? How can we see the glory of God's character without having that truth which alone reveals that character unto us? Since the truth is the result of the spirit of God, he not being able to deny that spirit expression, it is positively necessary to have

that truth to see the spirit that is contained therein. Since this is axiomatically true, how could our brethren of the past, those who lived before the truth had been fully revealed, before the spirit had guided into all the truth, have that spirit of truth implanted into their hearts? If they could have it given unto them in some other way, and God always chooses the best way, why not give it unto us in that same best way? If it is given through the truth, and God is now giving it that way, this must be the best, and therefore the only way; and if they had not all the truth, how could they have gotten the spirit in the past? Let us deal with and discuss these questions frankly, and God will answer them for us in his way, and we shall be made free from our uncertainty by the truth that makes free indeed.

### The Wedding Supper is Feasting upon God's Glory

We wish now to discuss several Scriptures with you which bear out this idea; namely, that the Holy Spirit has been playing a part during the age that is entirely different from the part it is now performing in the hearts of the saints. These Bible verses will show that the work the spirit of God has been doing is preparatory, getting the saints ready for this wedding supper; and that now, since this preparatory work is completed, it is implanting itself into our hearts through a revelation of the glory of God, which glory of God never before has been revealed to the children of men. This is having its beginning now, with the church, and will finally spread out until, by the close of the next age, it will have been spread before all of the human family for their attaining the completed new creature condition.

The following passage we quote from Tit. 2:11-13. "For the saving favor of God is manifested for all men, teaching us, that renouncing impiety and worldly desires, we shall live prudently, righteously, and piously in the present age, waiting for the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." The translators of our Authorized Version have thought to improve upon the literal text and have beclouded the issue in that they have translated the expression, "The appearing of the glory of the Great God," by the expression, "The glorious appearing of the Great God." To the thoughtful student there is as much difference between these two statements as there is between day and night. The wrong translation leads one to expect the appearing of God in bodily form and in a glorious and magnificent manner, but we all know that this is an impossibility, for it would destroy all who attempted to observe such an appearing. At least it would affect them as much as it did Saul of Tarsus; and the Bible tells us that no man can see God and live.

But the appearing of the glory of God is an altogether different occurrence, and one that will take place, and that, to the greatest blessing that can be bestowed upon those who are prepared to discern. This glory of God is nothing other than the glory of his character, the glory of love. This never before has been seen by man, for "There is none that seeketh after God." Rom. 3:11. All the efforts that man has put forth were to the end that he might know the truth concerning the plan of God. But whenever he attained a measure of this, he never used it to get acquainted with the Creator of that plan, but contended with others who differed from him on some minor point related to his findings. Before this glory of God could appear, the entire truth had to be given us, but its splendor attracted our attention so absorbingly that the glory hidden therein, the glory of God, never got into our heart's eye.

But, thank God, some of his people have sobered up sufficiently, and have, of late years, bestowed some little attention upon him instead of upon the truth or the instrument that God has used to bring it to their attention. Being free from man-worship, society-worship, or truth-worship, unto these the glory of the Great God has appeared, and also the glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Never before has it been presented that the glory of Christ was character glory, that it was other than his perfection of human nature; that he had to be begotten with the glory of God, and had to become a new creature by receiving the Holy Spirit from God; and that the godlike things of his perfect humanity had to be set aside, and were only the means whereby, or a vessel in which, he could receive the glory of God -- love of God.

Is this not the blessed hope that we have had, but which we could not define in our own minds, this attaining of a condition where we could witness the glory of God and be actuated thereby? The whole creation is waiting for this same thing but knows not what it is; whereas, we have now arrived at the place where we know. If you have been getting out of these studies what we think God has placed therein for you, can you not say with a joyful heart, "YES, THE GLORY OF THE GREAT GOD HAS

APPEARED, AND I CAN SEE THAT IT IS THE GLORY OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, ALSO?" Can the human heart imagine anything that is more beautiful, more glorious, more godly, than that which God has opened up for our heart's feeding and rejoicing? No, the human heart could not, and it could not have received this unless God had awakened the condition of spirituality within this heart; for we are told that it has never arisen upon the human heart, what God has for those who love him. 1 Cor. 2:9. Series Two, now completed, outlines this glory and introduces it for our meditation and amplification.

Notice the work of the Gospel Age as it is presented in this citation, Tit. 2:12; "Teaching us that renouncing impiety, and worldly desires, we should live prudently, righteously, and piously in the PRESENT AGE." That has been the teaching of the truth all through the present age and this has had a salutary effect upon the people of God. It has preserved their godlikeness and kept it awake and developed it so that when their wedding supper time comes they will have sufficient of that natural godlikeness so that they will be able to take in all the glory of God's godliness when it shall be called to their attention. If you will refresh your minds as to what was presented, in Study Two of Series One, along this line; the truthfulness of that and this verse will at once be apparent. Thus the temple is being made ready so that the glory of God can fill it when the priests go out of the Holy; and this is now taking place.

The use of the word "godly" by the Authorized Version, is an apparent incongruity to all who have followed the argument set forth, elsewhere in these studies, upon the difference between godlikeness and godliness. The Greek word is best represented by the English word "piously." To substantiate this feature of the argument, that the "PRESENT age" is not for implanting godliness, but merely for developing godlikeness, let us call to your attention the fourteenth verse of this same chapter. This verse shows us that Jesus died so that he might redeem from their condemnation, a class who are zealous in doing good to others, and purify them unto himself. This will get them into that condition in which they can appreciate and love the glory of God when it is revealed, as is now being done unto those so prepared.

#### The Church to be Blameless in Holiness at Christ's Presence

Let us now examine 1 Thes. 3:12,13. "And may the Lord cause you to be full and to overflow with love to each other, and to all, even as we also to you; so as to establish your hearts blameless in holiness before (Greek 'in front of') God, even our Father, at the coming (Greek 'presence') of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his holy ones" (saints). Here again we see this same program set forth for the church. Notice, the first thing is a development of godlikeness to the degree of love for the brethren, as Paul loved them. Note also that St. Paul admits that this godlike love was his blessing and nothing more, until the establishing of our hearts at the presence of our Lord. St. Peter refers to this same godlike love that we should attain, upon the basis of which the godly love should be received. He says, "Having purified your lives (souls) through obeying the truth (this is the way God causes it to be done by you) unto unfeigned brotherly love, love each other from the HEART, intensely." Note that the heart love is set forth as something above the soul love. Here, in St. Paul's advice to the brethren at Thessalonica, he gives us the same line of thought, and shows that the heart condition will be attained at the presence of Jesus Christ, and that it will be received when we are before God, ushered into his presence as the Royal person who went in to greet and inspect those who had come into the wedding supper before the real feasting had started.

Note that it tells us that we should be caused to abound and to overflow with love for each other and for all, for a certain purpose, and that purpose is that we, with all the saints, should be established in our hearts, blameless in HOLINESS before, or in front of God, at the time of the presence of Jesus Christ. The literal rendering of the Greek text reads as follows: "In order that your hearts will be set fast (established) blameless in holiness in the presence of God even our Father, at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints." If the word for presence is translated "coming," the thought is that the saints are coming with him, but since they will not ascend without us, the last members, they will not come with him, but will be with us at this wedding supper wherein our hearts will feed upon God, and thus be established in real HOLINESS as God is Holy. Just as the wedding guests were all invited and the number was full before they had feasted upon the wedding supper, SO ALL THE SAINTS WILL BE UNITED AT THIS GREAT FEAST UPON THE GLORY OF GOD, in his presence, at this time.

## The Wedding Supper Prepared, but revealed in the Last Time

Still more illumination along this line is afforded us by the statement of St. Peter as recorded in 1 Pet. 1:5. We quote, "Who are guarded by the power of God, through faith, for a salvation PREPARED to be revealed in the last time." Note well that this salvation is PREPARED, ready, to be uncovered or revealed in the last season. We have often found this salvation to be presented as our being taken to the divine nature, but this cannot be what St. Peter has reference to in this verse, for this matter is set forth in the preceding verse, where it is presented under the form of an inheritance that is incorruptible and unfading and which is preserved in heaven for those, who are kept through faith, FOR THIS SALVATION that is ready or prepared. This same word "prepared" is used in the wedding supper parable of Matt. 22. There, in verse four, it states, "I have prepared my 'to ariston' entertainment -- best meal. This "salvation" and this "best meal," are only other terms referring to the "wedding supper," the feasting upon the glory of God that is to be revealed in this last time and which delivers us from the old creature, godlikeness, into the new creature, godliness. What could be more honorable and wonderful than to be seated at this wedding supper and to feast upon the glory of God?

This glory of God is to be our salvation in the sense that it will be the condition of heart to which we shall be delivered, from the state in which we find ourselves as old creatures. This new creature condition is the only condition that is safe for eternal life. God can have but one standard of salvation; and this condition of heart-likeness unto himself, wherein his glory -- love -- is the fixed condition of our hearts, can be the only thing he can countenance for any and every intelligent being on all planes.

This salvation is prepared, ready, to be revealed in the last time in that God has carried his plan sufficiently far into reality that now his glory can be seen therein by those who are looking for it. All this glory of God has been placed in operation, in the giving of his son into death; and in the offering of this privilege of dying with him, unto the church; and their participation therein; and the glory that he has exhibited in exalting Jesus to the divine nature; and of his laying down his life on our behalf; and our promise of that same nature if we lay our lives down in the same way and to the same end with Jesus. These are the things referred to in the parable in the statement, "I have slain my oxen and my fatlings." Now, since the spirit has guided us into all the truth, is the time for it to get into our hearts. Can we not also see that it had to remain until the "last time" for its revelation? The entire plan of God must be brought to our attention and the entire spirit of God must be displayed, and when that is accomplished, then, and not until then, can it be properly revealed.

Notice too, that this class is garrisoned, or kept by the power of God through faith. They must be kept in such an attitude of heart that when the glory of the Lord is to be revealed unto them, they will be influenced thereby. Faith has this keeping power, and as their faith kept them in righteousness, their piety prepared them for the salvation that was ready to be given them in its own proper season.

Verse six shows that they rejoiced in this salvation even though they were subjected to trials that were at times severe; for it was proving them as to their steadfastness and loyalty. These are qualities that one must have, and they must be proven qualities at that. If they should prove to be such, then, the next verse shows that, AT THE "REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST," it would be found unto praise and glory and honor. This praise and glory and honor will all find its realization in the wedding supper which will be a feasting upon the most glorious truths with which God could honor us, and it will result not only to our praise from him, but also to his praise from us.

In verse thirteen, we are admonished to "hope perfectly for the GIFT that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Yes, this gift will be the greatest thing that God can bestow upon any one. God has nothing more valuable, nor more rejoicing of heart than his Holy Spirit; and he has promised to give it unto us, and, if we hope perfectly we shall finally receive it. Since hope is made up of expectancy and desire, we cannot hope perfectly unless we embody both these qualities in our hoping for this gift. We must acquaint ourselves with God's spirit if we are to desire it, for God will never give, as a gift, that which is not desired. Some of his people, in name, do not care for it and are not in the least interested in these things. All they desire is to get the divine nature; his spirit is of no interest to them. We cannot expect this gift unless we have lived up to the requirements for its be-

stowal. So the requirements, and the method of its bestowal are things that should be of vital interest to us. Then, when we have lived up to these requirements, then and then only can we say we are hoping perfectly for that gift.

The word translated "gift" in this instance, is also translated, elsewhere, as the words grace and joy. Since we realize that grace is help or assistance, we can see some reason for so translating this word; for the real help or assistance that God has for us, is the joy we get out of our knowledge and fellowship with him. Joy is the greatest strength of character that any one can possess, and, therefore, is the greatest assistance God can give us in the doing of his will for us; for he is not looking for accomplishments as his aim for us at present, but for that "be-thou-faithful-unto-death" attitude that must characterize our lives. Now, as we have previously presented this matter, the joy of the Lord is to be our strength, and this joy of the Lord is nothing other than joy in the Holy Spirit; and this Holy Spirit, the spirit of God, is the thing that God will reveal unto his church at the wedding supper. It is this spirit that is the glory of the Lord which is to be revealed at this wedding supper. It is our privilege, as you no doubt have been experiencing of late months, to enjoy a view into this glory of God, as he has been spreading it before us in setting forth the various graces of love. If these have been to your unspeakable and unsurpassed joy, then you have already been entering into this joy, and God has been giving you this gift that is to be bestowed at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

#### The Oil of Joy not the Pentecostal Blessing

Jesus was, we are told, anointed with the oil of joy, beyond or above, but not over, his brethren. He has always been over them and needed not to be anointed to that position. But he has received anointing to a degree that is beyond that which we have thus far received. He received the oil of joy in his anointing, but we did not, until recently. Now, at the revelation of Jesus Christ, the church is also being blessed with this oil of joy, for the "gift" that is to be received at this time is nothing other than the "joy" that is to come to us at this time of the wedding supper. What is a gift if it is not to be a joy? If it is not a joy in some way or other, it is no real gift; neither is it a favor, nor of any assistance or help. This wedding supper is the greatest gift God has for us, because it is the greatest blessing or favor he can bestow upon us and it is the most heart-rejoicing thing he can present unto us. Now is the grandest of all times, for now God is giving this grandest of all gifts unto those who can receive it, pictured in Mary choosing that good part, and which was not to be taken from her.

#### Heart Enlightenment to come after the Millennial Dawn

Notice how pointedly this thought of a great blessing to come to the church is given us in 2 Pet. 1:19. "And we have the prophetic Word, more confirmed, to which you do well, taking heed, as to a lamp shining in a (Greek) filthy place, till the day dawn, and the Lightbringer may arise in your hearts." Does this not tell us in unmistakable language that when the great Millennial Day dawns, that will be the time when the Lightbringer shall arise in our HEARTS, not in our minds. If we will be careful about our self-examination, we will find that this Lightbringer has arisen in our minds, but it has been only recently that he has arisen in our hearts. Really, we did not know what our hearts were until he came and cleared this matter up to our understanding. If the Lightbringer was not to arise in our hearts before the day dawn, then we can see that it HAS NOT BEEN THE BLESSING OF THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED BEFORE OUR DAY. To them the Word of truth was a lamp shining in a filthy place, and as the day dawned the light became more evident, and the real light did not appear over the horizon of our lives until the Lightbringer arose in our hearts. The light that is ours just before the sun rises, is comparable to the light of truth that was given us through Pastor Russell, constituting the early rain; and the light arising within our hearts now, to the illumination on spiritual matters God has given us of late, since we have entered into the joy of spiritual relationship and an understanding of love as it is seen in God. God is the real Lightbringer, and until he arises within ones heart, real day has not yet come to him.

#### The Body to be Complete before Growing up into the Anointed One

Now let us see what a clear setting forth of this program St. Paul gives us in Eph. 4:11-15. Here he tells us of God's provision on our behalf, in that he gave us the apostles and prophets, and that this



qualified us to serve the truth to others until the whole body of Christ was made full; and that we were then to be built up in love after we were no longer babes in doctrinal matters. Here are his words; "And he gave indeed the apostles and the prophets, and the evangelists, and shepherds, and teachers, for the complete qualification of the saints for the work of service, for a building up of the body of the Anointed One; till we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God, to a full grown man, to the measure of the full stature of the Anointed One; So that we may be infants no longer, tossed and whirled about by every wind of that teaching which is in the trickery (Greek, "die" -- singular of dice -- or "gambling") of men, by cunning craftiness in systematic deception; but, being truthful in love, we may grow up in all things into him who is the head -- the Anointed One."

Can we not draw from these simple and plain words the conclusion that the Lord has given us apostles and teachers and prophets for the complete qualifying of the saints so that we can minister the truth unto one another until the body of Christ would be full? In this way they build each other up in faith and knowledge, the same faith and knowledge that the Son of God possessed. It is then set forth that after we all have attained unto this unity of faith and knowledge, so that we will no longer be tossed and whirled about by error that is man's gamble and is systematized, that then we can grow up into Christ, our head, in all things -- all the things of the Holy Spirit.

When had the truth been so fully set forth that we all could come to a unity in faith and knowledge of the Son of God, but since Pastor Russell, as God's mouthpiece, has finished his work? Is it not since then that systematic deception upon the part of Satan, in the use of terms and Scripture passages, and a gamble with man's own ideas, has been the temptation of the people of God? Have not some been blown about like babes in a wind, and knew not what they believed nor what to believe, nor whether they had been taught truth or error? Those who are so whirled about by other teachings have not that foundation of truth upon which to build the character of love, or through which to receive the spirit of God. But those who have this knowledge of the Son of God, have that which will assist them to grow up into him who is our head, yes, to grow up into him in ALL THINGS. How can those who do not have this knowledge build upon a foundation that they question?

But this growing up into him in all things is not only dependent upon having the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, but there is something else that is very essential thereto, and without this all the rest is of no avail. This necessary thing is "being truthful in love." This does not refer to our inability to present the truth properly; nor, as the Authorized Version states it, "speaking the truth in love," for the presentation of the truth to others is not what causes us to grow up into Christ. The only thing that will cause us to grow up into Christ in all things, is to be truthful in our love. It is possible to deceive ourselves as to our loving one another. If our lives do not show forth that love to the extent that we lay our lives down for one another, then we are not truthful in love, for we are confessing more in our words and testimonies than we are showing forth in our actions. St. Peter tells us that we should purify our SOULS unto unfeigned love for the brethren, and this counsel that he here gives us is just another way of telling us that we can love one another with a feigned or hypocritical love, one that is as Jesus states when he advises, "Love not in word, but in deed and in truth." Here again we are advised to love not in word, implying that we may simply be loving in word, and that there might be no love at all in us. When we insist on our own way, cause division in class, and commit other evils just because we want our wills done, our love for the brethren is not truthful love. True love manifests itself in deeds, not in words only. All such have now been sifted out of the true church. This is a point upon which we should probe ourselves deeply, for it is that which may cause us to lose all, even though we have all the rest of that which is needed.

If we do not love truthfully, or are not truthful in our love; we cannot see and appreciate the love that God displayed for us and, therefore, we will not rejoice therein and cannot grow up into Christ, the anointed condition, in all the things that the Holy Spirit has to place or implant within our hearts. It is by awakening ourselves to an appreciation of our human love for the brethren that we have a basis upon which to be impressed with the loveliness of the Holy Spirit in respect to loving the brethren. What is true of brotherly love, as we have stated above, is true of all that there is in love. If our humility is of the assumed or affected kind, we are hypocrites and cannot love that quality when we see it in another, if we can see it in another. All the expressions of our lives must be truthful, and if

love is really behind them all, then we have the one and only basis for true godliness.

Then, with this equipment of sincerity and godlikeness, we MAY become godly, by growing up into him, the head, in all things. But it requires our endeavor and the directing of our hearts and minds into this spirit of God to attain unto this most desirable end. Similarly, St. Peter tells us that after we have purified our SOULS unto unfeigned love for the brethren, through obeying the truth, we should see to it that we love one another with a pure HEART, fervently. Is this not something to awaken unto, this difference between heart love for those whom we love with unfeigned love, and this love that we have gotten through obedience to the truth? We are so liable to think that this love we have acquired, through the obedience to the truth, is the desired END; whereas, it is only the beginning, a foundation and basis upon which this real heart love, the love of God, is to be acquired.

Can we not see that the members of Christ must grow up into him in all things, after the body has become FULL, and after it has attained unto the measure of the full STATURE of the Anointed One? When a man wishes to become a pipe-organist, he must become a full grown man first, for a child cannot play three manuals of keys, manipulate all the stops, play the pedal pipes with his feet, and regulate the swells and pedal controls that are required to properly play such an instrument. But can any one of adult size play such an organ? Does it not take MUCH practice to be able to play with both hands and feet at the same time, with ones eyes on three sets of notes? It is only when these feet and hands have grown into such harmony with what is recorded upon the brain through the eyes, or what originates there, that this accomplishment is possible. Practice finally unites all into such close relationship with the brain, that whatever the brain sees or feels, musically, the hands and feet perform. The thoughts of harmony in the head are expressed perfectly by the feet and hands. Just so we must become in tune with our Lord, by getting so vitally united with him, by growing up into him, that his spirit becomes our spirit, and we will then all express his spirit in our actions. This is to be attained only after the Christ has attained maturity or completeness of bodily growth -- when all the members of Christ are gathered into that anointed condition. This growing up into him will be brought about in the blessings of the wedding supper, after the members of the wedding party are all gathered into the banquet hall.

#### Sanctification of Church after Cleansing and Completion.

It is only when we have this line of thought presented to us and learn that this is the program of God that we begin to see that it is very frequently brought to our attention in the Bible. Eph. 5: 26; is another place where we can find this same matter presented. We quote from the word for word rendering of the Diaglott. Referring to the church or congregation as the bride of Christ, St. Paul states, "So that he might sanctify her, having cleansed (her, or the members, or us) in a bath of the water by a Word." Notice that he is not speaking of the church as individuals when the sanctifying is to be brought about, and notice, also, that this sanctification is to be brought about after the cleansing is complete. This church has been gathered throughout the Gospel Age, member by member, and has thus been purified, as to their souls, by obedience to the truth, which is here presented as a bath of the water of the Word. Then, having cleansed her in this way, he sanctifies her, and we are told elsewhere, that this sanctification is through the spirit.

#### Unfolding Spiritual Things unto Spiritual Ones

We have been so material in our conception of matters, that we have been inclined to place a material construction upon the spiritual portions and promises of the Word. The translators were as materially minded as are we of today, and, therefore, their slant of mind in that direction has tintured their renderings of the spiritual passages so that the reader is predisposed to get material thoughts out of them. The MATERIAL or PHYSICAL PHASE of God's greatest work is the MOST INSIGNIFICANT ELEMENT of that work. By this we mean that in the making of the new creature, God is least interested in the material aspect thereof. Some will be of the divine, others of the lower spirit natures; and still others in the human form; but the new creature in each instance will, of necessity, be the same identical thing. So it is the spiritual, the new creature, in which God is so much intrested; and it is in respect to this spiritual part of the future new creatures, that practically all references in the Bible are intended to apply. Why should God dangle before the eye of his children a glory of body and nature, when that

glory has a tendency to absorb the attention he wishes to center on the spiritual things of his character? His chief interest in us, at this time, is to center our affections and joys upon the things of love and not upon the glory of the future bodies and nature that he has for us. God must have the most hearty co-operation on our part to create or implant in our hearts, our affections, the things of his spirit; but the creation of the body, in which that heart with its affections and its accompanying individuality is to be placed, is a most INSIGNIFICANT part for the Almighty.

An example of thus taking a material view of spiritual information and instruction is seen in the verse we herewith quote: After informing them that he was going to prepare a place for them he adds, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again, and will receive you to myself, so that where I am you also may be." John 14:3. This verse has always been interpreted to teach that at the second coming of Christ he will take us unto himself in heaven, and that we shall forever be where he already is -- in the divine nature. But we think that there is a far sweeter and more heart-rejoicing interpretation to it than that. His going away was to prepare a place for us, so that sinful, fallen beings, will have a place with God; for there was never a place in that house of many mansions where an imperfect being could stand before God. Now, throughout this age, the church has thus stood before God in faithfulness and consecration, demonstrating their loyalty to God. But now the time has come for the bridegroom to return, and he is receiving the wise virgins unto himself, and it is since his return as the bridegroom that we are being admitted into the wedding supper; and it is our present privilege to be where Jesus was when he spoke those words unto the disciples of that time. Note well that he did not say that we might be where he WILL be, but that we might be where "I AM." Where was he at that time? Was he not here in the flesh where the rest of the disciples were? Yes, he was in the flesh, materially speaking, but spiritually, he was in a condition in which no one was at that time, nor has been since, until his return as bridegroom. That condition was such relationship with God that he could see God as he is; see his glory of character, understand the difference between godlikeness and godliness; see this godliness portrayed in its sublimity and grandeur in the plan of salvation; seeing love in all its graciousness and beauty. This is the condition in which Jesus was, and until the glory of God appeared, our blessed hope, Tit. 2:13; no one was privileged to see this glory. Now, since Jesus has returned in his glory of character, with the glory of God, all the wise virgins can enter into this wedding supper with him and thus be in the condition in which he was, at the time he spoke these words, and still is. If the careful student will read this verse thoughtfully, it will be apparent that Jesus wished us to be in that condition in which he was at the time he spoke those words, not where he would be, but "where I AM."

This same matter was again repeated when our Lord offered his high-priestly prayer, as recorded in John 17:24; where he prays, "Father, those whom thou hast given me, I wish that where I AM, they also may be with me; so that they may behold my glory, which thou didst give me, because thou didst love me before the foundation of the world." Here we see that Jesus wished to have us with himself, where he then was. This desire was to the end that we might behold his glory, certainly not the glory of body, for if he had intended this to refer to his glory of nature in the kingdom, we know that we shall possess the same glory as does he, and there would be no reason for his desiring us to see his glory nor to parade it before us, for we shall possess it in like measure. But when we realize that the glory of character is here referred to, and that it was the glory he then possessed, we can see that there is some real reason for so praying; for if we can be in that same relationship with God as he then was, we can understand this glory of the new creature, God's glory, and it will implant that glory within our hearts.

Jesus supplements this statement of his prayer with the words, "Because thou didst love me before the foundation of the world." Jesus was not standing before God as a godlike being. He occupied a position before God that was heaven-high above such a condition. This humanity of Jesus, from the standpoint of its godlikeness and perfection, was not a matter of God's consideration any longer, for he was a new creature in his sight now. Old things had been side-tracked and behold new things had arisen, and these new things were out of God. It was these new things in Jesus that God so loved. God saw this new creature of Jesus Christ long before the world was ever started, and this was such a joy to him that he was willing to endure all if only he could implant it into the heart of his son, and thus be the means of implanting it into the hearts of all his intelligent creatures finally. We can now see why Jesus wished us to behold his glory, for it would set God's ideal before us, and in addition thereto, display the glory of God before us for the implanting of these same graces of love into our hearts.

Now, reverting to the similar statement in John 14:3; made above, it should be clear that the thing Jesus desired was that we might get into this relationship with God, that he possessed while he was here in the flesh; for he stated that it could be attained when he would come again and receive us to himself. Then, the conversation following, down to and including verse seven, shows that while Jesus tells them they know whither he is going, and they know the way, they show him that they do not know, and then he admits that they did not know then, which demonstrates that he meant it in a prophetic sense. He shows that they did not then know, for he says, "If you HAD known me, you would have known my Father, and from NOW you know him and have seen him." Yes, if they ever will know God, or ever will see him, it will be from the things that were THEN being accomplished; and some glorious day, not far distant, all the church will say, "Well, we see now that all there was of glory and grace to see in God was revealed in Christ as we SAW him; yet, since we did not understand Jesus when he was with us, we did not see the Father; but since he has come and has taken us unto himself, and we are now just where he was when he was here, we see the Father, and his glory, and it sufficeth us; for our cup of joy runneth over, exceedingly."

### Spiritual Begetting to be Followed by Spiritual Birth

This material sense, which makes us seek material interpretations rather than spiritual ones, is our great hindrance in getting God's viewpoint on all matters. If we can put a material interpretation on a passage of the Bible, we think we have all there is to get out of it, but we are only missing the real blessing that it contains for us. We formerly thought that our begetting was to a nature, and that the new creation was creating in new material; but God has graciously opened our eyes to discern that we are begotten to a new creature condition of heart, and that the body has nothing to do with the new creature. Thus we see now that the begetting should be viewed from a spiritual standpoint and not from the material or body point of view. Just so it is with the matter of being born of the spirit. Here again we have taken the material aspect of the matter instead of the spiritual. If the begetting is through the Word of truth, and not to a spiritual nature or body condition; so the birth of the new creature cannot be to a nature or body condition, for the birth is only a maturing of the begotten condition. If the begetting is not to nature or body, the birth cannot be to nature or body.

This entire new creature condition is a spiritual matter, but not from the point of view that it is spiritual material. The new creature is the hidden man of the heart, begotten there and born there; and the body in which this begetting and birth takes place has nothing to do with the matter of its being begotten or being born. To prove that the new creature needs not be born into a new body to be complete, we see that in the next age, those of the world of mankind who will be begotten by the Word of truth, will mature as new creatures in the bodies they then possess and they will occupy them as the body of the new creature forever -- they will be born, as new creatures, into the same body in which they have been begotten. If we are to be begotten by the Word of truth, spiritually, and then must be born by getting a new body, it would be contrary to St. Paul's setting forth of this matter as his letter stated to the Galatian brethren, "Are you so thoughtless? Having begun in spirit, are you now being made perfect in flesh?" If we have been begotten in a spiritual way, are we born in a material way? Gal. 3:3.

When Jesus addressed Nicodemus, who came to him by night, he told much along this line, stating that he must be born from above if he would see the kingdom of God. And when Nicodemus showed his ignorance of spiritual matters, Jesus told him, "Truly, indeed, I say to thee, if any one be not born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." It appears that there are two factors in this matter of being born from above; namely, water and spirit. Now we know that the WATER represents the TRUTH, through which we are BEGOTTEN, and if we do not get God's SPIRIT out of this truth, we shall never be BORN as new creatures. When this spirit of God has been shed abroad into our hearts, then we are new creatures as much as we ever will be, and no change of body is needed to make this matter complete. We know of no Scripture that even hints at, or implies that a new body is necessary to make a new creature.

Jesus then adds the statement, "That which has been born out of flesh is flesh, and that which has been born out of spirit is spirit." No one is born on the spirit plane, for Jesus tells us that the angels do not marry, nor are they given in marriage; so the spirit beings are not pro-created, but are direct cre-

ations of God or his agencies; no birth condition being necessary. From now, can we not see that Jesus was not speaking in reference to birth on the plane of spirit nature? But there was one who had been born of the spirit, and that was Jesus himself, he had been begotten by the Word of truth, and had been born of the spirit; for the full spirit of God had functioned to complete him as a new creature. In the wilderness he had partaken so freely of this spirit that it had completed its work in him. Just so it is for all his body members; they must be begotten by the Word of truth, and when the proper time comes, they all will be born of the spirit into the completed new creature condition.

Then Jesus tells Nicodemus of natural things, illustrating the spiritual in that way; but Nicodemus does not believe, for he is a natural man, one who cannot receive the enlightenment on spiritual matters. He tells him of the wind blowing where it wills, and that one can hear its sound and not know about it; whence it comes nor whither it goes. Just so it is with one who has been born of the spirit and becomes a new creature. Such a new creature is not comprehended by the natural man, his strength is an unknown quantity. His peace and joy, and his confessions are heard but not understood. The natural man receives not the spiritual things, for they are to be spiritually discerned, and they are foolishness unto him. Nicodemus, being a natural man, even though he was a teacher in Isreal, remarked, "How can these things be?"

#### Jesus Had Ascended into Heaven before his Resurrection

To show that Jesus was one who had already been born of the spirit, and had been begotten sometime previously thereto, he tells Nicodemus, "Most assuredly I tell thee, that what we know we speak, and that we have seen -- discerned or experienced -- we testify, and you receive not our testimony." Certainly, if Jesus was telling about being born of the truth and the spirit, he must have known whereof he spoke, and testified to what he had discerned or had seen as his experience. He then adds, "If I told you of earthly things, (using them as illustrations as I did the wind) and you believed not, how would you believe if I told you of heavenly things?" (not comparing them to earthly things of which you know.) Jesus then makes another statement that is very spiritual in its application, and which we have always taken as referring to the material, it is; "And no one has ascended into heaven, except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man." We have always explained this as showing that no one prior to Jesus' time could have gone to heaven; but this is not the thought intended here, for it is strictly spiritual in its meaning. Jesus tells us that no one has ascended into the heavens but himself. Now we know that at the time this was uttered by Jesus he had not ascended, bodily, into heaven; and if some one wishes to argue that he had reference to his ascending into heaven from having visited the earth on his ministrations previous to his becoming a man, we will ask how the Son of Man, something he was not at that time, could be said to have thus ascended into heaven.

Jesus, here, has reference to his ascension into the spiritual relationship he had been elevated into, in being begotten by the Word of truth. This constituted him, spiritual. The Bible tells us that no one had ever ascended into this spiritual relationship with God before this time, and he was the first one to be so elevated and blessed. The church is referred to as being seated with Christ in the heavenlies. Eph. 2:6. These also have been taken up into the heavens, as was Jesus. No spiritual body or change to spiritual nature is referred to in this statement, merely the spiritual condition that one is in when the consecrated one is blessed with spiritual relationship with God. Some manuscripts add the expression, "which is in heaven." Now, while this is not found in what is supposed to be the oldest one, the one considered next oldest contains that expression, and it is also in many other early manuscripts. If we see that the heavens, here referred to, is nothing other than the condition of spiritual relationship with God, it gives no wrong thought to add this expression, "which is in heaven," for Jesus was in that spiritual or heavenly condition at that time.

#### The Church to see Him, while she is still here in the Flesh

We may place a material interpretation upon 1 John 3:2; but does this fully line up with the facts in the case, as the rest of the Bible sets them forth? We here quote it. "Behold! now are we children of God, and it has not yet been seen what we shall be. We know, however, that if he shall appear, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." If, at the appearing of the Lord, we are all

to be made like him in body nature, there would be no need of the advice stated above, 1 John 2:28; where we are counseled to abide in him that we may have confidence. Why do we need confidence at that rewarding time, if the verse refers to our body nature? Our change to divine glory of body will not be when our Lord appears, but when we shall be caught away for a meeting with the Lord in the air. 1 Thes. 4:17. But we are told that Jesus "shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and at his kingdom." 2 Tim. 4:1. We can draw from this statement that the living are to be judged at his appearing and the dead at his kingdom. The living are the members of the body of Christ, who will be judged at that time, and the dead are the world of mankind who are dead in trespasses and in sins. It is because the final judgment of the church is to take place at that time that we must have confidence when he appears. Yes, the appearing of our Lord will be the critical time for us, and all who love his appearing shall receive the crown of righteousness. 2 Tim. 4:8. This appearing of our Lord will be an undesirable time from every viewpoint but one, and that one will be the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Tit. 2:13. If we are so related to the Lord that this appearing of his glory will be a joy to us, that joy can be in nothing other than in the revealed glory of the Father and the Son. If we love that appearing and have great joy therein, we are being changed by that glory into the same image that we see therein -- godliness.

A careful reading of the second chapter of 1 John and down into this third chapter, will reveal that Jesus is not referred to as APPEARING. He is not even mentioned, but God and his glory is that which is to appear. God's appearing will be nothing other than love appearing, as it is now becoming our blessed privilege to see and understand it. If, then, God shall appear, his glory will be revealed to us, and also that of the Christ; for they are one and inseparable in this glorious particular. We, who see this glory and rejoice therein, will be affected thereby, in that it will implant itself into our hearts. In that way we shall become like him, and that is through seeing him as he is. Do we not realize that we cannot become as God is unless we see him as he is? for we all, in a face unveiled, Christ's face, behold the glory of the Lord, God's glory, and are changed into that same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3:18. Now, if we will be free to confess our knowledge of what a new creature is, as we formerly possessed it, we will have to state with the Apostle, that it had not appeared to us what such a thing is, for we had no spiritual conception thereof; thinking that it was our old godlike qualities brightened up somewhat, and then placed in a divine body to which we were begotten by the spirit; and when the birth of that new creature would come to pass, this new creature would be completed in that the divine body would be its everlasting habitation. This, we thought, was a new creation in that no one had ever been created in a divine body, previously; and, since it was created in new material, it was something new, and, therefore, a new creation.

Now, with such a conception of matters, can we say that it had appeared unto us what we were to be? If we can so state, we fear as to whether the one so stating knows now what a new creature is. But those of us who know how little we knew along this line, and have now, by God's grace, had our eyes opened to see what it means to be godly, really can say with the Apostle, in the past, it has not yet appeared what we shall be. Now, since it appears what our Lord is as a new creature, and we have seen the glory of God, as it has been revealed unto us recently, we know just what we shall be as new creatures; and while we see this glorious new creature state of our Lord, and see that which is the glory of God, the Holy Spirit in all its glory, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, and are being made as he is.

If reference is here made by St. John to the matter of no one seeing what a divine being is, since we are to be made of that nature, the statement is incorrect; for did not St. Paul see the Lord Jesus in his divine body, emitting a light that was above the brightness of the sun at noon-day? and did he not carry that proof of his having seen the Lord, as one born out of due time, until the day of his death, in the form of poor eyesight? With all this evidence, and the added thought that the Bible was written to be our spiritual guide book, rather than to cater to our curiosity by informing us of the things which we need not know, can we not take the spiritual application out of this verse and get the blessed thought of what a grand spiritual blessing is to be given us at this time? Yes, a correct view of this matter awakens us to our privileges at this time, so that we can see God and the bridegroom and enter with them into the wedding supper.

## The Reward of the Church, SPIRITUAL, not Spirit Nature

But, asks some one in great surprise, did not the early church have the Holy Spirit? Was not the Holy Spirit poured out upon it at Pentecost? This question may present itself in many different forms, but no one of us can know more about it than what the Bible informs us, and we do well to confine our answer on such matters to what the Bible has to present thereon. No one will attempt to argue that the early church did not receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, for it was poured out upon them in a miraculous manner. The miracles and signs that accompanied its pouring out were for the specific purpose of recording this most momentous matter. But whether they received the spirit as the oil of joy, is another matter, one upon which we should be slow to speak, and quick to hear what the Bible has to inform us therein.

The Bible tells us that Jesus was anointed with the oil of joy beyond his brethren, Heb. 1:9; not above them, in the sense that he is the head over the church; but in the sense that he received something beyond what we have received when we received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This oil of "extreme joy," as the Greek word brings it to us, is that which thrills the heart to the greatest and grandest degree possible; and if our greatest joy is in the truth or in the possession of the divine nature, there is something radically wrong with us. God is the most joyful being in the universe, originally, and this joy is in the Holy Spirit. Jesus was inducted into this "extreme joy" when God poured it out upon him during the forty days in the wilderness. The church is to be inducted into the same "extreme joy" at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 4:13. Jude tells us that we are to experience this same "extreme joy" when we are placed blameless before the presence of God's glory. Jude 24. Note that in neither case is the joy mentioned as dependent upon the change of nature, but upon a vision of the glory of the Holy Spirit, the glory of both the Father and the Son; and the same Greek word is used in all these cases.

Now, to ascertain what the Bible has to say about the early church in regard to this matter, we will take up for examination the seven stages of the true church as they are recorded in the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation. In each one of these churches their good and their bad is mentioned, and then in the final statement their reward is set forth. It is these rewards that we wish to examine, particularly; for here, where we have previously made a material application, we find spiritual things are referred to. In connection with the first church, Ephesus, we read, "To the conqueror will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." Rev. 2:7. Naturally enough, we would reason that the tree of life that is in the paradise of God, would represent the source of the divine life or nature, but we now think otherwise.

## The Wood of Life in the Paradise of God

Immortality is something inherent, and is not received by partaking of something to produce divinity. If we get immortality it will be in a body which has life welling up from within, and neither implanted nor supported from without. The life referred to in this Scripture is not the material life, but the spiritual -- new creature life. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. Without feeding upon this kind of food, no one will ever be permitted to exist on any plane; so it is clear that this knowledge of God is the prime essential. When one has this, God will supply all the material blessings so that this one may be continued in life eternally. This statement, "The wood of life in the midst of the Paradise of God," seems to be an allusion to the garden of Eden and its life sustaining trees from which Adam was ejected; and because of such ejection the death penalty went into effect. The tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, is symbolic language, for it is this knowledge of God and Jesus Christ which gives spiritual life, the new creature condition. This is the glorious hope to be realized at the appearing of the glory of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. So, those who were conquerors over the spirit of the world, flesh, and devil; in that they lived separate from impiety and earthly desires, and lived righteously, prudently, and piously in this present age, will be permitted to see this glory of God and Jesus Christ; and then they will be as he is in character, for they will see him as he is. Tit. 2:13.

The Greek word translated "tree" in this instance, literally means "wood." Some translators suggest that the "word" wood is to be understood as a generic word for a group of trees, all of which are trees of life. We quite agree as to this, for we realize that the glory of God will be seen not only through

Jesus, but also through all the rest of the members of the Christ. It is now our blessed privilege to see the spirit of God as it has been, and still is, exercised upon and toward us, who are the members of the Christ. God's spirit of mercy could never have been displayed unless the church, taken from the sinful human race, had been included in this body of Christ. So, we can eat of this fruit of the Holy Spirit as it appears in connection with the fallen members of the body of Christ. This word "wood" may also have special significance in calling attention to the humanity of the church, as that through which this Holy Spirit is to display itself. All future generations of the age of ages, will have to partake of this knowledge of God, which is eternal life unto all, in studying the spirit of God as it has been manifested through the entire Christ, while in the human nature.

#### The Garland of Life versus The Crown of Life

Unto the church at Smyrna, the second stage of the true church, the promise was, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life." Rev. 2:10. We were formerly taught that this crown of life was the highest form of life, immortality. This was arrived at as a conclusion based upon an erroneous supposition. The wrong supposition was that the word "crown," here used, was a correct translation; and that since the crown of anything is the highest point, the crown of life is the highest form of life. Just because one meaning of "crown" is the highest part of a thing, is no reason that every use of that word has the same significance. The Greek word here translated "crown," is more properly represented by the words "garland" or "wreath". These wreaths or garlands were given as rewards for victory in the games of the ancient Greeks.

The giving of a crown of life is equal to the statement; the giving of the reward of life. This life is not to be understood as material existence, but the spiritual life, the same as we have set forth in connection with the first stage of the church. The following verse, eleven, bears out this interpretation. It states that "the conqueror shall not be injured of the second death." Now, to be hurt of the second death, implies the possession, only, of material life. The goat class, who are sent into this second death, at the final judgment, had perfection of life from the human or material standpoint. To be not injured of the second death means more than perfection of life, for one must meet up to all of God's requirements and ideals. This is life as God counts life. One need not have divine or immortal life to be uninjured by the second death, for all who have life in the sense of having the spirit of God in their hearts, will never be so injured. All who have perfection of being and do not have the new creature condition, the spirit of God in their hearts, will be destroyed in the second death.

#### The Hidden Manna is Incorruptible Spiritual Food

Unto the third stage of the true church, Pergamos, he promised, "To the conqueror, I will give of that manna which has been concealed; and I will give to him a white pebble, and on the pebble a new name engraved, which no one knows but he who receives it." Rev. 2:17. When the children of Israel were fed in the wilderness, by God giving them the manna, this manna appeared upon the vegetation round about them in the form of little white particles, like dew. When Israel saw this they had many questions to ask relative to it, and so it was called manna; which means "whatness?" referring to these questions. Doubtless, many just ate all they could and were not aroused to ask any questions relative to it. These were the thoughtless, the materially minded, the unappreciative and unthankful, the avaricious. This manna corrupted very readily, and when a new supply was on hand, the old was wormy; and this was the case whether it was one day old or whether it was two days old, as it was over the Sabbath. Since none fell upon the Sabbath, there was sufficient given on the day before to last over the Sabbath. Some of this manna was gathered and placed in a golden pot, which pot was placed in the Ark of the Covenant. This manna in the golden pot did not become wormy, but remained fresh as long as it was in that pot. It is in allusion to this hidden manna, hidden away from the Israelites in general, that reference to it is made in the citation above quoted.

Jesus, speaking of this manna, tells his disciples, "Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, and died .... I am that living bread who has descended from heaven, if any one eat of this bread, he shall live into the age." St. John 6:49-51. In our third study of the preceding series we discuss the eating of



this body, or bread of Jesus, and how it was possible to eat of it unworthily. Those who ate of the body of Jesus, and did not imbibe the spirit that prompted the Father and the Son in that sacrifice, ate of it unworthily, and, therefore, ate unto condemnation. This class consists of those who appreciate all that they can of Jesus merely in a material way, willing to be delivered from death through his death; but does not consist of the class that joins him in his spirit of giving himself on behalf of others. They eat the manna, and do not ask the questions regarding it that makes it the true "whatness" -- manna -- that comes down from heaven, causing them to live forever.

The spiritual "whatness" that brings life is the answer to their questions, relative to the literal dying of Jesus, that reveals God and his Holy Spirit unto them. If we receive a one hundred dollar bill in the mail (with no clue as to who sent it) do we receive it without a question as to who sent it? or why he sent it? or what his motive could have been in sending it? or half a hundred other questions? We are more desirous of an answer to these questions than we are of that which the money will purchase for us in a material way. Just so those, who have these questions relative to the blessings brought them through the dying of Jesus for them, get an answer to these questions, and that answer is nothing other than a revelation of the spirit of God unto them. This spirit that is behind the gift of Jesus for us and to us, is the real manna that came down from heaven; for eating of the material blessings of his life is only a means to the one end of giving us the spirit that prompted the Father in giving him for and finally to us as the head of Christ, and is, therefore, the gift of his spirit unto us. This hidden manna or "whatness" is the hidden life that is in the blessings of Christ. If we get nothing other out of Jesus than the merit of his life, given to free us from condemnation, we will die just as the Israelites did who ate the literal manna. But, if we eat of this hidden manna, we will feed on the spirit of the truth, and this will cause us to be born of the spirit, and to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

This hidden manna was secreted within the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. This ark represents Christ. There is some hidden food in the Christ that is incorruptible, and that food is the answer to all our questions. And nothing other than a revelation of the spirit of God will do this for us; for the spirit will guide us into all truth, also spirituality. The wedding supper was a feasting upon the slain oxen and fatlings, which represent Jesus and his body members. There is something hidden in this life and suffering of the Christ that is inexplicable to the natural man, but which is answered to the spiritual man getting to know God. We might have a philosophical understanding of all this, but the spiritual understanding is the hidden manna that lies therein for our feeding. Merely partaking of the physical blessings of Jesus' death without receiving his spirit therefrom -- hidden manna -- will not give eternal life unto any one. To those who eat of this hidden manna now, whether here or in the kingdom before the new age fully dawns, unto these is guaranteed participation in the Ark of the Covenant as members thereof, in so doing; for in them will be this same spirit that the hidden manna represents, and they will be the channel or the receptacle that will hold it forth to the rest of God's intelligent beings throughout future ages. This Christ will contain the answer to the great "whatness" of all things -- a revelation of God's Holy Spirit.

Fresh manna fell each day and what fell today became wormy tomorrow. But since none fell on the seventh or Sabbath day, that which fell on the sixth day and was intended for the seventh day did not become wormy. This indicates that no truth will come during the seventh thousand year period, and that which is for the seventh day falls on the sixth. This truth will not corrupt, for it is the spiritual and eternal truth of God's Holy Spirit. This incorruptible manna calls to our attention the same thought as does that which was in the Ark of the Covenant. Our presentation in "Watchman What of the Night," with reference to light (truth) being darkness, when spiritual light is offered, is fully in harmony with these thoughts. He that hath spiritual understanding let him consider.

#### Our Greatest Blessing, Hidden in that Which is Most Common

The conqueror was to receive a white stone in which was written a new name, and which no one knew but the one receiving it. The word translated "stone," is the Greek word for pebble. It referred to a pebble worn smooth from handling. In olden times pebbles were used for voting, for adding and subtracting, and other arithmetical purposes. Use wore them smooth. This stone, or pebble, used so much that it became smooth, beautifully calls God to our attention. What is more often used than the word, "God?"

It is used by the most fallen "in vain." Some use it so often, they know not that they use it. It is used as a word of exclamation. In all oaths it is used. In refined society, "My Goodness," "Gracious Me," and "Mercy," and all such are substitutes for the name of only One who is good and gracious and merciful. In the streets and alleys we hear the expressions, "By Golly," "Gosh," "Gol Darn," and many other variations of these substitutes for the name of God. It is used in so many ways, and has become so smooth from usage that it slips off the tongue more easily than any other word. They use his name in joy and in sorrow, in anger and in sport, in excitement and in peace; yes, it is the most common word in the language.

This, which has been so much in use that it has been worn smooth, like the pebble referred to above, has a name engraved on it, and a new name at that; and that new name is the new understanding of who God is. This new name is indicative of the fact that we have gotten to know LOVE as something far beyond what we had ever dreamed it to be, in the way of goodness. That which is most common has turned out to be that which is most precious, and we have found out that we have in that which is our ever present associate, the most glorious, the most desirable and the most rejoicing as well as the most essential source of blessings. This is not only our present blessing, but it will be to those who overcome at any time. How thankful we should be for this marvelous-beyond-all-credibility blessing that is now our portion! Have we received our taste of the hidden manna? Have we our white stone with its new name engraved? Do we know that name, which no one else knows but he who receives it?

#### The Morning Star Comes at Break of Day

To the Thyatira stage of the true church the promise was given that the conqueror would be given the morning star. Jesus told us that he was the bright and morning star, the one who would bring or usher in the new day. By this is not meant the Millennial day with its blessings, but the new day of the new life, the life of the new creature, that comes as a blessing upon the Millennial blessings, which are reckoned to us now, and is to be actually given to the world in their day of visitation. The morning star has no light in itself, but merely reflects the light of the sun that is just behind the eastern horizon. It thus heralds the new day until it is swallowed up in the full light of that dawning day. As a star must receive before it can reflect the light of the sun, so this church must be blessed with this light direct from God through this morning star, before it can become a part thereof for reflecting the light of God into the hearts of the world of mankind when their day dawns, sometime down in the Millennial day. There is no Holy Spirit to be received from any one other than from God, and so we are to be only reflectors of that glorious light. To this end we will be given the morning star office after we have had its service rendered us. Through the infinite goodness of God, exercised upon us, we can see his spirit; and the world in due time will also see that spirit when they see what it has done for us.

When the world shall see the church in its glory and office, it will not be long before they will see that it was nothing other than the goodness and love of God that exercised itself on the church's behalf, and upon it that made it what it shall then be. This will be the morning star arising in their hearts, and when this is fully seen, then the sun of that eternal day will be shining into their hearts forever, and the glory of the morning star will have vanished in that greater glory of God himself. Finally, they will see that the glory of God is not the glory of the material being that he is, but that it is the glory of that magnificent principle of love. As the light of the sun prevents us from seeing the sun, so the glory of God's love will outshine his glory of body -- power, wisdom, and justice. This is exactly that unto which God wishes all to attain. This is the condition in which he is, and his modesty and unselfishness will not be satisfied until it shall be so in respect to us.

To this church was also made what appears to be a material promise. To the conqueror will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. This church, Thyatira, endured much persecution, and the Lord gave them comfort in this statement, assuring them that this would not be so forever. Some day the tables would turn and a better order would exist, and then they would have the privilege of having them within their power so that their desire upon their enemies might be their pleasure, which pleasure would be their blessing them with better treatment than they had been accorded by them; overcoming the evil that was in them by lavishing good upon them. Is this not also a wonderful reward; the privilege of overcoming your enemies by blessing them.

## White Garments not the Robe of Righteousness

Unto that stage of the church known as Sardis, the promise to the conqueror was that he should be clothed in white garments (plural), not with a white robe. Rev. 3:5. White always represents righteousness, and when applied to the church in its present state, represents the robe of Christ's righteousness. But the conqueror is now in the condition in which he needs the robe of Christ's righteousness no longer, for he has been faithful unto death, and this old body of sin has been forever laid aside. He will be awakened in the divine body, and will then be clothed in white garments. These garments represent the righteousness of the new creature; and, as you will note, are not given until in the resurrection morning.

It will be noted that garments are an addition to the body. The body is a beautiful piece of handiwork, when in its nearly perfect state, as some bodies are at the present time, for it reflects the work of God. Beautiful as it may be, it is proper to clothe it, and these garments that we place upon it are entirely foreign to the body -- added things, especially for the purpose of adornment and beauty. After they will have received their life, the bodies of the resurrected saints are also to be covered with these garments. No godlikeness will glory in God's sight, be it human, angelic, or divine; all must be covered with godliness, just as the body with its natural beauty must to be clothed in garments.

The Revelator tells us that the white garments are the righteousnesses (plural) of the saints. Some translators translate this to read "the righteous acts of the saints." There is no warrant for this translation, and it must be apparent to all that there is no sense to it, for God does not clothe us in acts. Each grace is an item of clothing, and all put together make the garments of the new creature. Since the garments are added to the body, it is evident that these righteousnesses are not inherent in the body; but are some things added thereto, something outside of the body. These righteousnesses that are not body righteousnesses are the new creature righteousnesses. Rev. 19:8.

These white garments will be received in the form of the wedding supper, as are all the other rewards of the various stages of the church. St. Paul speaks of the crown (reward) of righteousness that will be given to him and to all others who love his (God's) appearing. When Christ appears, all is trouble and sorrow, only his beauty of character revealed is to be rejoiced in and loved. So if we love that event, it shows that we love God's Holy Spirit and value it above all else, all that is passing away. Yes, when he appears, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is. His righteousness as a new creature will implant its righteousness within our hearts. Thus, the graces of the spirit, which are his glory, will be imparted within us as we see them and rejoice therein with extreme rejoicing when his glory is revealed unto us.

## Spiritual Pillars in His Spiritual Temple

Unto the Philadelphian stage of the true church, our Lord stated the promise in the following language. "The conqueror, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall never go out more; and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the new Jerusalem -- that coming down out of heaven from my God; and my new name." Rev. 3:12. (Diaglott) Pillars are a very important part of a temple; in fact so necessary that when once they are placed in the temple they are not removed. This is the promise that is here given; namely, that these pillars in God's temple shall never be removed. Upon this pillar, referred to in the text, will be written the name of God. This means that the conqueror will hold forth the name of God. The name of God stands for what he is. To have the name of God written on the conqueror means that God will implant his spirit within his heart. Can one think of looking upon a pillar upon which the name of God is written and not have God called to his attention? Just so the church class will be such an impression of God's spirit that every one thinking of them will see and have God called to his attention. Since there will be one hundred and forty-four thousand such pillars so inscribed, can one come into such a temple without having God called to his attention?

The new Jerusalem, as St. Paul informs us, is the one from above, and is the mother of us all, and represents the Sarah covenant. This Sarah Covenant is the mercy covenant through which we are being begotten and developed, and represents God's love and mercy. God is writing this love and mercy into our hearts by putting us under the motherly care of this mercy covenant. Thus we have the name of the

New Jerusalem, mother of us all, written upon us. When they see us they will see love and nothing else, so fully will God write this into our hearts. We are yet informed that Jesus will write his new name on us, so that we will be recognized as a part of him, and all our individuality be lost, submerged in this great Christ. This word Christ means anointed, and signifies being anointed with God's spirit. So all this in regard to having names written upon us, is one and the same thing in the final analysis, except that it brings different features that are concerned therewith, to our attention.

#### Spiritual Blessings offered Laodiceans before Death

To the last stage of this true church, Laodicea, he states a different promise than he does to any of the rest. This is not a spiritual promise, but purely a material one. It reads as follows: "The conqueror, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne." Rev. 3:21. This seems to be the only material promise made to any of the stages of the church with the sole exception of Thyatira, to whom he made a similar promise, but that was in addition to the spiritual one of giving to the conqueror, the morning star. To this last stage no spiritual promise is given. We account for this by reason of the fact that to this stage of the church the spiritual blessings, which are promised to the conquerors, are given before they pass from this scene of activity, for this class passes into the wedding supper before it is changed in the twinkling of an eye. In this particular the present stage of the church differs from all the other stages of this true church. Note that to this stage our Lord Jesus does not promise to come, but tells them that he is at the door and knocks, and that unto him who opens, will he come in and sup with him -- partake with him of the wedding supper.

The members of this stage of the church are counseled, by Jesus, to buy of him gold tried in the fire that they may be rich, and white garments that they may be clothed, and eye salve that they may anoint their eyes so they may see. Rev. 3:18. The eye salve seems to picture the truth which has been offered unto us that we might see what God wills to do for us and through us. If we apply this properly we can see what God desires us to see. The white garments must represent the same things here that they represent when used in reference to the Sardis stage of the church. In the case of the Sardis stage, these white garments were promised to the conqueror, but in the case of Laodicea, it is offered to them before death. Does this not prove that whatever the garments represent is to be given the earlier stage of the church in the resurrection, and to this last stage at the present time? Elsewhere these white garments are called the righteousness of the saints. This is somewhat the proper translation of the Greek text, which is mistranslated by the statement, "the righteous acts of the saints." Rev. 19:8.

These spiritual Laodiceans are counseled to buy white garments from our Lord that they may be clothed and that their shame be not manifested. The question may arise as to how only the present stage of church needed these garments in their earthly condition, and why the shame of the other stages of this true church did not appear if they had not these white garments, which were to be given them when first they should be awakened from the dead? We offer the following as an answer. One feels more or less shame when clothed out of the current fashion of the day. Should a sister in Christ go down the streets with her skirts dragging the pavement, with bustle and hoop-skirt, together with leg-o-mutton sleeves, and other styles of yesterday as her adornment; would it not be a shame for her? Just so it is a shame for one to prance around in his natural godlikeness when the white garments of the new creature are the decree of the fashion maker of the Pleiades. When God has established the style in the garments of godliness, and this clothing is to cover and put out of sight the natural beautiful(?) godlike selves that we are, it is a shame to be naked, or not wear these garments of God's providing. It is not a shame to go in bathing using the present style of abbreviated and rarified bathing suits, but enter a pool or beach with a suit of ten or twenty years ago, and see how you will feel. When God has provided the new creature garments it is a shame for a Christian (?) to be seen as nature endowed him with natural godlike graces.

To explain our relationship with God, and to show that all the righteous things we have as new creatures are dependent upon God, the statement is made, "Buy of ME gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." Was ever such a bargain offered unto any one? -- to make an investment that would make one rich without a gamble. Remember, it is not stated that we should do a little gambling, or that we might happen to become rich; but, that we WILL become rich if we make the investment he counsels. One may answer that he has not sufficient money to buy enough so that he may become rich, but we answer

that if we invest all we have in this transaction we will receive enough gold so that we shall be rich. It is thus evident that we can become rich if we simply take his advice and buy all the gold that we can. This gold is nothing other than that which makes God rich in what he calls riches. If one should gain everything and not benefit the inner man with the things of love, Lu. 9:25; he would be poor indeed. **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THAT WHICH MAKES ONE RICH INDEED, AND OUTSIDE OF THIS THERE ARE NO RICHES.** This is the gold that is offered unto us. This gold has been tried in the fire to prove its genuineness and its indestructibility. So, if we invest all that we have in the acquisition of this rare wealth, we will be rich as God counts riches.

This gold represents the character of God, the divine character. But let no one think that the divine character is due to the fact that God possesses the divine nature. Love is not divine in this sense, for the love of God will finally get into every heart that has intelligence as its foundation for perception. We call it "divine love" because it has had its fountain head in God; and is eternal in that it will never be conquered, being that which God esteems above all else, and that which he values to the extent that he will promote it in any heart, in which it finally makes its abode, with unending life and power. This character of God, love, has been tried in the fire. Yes, the fire of evil, suffering, and sacrifice, and each has made it only shine out the brighter, as fire does with pure gold. The permission of evil throughout the past six thousand years has been a furnace or fire that has proven this love of God. God has had to manifest each and every grace of love, for evil has brought it into operation. The spirit of God or his whole spirit has been necessarily put on display and called into action by all the varied and various unpleasant circumstances and conditions that sin has brought into existence.

Now, if we will invest our time, our intelligence, our powers of reason, and our godlike qualities, we will become rich. Our Lord will give us sufficient of this gold so we will be rich. Never has there been such an offer, and now, since all of this spirit of God has been placed on exhibition, this investment will give us a full endowment of this spirit so that we shall be rich indeed. No counsel like this was given to any of the previous stages of the church. They will get this same spirit at the wedding supper for they were faithful unto death, and are conquerors, to whom only it was promised. But we can enter into this joy of God right now, before we have finished our earthly career. If we are faithful in acquiring this gold, and these garments, we shall sit with Jesus in his throne as he overcame and was seated with God in his throne. This will be the material blessing of all to be rewarded as conquerors and to whom these promises are to be fulfilled at the resurrection when they are ushered into the wedding supper. "Let him who hath an ear, hear what the spirit says unto the congregations." If the SPIRIT is speaking unto the congregations of the true church, then the ear that hears the spirit is the ear of spiritual understanding, and it is not to be materially interpreted, nor grasped with the natural mind.

There is a thought that seems to find credence with some Bible students; namely, that the seven churches of Asia Minor have reference to the church that is here in the flesh at this time, in that it pictures seven phases of its present existence. Whether this be true or not we are not inclined to express our opinion, but we have some doubts in this direction. It is hard for us to reason in that way since we see that the foregoing thoughts incline us to view those seven churches as respective pictures of the seven stages of the true church down through the Gospel Age. The seventh or last church, as it is set forth by the Revelator, seems to be so different in its relationship to the Lord and his blessings, that we cannot harmonize it with the above suggested view.

There is one thing common to all the stages of the church, and that is that all are promised spiritual blessings. To the first six those blessings are contingent upon their being conquerors, and to the last they are offered before their resurrection. To all these first six, with the exception of the second stage, the Lord promised TO COME unto them; but to the seventh stage he announces himself as BEING PRESENT -- standing before the door -- being desirous of entering to sup, partake of the wedding supper with them. There is a slight rebuke in his words, "I HAVE stood before the door and I knock." (literal Greek) Since the wedding supper was to be held just previous to the marriage, and all were to be at that marriage supper, and the parable tells us that the supper was not enjoyed until the feast was full and the guests inspected, can we not see why this same spiritual blessing of the Holy Spirit, the character of God, was a thing that was promised to the conqueror all the way down through the age? and that it was a thing to be given the members of the last stage of the church before their death? Since this

contrast does exist, and is so marked and so indicative of what is set forth above, we cannot look with favor upon the thought that these seven stages represent seven groups of Christ's church now in the flesh.

Since God has nothing other to give than his Holy Spirit, all the rewards to these different churches are just another way of alluding to the same thing. Each member of that true church will get just what every other member gets. The greatness of it is brought out in the seven ways of reference to it, thereby bringing different features of it to our attention. All are to get this blessing at the wedding supper, the six stages in the divine nature, and we, the last stage, here in the flesh, after which all are to be taken at one time to meet the Lord in the air.

### The Sealing of the One Hundred Forty and Four Thousand

In the seventh chapter of Revelation, this matter of sealing the saints is presented for our information. Our preconceived ideas of the program of God in this regard have caused us to interpret the presentation out of harmony with the setting given it in the chapter. Here, between the accounts of the opening of the sixth and the seventh seals the sealing of the saints in their foreheads, is narrated. The sixth seal, presenting the impending destruction of organized churchianity and society as they now exist, is set forth; and then the seventh chapter opens with an account of the sealing of the saints and the things related thereto. We shall now attempt a cursory study of this matter, because it has a bearing upon the wedding supper, which is our subject. In fact, we think that the saints are sealed in their foreheads by being blessed with the spiritual enlightenment that this wedding supper affords.

The first verse of this seventh chapter of Revelation shows us that the setting of this matter is in the very time in which we find ourselves today. Are we not living in a time when it seems that the final trouble is about to break upon society? Do we not at times think that the trouble has already started? Well, be assured that it has not, for this sealing of the saints has not yet been accomplished. Therefore, this mentions the "Four angels standing upon the four corners of the earth, restraining the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." Therefore, neither society (the earth) nor the restless mass of mankind (the sea) have yet been hurt by matters as they are at present; and the green trees (the religious leaders and other great ones in the earth) have not been blown upon that they may be hurt, up to the present time. When these winds of real trouble blow upon the sea, it will rage against the earth and engulf it in a great tidal wave, destroying practically all that is on the earth. We know that this is not yet being permitted, for the sealing of these saints has not been accomplished up to the present time.

### The Angel who Does the Sealing.

The second verse introduces the one who is to do the sealing, by stating: "And I saw another angel ascending from the sun-rising, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it is given to injure the earth and the sea, saying, 'Injure not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.'" We have wondered why this angel is not mentioned as coming down from heaven, since we think it refers to our Lord coming to bless his people. But, as we study into this picture, we find it wonderfully in harmony with other statements in the Word, that have reference to this very time and work. We refer to the statement, which we have to some extent examined above; "the Lightbringer arising in your hearts." St. Peter tells us that when the day dawns, THEN, this Lightbringer shall ARISE in our hearts. Jesus, as Christ, is the morning star introducing this Lightbringer; for he is mentioned as "the bright and morning star." And, unto the conqueror of Thyatira was made the promise that he would be given the morning star. The understanding of Jesus, as a new creature, is this morning star that has arisen in our hearts.

This angel ascending from the sunrise is the Lord Jesus, as A NEW CREATURE, revealing spiritual things unto us in that he has revealed what a new creature is, and thus has reflected to us the light of the new day. This morning star reflects the light of the sun, not yet appearing upon the horizon, and so the church is to have this early light shed into their hearts in the form of the wedding supper, preparing them to be the bride of Christ at the wedding. The knowledge of spiritual things imparted unto us, recently, is the seal this angel has and with which he is sealing all these servants.

Seals of olden times had either a likeness of the king or else that which represented him, his coat of arms, so cut into the seal that when it was impressed into wax or other receptive material, it left the image of the king, or that representing him, thereon. This "morning star," reflecting the light of the sun, the source of all light and life, seals us with the spirit of God which he has already received and is now and has been reflecting it into our hearts since the day has been dawning. This sealing in the forehead tells us that we are sealed in having an intelligent grasp of spiritual things. The spiritual things we thus grasp are the spiritual things of God's Holy Spirit. In Study Two of Series One, we took up the matter of the heart, and think that we there demonstrated successfully that the heart lies within the intelligence, here pictured by the forehead; that each organ of perception has its intelligence as well as its heart faculty. If this were not so, how could we be sealed in our intelligence or intellect?

If this angel, ascending from the sun-rising, refers to our Lord Jesus, now, at this dawning time of the new age, and he holds the winds of trouble that they blow not UNTIL he shall have sealed the servants in their forehead, the entire one hundred and forty and four thousand; then we must draw the conclusion that these servants have not been sealed previously in the meaning of this specific sealing. The fact that it is the time for the day to dawn, and the time of trouble, necessarily being held back -- for when was it ever held back before -- and the further fact that the Lord is pictured as coming with this dawning day, unmistakably shows us that all the saints are now to be sealed in their forehead, and, therefore, were not so sealed previously. If we cannot draw these conclusions then we must lay aside our reason and intelligence in the study of the Word; and if we do this how will we then be sealed in the forehead?

When the angel bids the four angels to hold the four winds until this sealing is completed, we can know that as long as anarchy is not rampant within the masses, and as long as society and the great leaders of this old order are dwelling safely, that this sealing work is still in progress and not yet finished; for they are to be held only until this sealing work is completed. So let us not concern ourselves about the trouble coming; for, if we are of this class, nothing will prevent the work being accomplished within our hearts, and we can peacefully present ourselves for the completion of this greatest of all works.

#### Sealing unto the "Redemption of the Purchase"

Some one might think that the saints were sealed during the Gospel Age, as is referred to in Eph. 4:30; but it will be noted that this sealing is for, or unto a day of redemption. During the Gospel Age, the saints were sealed with the truth, which they were then given as meat in due season. This truth sealed them against the onslaughts of the great Adversary until God could deliver them by a birth into the new creature condition, which is the blessing of the wedding supper. This same thought is again presented in Eph. 1:13, 14. Here the translator makes it read, "with which ye were sealed." But there is no word in the Greek text for "with," and we think that the word, "by," is a better word to set forth the meaning intended. This is in harmony with the above statement on this sealing; namely, that it is "by" the spirit that we are sealed. If we are sealed "with the spirit," it implies that we have the spirit as a seal, but "by the spirit" means that it is the spirit that does the sealing, but with whatever it may use to seal us.

In 2 Cor. 1:22 the statement is made that God "has sealed us, and has given the pledge of the spirit in our hearts." In Eph. 1:14 we are told that this sealing by the Holy Spirit is "a pledge of our inheritance in a redemption of the purchase." From these two statements it appears that we can draw the conclusion that the inheritance referred to is the reception of the Holy Spirit, because the pledge refers to both. If this is so, then the sealing is the result of the spirit of God operating to-us-ward to the extent that it becomes an assurance that we shall finally have the spirit of God placed into our hearts. The real sealing with the Holy Spirit, the placing of God's spirit within our intelligences, thus influencing our hearts, is a matter of the immediate future and the present; -- the future for the saints that have gone on before, and the present for the saints that are still in the flesh.

The "day of redemption" or "redemption of the purchase" are terms that may easily be misinterpreted by the unthinking. These terms refer to the great blessing that is to come to the church when they shall be freed -- "loosed off" as the literal Greek translation implies -- from all the old selfness that is clinging so tenaciously to the old creature. This will be when the new creature gets its birth. That of

the sleeping saints will be at their wedding supper; whereas, we now are being privileged to receive our portion therein. It has no reference to the blessing of justification, for it is a loosing off of that which has been attracted unto God -- literal Greek, "made about" himself.

### The Pledge of the Spirit -- the Truth

A pledge is something that guarantees the fulfilment, at some future time, of that which has been promised. Titus 2:13 tells us that the blessed hope is the appearing of the glory of God and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and that when this glory appears we shall be blessed by being changed into that same glory. The pledge of this glory is that which places us in relationship thereto so that we can hope to that end. And this is the measure of truth that has been given unto us. This wonderful time will be the time of the "redemption of the purchase." This phrase is better represented in the English language by the words, "a loosing off, or deliverance of that which has been acquired, or made about himself." This deliverance, we think, refers to the birth of the new creature into spirituality, not into a spiritual body; but into a full comprehension of what a new creature is; of the difference between godlikeness and godliness; of freedom or deliverance from the bondage we have been under through our slavery to human mindedness, or materialism, or carnal mindedness. This takes place when we come into our inheritance of the spirit of God, when he gives us that spirit that constitutes our new birth. Jesus had been so born when he talked of these matters to Nicodemus, and when we can appreciate just what he there set forth, then we also have been born of both water and spirit. Having been begotten by the Word of truth, this is a pledge to us that we are to receive a spiritual birth. This is the completing of the new creature, and it has no dependence upon the kind of body possessed. The begetting is a pledge of the spiritual birth. Such an one can see the kingdom of God, and can see what is meant when the Apostle states that the "Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." This sealing or being born of the spirit, is the blessing of the wedding supper.

A close study of the matter that closes this chapter (Eph. 4:30; and the opening verses of the next chapter) will show that those sealed unto a day of redemption needed DELIVERANCE, REDEMPTION from bitterness, malice, anger, wrath, evil-speaking, etc., and were to "become imitators of God, and to walk in love," etc.. At the revelation of what a new creature is, and what godliness is in contrast to godlikeness, we are delivered, as new creatures from the bondage of carnality and human mindedness, and possess a joy and peace therein that is really wonderful. Such realize that they are now new creatures in the full sense of that expression, and this knowledge is so clear and emphatic to them that it is their declaration of independence in the full sense from the bondage to the old creature, even though this new creature must exist in the old body for a little season. The deliverance from this sinful body is a blessing that will follow closely upon the complete deliverance from the old into the new creature condition. But let us not overlook the more important one by being too materially minded.

### The Sealing of the Christ in Picture

This matter of the sealing of the saints in their foreheads, and the fact that it is to be participated in when the work of the Gospel Age is over, and is to be enjoyed by the entire one hundred forty and four thousand as one great event, is shown very beautifully and emphatically in type. We refer to the sending of Eleazer by Abraham into Mesopotamia to get Rebekah as a bride for Isaac. Eleazer here pictures the Holy Spirit of God. Abraham (God) sent Eleazer into his own country, to his kinfolk, (those feeling after God) to choose a bride, Rebekah, (the church) for his son Isaac (Jesus Christ). After a long journey, picturing the Gospel Age, Eleazer finally comes upon this maiden, and (having previously arranged with God that the maiden whom he should ask for a drink of water, and who should give him drink and also offer to water his camels) is astonished at the satisfactory fulfilment of his mission. Then the statement is made, Gen. 24:22; "And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold," and these he gave unto her, as is shown in Verse 30.

The marginal note on the word earring shows that it was an ornament for the forehead. Rebekah, who represents the entire church of Christ, received the golden jewel on her forehead. What could be more beautiful, as a picture, to show that after the church is complete, they will receive this golden jewel



of the sealing of God on their forehead. This is the gold tried in the fire, that the "Greater than Abraham" has provided as his gift to the church. Remember it was bestowed AFTER all the camels had been watered, and they were done drinking. These camels represent the organizations with which the Holy Spirit has been associated, and who can go for so long a time without taking on a new supply of truth, water. Churchianity has received practically nothing new since her first drink at the time of the early church. These "ships of the desert" have no seasonable need of new truths. It has been the privilege of the real church to hold forth the word of life unto these church organizations, and, since Pastor Russell has been used to bring us the whole of doctrinal truths, Rebekah has been watering these camels. Tons upon tons of this water of life have been poured out before them by the consecrated for many years, now past. Now they have done drinking, for the Lord's work in this regard is finished. Now the Holy Spirit is sealing the church on their foreheads, and it will have been accomplished before the winds of trouble are let loose to vent their fury upon the masses who have not been ready to drink of this truth which has been offered unto them also. The kingdom could have been set up in peace, without their destruction, if the people would have accepted it. The remainder of this glorious picture we hope to take up with you at some future time, if the winds will be held off long enough, for, we feel it is a part of that which seals the saints, a part of the rich viands of the wedding supper.

#### Jordan and Pentecost -- A Contrast

Then our Lord Jesus was anointed, the record is given us that immediately after coming up out of the water, the heavens were opened and the spirit in the form of a dove descended upon him. Mark 1:10. Thereupon he was led into the wilderness by the spirit, where he remained forty days. When he came forth therefrom, he was prepared for his temptations and the mission of suffering and the dying process, which were his life's work and purpose. Doubtless, while he was in the wilderness, he spent his time looking into these opened heavens, viewing the spirit of God which was his portion. Thus he was qualified for the mission he was to perform.

Now let us contrast herewith the experiences at Pentecost. The Apostles were all assembled in one place and were of one mind, when suddenly there was a sound that came from heaven, like the rushing of a violent wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Divided tongues appeared to them like fire, and one rested on each of them. And they were all filled with Holy Spirit (Greek leaves out the word "the") and began to speak in other languages as the spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:2-4. Do we not see a marked difference between these two manifestations? The heavens opened unto Jesus, signifying the opening up of spiritual things unto him, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove -- a symbol of peace and godliness -- descended upon him. Nothing in common with these symbols and their significance are mentioned in the account of the Pentecostal experience of the Apostles. Unto Jesus the power of the spirit came in the form of spiritual blessings; whereas, unto the Apostles the power was material in its effects and manifestation. The wind in its mighty rushing represents unseen power, and the fire is a symbol of destruction. The closest we can get to seeing any thing spiritual here is to understand that it could signify the destruction of their evil, or the purifying influence it would have in their lives, and purity is not godliness in any manner of consideration or construction. Not a single fact mentioned in connection with the Pentecostal reception of the spirit implies spirituality in the sense of developing godliness, or the graces of the spirit in the hearts of those there present.

We trust that the reader has become sufficiently acquainted with the method God has of giving his Holy Spirit into our hearts to realize that it is through the medium of intelligence, and a quiet and joyful contemplation of the beauty and glory of God's Holy Spirit, as we see was the case with the Lord Jesus in the wilderness. The church was being furnished for "the work of service," so that they "all may attain unto the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God, to the stature of a full grown man, to the measure of the full stature of the Anointed One." Eph. 4:10, 13. Then the Apostle continues to show that they are to grow up into Christ in all things (of the Holy Spirit) who is their head, and who has already received these things of the Holy Spirit in the spirit being given unto him, as was pictured by the dove descending upon him at Jordan. In Eph. 4:7; we are told that each of us was "given favor according to the MEASURE of the free gift of the Anointed One." So it has been during the age. But now is the time when we are to be filled with all things. Thus it appears that the free gift was the blessings we have received from God through the Apostles, which were given to them at Pentecost.

Pastor Russell once mentioned, in regard to these forty days of preparation of Jesus in the wilderness, that if Jesus required so long a time for his preparation for service, would it not be necessary for us to take some time for preparing ourselves for his service, after we have made our consecration to God? The answer is, unquestionably, "Yes." We then ask, why it was necessary for Jesus to take forty days in the wilderness in preparation for his service, whereas no preparation whatsoever was needed for the Apostles, for they began their service immediately. Our answer is that Jesus was completed as a new creature, having been both begotten and born during these forty days, while the apostles were merely begotten and furnished for their work of service to-us-ward, and that by miraculous power. Can we not see in this that there was an entirely different work accomplished in Jesus than there was in the Apostles, and the church through the blessing upon the Apostles, up until now?

### The Typical Anointing of the High Priest

In the eighth chapter of Leviticus, where Aaron is presented as being anointed, he is set forth as having been clothed in his glory robes. These glory robes do not represent the divine glory of body, but the glory of office that the Christ complete shall occupy with respect to the world of mankind. We know that Aaron, so clothed, represents not only the head, Jesus, but also the body with him; for he will not, nor can he so function without the body members added to himself. But while this anointing is taking place, the body members are there with him, represented by his sons clothed in sacrificing garments. We know also that Aaron did not put the glory garments on until the sacrificing of the Atonement Day was over. When all the sacrificing was over and the Scape Goat was led into the wilderness, and turned loose, then the High Priest clothed himself in the glory garments. When Aaron did this he represented all the members of his body with himself, who had taken part in the sacrifices pictured in the Lords goat being sacrificed.

We know now that these pictures are harmonious, and so the time features of the one must synchronize with those of the other. Just so the body of Aaron wearing the glory robes must tally in each of these two pictures. The only way that harmony seems possible, is to view them from the standpoint that we have set forth foregoing relative to the reception of the Holy Spirit by Jesus, and then by his church. Aaron, clothed with these glorious robes and paraphernalia of office, as presented in this eighth Chapter of Leviticus, and being anointed along with the under priests in sacrificing garments, represents Jesus, the head, receiving the Holy Spirit in the form of the dove, as he did at Jordan, and the body clothed thus gloriously represents the state of the body WHEN it shall receive this same oil of joy, which will be when the sacrificing is over, at the time of the wedding supper. The under priests being in sacrificing garments at the time of the anointing of the head, tells us unmistakably that the members of the body were not yet in glory garments, but would receive their anointing when they would be born new creatures, and thus be clothed with the glorious garments. This seems to be in harmony with the statement that Jesus was anointed with the oil of extreme joy beyond his brethren, and that these brethren will be made to rejoice with this same extreme joy at the revelation of the glory of Christ. Heb. 1:9; 1 Pet. 4:13. Consult the Greek text to see that these two phrases "extreme joy" are from the same word in both cases, the one a noun and the other a verb.

### That which is Most Holy is Open

Now we have a few things to offer that prove the facts of the foregoing. With reference to Jesus, the statement is made that the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descended upon him. By this is meant that he had a vision of the spiritual, and in that way he got the Holy Spirit. This spiritual vision gave him to see God as a god of love, and his contemplation thereof implanted that same spirit into his heart. This is the way he spent his time of forty days in the wilderness. In Revelation, we are told concerning the seven angels who had the seven last plagues, that they came out of the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony, which was opened in heaven. Rev. 15:5, 6. In verse 8 of the same chapter, we are told that this temple was full of smoke from the glory and power of God and that no one was able to enter the temple until the seven angels had poured out their seven plagues. To enter this temple means to enter into an understanding of God. This has been impossible in the past, because of the smoke -- confusion or beclouded condition -- that has prevailed regarding him, due to his glory and power. Christians knew that God was all-powerful, but they could not harmonize this with his

glory of love; for they thought that if he was so powerful, why should he allow so seemingly loveless things to take place as have taken place during the past six thousand years? As a result of these two seemingly contradictory aspects of God and his work, their minds were in such confusion that they could not understand God.

Since the seven last plagues have been poured out, it is possible to enter into an understanding of and relationship with God that has been impossible previously. By the "seven last plagues" we have reference to ALL the truths that we have received since we came into relationship with THE truth, having received an introduction thereto through the writings of Pastor Russell. These truths are both doctrinal and spiritual; the doctrinal having come first, and upon this basis the spiritual having been given unto us. Now, as was never before possible, we can see God; for his glory has appeared.

Practically parallel to this, in point of time and associated circumstances, we find a similar statement, Rev. 11:19; "And the temple of God was opened in the heaven, and there was seen the ark of the Lord's covenant in his temple." This statement follows the introduction of the seventh trumpet, which is the trumpet of truth, and which is practically the same as the seven plagues, only viewed differently. This last trumpet is the third woe. The seven plagues are a woe also, to those who dwell on the earth. The temple of God, is the place where God dwells. He dwells between the cherubim upon the mercy seat. This mercy seat is the lid upon the ark of the covenant. This, the only piece of furniture in the Most Holy, represents the Christ, head and body, of which God is the head. To the class who are spiritually blinded, this matter of God being the head of the Christ, has been opened up; first, intellectually, and then, spiritually. Of late years we have received an understanding of this arrangement. Now we see that the new creature, being in Christ, is made up of the things out of God, and in this way God is our head. Understanding God, reveals unto us the secret of the Christ; for "he having seen me, hath seen the Father." If it has not been that, since we have become acquainted with God, we have gotten a clearer insight into what the new creature, Christ, is; it may be that the seven plagues have not done as much for us as they can. Perhaps the smoke is not entirely cleared out of the temple for us, and perhaps our knowledge of the ark of the covenant might become clearer.

Please take note of the fact that no one could enter this temple until the seven plagues had been poured out, or had done their work. If these seven plagues are a recent feature of God's arrangement, then we must admit that none of the church living previously to the time that these plagues were all poured out, could have entered into this which the temple of God represents. This is incontrovertible. Therefore, we are now privileged to enter into that which the early church was not privileged to enter. If we are seated with Christ in heavenly places, in the Holy or begotten condition, for the opening of the Most Holy was into the Holy, then, if unto those in this heaven'y place the Most Holy is opened, it means a vision into the same things that Jesus was blessed with when the heavens were opened unto him. The rending of this veil at the death of Jesus is a prophecy of the blessings that are ours at this very time, for this privilege was not accorded any at the particular time when it happened, for no one was in the Holy condition, for none other than Jesus had been begotten at that time.

#### The Anti-typical Incense Offering for the Goat

In studying the Tabernacle as a type or shadow of the better things to come, we have often wondered just why the incense offering was recorded in connection with the sacrifice of the bullock and why it was not so recorded in reference to the Lord's goat. It was said that he should do with the blood of the goat as he did with that of the bullock, and then it is recorded that he sprinkled it as he did the blood of the bullock. Lev. 16:15. We tried to satisfy ourselves with the thought that the church would be admitted into the Most Holy through the much incense that was left over from that sacrificed by the Lord when he offered his, while here in the flesh; but that will not stand the inquisition of reason. Further, we find that when we understand what the incense offering pictures, we will realize that this cannot be the case, for we must, individually, attain unto all that our Lord attained unto in this respect, for the robe of righteousness does not cover our spiritual incompleteness in any sense whatsoever, even though it makes up for all our physical deficiencies, most thoroughly.

When the High Priest had completed the offering that represented himself, upon the brazen altar, he then

took some coals of fire from off the altar, in his censer, and with both hands full of incense beaten small, he made his incense offering. This was done by placing the censer, with its burning coals of fire, upon the golden altar that stood before the second veil. He crumbled his incense slowly upon these coals, so that the perfumed white smoke would fill the holy, and from its abundance would force its way beyond the veil into the Most Holy, and cover the Mercy Seat, so that he die not when he should enter into that sacred place with the blood of the slain animal, to make propitiation for sins. This incense offering, therefore, represented that sweet manifestation that Jesus had to make before God, upon the sufferings of his human sacrifice. These would receive recognition before God so that when Jesus died in the flesh, he would not be eternally blotted out, but would live as a new creature. We know of NOTHING that was so essential for our Lord to be blessed by God with life, other than the possession of the Holy Spirit -- love -- for without it one is NOTHING, even though he possessed all else. But with it he is all that God desires, even though he possesses NOTHING else.

St. Paul tells us what we must have to be acceptable, well-pleasing unto God. Here are his words; "Now the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy spirit; and he who in these things serves Christ, is well-pleasing unto God and approved of (the) men." Rom. 14:17,18. The men here referred to are the rest of the members of the church, who also know what is well-pleasing unto God and what is necessary to constitute one a member of the kingdom of God. Jesus possessed this righteousness, peace, and joy, as we have abundant evidence. He credited us with his righteousness, and left his peace with us, and spoke all the things that he did so that our joy might be full and his joy might be in us.

This spiritual incense was pictured in the material incense, which was made up of onycha, stacte, and galbanum, with frankincense. These four ingredients were to be in like quantity, and no specific amount; representing that each was to be in perfection, and the supply was unlimited. The frankincense, which was white, and which Hebrew word means white, and which also made a white smoke, represents the required righteousness necessary to be of the kingdom class, and be pleasing unto God. The other three perfumes represent peace, contentment, and joy. Contentment is not mentioned by St. Paul, because it is included in the word peace; for contentment is peace amid distressing circumstances, and peace is that state of calmness and quietness that one is in when properly poised, when there is no disturbing element to upset one. Are not these qualities just what we get from a rich indwelling of the Holy Spirit? And when this joy is the joy in God, or the joy of the Lord, it is full of the graces of love, as we have shown many times before.

Now, when he was anointed, Jesus received these things of understanding, wisdom, knowledge, and counsel, etc., of which the anti-typical anointing was made-up, and through these blessings he has been so furnished and qualified that he could get to know God and understand his purpose for him in so enlightening him, and thereby get his spirit into his heart. This spirit, so received, was then brought into contact with the trials which he, as a human being, in some respects had to experience; and it was caused to ascend up before God as a sweet smell, making him acceptable into the eternal conditions. Then he was awakened in the divine nature, and could present the merit of his sacrifice to God, for the propitiation of our sins, and thus effect our justification.

With the church this matter was differently instituted and consummated, although the results will finally be identical with those attained by Christ, the head. Truth with them has been a progressive matter, a little at a time; each stage of the church getting a little measure of light, and finally the entire unfolding of God's purpose and plan, here in the end of the age. How could they have that knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, together with the necessary counsel if they did not have the truth through which and for which it has been given unto us? Not until all the truth had been given, into which the spirit was to guide us, could the spirit get into us, if this spirit is in the truth.

It necessarily follows, then, that if they did not have the truth with its enlightening influences, they could not have the peace and joy and righteousness of the truth in their hearts. Take your own individual case as an example; how much of the JOY OF THE LORD did you have even after you had all the truth and rejoiced therein? Did not God awaken you to spirituality, and open up to you what the spirit of God is, only recently? Has he not given us an understanding of the new creature of late that we

never had before? 1 Pet. 1:13. Since all the truth is here with us, as it is since Pastor Russell served it to us, we are now where Jesus was when he entered the wilderness and had the heavens opened up unto him. We are now at this golden altar, and have the incense of the righteousness, joy, and peace of the Holy Spirit, with the privilege of offering it to God. It is now, since the spirit has guided us into all truth, that it can and will be in us; a thing that was impossible before all the truth was here.

Before this church can enter into the presence of God, in the full and eternal sense, this incense must be offered to prepare the way, so that they "die not." If Jesus, who was a perfect material being, would have died unless this offering had preceded him into the presence of God, could we, who are imperfect material beings, hope to enter there? But, since flesh and blood will not be permitted to glory in his sight, we must be matured as new creatures, (the body is not here referred to) and without this completeness of the Holy Spirit we can never hope to stand before him eternally. Therefore, it is apparent that this fulness of the spirit of God -- love in all its varied manifestations -- must be the possession of every member of the church of God.

### Incense Offered for All the Saints

Let us now examine a few verses, that relate to this very thing, to see if God has not prepared such a blessing for us in this end of the age. Rev. 8:2-4 reads as follows: "And I saw the seven angels who stand in the presence of God, and seven trumpets were given unto them. And another angel came and stood by the altar, having a golden censer; and to him much incense was given, that he should give it for the prayers of all the saints on that golden altar which is before the throne. And the smoke of the perfume (incense) went up for the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel, in the presence of God."

These seven trumpets have been bugle blasts of liberty, as Pastor Russell tells us. The first six brought no real deliverance; but the last, being the trump of God, brought us the foundation for entire liberty, for it is the truth of God's plan, and this truth can make all free who will appreciate it to that end and so use it. This "angel with the incense" is mentioned after the "seven angels with their trumpets" are very summarily introduced, showing us that this incense offering for the prayers of ALL the saints will not take place until all the seven trumpets have sounded. Now, since all these trumpets have sent forth their message, this offering of the incense, which is for the prayers of ALL the saints, is the blessed privilege of ALL the saints, some immediately, and others a little later. This point will be treated a little farther on in this article.

In these three verses we see how closely these seven angels with their trumpets are associated with the angel with the censer and the much incense. The work of the last angel with the much incense is the most important of all, for the preceding seven are only a means to that end -- the incense offering. If the truth did not have a sanctifying spirit to mature us as new creatures, for what purpose would the truth be? Thousands have the truth, and have devoted their lives to its service, but have they a Christian spirit? Can they not ex-communicate their brethren from their fellowship? Can they not disdain and judge them, and pass them on the streets without even so little as recognizing them? Have they not assigned them to all the punishment and disfavor that the Lord has for those who are doomed to the second death? We must confess that the mere knowledge of the truth has sanctified no one, but that it takes the spirit that is in the truth to implant God's work within their hearts. And until all the truth has been brought out, no one can get the spirit out of it; for no one could enter into the temple of God until the seven last plagues had done their work; and these SEVEN PLAGUES ARE ALMOST THE SAME AS THE SEVENTH TRUMPET, after which the incense is to be offered for all.

After this little summary (the seven angels with their trumpets and the other angel with his censer and incense) is delineated upon in the first five verses of this eighth chapter, the account of the seven angels and their work is then outlined in greater detail. When the seventh angel has sounded, as is recorded in the closing verses of the eleventh chapter, then the work of this other angel is briefly set forth in the very last verse of the chapter. These are the words; "And the temple of God was opened in the heaven, and there was seen the ark of the covenant of the Lord in his temple; and there came lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail."

This ark of the covenant with its cover, the mercy seat, was the throne upon which God manifested his presence by the shekinah glory light. No man could look upon this ark and live, except Aaron, who saw it once a year, and when he entered this sanctuary he pictured the Lord Jesus as a new creature, not as a human being. No human being can see the spirit of the Lord unless he is a new creature, who only is so privileged, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned, and the new creature is the spiritual man. The opening of the temple in heaven, means that the spiritual ones can see into the Most Holy and understand God; get an understanding of his spirit -- the spirit of real love. It is the seventh trumpet that gives us that through which we can see God, but our minds must be directed into it, and this is what the angel, who followed the seven, is to do for us. The results of this service to us are to get us to see what this ark of the covenant is, and that God is the head of this whole arrangement and dwells in and on this new creature class, the church -- on them because he is their head.

Just as the narrative of Rev. 8:5 records the happenings (thunders, lightnings, voices and an earthquake) that follow the incense offering of this angel following the seventh trumpet, just so the opening of the temple and the revelation of the Ark of the Covenant, God's dwelling place, is followed by lightnings, thunders, voices, an earthquake, and great hail. So, after the present work of the church is over, the wedding supper with its blessings are to be received; then the time of real trouble will start, for the winds of trouble will be held only until the servants of the Lord are sealed in their foreheads. We can thus know that the real trouble has not yet commenced, and have comparative peace and quiet to that which will pertain after this work in the church of the Lord will be completed.

Just as Jesus had to offer his incense before entering heaven itself -- coming before God -- so the church must offer her incense before she, as the bride of Christ, can be presented to the Father. She must be offered without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing. For acceptableness unto God in that kingdom of his, we must serve the cause of Christ in the righteousness, joy, and peace of the Holy Spirit. Studies Four and Five of Series One dwell upon these qualities at some length, and show us how essential they are to the Christian character. Joy in the Lord is the most essential characteristic that the Christian will or can possess. It was through this joy that Jesus despised the shame and endured the cross and has been seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, and so we also must rejoice in God to that same end. "Count (Greek, "commandeer") all joy when you fall into divers trials and temptations," is just another way of saying, "Overcome the trials by joy, and upon these coals of human suffering and persecution and self-denial, offer the incense of joy, peace, and righteousness, which will provide an acceptable entrance for you into God's presence."

During these last few years, God has been opening the temple in heaven, unto the spiritually minded of his children, and in that temple we can see the glory of the Lord, for the ark of the covenant, the church with its head, is the complete revelation of God's glory. All his glory of character is set into operation in dealing with them, making new creatures of them, and then rewarding them with divine power in the kingdom. We are now privileged to behold this vision and enter this temple, in the hope that we shall become new creatures in so doing.

Prayer is the heart's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed. This is about the best definition of prayer that we have been privileged to receive. The prayer of the saints has been that they might please God perfectly along this line of character possession; that they may offer unto God such worship, devotion, and adoration as will please him completely. Now, for the first time, it has been the privilege of the saints to see clearly what a new creature is, and to offer praise and devotion unto God as such, which is upon the basis of the knowledge that God has given us since he gave us the truth through Pastor Russell. The Holy Spirit is now getting into our hearts, after having first guided us into all the truth, and, with this Holy Spirit in our hearts, we can offer an acceptable prayer of praise, adoration, worship and thankfulness unto him.

When this perfume or incense will have been offered up by the entire church, then the blood of the goat, anti-typical, which contains the merit of Jesus, will be taken into the Most Holy and be sprinkled for the sins of the whole world of mankind, and then the blessing of all the families of the earth will begin.

## Offering Incense for ALL THE SAINTS

Doubtless, the question has presented itself to the interested and thoughtful reader many times since taking up this article for reading or study; what evidence have we to show that those members of the church who have gone into the death state had not the Holy Spirit in the form of the 'Oil of Joy?' We shall now endeavor to answer this interesting question, and, since no one can know more about this than what can be deduced from the Word of God, we shall confine our consideration of this question to that unfailling and only reliable source of knowledge. We hope that our readers have gotten free from that ecclesiastical frame of mind that hates to have its lid forcibly lifted to receive meat in due season. The fact that you have remained on our mailing list until now leads us to believe that you are not of such, but that you welcome light as it is revealed upon the pages of that true light that leads, and that shines upon the pathway of the just.

We will now present a Scripture that answers this question as directly as if God had spoken the answer from heaven. It should satisfy every child of God, because God could not tell them any more plainly, we think. The parable of the talents that is recorded in Matt. 25:14-30; gives us this answer. The opening statement is that a man intending to travel abroad, called his own servants and delivered to them his goods (Greek, "things extant"). To each one he gave according to his respective capacity, and departed. This, we all understand, refers to our Lord Jesus when he left the earth, and pictures him leaving with those first members of the church the blessings of the relationship with him and God to the extent that they were able to receive them. Some could take more and others less. These blessings refer to the truth which he left with them and which he gave to them at Pentecost when he shed the Spirit upon them. With this they were occupied until they died. Just so it has been with all the saints down through the Gospel Age, (the time this man was abroad).

Then, referring to our Lord's return, as bridegroom, as pictured in the preceding parable, the account states, "After a long time the master of those servants returned and reckoned with them." The larger number of these servants have fallen asleep, and so they must be awakened before they can be dealt with. Unto all the faithful, those who used their blessings in the proper way, the same reward is to be given. Unto these he states, "Well done, good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful in a few things, I WILL appoint thee over many; partake of thy master's joy." Please note there are two rewards; one immediately, and the other in the future. Paraphrasing the matter we might set it forth as follows: "You have been faithful over what few things I have privileged you to use, and so I will make you ruler over many things. I will give you to rule with me in my Father's throne. But right now I have something far more important than all of this, so we will partake of that immediately. The wedding supper is all ready, and this wedding supper is a spiritual feast of the finest things that Jehovah, our Father, can set before us. Let us enter into it immediately. I have been desiring to eat this feasted with you in this kingdom ever since I instituted my Memorial when I left you and came up hither. This feast of all feasts is the partaking of the joy of God. So, without further delay, enter into this joy that has been mine ever since I became a new creature, when I was baptized at Jordan and went into the wilderness. There, with the opened heavens before me, I feasted to the full and have been enjoying this greatest of all joys. Now it is my long anticipated privilege to take you into this same joy with me; so let us immediately enter therein.

"You see, when I made my consecration unto the Father, I was immediately placed upon trial for life, and so God gave me the Holy Spirit in its fulness. Not only did the Spirit of God lead me into all truth, but it also furnished me with the 'Oil of joy.' This is something that I received 'BEYOND' that which you received; for you received only the truth, and that only in a measure, according to the period of the church under which you lived and were blessed. Now all the truth has been given through the sounding of the last trumpet, and all of you can now fill your minds with the entire truth of the plan of God. You need no longer see only in part, but you can see the entire plan and purpose of God. The glorious spirit of our Father as it is reflected and displayed in this plan of his for, not only your blessing, but also for the blessing of the new creature condition for all his intelligent creatures, you also can see. As you see this spirit and rejoice therein, you can enter into the same knowledge or realization that caused God to rejoice during the ages past, since he has formulated this plan. Now be seated at this wedding supper and 'be joyful in glory.' Psa. 149:5.

## The Church in Glory, and We here, Feast Together

"While you are feasting at this most wonderful of all feasts, your brethren, those of your number who also have consecrated themselves unto the will and service of our Father, and who are not yet in the spirit world, but are still in the human state on earth, where you formerly were, have proven their faithfulness unto their vows unto God; and they are singing aloud upon their beds (Heb. banquet-couches). This extreme joy has come unto them some little time ago, because they are still in their frail human bodies, and have so many besetments, and so much human mindedness, having this treasure of the new creature in an earthen vessel, that it has taken them several years to partake of that which you, with your divine bodies and minds, can receive in a very short time. Hence, you have been left asleep until this late hour; and, as soon as you have gotten this joy of the Lord into your hearts, your brethren on earth will have finished their feasting at the wedding supper, and shall be changed to the same glory of body that you now possess. After this, all together, at the same time, we shall be taken for a meeting of the Lord Jehovah in the air, and shall forever be with him. 1 Thes. 4:15-17; (Diaglott)

"This parable of the rewarding of the servants, refers to the rewarding of your brethren, who are still in the flesh, as well as it does to your being rewarded. Faithfulness unto death is not always necessary, for all that is needed is faithfulness that suffices God, and this can be demonstrated under the proper trials and tests. Your brethren in the flesh have stood the tests that have come upon them, and the fact that they are receiving and accepting these spiritual truths, which cause them to enter into this same joy that you are now entering into, is proof sufficient that they have been faithful to our Father. The fact that they accept this most precious truth regardless of the insignificant way it is being tendered them, after the wonderful way they have been given truth previously, is the best evidence that this truth has been properly used by them, and demonstrates their worthiness of entering into this joy of the Lord.

"If you should like to know why you were not given this joy of the Lord, this oil of extreme joy, as I was given it, and, as the members of my body yet remaining on earth, have been given it, I will answer this also for you; for, at the wedding suppers that were enjoyed on earth, and of which this is the great anti-type, riddles and questions were featured, as is recorded of the wedding supper just as when Samson married the Philistine maiden; so at this wedding supper, all your questions will be answered. Here our Father desires for you to be entertained upon all that your heart delights in, and so all the secrets that have been hidden from generations and ages shall be revealed to you.

## Why OIL of JOY was not Given to Early Church.

"Now, let us consider that you of the first stage of the church, had been given the Holy Spirit in the form of the 'Oil of Joy' and had been born of the spirit back at that time; then our Father could not have left you in the sleep of death during these hundreds of years; for he cannot deny his power to one who has the Holy Spirit in his heart. He could not have left a mature new creature in death for almost two thousand years. After I had tasted death, having remained in the death state for parts of three days, he raised me from the dead very early in the morning of the third day, leaving me in death no longer than was necessary to fulfill the required time. It would be altogether inconsistent on the part of Jehovah to create a mature new creature, with heart-likeness unto him, and then leave such an one asleep in death. Furthermore, since you are to be presented unto him as a composite body, the church; and since the incense offering must precede your awakening and entrance into his presence; and the blood of the anti-typical goat, your humanity, cannot be treated other than that of a single body; the church must be presented as a whole. So, the wedding supper, the revelation of the 'Oil of Joy,' the glory of God; which implants the spirit of God within your hearts, had to be deferred until this entire composite body had demonstrated its faithfulness.

"Since you, as individuals, are not the bride which God has selected for me, but are such only as a company, the marriage and union must be celebrated collectively. Therefore, our Father has seen wise to test each ones faithfulness unto death, and then let him sleep until the entire number has been called into the wedding supper; then the grand feast begins. Now, since you are awake, and your brethren on earth are also awake, and these things have been revealed unto them just as they are being revealed to you now; my entire body, the Christ, is feasting together on this joy of the Lord; you, here in glory,



are joyful; and they, still in the flesh, are singing aloud upon their couches, as they also feast upon this supper. Psa. 149:5.

### The Building of Zion through God's Glory

"Do you not remember that our Father told us through David in Psa. 102:16; that when he would build up Zion, he would appear in his glory? Now he is rearing his Zion, and he is also appearing in his glory. This glory is the glory of his character, which he is now revealing unto this Zion class. As this glory is revealed and implanted within your hearts, Zion is being builded. Just like Solomon's temple was reared after all the material was selected and prepared, so Zion is now being reared, after all its members have been selected and prepared.

"When you will have feasted to the full, your birth into the new creature condition will be a completed thing. Your being awakened upon the spirit plane is not your spiritual birth into the kingdom; for that kingdom of God is not principally a material thing, but it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14:17 Now that you have entered into the wedding supper and are entering into the joy of God, which joy is the joy in the Holy Spirit, you can see the kingdom which no man can see unless he is born of water (truth) and spirit (the Holy Spirit). Your brethren are being thus born of the spirit on earth while still in their human bodies, for they are entering into this joy of the Holy Spirit with its peace and righteousness. When one is begotten to spiritual things through the Word of Truth, the birth must be when these spiritual things have brought fruitage in his heart. One cannot be born into a nature as a result of being begotten to spirituality. Having been commenced in the spirit, your completion and birth will be in spiritual things, in relation to which you were begotten.

"Should you ask me why you have been left to sleep while your brethren on earth have been enjoying these spiritual things of God, I will state in addition to what I have set forth foregoing about their human mindedness, and your possession of divine bodies, etc., that God wished to show the world of mankind, who also must become new creatures in their day of visitation, that a new creature is not a material being, but a spiritual one; that it is the hidden man of the heart; and further, to clear up to their minds that they too, can become new creatures in their human bodies. When they realize that the members of the church, became such, while in sinful bodies, amid all the unrighteousness that characterizes the world of today; they can have very strong hope that this treasure also can be placed in their future perfect human bodies, when they get into proper relationship with God and his spirit. Had I taken the entire church into the divine nature and then given you the Holy Spirit in the form of the 'Oil of Joy,' there would have been some things hard, perhaps even impossible for them to grasp about this wonderful matter. But, having allowed your brethren to eat of the wedding supper, and even be born of the spirit into maturity as new creatures while still in the flesh, they can see that the new creature is something entirely independent of divinity, or any other kind of body. Seeing that this wedding supper has produced such wonderful results in them, they too, will be desirous of partaking of this same feast. And that will be their privilege, as one generation after another returns from the sleep of death and is invited to this festival, that will last as long as there is some one to be blessed by partaking of it.

### We Shall not Precede Those Who Have Fallen Asleep

"While they have entered into the reward of spirituality first, they have not entered into the divine nature before you; they were not to prevent ("go before") you. You will recollect in the parable I gave you of the householder, who, engaging laborers even until the eleventh hour, for his vineyard; when the work was done, ordered his steward to call all the laborers and reward them. He was instructed to call first, those who entered his service last, and give them their reward ahead of the rest. Just so, it has pleased our Father to give the reward of his Holy Spirit unto them while still in the flesh. And now you have yours also; and you see he has dealt unjustly with no one. God's gifts are not partial bestowals. Neither are they intended to be selfishly received. He blesses all with his spirit in giving special material blessings to some. In giving your brethren, still in the flesh, the spiritual blessings, he is conferring upon all his creatures the greatest blessing possible. In giving his Spirit unto all through blessing some outstandingly, he confers greater blessings upon all than if they were so materially blessed also.

"When I spoke with you each, while yet in the flesh, through your respective messenger who served the

particular stage of the church under which you each demonstrated your faithfulness, I promised this wedding feast as a reward if you should be faithful unto death. Now you are all assembled in the spirit, all seated at the same wedding supper, and all partaking of the same spiritual food, even though you are not all in your resurrection bodies. Through the Apostle Paul you were informed that the saints, ALL TOGETHER, would be privileged to fully understand the length, breadth, depth, and height of the love of God; Eph. 3:18. This love of God has been fully displayed, and now for the first time, the saints, ALL TOGETHER, have been privileged to see it here at the wedding supper; you in the divine nature, and your brethren in the flesh. This is the appearing of God in his glory, for he is now building his Zion, and all of this Zion class are beholding the glory of God, TOGETHER.

"Were you not promised, through St. Peter, that after you had suffered a little while, the God of all grace would complete you by confirming and establishing you? Yes, you had to suffer unto death to show your faithfulness unto him, and now to complete you as new creatures, to bring you to the birth, you need to be confirmed and established; and nothing will so establish you in righteousness and love, as to feast at this wedding supper -- a feast on love. Here you will be privileged to enter into the same joy that is in the heart of God. This joy is not in the possession of any material thing, for even though you are now in divine bodies, you are still to enter into this joy of the Lord. While this joy lies not in the possession of material things, the possession of the most valuable thing in the universe lies in this joy; for as you rejoice in that in which God rejoices, the Holy Spirit of love, you will have implanted into your hearts the same spirit that God himself possesses. After you have entered into this joy, you shall then be qualified to be made ruler of many things, for God cannot, nor would he, deliver into your power all things unless you possess his spirit. This is the purpose of the wedding supper.

"You remember quite well that while you were still on earth, there was one thought uppermost in your minds, and it constituted your one prayer; namely, to be filled with the Holy Spirit of our Father. While you did not see the length and breadth and height and depth of this desire, yet, you realized that it was the spirit of God and that it was Holy, and your hearts craved it above all else. This craving constituted you the mourners in Zion. None of you have received comfort for this mourning until now. But, now you are being given the oil of extreme joy for your mourning. You here in the divine nature, and your brethren still on earth in their human bodies, constitute the complete number of my body, the church of God. You now fulfill the picture of the golden altar that was just outside the vail, before the Lord's mercy seat, and as it was upon this golden altar that the incense was caused to ascend unto God in type; so from you, as a completed church, this anti-typical incense is now arising to God preparatory to your being presented before the Father.

"Now your prayers for that Holy Spirit of God are finding fulfilment, for, through my agency on earth, I am giving you this blessing as an answer to the prayers of each and every one of you. Thus, this incense is being given to you, the anti-typical golden altar, and from your hearts a sweet incense is ascending unto our Father. When this work has been completed, then I will snatch away from the earth your brethren that are still down there, and together with you, we shall all go unto the Father. There and then I shall present you to our Father as my bride. Thus the merit that I invested in you will again be presented to God and all the families of the earth will be in line for their blessing thereafter."

We wish to state that we have only touched upon this picture. The more complete detail of this incense offering we expect to take up with you at some future time, the Lord willing, when we shall discuss this part of the Revelation of St. John with you. This is our hope at present.

#### The Early and the Latter Rains

As we have set forth in a former study, so we wish to again bring to your attention the matter of the early and latter rains. This statement, by St. James, shows that there could be no fruit without both of these rains. We will give you the correct rendering of the Greek text, which does not appear in the arranged rendering of the Diaglott. "Be you patient, then, brethren, till the presence of the Lord. Lo, the husbandman expects the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it, till it receive the early and latter rain." Jas.5:7. Does this not tell us unmistakably that the fruit will not be matured until the early and latter rains have been received, and that this will be expected when the Lord is present

as the one to receive such fruitage. He did not expect that fruitage until the time of the latter rain, for it takes that rain to mature it. Therefore, we are counselled to be patient until the second (latter) rain, which will mature this fruit. The former rain was given under the blessing extended us through Pastor Russell. Here we received the basis for the spiritual things which are being implanted within us or matured by the second or latter rain which is now descending upon us.

Is it not proper, and the thing intended, that we should expect the fruitage in us when this latter rain descends? and that this latter rain is to come upon us when the Lord is to be present? While our Lord had come long ago to act as God's representative in preparing for the kingdom, he had not come until now to receive this fruitage, for he is now coming to take his bride; and, therefore, is now serving the wedding supper. While this second rain is descending he is present to expect the fruitage. As a result it is now ripening in our hearts. The husbandman waits until we have the early and later rains.

### The Gathering of the Saints unto the Wedding Supper

In the words of David we find a beautiful corroboration of this gathering of the saints to the wedding supper, after the message has gone forth to the whole earth. Psa. 50:1-5. After telling that "The Mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof," which has been explained as calling the world from the morning unto the evening of the Millennial day, but which is not the intended thought, for the rising of the sun is poetical for the East, and its setting, for the West, the gathering of the saints is ordered. The tense of Psa. 50:1; above quoted, is that of an accomplished deed, and not of the future. It, therefore, tells us of something now past.

To show how this calling has been done, the second verse of this Psalm states; "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Thus we see that the Zion class has been God's instrument for calling all the earth, from the East to the West. The "perfection of beauty," the truth, has indeed shined forth, been declared by this class in past years.

While these two verses indicate things accomplished, the next one tells us of future things, those immediately before the door. This is the announcement: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent. A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Yes, the time of trouble shall prepare his way, and in the midst of all this trouble it will dawn upon some that God is tearing down the sinful kingdoms of Satan to establish that of our Lord on its foundation of truth and justice. Verse four then shows that God will judge his people, and the nominal class; and the great company will suffer some severe times; whereas, his own true children shall be blessed beyond their greatest hopes and expectations.

This greatest blessing, taking place after the world-wide proclamation of the truth has been made, and just before the trouble of anarchy, "fire," introduces the kingdom, is recorded in the fifth verse. "Gather my saints together unto me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Notice that the saints are to be gathered unto Jehovah. This gathering, we think, is not a gathering into the divine nature, but unto the wedding supper, which is a gathering of the bride into the completed new creature condition. The "Royal person" who made the wedding feast for his son, is this Jehovah who has prepared for the gathering of the saints unto himself. Being gathered into this intimate relationship with God, gives us his Holy Spirit and we thus become acceptable as the bride for his son. Space, and difference of nature are not separating factors with God. Those who have his spirit are in his presence, and so we are being gathered into his very presence right now, while we are still in our old sinful, and imperfect bodies. Psa. 50:5.

The part of this verse appearing above as "Those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," appears in Luther's translation of the Bible as follows: "Those who regard the covenant more than the sacrifice." This seems to be more in harmony with what we might anticipate. To "make a covenant by sacrifice," is a very illy-illuminated phrase. What we should do is consider the covenant rather than our sacrifice. What we sacrifice amounts to nothing, when we view it as to its intrinsic merit. The covenant reveals God's Spirit, to those who have the disposition to get acquainted with his Spirit, through his covenant. This class can get his Spirit out of his covenant, when this entire matter of the

covenants is cleared up to their minds. It is the truth that clears up these covenants, and now we can get the Spirit of God out of it, and thus be gathered unto him.

### Some Taken and Others Left

Much this same thought is presented where we have again placed a material interpretation upon it and made it to imply our taking on of heavenly or divine bodies. This presentation is in Matt. 24:40,41. There we are told of two in the field and two at the mill, and in each case one will be taken and the other left. The Greek word here translated, "taken," is given the meaning, "to receive near," or "to associate with ones self," by Professor Strong in his Concordance of the Bible. Before the Lord will take us up into the divine nature, he will receive us near, or into association with himself and the Father, in the wedding supper arrangement that he has planned for us.

So it is today. Among the brethren who have received the early rain and have heard the call of the Lord, which was sent throughout the entire world, from the East unto the West; there are those whom he has taken into sacred nearness with himself, and there are those who have been left right where they were, and are still "in the truth," but have made no progress therein. The difference between these two classes is that the one has made the truth their own, and are mourning because they see a wonderful ideal presented to them in that truth into which they cannot attain, but which they love above all else that is precious, even the truth itself. The other class has no such disposition, and when the message went forth that no character need be developed, they rejoiced greatly and turned their attention to almost anything else in the world; the best of them to studying upon the truth of the impending trouble and its chronological features, trying to figure out when the real crash will come. These are "Marys" and "Marthas," respectively.

If you have been taken into this sacred nearness, you will realize it, and no one will need to tell you, for you will know it yourself. If you do not know whether you have been received into this nearness with God, **YOU CERTAINLY HAVE NOT**; and what is more, you have been accorded the privilege by the present Bridegroom. In this case, the best thing that you can do is to cease your surfeiting on worldly things and awaken unto spirituality, asking God to help you. Return to the beginning of these studies and, prayerfully, with undivided affection and attention, study them through again. It may be that you will find him in whom your soul will take "extreme joy."

### The Crown of Glory, When the Chief Shepherd Appears

In harmony with this thought, St. Peter tells us, "When the chief shepherd is manifested (or "shall appear,") ye shall receive the unfading crown of glory." 1 Pet. 5:4. This unfading crown of glory is the glory of the Holy Spirit. The Greek text emphasizes the word, "glory," showing that it is "the glory," God's principal glory, his glory of character -- love. This reward, crown of glory, will be given to all at the appearing of the chief shepherd unto them; and, since he is now present, for his glory is appearing, we can realize the fulfilment of this promise; for when he shall appear, then shall we also be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

### The "Appearing" of Christ is Spiritual, not Material

To show that this appearing is not a physical, but a spiritual one; that it refers to the appearing of the glory of character of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to their glory of person or body, we wish to call your attention to a statement along this line by St. Paul in 1 Tim. 6:14-16; which we shall here quote. "That thou keep the commandment, being spotless, blameless, till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which (appearing), in his (God's) own seasons, that blessed and only Potentate, will exhibit." There are only two things that "which" can refer to in this instance; for it is feminine in gender, and, therefore, cannot refer to Jesus or God; whereas, the words, "commandment," and "appearing," are both feminine in gender. Therefore, it must refer to one of these. Now, the commandment has already been exhibited, for it had been kept, but the appearing has not; so the "appearing" of Jesus is the only thing that can be referred to as that which is to be exhibited in God's own seasons.

It is now the season for this appearing to be exhibited to the bride of Christ. None other than she can see his glory now since it is not the season for any other. But, after it has been exhibited to her, the season will come for the Great Company to assemble for the feast and have the glory of the Holy Spirit exhibited to them. Following this will be the season for the Ancient Worthies and the world of mankind, and somewhere along the line the other angelic hosts will have their season to view this glorious pageant of godliness. Thus each in God's own season will view this appearing of Christ, the church being the first so blessed, the first fruit of this displayed glory of love. While the world of mankind can never see his glory of body, Acts 9:3; 26:13,14; still they will be qualified, through restitution to complete godlikeness, to view all the glory of love, the Holy Spirit, God, through Christ, and the church, and thus be begotten and born into the new creature condition.

### The Oil of Joy Given at the Last

When our Lord Jesus opened his ministry and read from the Scriptures that portion which referred to his message to the people at that time, he turned to Isa. 61; and read the first verse, after which he closed the book, leaving out the rest of that account of his work and message. He did not read about the proclamation of the day of vengeance of our God, nor of the bringing of comfort unto all the mourners; for this was not yet due. These features were reserved unto the day, just passed, when Pastor Russell announced this proclamation of vengeance and brought the comfort for all that mourn, giving them the hopeful message of the restitution of all things. Following this portion of the Scriptures is the message of the present hour: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

The mourners in Zion are they who see, somewhat, the ideal that God has set for the attainment of his approval. They see how far they come from that standard, and, therefore, they are mourners. These mourners are different from all other mourners, and they are to be comforted. They are to be given beauty for ashes -- the beauty of a new hope for the ashes of an expired hope. They have seen all that they once trusted in of truth and spirituality, seem to come to naught; and the instrument God has used to bring them thus far, and through which they trusted that God would continue to guide them safely to the end, little by little lay aside the truth, and entirely set aside all spirituality and "character development." For these ashes of lost hope and despair, we are to give them the beauty of clearer light and more certain hopes of a still greater glory. They are to be given also the oil of joy for their mourning; yes, that same oil of joy which Jesus received beyond all his brethren, is to be given to all the mourning ones here in the end of the age, as the last work of the church rendered to one another by the members thereof so that thus the bride may be made ready. These mourners are mourning for the very thing that the oil of joy represents. It is only the loss or absence of that for which one is mourning that needs to be supplied to do away with that mourning; nothing else will relieve it. So, if they are to be given the oil of joy for their mourning, then these mourners in Zion must be mourning for the oil of joy.

This extreme joy that is to be extended unto us at the revelation of the glory of our great God, is nothing other than the oil of joy that is NOW to be given to the mourners in Zion. This oil of joy is the blessing of the wedding supper. No greater joy can come to a bride than the event of her wedding, and so this marriage of the church to her Lord is intimately associated with the oil of extreme joy that is to be her present blessing. Please note that it is about the last thing to be given God's people. The "garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness," is the same picture viewed from another angle. The new creature is referred to as a garment, or as garments, and we are told to put on the new man and put off the old one. It promotes a spirit of heaviness to see how prone we are to live and think as old creatures, but now we can see how we can stand before God, having on the new creature garments, and this is our extreme joy. These garments are the same ones referred to in the promises to the several churches, that the conquerors would be clothed in white garments. It is now our privilege to be clothed with these garments, instead of with the spirit of heaviness, which is ours when we look at ourselves from the standpoint of the flesh. We can see why these garments are called the garments of praise, in the last part of this verse; for there it is stated that this is all to be given unto us, so that we may be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of our God, so that the LORD "MIGHT BE GLORIFIED." Yes, it will be all to his praise; for it is his spirit that is in us and which blesses all the rest.

## The Return from the Wedding Feast

In a former study we made mention of the Lord returning from the wedding feasts, as is stated in Lu. 12:36-38; and some of our readers asked how it could be that the Lord is presented as coming from the wedding supper, when he returns, since the wedding supper is pictured to be an event coming in the future. We will try and answer this question; for, doubtless, it has presented itself to others. We quote these verses; "And be you like men waiting for their master, when he shall return from the nuptial feasts; that when he comes and knocks, they may INSTANTLY open to him. HAPPY are those servants, whom, when their master arrives, he shall find watching. I assure you, that he will gird himself, and cause them to recline, and going forth, he will serve them. And if he should come in the second, or in the third watch, and thus find them, HAPPY are they."

Let us call to your attention the fact that he requires that the watchers INSTANTLY open unto him, if they are to be of those who are to be HAPPY. This is the class who shall be served by their Lord when he comes from the wedding supper. These are the wise virgins.

To explain this matter of coming from the wedding feasts, let us recall the statement of the parable of the marriage festival that a royal person prepared for his son, Matt. 22. The Greek word for "marriage festival," used in this chapter, is the same as that used in the citation from Luke, quoted above. In the earlier part of this article we showed that the word here translated, "festival," is plural and refers to the entire week of feasts that is to follow the marriage itself, but that previous to this marriage, is the supper, (Greek) the "to ariston" -- the best meal -- which is for the bride and her bridegroom, alone.

The narrative tells us that the Master comes from these feasts. So if the feasts are to follow the marriage, and the marriage has not yet taken place, how could he be coming from them? We shall endeavor to set forth the explanation of this seeming incongruity as follows: The Parable tells us that the royal person prepared a marriage festival for his son, and in the fourth verse of Matt. 22; the statement is made that "I have killed my oxen and my fatlings, and all is ready." Just so it is, the oxen represent the Lord Jesus, and the fatlings picture the church, all of whom were then to be feasted upon by faith, just as Jesus feasted upon them, including himself. But now, at the close of the Gospel Age, they are nearly all sacrificed, and so the festival is about ready for the world. Jesus has been preparing this festival. This has been his work throughout this Gospel Age, and when he has finished it and comes to spread it for us, he will come from the prepared supper or feast, in that sense. To those who IMMEDIATELY open unto him, he enters and causes them to recline -- on their couches as was the custom in those times, and as Psa. 149:5 calls to our attention -- and he serves them. This is the same feeding that is referred to as being accomplished by Prince David, in Ezek. 34:23.

## The Oxen and the Fatlings of this Supper

Since this feasting was to last for seven days, and was a royal marriage, one oxen and one fatling was not sufficient, hence the plural form of these animals is used. These oxen and fatlings are the only kinds of food that are mentioned in connection with this supper. It follows, then, that since these represent Jesus and his church, they will be the main dishes or foods that will be served at this great wedding festival, both for the bride before the marriage takes place, and for the neighbors thereafter.

Should some one ask how this is to be understood, we will answer in the following explanation: It has been stated several times before in this article that the wedding supper is a feasting upon the Holy Spirit, and that it is a feasting upon love. God has chosen to reveal his Holy Spirit of love in the sacrifice of Jesus and his church, and also in their exaltation to the divine nature. Every grace of his Holy Spirit has been displayed in his dealings with them. Jesus, while in the wilderness, beheld all this glory of God as he saw the plan of salvation and his part therein; also the part his body-members were to play therein. This was his portion in the wedding supper. On this spirit of God he feasted to his extreme joy. The church can also vision all this with reference to Jesus and his church, and thus can also partake of the wedding supper now, but not before the entire plan of God has been made known unto them. The world of mankind, when awakened from their sleep in the next age, will come forth to this same feasting, and future creations will do likewise.

When an animal is slain for food, its life is taken. In Bible times its blood had to be drawn, for, since the life was in the blood it was sinful to eat any of the blood. The body that remained after the life was gone, was just that which resulted from the food that the animal had eaten. When we eat animal flesh, we are eating the food elements that the animal has been feeding upon, except that they are in concentrated form. So the eating of these oxen and fatlings, is not the appropriation of their life rights, blood -- bringing justification, the blessing which we have received long before, -- but it is the appropriation of the strength that they had; the food of which they partook.

Feeding upon our Lord, beyond accepting him as our ransomer, is not feeding upon his deeds, for he had a perfect body and consequently we could get no encouragement therefrom. But it is feeding upon the spirit that prompted him to so GRACE-FULL-Y conduct himself, which reveals the spirit of God. The Lord God was his strength. This calls God to our attention. With the church, we are to do likewise. As we see the love toward us manifested in Christ, we feed upon this spirit, and upon the spirit that prompted the church to live acceptably after they had ceased to use their own strength, and became influenced by the power of the love of God. Thus these animals being dead, when eaten, shows that it was not the strength of character that they possessed as humans, but that it was the new strength that they possessed as new creatures that we are to assimilate. All this strength was that which they received from the power of his glory, Col. 1:11; and which he supplied to us according to his riches in glory. Phil. 4:19. Had it not been that Jesus and his church had presented their bodies to God for this purpose, the spirit of God could not have been displayed in these particulars. So we are now "eating" blessings to ourselves as a result of their having been slain by the goodness and glory of God. It was these qualities in God that caused us to die to our wills and awaken as new creatures to the use of his will and his power.

When we shall have finished this feasting upon the spirit of the Lord revealed through the death and dying of Jesus and his church, the wedding supper will be over, and the marriage will then take place; we will be united with those feasting in glory, and all will be everlastingly united to our head, Jesus Christ, and the Father. The Great Company will be the next to so feast, but that will be after they shall have also entered into their eternal condition. Then the Ancient Worthies, the world of mankind, and the lower planes of spirit beings will be invited to this same feasting. Morning after morning, as the resurrection brings forth its quota to partake of the feast, the marriage festivities will continue; and when the inhabitants of this earth will all have been so blessed, and are eternally happy, then, morning after morning as the eternal ages bring forth other creations of the material kind, (one planet after another of the seemingly endless numbers that already exist in the space around us becoming inhabited) and they awaken to the blessings of this marriage feast, and become new creations of the spiritual kind, this grandest of all works will continue until that love which could not refrain from creating so that it might be privileged to bless, will have become fully satisfied in blessing.