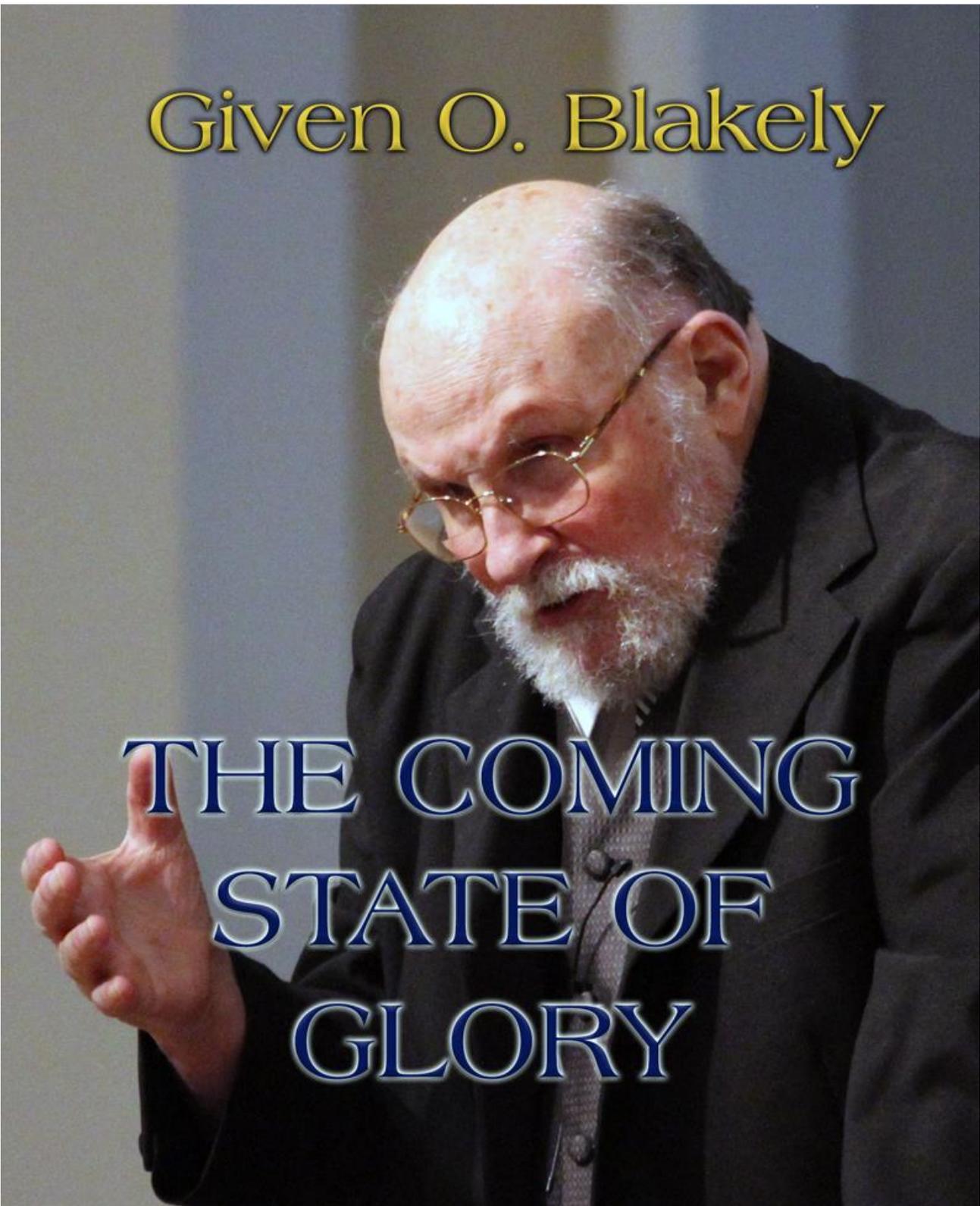


Given O. Blakely



THE COMING  
STATE OF  
GLORY

## Part 1 - INTRODUCTION

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." (Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

#### Lesson 1 of 37 INTRODUCTION

Before the conclusion of the book of The Revelation, the Holy Spirit sets the glory that awaits us before the eyes of our hearts. He does not provide an academic explanation of the glorified state, for the glory transcends both human language and experience. Thus, no descriptions are given such as those relating to Canaan, the promised land (Gen 15:18-21; Ex 23:31; Num 34:3-15; Deut 11:24). We do not read of borders and other external reference points. Rather, the Spirit addresses the heart, speaking of matters for which faith causes us to long. This is heart language, and if we work on believing the text instead of understanding it in an educated way, a sense of its grandeur will burst upon us. It speaks more to our spiritual intuition than to our human intellect.

The language that is used obtains power to those engaged in the good fight of faith. Think of the words that will be accentuated: "life," "healing," "no more curse," "serve Him," "see His face," "no night there," and "reign forever." All of these expressions presume we are presently engaged in a fierce conflict in which liabilities in these areas exist. They also emphasize that our present experience does not allow the fulness of these things that we desire, and for which we long. They are held out to us to ensure our hearts that our labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58).

These are words related to the Persons of God, Christ, and the Spirit. They are delivered by a holy angel. They are related to "the throne of God and of the Lamb," "His face," and "His name." Only a fool would dare to neglect such a word.

Let it be clear that to those who are not presently living by faith (Heb 10:38) and walking in the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16,25), this text will appear as nothing more than irrelevant chatter. It will not seem to be related to living in this world. But those are all misapprehensions that have been dictated by delusion. I cannot begin to enumerate the number of "Christian" preachers and teachers that have articulated their failure to appreciate the book of the Revelation. Some of these poor souls have preached for years, and have never deliberately ingested its message, and set the statements of this book before the people. That must be considered in view of the fact that the book is written to "messengers."

Think what is insinuated by the view that this book cannot be understood, and is therefore irrelevant to the "Christian." That means the beginning statements of this book are irrelevant to the believer: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: Who

bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (Rev 1:3). Ponder the gravity of that statement. We are told this is "the revelation of Jesus Christ." It is a revelation "God gave unto Him." Jesus gave it to "His angel" who gave it to John. John referred to it as "the testimony of Jesus Christ." A blessing is pronounced on the person who reads these words, and hears these words. What must heaven think of the person who refuses to subject his mind to such words? John was faithful in writing the words to the churches. What must be said of preachers and teachers who withhold them from those they pretend to be leading?

Through the Spirit, and by means of our faith, we are developing a hearty appetite for the very things now held before us. This is not a mere academic exercise – something to be outlined, placed in prioritized order, and codified. At least two things are accentuated by this text. First, what is ahead for the saints is an enlargement of the very experiences faith has brought to us now. Second, the Holy Spirit is culturing within our hearts a yearning for these very things.

It should be apparent to you that none of these things are of value to the institutional mind – the frame of spirit that associates every aspect of spiritual life with a religious institution or carnal mind-set. Too, they deal with lofty experience – life in heavenly places (Eph 1:3; 2:6). They lift us above mere human associations into spiritual ones. The common denominator that gives great value to them is not domestic life, institutional involvements, or other aspects of social life in this world. In fact, unless the individual is living by faith, all of these glorious affirmations appear irrelevant. Such a state of mind moves one to neglect these assertions, which causes hope to expire. To those who are not "spiritually minded" (Rom 8:6), they are more "pie-in-the-sky-by- and-by," having little to do with "where the rubber hits the road," as mere men would say.

God's people must not allow their religion to take them where any affirmation of the Spirit becomes pointless! Who is not aware that countless religious gatherings never assist those attending to come within the perimeter of Divine influence. They are more soulish than spiritual, and do not prepare the heart for deep involvements with Deity. Those so ensnared will find no lasting value in the text before us. They have been robbed by their religion – a tragic condition.

The things to which we will now be exposed cannot be concluded by, what is often considered, logical thinking. Rather, they are matters that must be revealed: i.e., "He showed me . . ." (Rev 22:1). The glorified state is so marvelous it exceeds all human abilities to imagine or think. Yet, they are altogether true and comforting. Yea, they are essential for the believer.

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## Part 2 - THE PURE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 2 of 37

### THE PURE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE

“And he showed me a PURE river of water of life, CLEAR as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.” (Verse 1 of Rev 22:1-9).

Notice the adjectives employed by the Holy Spirit: “PURE” and “CLEAR.” How marvelous to hear of such things while in a polluted realm, where matters are not as clear as we desire, nor as pure as we prefer. For believers in Christ, the future holds out both PURITY and CLARITY – qualities which the grace of God teaches and leads us to prefer and crave. There will be no distractions or contamination of any kind: no imperfection or defilement in any form. Candidly, I find that to be a most pleasant consideration – and it is no mere wistful dream, but is fostered by Divine revelation.

### A MATTER OF REVELATION

“He showed me.” It is no wonder this book is called “the Revelation” (1:1). It is not the result of human conclusion or contemplation, but of Divine disclosure. This is not the result of diligent study, but of a revelation from God. What follows could never have been deduced by mortals – regardless of the amount of revelation given to them. At the very outset of the book, John is told, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass” (1:1). The term “shortly” is a perspective of faith, not time. It is telling us of the next series of events that are to capture our attention – and faith can leap over vast segments of time!

Following the exhortation to the churches, the aged Apostle was told, “I will SHOW THEE things which MUST BE hereafter” (4:1). This is not a mere prediction, but a declaration of a Divine appointment. After John had been exposed to the alarming corruption of false religion, he was told, “I will SHOW UNTO THEE the judgment of the great whore . . .” (17:1). Before closing this marvelous vision, John was again told, “the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to SHOW UNTO HIS SERVANTS the things which must shortly be done” (22:6). The thought of a God that is eager to “show” must provoke a people that are anxious to KNOW.

John is twice SHOWN something in this section of the Revelation. (1) “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and SHOWED ME that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (21:10). (2) “And he SHOWED ME a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb” (22:1).

Although considerable revelation had already been given to the sons of men, the Apostle John was still SHOWN additional aspects of glory (Lord, deliver us from small and shallow thinking!). At least three things may be seen in this. First, there are things that cannot be concluded, even though extensive revelation has been given. Second, the greatness of glory requires extensive unveiling. Third, there is a need for believers to have their minds stretched, so

to speak, regarding their future.

From an academic point of view, the word “show” is translated from a word that means “show, point out, reveal, explain, or prove” (Barclay-Newman Greek Dictionary). The word “SHOW”

underscores that it is hidden from men, and that if it is not revealed, it is impossible for it to be known by men. The words “POINT OUT” mean it is not apparent. “REVEAL” means Divine initiative is required for it to be seen. “EXPLAIN” indicates that even the vision requires some Divine interpretation. “PROVE” emphasizes how the Lord brings the matter to the attention of John, confirming the reality of the things being made known.

Once again, the Spirit makes clear that “no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation” (2 Pet 1:20). What we have before us is NOT John’s commentary on what he saw, but what he actually saw – and there is a vast difference. When it comes to faith, God will allow no man, regardless of his appointed position in the Kingdom, to simply give us a private exposition of the truth to which he was exposed. Truth revealed is not a series of building blocks to be assembled by mere mortals. Nor indeed, can the soul be saved, strengthened, or comforted, by an interpretation originating by men. If the things of God are not “shown,” there is no way for them to be known. Praise God that He is still making them known through His Holy Spirit – enlightening the eyes of our understanding to see what is invisible (Eph 1:18).

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## Part 3 - A PURE RIVER

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 3 of 37 A PURE RIVER

"And he showed me A PURE RIVER of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Verse 1, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

"A pure river of water of life." From the EARTHLY perspective, the very expression "pure river" is a contradiction of terms. In this world, a river is a watercourse – a flow of water that passes through varied terrains. Because of their movement, rivers pick up all manner of contamination. Ordinarily, because of this condition, one does not drink directly from a river.

In our text we are exposed to a new concept of a river – a "pure river" that fosters "life."

#### CONTENDING WITH CONTAMINATION

Often, in this world, the water of life is offered in contaminated cups of men's creation. Denominational containers present the truth of God in the setting of sectarian dogma, thereby neutralizing the influence of the truth upon the soul. This has a spiritually lethal affect upon the individual, thus neutralizing spiritual benefits. Several examples of this kind of cunning contamination will suffice to confirm this unfortunate circumstance. I have highlighted the unfortunate human additions to Scriptural expressions.

NEW TESTAMENT "church," BELIEVER'S "baptism," UNCONDITIONAL "love,"

UNCONDITIONAL "election," LIMITED "atonement," IRRESISTIBLE "grace," TOTAL depravity ("none righteous"), PLAN OF "salvation," AUTHORITY of "the elders,"  
CONDITIONAL "immortality," God loves you ANYWAY, TOMORROW'S "church" . . . etc.

Those additions, however innocent or doctrinally sound they may appear, represent bodies of theological dogma that have been developed by men. They present inspired terms from a human point of view instead of from a heavenly one. They attempt to wrap the precious jewel of truth in combustible and defiled paper. The effort to defend them has nothing to do with the inspired term itself, but with what men have said about the term. It is assumed that the inspired expression may be misunderstood, and therefore men – men that have to be saved from their sin – use their own understanding to clarify the expression used by the Holy Spirit. Just how wise is such an effort? Did the Holy Spirit really move men to use terms that needed human understanding and explanation to clarify them. It is written, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet 1:20-21). That is, Scripture is not the result of the writers interpreting what was said, then writing it down. If Scripture did not originate that way, how can it possibly be right to present it in that manner today?

The number of arguments, contention, and division that have arisen because of this imagined clarifying tactic of men is staggering. The very presence of such explanations insinuate that the Word lacks clarity, and that the Holy Spirit does not work through the word. Intellectual appendages to an inspired term do not add any power to it – in fact it nullifies the power it actually does have. Jesus said of the traditions of men, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of NONE EFFECT by your tradition" (Matt 15:6; Mk 7:13). This is one reason why no "Bible" should contain human commentary (a widening practice of our time) – that is something the Jews sought to do by combining the Talmud (Jewish tradition) with the Torah (The Law given by Moses) – something that has become fashionable for professed Christian ministers today. The Talmud had no power, the Torah did.

In this world, we must contend with this form of contamination, testing everything we hear. Sometimes the smallest addition has a devastating and harmful effect upon the reader or hearer. As it is written, "Prove (test) all things" (1 Thess 5:21). Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa 8:20). Jesus said, "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Luke 12:57). Paul also wrote, "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" (Phil 1:10).

This circumstance proves to be a thorn in our side, having potentially poisonous effects upon the soul. Those who live by faith look forward to the time when we will drink freely from a "pure river." What a blessed contemplation!

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## Part 4 - ABUNDANCE! ABUNDANCE!

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 4 of 37 - ABUNDANCE! ABUNDANCE!

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. " (Verse 1 of Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

John sees a "RIVER" – not a cruse of water" like David took from sleeping Saul (1 Sam 26:11- 12). Not a larger "waterpot," like the one the woman of Samaria brought to Jacob's well (John 4:4:26), or even the larger waterpots like the ones in which the Lord Jesus turned water into wine (John 2:6-7). He did not a "well" like the one Isaac's servants dug in Beersheba (Gen 26:23-25). Not a larger dungeon like the one into which Jeremiah was thrown, which was only moist and muddy (Jer 38:6-7). He saw "a pure river of water of life!"

Etymologically, a "river" is defined as "flowing water river, stream" (THAYER). It is a watercourse in which life is being sustained. The rivers of Scripture were noted for their largeness" – "the river of Egypt" (the Nile) Gen 15:18); "the great river, the river Euphrates (Gen 15:18). Four great rivers flowed out of a large river in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:10-14): Pison (which watered the land of Havilah), Gihon (which watered the land of Ethiopia), Hiddekel (which watered Assyria), and Euphrates, called "the great river" – 1,724 miles in length (Gen 15:18).

This expression—"a pure river of water of life"—denotes ABUNDANCE—the abundance of life. The river John sees supports, sustains, and brings, an abundance of life. It has a large tributary which is presently available to believers in the world. Jesus, you will remember, affirmed, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it MORE ABUNDANTLY" (John 10:10).

The Scriptures frequently speak of the abundance that is inherent in God's great salvation. There is plentitude in Christ Jesus, and you must not doubt it!

There is "the ABUNDANCE of grace" (Rom 5:17).

The "ABUNDANCE of joy" (2 Cor 8:2; Phil 1:26).

Paul received "the ABUNDANCE of revelations" (2 Cor 12:7).

God "is able to do exceeding ABUNDANTLY above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph 3:20).

The grace of God is "exceeding ABUNDANT with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 1:14).

The Holy Spirit is "shed on us ABUNDANTLY through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:6).

God is "willing more ABUNDANTLY to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel" (Heb 6:17).

God "according to his ABUNDANT mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet 1:3).

The rewarding recompense of God to the godly is described as "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over" (Luke 6:38).

The Psalmist speaks of being "ABUNDANTLY satisfied" (Psa 36:8).

There is "the ABUNDANCE of peace" (Psa 37:11).

Isaiah said God would "ABUNDANTLY pardon" (Isa 55:7).

Jeremiah spoke of "the ABUNDANCE of peace and truth" (Jer 33:6).

While that abundance begins now, in this world, it will not reach its apex until we are liberated from this "vile body" (Phil 3:20-21), or "earthen vessel" (2 Cor 4:7). Here, while we are in the world, but

not of it, there are times when truth seems to rise to flood-stage in our hearts. We experience “joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Pet 1:8). However, that condition is not unending while we are “in the body” (Heb 13:3). Soon, the desert times are upon us again and we cry out, “my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Psa 63:1). The apostle Paul spoke of a time in Asia when “we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life” (2 Cor 1:8). O no, we do not have a Cinderella view of life in Christ, or boast of being happy all the time, and continually riding on the crest of the wave. We experience being “troubled,” “perplexed,” “persecuted,” and “cast down” (2 Cor 4:8-9).

But it will not be so in the world to come, praise the Lord! We are anticipating the time and place when “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be NO MORE death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev 21:4).

If there is one besetting sin of nominal “Christian” preachers and teachers, it is that they do not give the people very much. They do not have much in their meager “treasure” (Matt 13:52). Today people are hearing too much froth and childishness from professed Christian leaders. The meals for the mind that they serve are too meager. The thoughts they articulate are too shallow. The stench of earth is upon much that they see, and the mark of temporality is upon what they are too often doing. They are not preparing people for death and the day of judgment – two appointments that cannot be avoided. They are too expert on earth life, and too ignorant of heavenly life. They glory too much in appearance (2 Cor 5:12).

In the meantime, there are spiritual store houses replete with resources for the people of God. They are referred to as “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places” (Eph 1:3), and “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3). There are treasures to be dispensed, and an abundance to be enjoyed. Let the people of God demand that these provisions be regularly dispensed! They simply cannot do without them.

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## Part 5 - THE WATER OF LIFE

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 5 of 37

#### THE WATER OF LIFE

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Verse 1, Rev 22:1-9)

The FIRST thing John beholds is preeminent – LIFE. He is not shown what we will do, but the source of sustenance and delight: "a pure river of water of life." This is doubtless the river of which David sang. "THERE IS A RIVER whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High" (Psa 46:4). What we have upon earth now is actually a tributary of this heavenly river, rich with all of the spiritual nutrients necessary to

sustain spiritual life in this world. It is a source of joy and gladness, satisfaction and gratification. Life is not depicted as a boisterous ocean, but a smoothly flowing and quiet river, following a tranquil course without any commotion or turbulence. There are storms and hurricanes on the sea, but never on the river! Therefore the Lord promised through Isaiah, "For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream" (Isa 66:12). Life and peace blend well together.

In ancient times, the flow of water into the city was critical. If the enemy could cut off the water supply, the city could be easily conquered. If the supply of water could be maintained, the city could stand during the fiercest assaults. Concerning the fall of Babylon on the night Belshazzar died by the judgment of God, the historian Herodotus indicates that Babylon fell as a consequence of the diverting of the waters of the Euphrates. The invading armies then entered Babylon by means of the dried riverbed, thus conquering the city. John Gill gives this account: Belshazzar was slain by those "who led Cyrus's army up the river Euphrates into the city of Babylon, its course being turned; the inhabitants of which being reveling and rioting, and the gates open, these men went up to the king's palace; the doors of which being opened by the king's orders to know what was the matter, they rushed in, and finding him standing up with his sword drawn in his own defense, they fell upon him, and slew him, and all about him, as Xenophon relates; and this was the same night the feast was, and the handwriting was seen, read, and interpreted" (John Gill).

Similarly, the devil seeks to cut off the river of life from the people of God, thus robbing them of their joy which is, to a significant degree, their "strength" (Neh 8:10). The fact that he has been largely successful is seen in the growing number of novices who are attempting to create songs and methodologies through which joy can be experienced. They are, however, a miserable substitute for the "river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High" (Psa 46:4). O for a greater measure of the joy redemption affords: "joying in God through Christ Jesus" (Rom 5:11); the "joy of the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17; 1 Thess 1:6); "all joy" (Rom 15:13); "the joy of faith" (Phil 1:25); "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet 1:8); "exceeding joy" (1 Pet 4:18); and "joy" that is "full" (1 John 1:4; 2 John 1:12). That is joy that comes from the river which makes glad the city of God!

Our text speaks of a joyful condition that will never be interrupted. The abundant supply of life will never be cut off, diminished, or run dry. How marvelous is the picture!

There will no more sense of distance between the individual and the source spiritual life. No more environment or circumstance in which true life and response are reduced or placed under limitation. Our awareness of God will never wane, nor a sense of profound satisfaction ever diminish. Now, there is something to think about!

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## Part 6 - PERFECT CLARITY, OR "CLEAR AS CRYSTAL"

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 6 of 37 - PERFECT CLARITY, OR "CLEAR AS CRYSTAL"

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, CLEAR AS CRYSTAL, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Verse 1 of Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

"Clear as crystal." This is an aspect of glory that can scarcely be imagined while in this world. Alas, even in our best times, "we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (1 Cor 13:12, NIV). Even after we are given profound glimpses of the truth, we must stand back and shout, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how UNSEARCHABLE are His judgments, and His ways PAST FINDING OUT!" (Rom 11:33). With David we acknowledge, "Your thoughts are VERY DEEP" (Psa 92:5 NKJV). Even when the "riches of Christ" are brought within our grasp, where they can be enjoyed and contemplated, we acknowledge they are "unsearchable" –i.e. "the UNSEARCHABLE riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8). Unlike mere man, it is said of the Holy Spirit, through whom revelation comes to us, "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor 2:10).

A library of books will not change this circumstance: the thoughts of God are "very deep" – deeper than the mind of man can go. Several decades ago I was attending a special series of meetings. At one point brother Alger Fitch and I were standing over a table loaded with books on Hermeneutics (the science of interpretation). Brother Alger asked me, "What do you think of these, brother Given?" I replied, "It is commentary on human ignorance." You may rest assured, the deep things of God cannot be clarified by any facet of human wisdom, or any amalgamation of it – no matter what men think, or say. At some point, if His thoughts are to be comprehended, God Himself will have to unveil them. Occasionally, this takes place in some small measure as we live by faith and walk in the Spirit. The Lord enlightens the eyes of our understanding (Eph 1:18), and fills us "with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col 1:9). This is why David five times prayed "give me understanding" (Psa 119:34,73,125,144,169). It is why Paul wrote to Timothy, 'the Lord give thee understanding in all things' (2 Tim 2:7). God's thoughts – even the revealed ones – "are very deep."

This circumstance provokes a lifetime of godly inquiry, seeking, and pressing toward the mark. As long as we are in the body, a profound sense of mystery surrounds the truth of God. It is our "earthen vessels," and not the truth itself, that produces this situation. This side of the veil that separates life and death, no child of God will ever be able he possesses a perfect understand of any Divine utterance. The "earthen vessel" of our body (2 Cor 4:7) is the hindering factor.

However, as our text affirms, this will not be the case in the world to come. There, the flow of life-giving truth will be marked by perfect and undiminished clarity. The "river of water of life" is not only abundant and pure, it is also comprehensible. This is another way of saying, "but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor 13:12). It is involved in the promise, "they shall see His face" (Rev 22:4).

The far-reaching implications of truth will be apparent to us. The significance of Divine utterance will be obvious to us as we no longer peer into a hazy mirror. The truth itself is pure (Psa 119:140; Prov 30:5). However, the "vile body" (Phil 3:20-21) in which we presently reside, emits a sort of spiritual fog that removes much of the apparency of the truth. This condition is a source of great grief to those living by faith. If need be, they are quite content to live without comprehending eternal life in this world, but they are not content with the lack of perfect clarity

in the things of God. How blessed, therefore, to read of a “a pure river of water of life, CLEAR AS CRYSTAL.”

While we await the time when we will be where the river is located, we are developing an appetite for its waters – an inward longing to see clearly, and understand completely. This is part of living “by every word of God” (Lk 4:4). That not only refers to knowing what to do, but to the development of a hearty spiritual appetite. As the heart is regularly subjected to the Word of God – not merely for moral direction, but to be acquainted with the Lord Himself – a preference for the Living God, and a longing for a more profound acquaintance with Him is awakened.

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## Part 7 - DIRECT ACCESS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 7 of 37 DIRECT ACCESS

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, PROCEEDING FROM the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Verse 1, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

"Proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." The flow of sustaining life will come directly from the Lord, without secondary means. In this world, revelation comes through appointed means. Even the book of Revelation was given by God through Jesus, through an angel, through John (1:1) – appointed means through which the message was, so to speak, filtered without contamination. The fact that we are in a world dominated by the devil (2 Cor 4:4), have the treasure of salvation in "earthen vessels" (2 Cor 4:7) necessitates this rather complicated arrange – a word from God given to Jesus, who gave it to an angel, who gave it to John, who delivered it to us.

Everyone brought to faith is given a "minister," some individual through whom the knowledge of the truth came. As it is written, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" (1 Cor 3:5). Those who think they can ignore these God-given ministers and still be ready to meet the Lord have been sorely deceived.

God has also appointed the Scriptures as a means to sustain spiritual life. As it is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4). And again, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom 15:4). Any notion that we can adequately prepare for glory independently of the Scriptures is nothing less than an imagination, to be cast down with our spiritual weaponry.

The saints themselves are also a rich source of benefit to one another. It is through them that Jesus ministers, bringing life-sustaining supplies to His people. As it is written, "the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together BY ITS LIGAMENTS AND SINEWS, grows as God causes it to grow" (Col 2:19, NIV). The various members of the body are essential for spiritual growth. They have been placed in the body precisely where God wants them, and endued with a measure of faith that enables them to effectively minister to one another (1 Cor

12:18,22-27; Rom 12:3-6). If you are ever tempted to think you can make it to glory by ignoring kindred saints God has placed in your path, you have simply been seduced by the devil. Further, nothing God gives can be treated as unnecessary.

Thus, in this world, we are provided access to the truth through indirect means, as well as directly between our spirits and the Holy Spirit. The reason for this provision can be traced to the impact of sin upon our persons and the environment in which we are sojourning. Thus, ministers of truth, the Scriptures, and the body of Christ have been given to assist us in laying hold on the truth.

This will not be the case in glory. We will have direct access to the truth, with no need for it to pass through another before it comes to us. The abundant things of God will all be within our reach, so to speak. It ought to be noted that the necessity of secondary means is what enables both temptation and distortion. Direct access removes those circumstances.

Thus John's first exposure to the blessed state of the redeemed finds them in a state of Divine abundance. What they have tasted in this world will be expanded in the world to come. The appetite created and sustained by grace through faith will be satisfied. It will all be accomplished in an

intensely personal environment with no restrictions or limitation. Everything will be within reach. Let it be clear that salvation enables you to prepare for that time, and do so in a state of gladness and satisfaction.

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## Part 8 - EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE WATERS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 8 of 37

### EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE WATERS

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Verse 1, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

This is the ultimate fulfillment of Ezekiel's vision of the healing waters. The language used in this text is that of Ezekiel (Ezek 47:1-23). As Ezekiel's waters swelled, they are said to have become "a RIVER that could not be passed over" (Ezek 47:5). When the prophet stood on the brink of those waters, it is written he was caused to "return to the brink of the river" (Ezek 47:6). He then saw that there were also "very many trees on the one side and on the other" (Ezek 47:7). The fruit of those marvelous trees is described in this manner. "And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezek 47:12).

Ezekiel's vision was of a Divinely inaugurated revival, when the truth of God would pervade, and the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14). The waters of our text issued forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In both our text and the vision of Ezekiel, the waters did not merge with some other waters, but remained pure and uncontaminated.

Real spiritual life is never produced or fostered by a mixture of Divine wisdom and the wisdom of men – NEVER! This is precisely why there is a phenomenal absence of holiness in the nominal church. It is the direct result of preaching and teaching that is not blessed by God, because it has been mixed with the defiling wisdom of men.

Ezekiel was prophesying of things that would occur in the earth. John was given to see what is on the other side – in the place reserved for those who are living by faith and walking in the Spirit. In Ezekiel's vision, the waters were shallow at first. When the depth of them was first measured it was "to the ankles" (Ezek 47:3). As they continued to flow, another measurement was taken, and they were "to the loins," or about waist deep. The next measure is described in these words: "Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over" (Ezek 47:5).

Ezekiel was then caused to go to the brink of the river, and he saw "at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other" (Ezek 47:7). He was also caused to see some additional characteristics of this mighty river: "And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they SHALL BE HEALED; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezek 47:9). And additionally he saw, "by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezek 47:12)

We see, then, the nature of life from God.

It tends to increase until it dominates – from ankle deep to a river that cannot be crossed (Ezek 47:33-5).

There is an abundance of life – trees on both sides (Ezek 47:7).

There is a promotion and sustaining of life – everything in the waters shall live (Ezek 47:8).

There is recovery – wherever the waters came, there was healing (Ezek 47:8-9,11).

There was fruit – “meat.” or food, fruit, and new fruit (Ezek 47:12-13).

The means of maintaining health was in the waters – medicine (Ezek 47:12).

Miry places and marshes (swamps and marshes, NKJV) were not healed (Ezek 47:11). “Swamps” are lowlands dominated by woody vegetation, and only partly covered with shallow water.

“Marshes” are wet lands with many grasses and other plants that do not support living creatures.

Both marshes and swamps are shallow and tend to stagnancy.

## OBSERVATIONS

Given the depiction of waters in Ezekiel 47, we see that fruitfulness cannot grow in shallow and stagnant lives. Living waters are flowing waters. The further you are from shore, the deeper the waters. What comes from God tends to increase. It does not decrease or die. As spiritual life increases, it corrects inward diseases and proclivities. Fruitfulness is promoted, and a harvest is

reaped. Where there is continual shallowness – like ankle deep waters – there will be no trees or fruit – no evidences of life. Where the water of life is flowing spiritual health is promoted and maintained.

In other words, one cannot prepare for glory with ankle deep theology, shallow living, and surface understanding. Those are traits of spiritual sleep, insensitivity, blindness, and deafness. Such characteristics will, if not corrected, exclude one from the glories to come.

The prophet Ezekiel, therefore, prepared us for John’s vision. It was through him that the Holy Spirit developed the vocabulary of our text. To put it another way, when John wrote, he did so in words “which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor 2:13 NKJV). This is the manner in which the Lord delivers truth to His people. Those who couch the Word of God in the language of the street, or in words that man’s wisdom teaches, are in direct conflict with the manner of the Holy Spirit. With remarkable consistency, when the Holy Spirit reveals the things prepared for those who love the Lord, He does so in the vocabulary of the prophets.

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## Part 9 - THE TREE OF LIFE, ITS FRUITS AND LEAVES, #1

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 9 of 37

#### THE TREE OF LIFE, ITS FRUITS AND LEAVES, #1

"In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Verse 22, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

Glory is a condition in which no separating divisions exist. There is a single "street," and a solitary "river" – absolute focus and singularity. There is one tree that has been reproduced in abundance. That is a depiction of perfect harmony and blessing, accord and unanimity.

How different from our experience in this world! Here, "the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal 5:17). There is "the law of sin and death" (Rom 7:23,25; 8:2), and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:2). False prophets are found as well as true ones (1 John 4:1). There are both wheat and tares (Matt 13:25-26), "the children of the kingdom," and "the children of the wicked one" (Matt 13:38), "the righteous (1 Pet 3:12) and the unrighteous (1 Cor 6:9), "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22; Eph 5:9), and "the works of the flesh" (Gal 5:19), the real "Christ" (Matt 16:16), and "false christs" (Matt 24:24). "The Gospel of Christ" (Rom 1:16), and "another Gospel, which is not another (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6), living churches (Rom 6:11,13), and dead ones (Rev 3:1), the "Holy Spirit" (Eph 4:30), and "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2). There are "imagination" to be cast down (2 Cor 10:5), and "acceptable" meditations (Psa 19:14). The lie is brought to us as well as the truth. In "this present evil world," we are exposed to a multiplicity of streets and rivers. There are experiences of life like being "troubled on every side" yet "not distressed," "perplexed but not in despair," "persecuted but not forsaken," and "cast down but not destroyed" (2 Cor 4:8-9). All of this is

because we "have this treasure" of salvation in an "earthen vessel" (2 Cor 4:7).

For those in Christ Jesus, there is a fierce warfare within as well. There are "ungodliness and worldly lusts" to be rejected, and sobriety, righteousness, and godliness to be advanced (Tit 2:11-12). There are two competing laws within us, striving to be dominate: "the law of the mind," or "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 22-23; Rom 8:2), and "another law, warring against the law of our mind" (Rom 7:23). Believers regularly confront "the god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4), and "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 11:31). We have a body that must be held down and controlled (1 Cor 9:27), and a spirit that must be sanctified and given expression (1 Cor 6:20; Gal 6:18; 1 Thess 5:23).

Glory will find us completely relieved of such grievous contradictions! We will experience complete and total deliverance. There will be no more warfare, resistance, putting off, rejecting, fighting, striving, or running to obtain. There will be no more darkness, no more night, no more vagueness, and no more frustration. Instead, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev 22:2-4).

Now, the Spirit will emphasize the completeness of the glorified state. There will be no appetite

developed by grace that will not be gratified, and no thirst created by faith that is not assuaged. Our text assumes a longing for the condition described. Grace is preparing those who live by faith for the fulfillment of these promises. Any approach to religion that does not make these texts inestimable is suspicious, to say the least, and should be avoided.

Additionally, there will be no effects of sin that will not be thoroughly remedied. Not a single vestige of the curse or its impact will remain. There will not be one legitimate longing that is not abundantly satisfied!

THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

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## Part 10 - THE TREE OF LIFE, #2

"In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Verse 2, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

### Lesson 10 of 37 - THE TREE OF LIFE, #2

Our first exposure to "the tree of life" is in Genesis 2:9. You may recall it was a single tree in an isolated place – "the midst of the garden" of Eden. It was not accessible from every place in the garden. It also competed with another tree, which was also in the midst of the garden" – "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen 2:9). The "tree of life" bore fruit that could be eaten. "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil" yielded fruit that could NOT be eaten (Gen 2:16- 17).

With the entrance of sin, humanity was barred from "the tree of life." After Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden by the God who had placed them there (Gen 2:15), the "tree of life" became totally inaccessible. As it is written, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he DROVE OUT the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen 3:22-24).

God created the Garden. He placed man (Adam and Eve) in the Garden. And, He expelled them from the Garden because of their disobedience. It certainly was not true in their case, "Once in Eden, always in Eden!" – even though God had placed them there (Gen 2:15) – and God's nature cannot change (Mal 3:6).

Thus, the Lord placed a cap, so to speak, on what men could know and experience. With sin, humanity entered into the realm of restriction – severe limitation. The primary stricture related to access to God, Divine knowledge, and spiritual growth. As long as we are in the flesh, these circumscriptions remain. They are in much larger measure than we dare to imagine, even though grace allows us to touch the fringe of truth and handle what we do not fully comprehend.

Our limitations are so extensive the Spirit must speak to us in the language of our text. The "tree of life" is "in the middle of the street." In the glory, any place and everyplace we can be found, "the tree of life" will be accessible, i.e., access to the life of God will be absolutely unhindered and free. As if that did not suffice, the tree of life, like a giant forest, is "in the midst of the street AND on either side of the river" that flows like a mighty torrent from the throne. Absolutely no communication of any sort will move us beyond the source of life.

In this world we receive "grace for grace," one blessing piled, as it were, upon another (John 1:16). The loving favor of God meets us in the pit as well as upon the mountain. We taste of it when we are suffering need or when we are abounding. It teaches us contentment in diverse conditions (Tit 2:11-13). Grace not only brings the things of God to us, it enables us to recover from the debilitating environment of this world, and the "vile body" (Phil 3:20-21) in which we are temporarily housed.

But in the world to come, life itself will be exponential, as we leap upward from one degree of life to another. Our responses and expressions will swell and grow without restriction, together with our insights and delights. There will be nothing that makes for death, and everything that makes for joyful life. What a picture is given here!

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## Part 11 - THE FRUITS OF THE TREE, #3

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 11 of 37

### THE FRUITS OF THE TREE, #3

"In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Verse 2, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

" . . . which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month." In sharp contrast with the cyclical nature of life in the flesh, a continual spiritual crop will be yielded. There will be no famine or reduction of benefits – ever, or in any sense.

The fruit is diverse. The KJV reads, "twelve MANNER of fruits." The NKJV says, "twelve fruits." The NASB and NRSV read, "twelve KINDS of fruits," and the NIV reads, "twelve CROPS of fruit." Ezekiel's vision spoke in precisely the same manner. "Fruit trees of ALL KINDS will grow on both banks of the river . . . Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them" (Ezek 47:12).

The words "twelve manner" is equivalent to the "all kinds" of Ezekiel's vision. It speaks of thoroughness, with nothing lacking at any time. Everything required to sustain life, joy, peace, and productivity will be there. When the saints are in glory, they will not be mere robots, moving about mechanically with no personal involvement in the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. The Spirit speaks in this manner because "eternal glory" (2 Tim 2:10; 1 Pet 5:10) speaks of an order to which we have only been introduced. What we have now in Christ Jesus is appropriately described as "the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom 8:23). The Holy Spirit Himself is referred to as "the earnest" [guarantee, pledge, deposit, or down payment] (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13-14). The "gift of the Spirit" is to believers in this world what the grapes of Eschol were to the Israelites (Num 13:23) – A SAMPLING. This is why it is nothing more than theological folly to imagine it is impossible for someone to "fall away" (Heb 6:6). As long as we are in the body, a frail earthen vessel (2 Cor 4:7), there is something temporal about us. That temporality is a door through which the Tempter can enter, and subvert the soul (Tit 1:11). This circumstance is what necessitates fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12), living by faith (Heb 10:38), walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,23), resisting the devil (James 4:7), cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (2 Cor 7:1), running the race set before us (Heb 12:1-2), standing against the wiles of the devil (Eph 6:11), etc. Now, we occupy a world that is dominated by the devil (2 Cor 4:4).

By faith we can overcome all of this circumstance (1 John 5:4-5), but only so.

Now, God, who gave the Revelation to Christ, who gave it to an angel, who gave it to John, who gave it to us, wants us to know of our ultimate destiny. We fight now, but we will not do so then. We are oppressed now, but we will not be then. There are times when we long for the presence of the Lord, but that will not be so in glory. Therefore, the Spirit speaks to us of unending provision, and uninterrupted access. He is helping our faith by assuring us of the nature and benefits of "eternal glory."

The bearing of fruit "every month" signifies the absence of seasons. As in nature, so it is in grace: There are seasons – times when spiritual fruit flourishes, and times when it does not. God's people

must learn to “abound AND to suffer need” (Phil 4:12). That is the nature of spiritual life in this world. BUT IT WILL NOT BE SO IN THE WORLD TO COME! There will be no fall, when the leaf begins to wither, and life begins to wane. Nor, indeed, will there be winter, when deadness returns.

In glory, life will be experientially and discerningly sustained. In this world, our blessed Lord sustains our lives according to His promise: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb 13:5). However, this is not always apparent. Sometimes the most spiritual of all live on the very border of despair (2 Cor 1:8; Phil 2:27). During such times, the sensitive soul cries out to God, “Show Thyself!” (Psa 94:1). But in the world to come, no such cry will ever be heard! There will be obvious and accessible provision, with no season of scarcity. Praise the Lord for such marvelous promises!

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## Part 12 - THE LEAVES OF THE TREE, #4

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 12 of 37

#### THE LEAVES OF THE TREE, #4

"In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Verse 2, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

"... and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Ezekiel spoke similarly of the trees growing by the healing waters: "and their leaves for medicine" (Ezek 47:12). Everything about the destiny of the righteous speaks of full recovery and abundant life.

The "nations" are "the nations of those who are saved" mentioned earlier (Rev 21:24). These are "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Rev 7:9).

Throughout the world, the redeemed experienced varied effects of "the transgression." Some were deprived of the normal requisites of life, living in poverty, sickness, and squalor. Others had little opportunity to culture their minds in the Lord. Still others lived in places and times characterized by fierce and bloody persecution. Still others lived out their lives in the midst of ferocious wars and military conflicts. Make no mistake about it, SIN HAS YIELDED GREAT DEVASTATION AND DEPRIVATION TO OUR RACE!

How sorely healing is needed. When we read, "and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa 53:5; 1 Pet 2:24), we bring great reproach upon Jesus by confining that healing to temporary relief from bodily infirmities. Just as our sores went deeper than the flesh, so our healing extends infinitely further than our present bodies. There are effects of sin that must be remedied, and they can only be remedied by the working and provision of the Lord!

Will the impact sin has had upon our minds, memories, abilities, and desires ever be healed? YES!! "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Will the lamentation and grief that we experience because of sin ever be remedied? YES!! "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." What about the sorrow for sins committed, personal failures, and wasted time? Will we ever be finished with those things? YES!! "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." How about the grief that attends separation, trials, and the hardships of

life? Will the scars left upon us by these things ever be removed? YES!! "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Will Peter have forever blotted from his mind that awful night when he denied Jesus three times? YES!! Will Paul ever forget consenting to the death of Stephen? YES!! Will your mind ever be freed from the recollection of foolish words and deeds you would to God you never said and did? YES!! YES!! YES!!

Indeed, all such things will be removed for those who overcome. "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." There will be full recovery from every effect of sin – every single one! The hurtful things that occurred to us during our sojourn in the flesh will "not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa 65:17). On eagles wing, we will soar high above debilitating and sorrowful memories. With agility of spirit, soul, and body, we will walk upon those high hills of eternal

involvement without a twinge of conscience, or moroseness of thought. "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

I ask you, is that not worth fighting the good fight of faith? Does not the recollection of these things bring strength to resist the devil, remaining steadfast in the faith? You have every reason to be faithful until death! Full provision has been made for you in your glorious inheritance! The Spirit does not exaggerate what is prepared for you. The inheritance is great in every sense of the word, and worthy of your best effort. Fight, soldier, Fight! Run, runner, Run! Be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord! "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb 10:37). Hold on! Hold on!

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## Part 13 - NO MORE CURSE! NO MORE CURSE!

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 13 of 37

### NO MORE CURSE! NO MORE CURSE!

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

Only those living by faith have the remotest idea of the magnitude of this promise. The curse of God was made known in Eden, and has continued without interruption until this very day. What a tragic day it was when the Almighty said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen 3:16-19). Anyone imagining sin to be inconsequential must acquaint themselves with what it has brought into the world.

After killing Abel, Cain was "CURSED from the earth" by the Lord (Gen 4:11). Eleven hundred years after the fall, when Noah was born, Lamech remembered "the ground which the LORD hath CURSED" (Gen 5:29). In the flood, God again CURSED the ground "for man's sake" (Gen

8:21). After the flood, Canaan was CURSED because of the sin of his father, Ham (Gen 9:25). When the Law was read to Israel, its CURSES were sounded from Mount Ebal (Deut 27:13-26). With thunderous tones, even the Apostolic writings say, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under THE CURSE; for it is written, CURSED is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them" (Gal 3:10).

The curse of the Almighty is all about us. The ground is cursed. Flesh is cursed. Even the whole creation has been cursed for the sake of man, groaning under the weight of its own mortality, appropriately called "the bondage of corruption" (Rom 8:20-22). One of the functions of salvation is to make us aware of this situation, and cause us to long for the time when there will be "no more curse." It is no wonder that the saints are constantly admonished NOT to become enamored of "this present evil world," from which we have, by the grace of God, been "delivered" (Gal 1:4). In Christ we are being acclimated for a realm where "the curse" does not in any way exist. To become absorbed with the ways and manners of this world is to live under the power of the curse.

Something that is "cursed" is delivered over to Divine wrath – a most dreadful consideration. While we are in this world, the Spirit reminds us that the people who are unresponsive to Divine overtures are like unprofitable ground that is "nigh unto cursing" (Heb 6:8). Jesus affirmed the unbeliever is walking about with the wrath of God abiding upon him (John 3:36). Peter spoke of persons who sat among the people of God who are "cursed children" (2 Pet 2:12). Indeed, for the people of God, there is a keen awareness that the time has not yet come when there "is no more curse."

However, there is coming a time when, for the saints of God, "there is no more curse." Dare we to imagine what that means? It means there will be no more disobedience, temptation, hatred, or lack of response to God. There will be no more murder, crime, jealousy, or evil imaginations of the heart.

There will be “no more curse” because there will be nothing to provoke Divine cursing. Never again will effort be spent on resistance, as when the ground brings forth thorns and thistles to those who cultivate it, and our flesh in which dwells no good thing, causes difficulty for us (Rom 7:18). That “other law” that wages relentless war against us when we would do good, will no longer be present (Rom 7:23). Those who are living by faith know very well that “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal 5:17). That takes place in the realm of the curse.

Here we live with a mixture of curse and blessing. Our spirit is blessed and our flesh is cursed. We are seated in the blessed heavenlies, while living in a cursed realm below. But all of That will be behind us when we are “ever with the Lord.” No more warnings will be required. There will be no need to exhort those who must be exhorted to awake from spiritual slumber: “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou That sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Eph 5:14). There will be “no more curse.” Mortuaries, hospitals, and prisons are evidences of the curse. But none of them will be in glory. There will be “no more curse.”

Saint of God, the time of which we are reading is worthy of your investment. Preparations for eternity without cursing is time well spent. There will be “no more curse.” In the world to come, there will not be “anything accursed” (RSV). That means there will be no flesh, no sin, no

wayward thought, and no recalcitrant nature – all of which have the curse of God upon them. For a while, we must live in a cursed body and a cursed realm. But we will yet be delivered from both, and brought into a state of glory where there “is no more curse.” Only Divine approval and blessing will forever surround us. There will be nothing, absolutely nothing, That will evidence God’s disapproval. Having removed all things That offend, the love of God shall be lavished upon us in unprecedented ways. There is no way to now comprehend the effects of “no more curse.” Our hearts, however, can long for That time, and in That longing, find strength for the day.

I cannot leave this matter without observing That, in my judgment, there is too much in the nominal church That has been cursed by God! There must be an extensive effort expended to “cast out the old leaven” (1 Cor 5:7-8), “sin not” (1 Cor 15:34; Eph 5:26; 1 John 2:1), crucify the flesh (Gal 5:24), “mortify the deeds of the body” (Rom 8:13), “be separate” (2 Cor 6:7), and “let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1). Preparation to occupy the realm where there is “no curse” demands That these be done.

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## Part 14 - AND HIS SERVANTS SHALL SERVE HIM

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

Lesson 14 of 37

### AND HIS SERVANTS SHALL SERVE HIM

“ . . . and His servants shall serve Him.” Here is a term by which the people of God will be known in the world to come as well as this one: “HIS SERVANTS.” In this world, the sons of God are ever about doing their Father’s business. They have been called into His work. It all begins now, during “the day of salvation,” and “the acceptable year of the Lord” (2 Cor 6:2; Lk 4:19). We must thrust from us any notion that salvation is primarily God identifying with us. In no way is the Lord our servant – we are ever His.

As trite as that observation may appear, there is an alarming tendency to present Christ as the resolution to personal difficulties and the means of achieving personal goals. I realize there is an element of truth to this, but it has been grossly exaggerated. Our redemption brings us into the Divine agenda, freeing us from enslavement to self.

In this world, the word “servant” does not designate exaltation or superiority in any sense. In a way, in this world, it is a demeaning term. But it is not so in the Kingdom of God. Think of the notable persons known for being the servants of God. “My SERVANT Moses” . . . “My SERVANT Caleb” . . . “My SERVANT David” . . . “My SERVANT Job” . . . “Abraham His SERVANT” . . . “My SERVANT Isaiah” . . . “My SERVANTS the prophets” . . . “His SERVANT John” . . . “Paul, a SERVANT of Jesus Christ” . . . “Epaphras, a SERVANT of Christ” . . . “Jude, a SERVANT of Jesus Christ” (Num 12:7; 14:24; 2 Sam 3:18; Job 1:8; Psa 105:7; Isa 20:3; Jer 7:25; Rev 1:1; Rom 1:1; Col 4:12; Jude 1).

What a notable list! As if that were not enough, the Lord Jesus Himself is called a SERVANT. Prophetically Isaiah said, “Behold My SERVANT, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles” (Isa 42:1). For Jesus, this involved humbling Himself. Yet, it became the basis for His exaltation above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to come. As it is written, “But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a SERVANT, and was made in the likeness of men . . . Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name” (Phil 2:7-9).

The people of God, while they are living in this world, are identified as having been made “the SERVANTS of righteousness” (Rom 6:18). Their capacities are to be yielded as “SERVANTS to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom 6:19). Being made “free from sin” they have become “SERVANTS to God” (Rom 6:22). Believers are reminded, "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (1 Cor 7:23). Paul and Timothy are identified as “SERVANTS of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:1). Having been freed by the grace of God as are admonished, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the SERVANTS of God" (1 Pet 2:16).

When observing the contemporary church, their servitude to God is not at all evident. There are too many charlatans in their numbers who are serving their own interests. There are educational institutions that are seeking their own concerns. Let it be clear in your mind, those who are not

serving God here, while they are “in the body,” have no hope of serving Him in the world to come. Those who will serving the Lord in the glory, shall have served Him in time, and in this world.

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## Part 15 - AN EXALTED POSITION

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 15 of 37

#### AN EXALTED POSITION

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

So far as we are concerned, the highest position among the people of God is that of a "servant." Jesus, who was the Truth incarnate, affirmed, "And whosoever will be CHIEF among you, let him be your servant . . . he that is GREATEST among you shall be your servant" (Matt 20:27; 23:11). Servanthood, in this case, involves the willing abandonment of self interests in order to minister to the Lord, doing His bidding and profiting His people. Eliezer was a servant to Abraham, yet was "the steward," or manager, of Abraham's entire house (Gen 15:2). Joseph was the servant, or slave, of Potiphar, "an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard" (Gen 37:36). Yet Potiphar "made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand" (Gen 39:4).

Being a servant is the appointed prelude to reigning with Christ. As it is written, "Well done, thou good and faithful SERVANT: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee RULER over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt 25:21). Those who will be condemned are described as "wicked and slothful servants," and "unprofitable servants" (Matt

25:26,30).

There is no more elevated position than that of employment in Divine service. Our Lord's work is the highest work, and those involved in it are the uppermost people. The greatest liberty is enjoyed in the Lord's service, and the grandest rewards are offered there. It is here that our hearts are most fully satisfied, our peace is most extensive, and our joy brought to its zenith. What soul is there who is engaged in serving the Lord that has not found this to be so?

We expect those who serve Christ in the capacity of an elder, bishop, or overseer, to "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28), and "feed the flock of God" (1 Pet 5:2). They are to serve the Lord's interests, and join in the work He Himself is doing. A person who does not regularly and faithfully feed the church of God has no right to an imagined higher position in it. If that is the kind of position such non-feeders occupy, they have usurped the position, and thrown down the will of God to provide for themselves. Those who modify what they preach and teach to please the people are not servants of God – they are enemies of both God and His people. Such pretentious servants are fitly described as "spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, TO WHOM IS RESERVED THE BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS FOREVER" (Jude 1:12-13). That is how serious it is for a people being led in such a manner as leaves unlearned and ignorant in the things of God – a people who are not growing up into Christ in all things – a people who are not "able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph 3:18-19). A teacher or preacher who leaves people in that state, as compared with enabling them to "grow up into Christ in all things" (Eph 4:15), is an imposter.

Those who have no interest in the things of God, and the food that He places on His table, will "after their own lusts . . . heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim 4:3-4). Be sure of this: there is no place in heaven for such people, or for those who, in the name of a preacher or teacher, give them what they want. Those who do not serve the Lord here, will not serve Him there!

Thus, when we read "His servants shall serve Him," we are reading of the consummate blessing. Consequently, serving God while in this world is the most elevated position. That service involves feeding Christ's lambs and sheep (John 20:15-17). It is not telling them how they ought to live, but feeding them. It is not outlining what it takes to have a successful marriage – it is feeding them. It is not telling them how to vote, it is feeding them. It is to be understood that feeding often involves reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Tim 4:2). However, good feeding will reduce the need for such corrective measures. When the saints of God are strong they will tend to do the right thing.

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## Part 16 - HIS SERVANTS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 16 of 37

#### HIS SERVANTS

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

When we read "HIS servants shall serve Him," reference is made to the complete effectiveness of our Lord's great salvation (Heb 2:3). Those who serve the Lord there – AFTER the Lord Jesus has returned in all of His glory (Lk 9:26), AFTER the dead have been raised (John 5:28-29), AFTER the day of judgment (Heb 9:26; 1 John 4:17), AFTER the church has been presented to Christ "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:27), and AFTER they have been confessed to God and the angels by Jesus (Rev 3:5) – These are the ones of whom it is written, "His servants shall serve Him."

This being true, it is imperative that we all live with those "AFTER'S" in mind. We are presently in a state that is not compatible with heaven – We are in a body that cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50). We have "the old man" which has no place in heaven (Eph 4:22; Col 3:9). We can be tempted, which is a circumstance that cannot finally be brought into the presence of God. The Lord Himself keeps us from falling (Jude 1:20). However, that is a circumstance that cannot be associated with immortality.

These "servants" are the ones who served the Lord here – while they were "in the world" (John 17:11; 1 Pet 5:9), and "in the body" (Heb 13:3). They served the Lord while they were in the devil's domain (2 Cor 4:4). They served Him even though they were tempted (1 Cor 10:13). They served Him while they had to "fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life" (1 Tim 6:12). Even though they were "troubled on every side," "perplexed," "persecuted," and "cast down" (2 Cor 4:8-9), they served the Lord. These are people who "endured to the end" (Matt 10:22), and hoped "to the end for the grace that" will be brought "at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 1:13). They "held fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb 3:6). They maintained "the beginning of [their] confidence steadfast unto the end" (Heb 3:14), and showed "the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end" (Heb 6:11).

They became "His servants" while yet in this world. Their reception of Jesus (John 1:12) and reconciliation to God (Col 1:21) is what constituted them "servants." Those who do not serve the Lord here, will surely NOT serve Him there – and they must not be led to imagine that they will, or that anyone will remain with the Lord who does not serve Him, and follow Him wherever He goes (Rev 14:4)! Let it be clear, being addicted to self-interests in this world excludes one from being forever with the Lord. Knowing the condition of the contemporary church, this is an alarming consideration. Yet, it does need to be said in a most solemn and arresting tone. The Spirit admonishes, "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (1 Cor 7:23). Again we are reminded, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20, NKJV).

However, this is not a matter to be bound upon men with the chords of Law. Rather, it is to be mentioned within the context of glory. The people of God must have this clearly and regularly set before them: "His servants shall serve Him!" If there is joy in serving Him now, who can imagine the magnitude of the joy to be experienced then! If satisfaction is found in Divine service here, in

the war zone, what will be brought by our involvement in that world!

After over sixty-two years of public ministry, preaching in hundreds of churches, I can tell you that a “Christianity” is extant in our time that does not regularly hear about glory, immortality, and being forever with the Lord. Modern hymnals and songs do not focus upon heaven, eternity, or an economy in place that endures forever. The absence of this kind of preaching and teaching has opened the door to charlatans, career-seekers, and unlearned leaders. The opportunists have entered without detection. Subverting doctrines have entered. Staggering numbers of millionaire- preachers are in place, sorely lacking in power. These men have introduced an environment where pondering an eternal inheritance, or being confessed to God the Father, and all the holy angels, have no superior value. Make no mistake m about this, those who have contributed to this kind of “Christianity” are our enemies. Of such men Paul warned, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If ANY man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor 3:17).

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## Part 17 - WITHOUT ENCUMBRANCE

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 17 of 37

#### WITHOUT ENCUMBRANCE

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

It is to be understood that when "His servants shall serve Him," it will be without the encumbrances of this life. In this world, Paul served the Lord in prison, and John on the Isle of Patmos (2 Tim 1:16; Rev 1:9). Stephen served the Lord while religious men hurled stones at him, and the early church served Him when they were "scattered abroad" (Acts 7:58; 8:4).

Epaphroditus served the Lord when he was sick, and Paul did so with a "thorn in the flesh" (Phil 2:27; 2 Cor 12:7). Abraham served the Lord while a stranger in the very land he was promised (Heb 11:9). Isaiah, at one time, served the Lord "naked and barefoot three years" (Isa 20:2). While Jeremiah was serving the Lord, his enemies "cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire" (Jer 38:6).

Serving the Lord is not a bed of roses, with earthly fame and glory, plush houses, and religious empires – and that is not how it is presented by the Spirit. Jesus told His primary leaders, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). And again, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). The leading apostle of the twelve, AFTER Jesus had died, AFTER He had risen from the dead, AFTER He was exalted to the right hand of God, and AFTER He had poured out the Spirit upon them, publicly said, "silver and gold have I none" (Acts 3:6). The apostle to the Gentiles who was especially blessed with unparalleled "visions and revelations" (2 Cor 12:1-3), wrote: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once

was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." (2 Cor 11:23-28). WHAT CHURCH OF OUR TIME WOULD HIRE HIM AFTER READING THAT RESUME??

Yet all of these men were prepared by that very service for the time to come, when "His servants shall serve Him."

In this world, our service involves having a treasure in an earthen vessel (2 Cor 4:7). While we serve the Law, we experience "another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind" (Rom 7:23). Sometimes, we must confess with the ancients that we are "pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired of life" (2 Cor 1:8). Not only do we experience the wonderful response of heaven, we also endure the disheartening responses of earth. We serve the Lord in a dichotomy of experience. As it is written, "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet

making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Cor 6:9-10).

But in the world to come, this will not be the case. We will happily serve the Lord without distraction. We will see nothing that competes with our service. No foreign thought will invade our minds. No enemy will be found in the land. We will not need to have a sword in our hand as well as a trowel, as those working with Nehemiah (Neh 4:18). I can scarcely imagine what it will be like to serve the Lord in this manner—without any distraction. But it is a most joyful contemplation. All glory to God for telling us of this blessing!

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## Part 18 - THE TEST OF A SERVANT

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 18 of 37

### THE TEST OF A SERVANT

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Verse 3, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

What are the Divinely appointed characteristics of a “servant,” and how will they be evaluated. Is “servant” nothing more than a title, or is it a function? In the world, there are men who wear titles that do not really describe what they actually DO. There are “managers” who do not manage, “workers” who do not work, and “leaders” who do not lead. Such people are not paid for what they actually do, but for who they are on the management chart, or company roster.

Unfortunately this circumstance is now found in “the church.” It has “preachers” who do not preach as God requires, “teachers” who do not teach as God as ordained, “elders” who do not feed and care for the flock, and “deacons” who do not serve. There are “singers” who cannot sing, “scholars” who have no grasp of the Kingdom of God, and purported “worship leaders” who have

not apprehended what worship is. Unfortunately, men have learned to live with these circumstances, even though some are keenly aware of their existence. Their hearts and minds have not yet grasped the significance of terms like, “wicked servant” (Matt 18:22), “wicked and slothful servant” (Matt 25:26), “that servant’ which is not found “doing” when the Lord comes (Lk 12:43-46), “that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will” (Luke 12:47), and the “servant” who did not know the Lord’s will, yet committed things “worthy of stripes” (Lk 12:48).

On the day of judgment, what will be the Lord’s reaction to elders who did not “feed the flock of God” (1 Pet 5:2), “take care of the church of God” (1 Tim 3:5), and yet must “give account” for the people they were to feed (Heb 13:17).

A condemned condition that was found in Israel, has now been duplicated in the church: “These things you have done and I kept silent; YOU THOUGHT I WAS ALL TOGETHER LIKE YOU. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face” (Psa 50:21, NIV). The nominal church, or professing “Christians,” conduct themselves just as though God approves of them – as though He actually thinks like they do. They imagine that they are approved because of their creed, or their sectarian stance, or their name, or their self-assessed accomplishments.

The test of a servant is whether or not he will serve the Master WHEN HE IS ABSENT. The Kingdom of heaven is likened to “a man traveling into a far country, who called His own servants, and delivered unto them His goods” (Matt 25:14). Each servant was given something to do. The charge was in strict accord with each person’s abilities. There was no possible option about whether the work was to be done or not. Each servant received something from the master. They all knew the master would return to bring them into account for their faithfulness. You will remember that even though all of the servants received something, not all of them were faithful. In particular, one servant did not serve his master’s interest. He buried what was given to him, and straightway forgot about it. But the day of reckoning DID come. Just as the unfaithfulness of that servant excluded him from the presence of the master, so the faithfulness of the other stewards became the occasion of their blessing (Matt 25:15-30).

In this parable, the Lord accentuated His absence from the arena of service. "After A LONG TIME the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" (Matt 25:19). That delay is what revealed the hearts of the servants! TIME IS THE GREAT TESTER OF DISCIPLESHIP. Those who serve the Lord by fits and starts, not being reliable or consistent, are walking among fiery serpents and scorpions. Unless their hearts are made stable, and their service made more consistent, they have little hope of being forever with the Lord.

As demonstrated in Israel, God sometimes awakens His servants from their lethargy. He has used poisonous snakes (Num 21:6), trouble and captivity by the heathen (2 Chron 29:8-9), destruction (Jer 34:1-3), plagues (Num 31:16), etc. I do not know if "the Mighty God" (Psa 50:1) will awaken the church and our nation or not. Perhaps they have provoked the Lord the tenth time, as Israel did, and have therefore been excluded (Num 14:22). In the parable of reference, the Lord of the wicked servant did not arrest his downward plummet. He did not stop him from being unfaithful. That servant had all of the resources required to carry out his stewardship. However, in the end, what was originally given to him was given to a faithful servant, and the "unprofitable servant"

was cast "into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt 25:26-30). THE AIM OF THE SERVANT IS TO BRING PROFIT AND BENEFIT TO THE HIS LORD AND HIS LORD'S KINGDOM!

Finally, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." (Rom 13:11-12).

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## Part 19 - THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 19 of 37

"They shall SEE HIS FACE, and His name shall be on their foreheads. (Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

### THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE

This is the same as seeing "face to face" – "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor 13:12). It involves the removal of both veil and mirror, or dark glass. It is seeing the Lord without obscurity, comprehending His presence without the necessity of faith, as we now know it. It is seeing Him "as He is," in all of His resplendent glory and majesty (1 John 3:2).

### A SYNONYM FOR HIS PERSON

The "face" of the Lord is a synonym for His Person. When Moses asked the Lord to show him His glory, the Lord responded, "You cannot SEE MY FACE; for no man shall SEE ME, and live" (Ex 33:20). Notice the parallel between "My face" and "Me." When the Lord spoke of seeking His Person, He said, "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and SEEK MY FACE . . ." (2 Chron 7:14). Thus, when we read "they shall SEE HIS FACE," the promise of seeing "HIM," whom we presently "see not" (1 Pet 1:8), is being given (1 Pet 1:8; 1 John 3:2). A message that is not pointed in this direction cannot possibly be the Gospel, or a declaration of the Word and will of the Lord. It cannot be a message that is undergirded by Divine power – one with which the Holy Spirit can work. Let us be clear about this, the work of Christ is not cleaning up society, stabilizing wavering marriages, getting wayward youth off the streets, and making strong nations. Those are all the result of believing the Gospel and living unto the Lord. No individual or group of individuals can crucify the flesh (Gal 5:24), live by faith (Heb 10:38), walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,26), or present their bodies a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1-2), without the effects of that posture rippling into every facet of life. When it is realized, salvation is thoroughly effective. The possibility of this effectiveness is confirmed by the very nature of salvation. It is encapsulated in these words: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13). The Amplified Bible reads, "For the grace of God (His unmerited favor and blessing) has come forward (appeared) for the deliverance from sin and the eternal salvation for all mankind. It has trained us

to reject and renounce all ungodliness (irreligion) and worldly (passionate) desires, to live discreet (temperate, self-controlled), upright, devout (spiritually whole) lives in this present world, awaiting and looking for the [fulfillment, the realization of our] blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus (the Messiah, the Anointed One), Who gave Himself on our behalf that He might redeem us (purchase our freedom) from all iniquity and purify for Himself a people [to be peculiarly His own, people who are] eager and enthusiastic about [living a life that is good and filled with] beneficial deeds."

It simply is not possible for a more thorough provision to be given. Within the professed church, all ungodliness, slothfulness, unfaithfulness, worldliness, and lack of fruitfulness is a public contradiction of these provisions. If the people have really heard the Gospel, these are indications that the Gospel has been rejected, and unbelief has assumed a reign over the people.

Psalm 105:4 gives this admonition: “Seek the LORD, and His strength: seek HIS FACE evermore.” Hosea also spoke in this manner. “I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and SEEK MY FACE: in their affliction they will SEEK ME early”(Hos 5:15). Again, note how the Lord’s Person and His face are used synonymously.

#### THE SERVANTS LONGED FOR THIS

While in this world, the servants of God long to see the Lord – to behold His “face.” Grace leads us into this desire. If this were not the case, the promise would mean little or nothing to us. It assumes a fervent longing for this very thing on the part of the saints. David spoke of a special generation of people who sought the face of the Lord: "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek Thy face" (Psa 24:8-6). We know from Scripture that this is what the Lord desires – for His face to be sought. As it is written, “When You said, ‘Seek My face’ My heart said to You, ‘YOUR FACE, LORD, I will seek” (Psa 27:8, NKJV).

Two wonderful things are seen here. First, the Lord wants to be seen, and calls upon men to seek His face – His Person and blessing. Second, tender hearts can respond to the Lord’s request with joyful expectation. Our text assumes the face of the Lord, or His Person, is now being sought by the saints. That is what gives weight to this promise.

There is a suspicious absence of this quest in the nominal church. Too often a special group of people are employed to stir up the people to praise God. It is to be questioned that a people who have to be stirred up to praise the Lord have even been living for Him. When there is little exposition of Christ, as seen in the Epistles, and a minuscule understanding of both His Person and work is set before the people, the hearers are not being cultured for heaven – and it simply is not possible for a more serious condition to exist.

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## Part 20 - JESUS' "FACE" SEEN IN FULNESS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 20 of 37

### JESUS' "FACE" SEEN IN FULNESS

"They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads." (Verse 4, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall SEE GOD" (Matt 5:8). Our text is addressing the fulfillment of that glorious promise. Seeing the face of Jesus equates to seeing God, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col 2:9).

Our text assumes that salvation has created a deep and profound longing to see the Lord "as He is" (1 John 3:2). This does not speak of seeing the fulness of a sectarian position, or the proper view of the coming of the Lord, or what is really involved in appropriating salvation. Seeing the face of Jesus, beholding Him as He is, will address every valid field of knowledge and understanding. A purported Gospel that does not whet the appetites of those who believe it, to see the Lord Jesus as He is, is really no gospel at all. Such a longing can only be found in "the pure of heart," who refuse to allow the defilements of this world to clutter their perception and affection.

This promise is also the fulfillment of Hebrews 11:6. "... he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Heb 11:6, NKJV). The reward for those seeking "Him" is the Lord Himself! As the Lord said to our father Abraham, "I am your Shield, your exceedingly Great Reward" (Gen 15:1). David confessed he also had embraced this longing. "O LORD, You are the Portion of my inheritance and my Cup" (Psa 16:5).

Seeing the glorified Christ's face involves more than simply looking at Him – although that is surely the heart of the vision. Even in this world, when men go to see celebrities, they do not simply want to look at them. They want to behold what they do – the thing that makes them worldly celebrities. Even so, beholding the Face of our Lord involves seeing His works in a clear and uncluttered way. Seeing His face involves discerning His judgments and ways, which are obscured in this world, and "past finding out" (Rom 11:33). But the saints are not content with this circumstance. Their faith has caused their hearts to long for a fuller vision, a more comprehensive look at their marvelous Lord.

Indeed, their longing will be satisfied. When they see "His face" it will no more be said, "Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known" (Psa 77:19). Everything God does is for a reason. As it is written, "and you shall know that I have done nothing without cause that I have done in it, says the LORD GOD" (Ezek 14:23). Those causes, however, are not always apparent to us while we sojourn in this world. But then – when we see "His face" – there will be no yoke, no burden, no veiling, and no secrets. We will behold His Person, understand His ways, and comprehend His workings. Glory to God! At that glorious time, everything will fall together, and the knowledge of God will be brought to its intended maturity. The mother of all sectarianism and false teaching is the absence of the knowledge of God!

In the meantime, while we wait to see His face, let us culture an appetite for the coming vision. In all of its aspects, salvation contributes to the development of such a yearning. Conversely, all Satanic influence seeks to either dull or remove that anticipating longing. Understanding this will deliver us from many religious involvements that are not driven by the Holy Spirit. Any

association or teaching that pushes our inheritance from our consideration is most dangerous.

Believe it or not, solving societal and domestic difficulties ranks very low in the Kingdom of God, if it even has a ranking at all. If such difficulties are solvable – and they may not be – they will be properly addressed and resolved through the Lord Jesus Christ and His great salvation.

When we see His face, no association will be made with challenges that occurred in the flesh. At that time, those challenges will be viewed as “former things” which will have “passed away” (Rev 21:4). As it is written, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, NOR COME INTO MIND" (Isa 65:17).

Now, live in such a way as will prepare you to rejoice and be glad when Jesus is seen as He is. For every one, that vision will be their induction into eternity – either to be with the Lord, or without Him.

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## Part 21 - HIS NAME SHALL BE ON THEIR FOREHEADS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 21 of 37

### HIS NAME SHALL BE ON THEIR FOREHEADS

"They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads." (Verse 4, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

This is an aspect of glory that is most refreshing to the soul. Earlier in this vision, the judgment of God was withheld until His servants were "sealed in their foreheads" (7:3). When the bottomless pit was opened according to God's purpose, the destructive hoard were allowed to hurt "only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (9:4). Later, when the whole house of Israel was seen standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, they had the "Father's name written in their foreheads" (14:1).

This is a symbolic way of saying the redeemed are OBVIOUSLY identified with God. The identity cannot be questioned, and there will be no opportunity for any personality to reject it or question it. Those who did not recognize the saints of God in this world, will recognize them on the day of judgment, and it will be to their condemnation. That identity was not achieved by the saints themselves, but accomplished by God. Their identity is the result of Divine work, not human ingenuity. This is not a human achievement, but a Divine one.

Jesus promised this very thing to the church in Philadelphia. They had not denied His name, but had heartily embraced Him in this world, even though they were opposed by the "synagogue of Satan" because they were unashamed to take hold on the Savior and His promises. To them Jesus said, "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God AND the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. AND I will write on him My new name" (3:12). It is not possible to estimate the joy and satisfaction that will result from this Divine writing.

OVERCOMERS (Rev 12:11), whether from Philadelphia in the first century, or Joplin, or your city, in the twentieth century, all who are faithful until the end will enjoy the fulfillment of this promise.

They will be conspicuously and thoroughly related to the Living God. They will have His NATURE, His DISPOSITION, and His CHARACTER, in fulness, and according to their measure: THE NAME OF "MY GOD" WILL BE UPON THEM. God will see it. The exalted Christ will see it. The Holy Spirit will see it., The holy angels will see it. The exalted orders of the cherubim and seraphim will see it. The glorified saints will see it. The condemned will see it. Satan will see it. Fallen angels will see it. Wicked principalities and powers will see it. Not a solitary objection will rise from this motley group when the identity of the saints is made unquestionably clear to every created personality.

The glorified saints will FIT INTO the completed temple and city of God. They will belong where they are, and it will be evident to the redeemed of all ages, and the angelic hosts as well: the "NAME OF THE CITY OF MY GOD" WILL BE UPON THEM.

And there, identity with the Lord Jesus will be noticeable and clear. They will be seen as His "brethren," whom He has faithfully brought to God (Heb 2:10-12). They will share the throne with

Him (Rev 3:21), and be “joint heirs” together with Him (Rom 8:17). Indeed, Jesus will write upon them HIS OWN NEW NAME.”

In this world, we must deal with not being accepted – with being out of place, so to speak. It is difficult enough to endure the status of “outcast” among the obviously unsaved: those with whom we live and work. But, alas, the status of “stranger and foreigner” is not limited to that alienated segment of humanity. Too often, we feel out of place in the professed church, and around those who wear the name of the Lord. This is by no means a comfortable circumstance, and no person of sound mind seeks such a status. Yet, it is becoming more and more obvious that the closer one draws to the Lord, the further he is from the nominal church.

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## Part 22 - MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 22 of 37

#### MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

"They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads." (Verse 4, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

The thought of fitting into glory is a solace to my soul – a refreshing and encouraging contemplation. My greatest social grief is sensing I often do not really belong among my religious peers. This does NOT apply to the brethren with whom I regularly meet. The fact of not fitting in is something I have experienced in increasing measure since 1957. It has forced me to seek fellowship outside of the nominal church.

Perhaps sharing some of my own experience and perceptions on this point will bring some

encouragement to others who have shared this same thing. For a long time now, I have sensed an increasing gulf forming between myself and the institutional church. This is not what I desired to happen, and is not my preference. However I cannot compromise my quest for glory for the approval of mere men.

This expanding chasm is largely owing to a personal quest for the things of God, and a disdain of mediocrity and compromise. I make no claim of being unique in this pursuit. In fact, it is an aspect of faith that all believers possess to some degree. I find that as the things of God become clearer to me, kindred spirits become correspondingly more precious. Conversely, those lacking an appetite for these things grow more distant, and can more easily do without my company, and I without theirs.

The things that qualify us for fellowship with God too often disqualify us for a place in the modern church. Familiarity with the good Word of God, which I so dearly treasure, is not a requirement for leadership or ministry in the nominal church. A strong desire for a fellowship based upon and around the Word of God is not a requisite either. In fact, such things are viewed as strange, actually making those possessing them peculiar or foreign to the average churchman.

The general church or religious institution has its own standards and credential-requirements. Oblivious of the absurdity of their self-conceived necessities, they are blissfully unaware that those very prerequisites exclude Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, the Apostles, Luke, James, Jude, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Barnabas, Epaphroditus, and a host of other kingdom giants, from playing a role in their institutions. None of them would be accepted and honored in the average church. Thus, many of us who are at home in the presence of the Lord are also actually ill-at-ease in such gatherings.

Unwilling to settle for being relegated to the domain of inactivity, I gathered about me tender souls who were obviously engaged in a quest for glory. Together we began to flourish in the courts of the Lord (Psa 92:13), and a staggering number of doors were opened to us to serve others who were also seeking the Lord. Some who have knowledge of our labors refer to us as a "cult," and others have sought to shut us down – but we continue to grow. We refuse to yield to the pressures of the institutional church, and we also refuse to quench and grieve the Holy Spirit.

## A COMMON EXPERIENCE

All of this should surprise no one. In all ages, those who were used of God experienced exactly the same thing. It was the Scribes, Pharisees, Lawyers, and Jewish Council that rejected John the Baptist, Jesus, Stephen, and Paul.

Do not think for one moment that all of this had no affect upon those being rejected. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, who had rejected Him (Lk 19:41-43). Paul had heaviness of heart over Israel (Rom 9:2), and over the fact that he was rejected by "all men" when he needed them the most (2 Tim 4:16). He also was maligned and doubted by some in the Corinthian church, where he labored successfully for eighteen months (Acts 18:1-11; 1 Cor 9:1-3; 2 Cor 10:10). Stephen prayed for the very ones who stoned him (Acts 7:60).

Religious rejection is like the bitter herbs at the Passover feast. I have found that if you really want to press closer to Christ, you will face rejection by many who call themselves "Christians."

However Divine approval is actually realized in the undergoing of contradicting experiences. Paul testifies, "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God . . . By honor AND dishonor, by evil report AND good report: as deceivers, AND yet true; As unknown, AND yet well known; as dying, AND , behold, we live; as chastened, AND not killed; As sorrowful, YET alway rejoicing; as poor, YET making many rich; as having nothing, and YET possessing all things" (2 Cor 6:4-10). The comfort of the Holy Spirit, and the realization of the love of God more than compensates for these competing conditions.

## A PLACE AT LAST

All of this highlights the glories of the world to come. No more will God's people be "the filth of the world, and . . . the offscouring of all things" (1 Cor 4:13). Indeed, the name of their God will be upon "their forehead." In this world, it was their hearts that were "circumcised" and made new. That operation was only apparent to those who had experienced the same thing. Then, on the other side, we will be citizens of the city, and OBVIOUSLY so. No one will ask us if we are really citizens, or question our presence in the glory. It will be apparent we belong there. Our association with God will be evident. Our connection with Jesus will be noticeable and unquestionable. There will be nothing about us that will lead to any other conclusion: we will belong in glory. "His name shall be on their foreheads." Hallelujah! How the hearts of believers long for that time!

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## Part 23 - NO NIGHT THERE

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 23 of 37

### NO NIGHT THERE

"There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light." (Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

“NO NIGHT THERE!” It is no wonder the Spirit says, “Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work” (2 Thess 2:16-17, NKJV). The “hope” that is held out to the believer is “good.” Our future is bright with the glow of “good things to come” (Heb 9:11). It is important that this be proclaimed and accented to this generation, for it is one that is unduly relying on government and other influences to make life more pleasant and profitable. In Christ we have been given “better things” (Heb 6:9), a “better hope” (Heb 7:19), a “better covenant” (Heb 8:6), and a “better and enduring substance” (Heb 10:34). We legitimately “desire a better country, that is, an heavenly” (Heb 11:16), and anticipate “a better resurrection” (Heb 11:35). What possible rationale can be presented for relying on earthly wisdom or institutions when we have been called to such things?

Those who embrace the Lord with zeal, abandoning all competing pursuits, will surely be justified. If we seem foolishly radical now, it is only because our enemies are uncertain of their

future. To such we acknowledge that, according to appearance, “We are fools for Christ's sake” (1 Cor 4:10). We have cast our eyes from the defilements of this world to the fair fields of glory. If, to some, the prospect of realizing all our hearts desire seems but a dream, let us dream on! The happy prospect of glory has given us power to live, the ability to think more soundly, and the adeptness to drink from life’s most bitter cup without despairing. What a marvelous revelation is set before us in the twenty-second chapter of Revelation! Let us drink from it with joy!

Who is capable of comprehending the magnitude of this promise! “There shall be NO night there!” Among other things, life in this world is accompanied by night – both in nature and in spirit. In fact, our entire sojourn in this world is likened to time in the night. That is why we are told, “THE NIGHT is far spent, the day is at hand” (Rom 13:12). We are not “of the night,” but we are presently occupying the realm of night.

Do not despair because of earthly circumstances, faithful pilgrim! Lift up your head, for “your redemption draweth nigh” (Lk 21:23). Ponder this truth: “For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb 10:37).

When Jesus comes, He will interrupt the affairs of this world like a “thief in the night” (1 Thess 5:2; 2 Pet 3:10). Until that time, we live amidst uncertainties. We do not even know what a single day will bring forth, to say nothing of next year. We have a perfect parallel in nature. The light that rules the night is called a “lesser light” (Gen 1:16). But there will be no “lesser light” for any nighttime in glory. There will only be day – glorious day. In eternity, we will find the glow of grace was greatly diminished in the realm where faith was perfected. In the glory, we will find that the things that presently may appear crystal clear were actually greatly obscured by the place of the night. In the blazing light of glory, nothing will be hidden – not even God and Christ themselves. That is why it is written, “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with

men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and GOD HIMSELF shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev 21:3). However, while this cannot be said of this world, it is true in EVERY sense, in the world to come: "There will be NO night there" – no obscurity, no ignorance, no confusion, no confounding, no misunderstanding, no lack of familiarity, or unawareness—i.e. no need for faith, by which we must live in this world (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38)! While we are in this world, we confront "works of DARKNESS" (Eph 5:11), "the rulers of the DARKNESS of this world" (Eph 6:12), and "the power of DARKNESS" (Col 1:13). There is the imminent danger of walking in DARKNESS (1 John 1:6; 2:11). However, all of this is excluded in the glory, for "there is NO NIGHT there!" Thanks be unto God!

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## Part 24 - THE TRAGEDY OF NIGHT

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 24 of 37

### THE TRAGEDY OF NIGHT

"There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light" (Verse 22:5, Revelation 22:1-9, 21:25 NKJV)

The "night" does not speak of good things. It is a time of doubt and question, when watchmen must take their position on the walls of life (Isa 21:11). Jesus spoke of the coming night "when no one can work" (John 9:4). Night, in this sense, is something with which the children of God cannot blend. As it is written, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are NOT OF THE NIGHT, nor of darkness" (1 Thess 5:5). It is true that we ourselves were "once darkness," but in Jesus that is no longer the case (Eph 5:8). The ignorance and depravity belonging to darkness are now contrary to our renewed natures, and we can no longer blend with them.

Glory consists of the ABSENCE of some things, as well as the presence of others. The "night" speaks of everything contrary to us, and against which our faith struggles. To accentuate this, allow me to remind you of common experiences associated with nighttime. Because there is "NO NIGHT there," none of these things will be there either.

**CRYING.** "And it grieved Samuel; and he CRIED unto the LORD ALL NIGHT." "O my God, I CRY . . . in THE NIGHT season." "She weeps bitterly in THE NIGHT" (1 Sam 15:11; Psa 22:2; Lam 1:2). What child of God does not know what this is about? Console your heart, child of God. "There shall be NO NIGHT there!"

**WEEPING THAT ENDURES.** "Weeping may endure for A NIGHT, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa 30:5). There are times when our tears gush during THE NIGHT, watering our bed (Psa 6:6). These are times when the helplessness of our flesh is emphasized, and our frailty looms large. What a blessed thing it is to read, "There shall be NO NIGHT there!"

**BITTER REMORSE.** No child of God desires remorse. Yet, in this world, we taste of it like Peter did THE NIGHT Jesus was betrayed and tried. "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Lk 22:62). What an exceedingly dark night that was! Those with tender hearts know something of that experience. How good to know, "There shall be NO NIGHT there." The mourning ones will be comforted!

**TOILING FRUITLESSLY.** No child of God wants anything to do with fruitless labors. However, what believer is there that does not know what it is like to work hard, yet take in little. Remember when the disciples went fishing after Jesus' death? It is written, "and THAT NIGHT they caught nothing" (John 21:3). It was reminiscent of an experience they had at the beginning. "And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled ALL THE NIGHT, and have taken nothing" (Lk 5:5). There are times when we cannot show much for our labors. But that will all end in the glory. "There is NO NIGHT there."

**PRAYER VIGILS.** Our blessed Lord was noted for all night vigils in prayer. "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued ALL NIGHT in prayer to God" (Lk 6:12). Before Him, Jacob did the same (Gen 32:24). With the world shut out, and the lurking enemy of the soul near, nighttime has become a season for prayer. It is all part of being in this world. But it will not be so in the world to come. There will be no need for gathering strength in all-night seasons of prayer. "There is NO NIGHT there."

**A TIME OF DEATH.** When those close to us leave this world, it is, so to speak, the nighttime. The brightness of the soul's sun has often set as we see those with whom we have sojourned move up

higher. It can be said of more than one, “And this woman's child died IN THE NIGHT” (1 Kgs 3:19). It is one of the harder experiences of life. But all of that will be behind us when we are ever with the Lord. “There is NO NIGHT there.”

Time does not allow extensive comments on this subject – THE NIGHT. In bitterness of soul, the Psalmist's inward sore ran IN THE NIGHT (Psa 77:2). Jacob spoke of being consumed by frost AT NIGHT (Gen 31:40). Job spoke of “WEARISOME NIGHTS” (Job 7:3). There is a terror associated with THE NIGHT (Psa 91:5), and strong spiritual desires that surface in THE NIGHT (Isa 26:9). All of this is part and parcel of living in the body and in the world. But it is only a temporary situation. “There is NO NIGHT there.”

Consider the difficulties associated with the darkness. Presently we wrestle against “the rulers of THE DARKNESS of this world,” and the “power OF DARKNESS” (Eph 6:12; Col 1:13). But all of that will soon be behind us forever. “There is NO NIGHT there.”

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## Part 25 - NO LAMP AND NO LIGHT

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 25 of 37

#### NO LAMP AND NO LIGHT

"They need no lamp ["candle" KJV] nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light." (Verse Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

The "lamp," or "candle," is for the night, and "the sun" is for the day. In this world, we need them both because of the temporal nature of life, and because of its ordered cycles of day and night. They allow us to adapt to a changing environment.

To put it another way, the fulness of Divine glory is not presently with us. His Word is "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa 119:105). It allows us to navigate through difficult spiritual terrain. While we remain in this world, in order to see things properly, we need help from heaven.

But in the world to come, there will be no need for any adaptation to a changing environment as we presently know it. Then, being redeemed from the earth (Rev 14:3), and being clothed with immortality (1 Cor 15:53-54), The "Lord God" Himself will shed light on everything. Nothing will be vague or mysterious. There will be no dark corners, so to speak, where we must navigate by faith. In this world, because we do not fully see the Lord, we cannot fully see life. In fact, both truth and life are only seen correctly to the degree we behold the Lord aright. No wonder it is written, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but THEN face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor 13:12).

Clarity of vision has more to do with WHERE we are than what we know. Being in the body and in the world produces a blurred condition. Further, while we are surrounded by the temporal order, God Himself cannot dwell fully with us. All of that, praise the Lord, will be fully corrected in the world to come. With the temporal removed, and our enemies in the lake of fire, the Lord Himself will be able to fully dwell with us. His Presence, or Person, will cause everything to become clear to us. There will be no further need for "lesser lights," whether lamps or the moon – or even the sun.

In a sense, believers can tell how close they are to God by what they are able to comprehend or understand. Where a fundamental ignorance of God and the things of the Spirit of God exist, there is a vast chasm between the individual and God, and the "things of God" (1 Cor 2:10-11), and "the things of the Spirit" (Rom 8:5). Too, as the things of God and of the Spirit become clearer to us, we are coming closer to the Lord, drawing near to Him in faith.

Conversely, the clarity of understanding we will have when we are in glory will confirm God Himself is with us. The illumination we possess will be given to us by His Presence, not by secondary means, as it is now received.

All of this assumes there is a longing for this illumination within the saints – and, indeed, there is. Salvation brings this longing to the soul, and a profound discontent with unnecessary ignorance. Wherever the Lord Jesus is received, there comes an increasing appetite and yearning for the truth of God. Where that is missing, death is prevalent. The pulse of spiritual life is directly proportionate to the dominance of hope. Where hope is nourished and maintained, strong yearnings for glory are found. Candidly, I do not believe this attitude is found in the average "Christian." Where strong yearnings for glory are found, men will find it exceedingly difficult to endure the spiritual pabulum

that is being ladled out from the average pulpit.

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## Part 26 - THEY SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 26 of 37

### THEY SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER

"And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place." (Verse 5b-6, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

The magnitude of the glory set before us continues to grow. A river of water of life, trees yielding a variety of fruit, and leaves for the healing of the nations – all in abundance. There is no more curse, the throne of God and the Lamb will be in our midst, and our service unhindered! BUT THERE IS MORE! We will be God's servants, but not mere servants. The saved will be REIGNING SERVANTS! Rather than being ruled, we will rule! Ours will not be an independent reign. Rather, we will reign WITH CHRIST. While ours will be a joint rule, it will be strictly in concert with our Lord Jesus Christ's reign. We will be brought into His rule and operate within the Divine agenda. It will all be joyful and effective.

Herein is a marvelous thing. Earlier in Revelation it is said of Jesus, "and He shall reign for ever and ever" (11:15). Now, it is said of the saints, "and THEY shall reign forever and ever." This will be a just, or righteous, reign for which no apology will be offered. Then the saying will be fulfilled, "The LORD will make you the head, not the tail . . . you will always be at the top, never at the bottom" (Deut 28:13, NIV). In this world, that promise was conditional: "If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them." There, it will be unconditional, for we will be delivered from every restraining and competing influence, that were THE CAUSE for conditions.

Here and there, the Lord has revealed this reign. One of the most extensive prophecies came through Daniel. He thrice referred to this very reign. "But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come . . . and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom . . . Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him" (Dan 7:18,22,27, NKJV). The Revised Standard and New Revised Standard Versions read, "all dominions shall serve and obey THEM." The Complete Jewish Bible, God's Word translation, Jewish Publication Bible, and Common English Bible read the same – "serve and obey them."

Is this not a staggering promise? And yet it is held out to every child of God. Jesus spoke of inheriting "the kingdom PREPARED FOR YOU from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34). Here we grapple with the enemy of our souls. There, we will not. What God has planned on the trestle board of eternity can scarcely be imagined – even after extensive revelation.

The thought of ALWAYS dominating is too large to be grasped at this present time. But we must allow our faith to stretch toward that goal, for, as the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, that is where we are headed. The people of God do need to hear these things. It will strengthen the sinews of their faith, and brace up their feeble knees. We must hear about more than our weaknesses. We need a message that affirms that for which we have been apprehended (Phil 3:12)!

## FAITHFUL AND TRUE WORDS

“Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.” (Verse 6)

Some might wonder why such an expression is necessary. After all, this is the Word of God! It is God speaking through Jesus, through an angel, and now through the Holy Spirit. Is not that enough? Why add, “These words are faithful and true?” There is a reason!

An academic perspective is extremely limited. There are several things it does NOT take into consideration. First, we are in the flesh, which is everywhere declared to be a handicap. Second, we are in a cursed world, which world constitutes a distraction to the soul. Third, we are opposed by a shrewd enemy who is aggressive against us. Fourth, we are living by faith and not by sight. The realities we have embraced are not evident, and vanish from our understanding like smoke unless they are believed. In view of these circumstances, placing confidence in scholastic and formalistic approaches is foolish and absurd. Expertise in language gives you no advantage in the good fight of faith. Historical proficiency cannot clear up eternal matters. An extremely logical mind can be as great a handicap as it can an advantage. Throughout the ages, the Spirit thunders, “Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom” (Jer 9:23, NIV). This is not empty oratory, but a solemn reality!

When it comes to the apprehension of Himself and His salvation, God has discarded the whole of worldly wisdom. As it is written, “Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the

debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?” (1 Cor 1:20, NASB). If you want to know the things of God, a worldly-wise man will do you no good. If you desire for the things of God to find residence in your soul, you must not call for a “scholar,” or scribe. The philosopher is impotent when it comes to “the things of the Spirit of God.” That is simply the way it is. The reluctance of many to acknowledge this truth has no bearing whatsoever upon it.

It is because of this circumstance that Divine iteration is employed. “These words are faithful and true.” They have been said because they are true; they are not true because they have been said. They are not true because they are logical, but are spiritually logical because they are true. The ONLY reason to believe them is because the Lord has declared them – but that is reason enough for faith.

The biggest part of edification is AFFIRMATION, not explanation. The more men attempt to explain the truth of God, the more the power of the truth is neutralized. At some point the truthfulness of the promise must be affirmed. Again, its absolute faithfulness is to be declared. You can trust what the Lord has said, building your entire life upon it. It will hold you up during the battle, in the valley, and upon the mountain. With God, there “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). If you cannot prove the truth of His promises, they are still “faithful and true.” If they do not conform to historical patterns of thought, they remain “faithful and true.” If someone finds some Dead Sea scrolls that omit them, they are still “faithful and true.”

At once, the sophist will suspect we are speaking reproachfully of his cherished wisdom. Let such men acknowledge their thoughts are NOT the thoughts of God, neither are their ways His (Isa 55:8-9). And what is a person to do when such a circumstance is encountered? The answer is clear, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts” (Isa 55:7). See – all of that is involved in the words, “These words are faithful and true!” If you will embrace them by faith, you will find it to be so.

## THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 27 of 37

### GOD IS SHOWING HIS SERVANTS

"Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place." (Verse 6, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

See the Divine intention and initiative. It is glorious! The "holy prophets," rejected by those who heard them, were preparing the people of God for what we are reading. They wrote of "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow"—and this is "the glory" of which we are reading (1 Pet 1:11). Now God stands behind the prophets and declares they belong to Him and spoke the truth. What He had revealed through the holy prophets is now being expounded by Jesus, who gave the word to an angel, who gave the word to John. That message is not only in

harmony with the words of "the holy prophets," it is the enlargement of their words.

God does not send an angel to confirm the words of Socrates or Plato! He does not buttress the words of Josephus, as men attempt to do. Regardless of their professed worth and advancement in learning, God has never confirmed the message of a philosopher, linguist, economist, historian, or politician. He has never been known as the Lord God of the philosophers, or the God of the historian or the politician. Never has He represented Himself as the Sender of economists, or the Revealer of language expertise. While all valid knowledge is traceable to God alone, He has chosen to align Himself with the holy prophets – not the philosophers; and not the historians. That means the message of the holy prophets is superior to all of their peers and of all other history – even "church history," which cannot save or illuminate anyone.

There is such a vast gulf between the dwelling place of God and the abode of men, the message must be brought down into the defiled realm by an angel to John. No man could rise into heaven to obtain it and bring it down. The wisest and most gifted among men could not conclude it from the starry heavens or other facets of creation. The scientist, philosopher, and astronomer all stand before the mighty God of heaven with their hands over their mouths. It was a holy angel that brought the truth within the grasp of the man of God. He did not use apologetics, but revelation. He did appeal to science, but the words of the holy prophets.

### SHOWN TO HIS SERVANTS

And who are the intended recipients of this truth? Is it a mass message for the multitudes? Indeed, it is not! It is for "HIS SERVANTS" –those employed by God in His work. If a person is NOT serving the Lord, this message is NOT for them! If a person IS serving the Lord, the message IS for them! It is really just that simple. Other versions read, "His slaves" (CSB), "his bondmen" (DARBY), "His bond-servants" (NASB), "those who serve him" (NIRV). The etymological definition of "servant" is "a slave, bondman, man of servile condition; one who gives himself up wholly to another's will; those whose service is used by Christ; of all who obey God's commands, his true worshipers; devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests" (THAYER). These are the people who are not living for self, but for the Lord.

The Revelation is not for novel reading – like the book-of-the-month club. It is not for the disinterested, or those who are not serving the Lord.

See how mindful the Lord is of those who live, and move, and have their being in Him (Acts 17:28)! He wants them to know what is ahead—what has been determined for them. Yes, they need to know these things in order to serve the Lord acceptably. He will not leave them to walk in the darkness, but will shed some light on their path, making it more tolerable and enjoyable. Because “we are saved by hope” (Rom 8:24), our Lord will speak to hope, nurturing and strengthening it.

This message is not for those who are not serving the Lord, or those who have no interest in eternity. That is why they cannot understand it. It is why the message of this book confuses many professing Christians. It is not for them, and God will not allow them to comprehend it or profit from it. Insightful believers join their Lord in giving thanks for this circumstance: “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because THOU HAST HID THESE THINGS from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Matt 11:25; Lk 10:21).

Page 28 - THINGS THAT MUST SHORTLY TAKE PLACE

THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 28 of 37

THINGS THAT MUST SHORTLY TAKE PLACE

"Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must SHORTLY TAKE PLACE." (Verse 6, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

This is the second time the Lord has made this point. The first verse of chapter one of the Revelation affirmed, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must SHORTLY COME TO PASS . . .” Again, note the use of the word “servants.” That is a term that is by no means confined to a specific area of the world or period of time.

At this point, men rush into the arena of thought, bringing their language expertise and lifeless theology. Fastening upon the expression “shortly take place,” they conclude God is speaking in the language of time – i.e., not much time will elapse before these things all take place. Thus some teach the destruction of Jerusalem is the point of time in reference, and that Jesus is speaking of things to occur during the latter part of the first century – in the lifetime of the first readers of the Revelation. How often I have heard men say, “the early church thought Jesus was going to come during their time. This kind of thinking postulates that “shortly” means a brief period of time.

By so teaching, these people have robbed the saints of God, depriving them of food for hope and sustenance for the soul. If some imagine such people are sincere, we emphatically deny this to be the case. Their doctrine has betrayed the corruption that is in their hearts. They are neither honest nor good that teach the saints the glorious things we have just read have already taken place. Lest I appear to be speaking too strongly on this matter, allow me to refresh your mind about the magnitude of what has been revealed. Because of the sheer greatness of the Revelation, I will limit myself to the section covered in 21:10-22:6. These are things said to take place “shortly.”

The devil, the beast, and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire (20:10).

The earth and the heaven have fled away from the face of the One seated upon the throne, and no place is found for them (20:11).

The dead, small and great, are brought to stand before God (20:12a).  
The book of life is opened (20:12b).  
The dead are judged out of those things written in the books, and in accordance with their works (20:12c).  
The sea gives up its dead, and they are all judged according to their works (20:13).  
Death and hades [the abode of the dead] give up the dead that are in them (20:14).  
Whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (20:15).  
The new heaven and the new earth appear (21:1a).  
The first heaven and the first earth are passed away (21:1b).

The glorified saints are seen coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband (21:2).  
The tabernacle of God is with men, and He Himself dwells with them (21:3).  
God wipes away all tears from their eyes (21:4a).  
There is no more death (21:4b).  
There is no more sorrow (21:4c).  
There is no more crying (21:4d).  
There is no more pain (21:4e).  
The former things are passed away (21:4f).  
All things are made new (21:5).  
John is given a vision of the bride, the Lamb's wife (21:9-10).  
The glorified bride has the glory of God (21:11-21).  
The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple (21:22).  
There is no need of the sun or the moon, and the glory of God and the Lamb shed light everywhere (21:23).  
The nations of the saved of the earth bring all of their glory (21:24,26).  
The gates are never again shut (21:25a).  
There is no night (21:25b).  
Nothing defiling, works an abomination, or makes a lie, enters (21:27a).  
Everyone whose names are written in the book of life enter (21:27b).  
A pure river of water of life flows without hindrance or contamination (22:1).  
The tree of life flourishes with an abundance of consistent and continual fruit (22:2a).  
The nations are healed (22:2b).  
There is no more curse (22:3a).  
The throne of God and the Lamb are with the people (22:3b).  
God's servants serve Him (22:3c).  
God's servants see His face (22:4a).  
God's name is written upon the foreheads of His servants (22:4b).  
There shall be no night there (22:5a).  
There is no need of the sun or the moon (22:5b).  
The Lord God gives light to His servants (22:5c).  
God's servants reign forever and ever (22:5d).

There are FORTY marvelous things attributed to happening "shortly." What soul is there foolish enough to try and wrest these from the hands of the people of God? Who is ignorant enough to say these all occurred in the first century? To attempt such things requires a prodigious imagination, a deceived mind, and a hard heart. We will not give such people the benefit of being honest, good, or sincere. If Hymaneus and Philetus overthrew the faith of some by saying the resurrection was past already (2 Tim 2:18), what can be said of those who teach these FORTY things have passed? – or that the early church fully expected them all to take place during their time in the earth?

I have taken the time to briefly elucidate on this heretical view because of the gravity of our text.

These words were sent by God through Jesus, and through an angel to “show His servants the things which **MUST SHORTLY BE DONE.**” In all of those promises, nothing was held out that could possibly be limited by time or geography. They were all universal promises that spanned the ages. This is not provincial language, and must not be treated as such.

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## Part 29 - NOT CONFINED TO TIME

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 29 of 37

#### NOT CONFINED TO TIME

"And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must SHORTLY take place." (Verse 6, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

Other versions read, "soon" (NIV), "are now to come about (BBE), "must quickly take place" (CSB), "happen soon" (GWN), and "come quickly" (YLT).

Remember, the things which are said to take place "shortly" include the following.

The first earth passing away, and there being no more sea (Rev 21:1).

The new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev 21:2).

The tabernacle of God being with men, and Him dwelling among them (21:3).

Tears wiped away, and no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain (Rev 21:4).

The former things are passed away (Rev 21:4).

Overcomers inherit all things, and the damned will have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone (Rev 21:6-8).

The Lamb's wife is seen "having the glory of God" (Rev 21:9-27).

The realities of the text for this series of devotions (Rev 22:1-9).

The book of the Revelation begins by saying, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must SHORTLY come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John" (Rev 1:1). Now it is mentioned again with the saints of God being the focus.

The word "shortly" is not confined to time, although it is sometimes used in that sense. However, in every Apostolic use where time is the obvious point, doctrine is NOT the focus. Always, it was a matter of personal desire or preference (1 Cor 4:19; Phil 2:19,24; 1 Tim 3:14; 2 Tim 4:19; Heb 13:23; 3 John 14). Peter used the word "shortly" when referring to a special revelation concerning his death (2 Pet 1:14).

#### THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH

The Spirit witnessed to us, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet SHORTLY. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (Rom 16:20). This bruising would have the same characteristics of our Lord's bruising of the wicked one. Once Satan was bruised, the Lord was troubled no more by him. So it will be with the saints. When Satan is bruised under their feet, they will have done with him once and for all. The word "shortly" does not mean this was going to happen within the lifetime of the brethren in Rome. Rather, IT IS THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH. It is speaking of things that "are not as though they were," or declaring the "end from the

beginning" (Rom 4:17; Isa 46:10). Such words are spoken with the Divine agenda in mind.

From this perspective, the coming of the Lord is set forth as about to occur. "For yet A LITTLE WHILE, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb 10:37). Not being burdened with the incidentals of life, the Lord leaps ahead to the next significant event, saying it will take

place in a “LITTLE WHILE.” Until the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, the next significant thing that was to happen in the world was the coming of the Christ. Since He has ascended into heaven, the next significant thing is His return and the glorification of His church. In both of these instances, faith is what makes the time “short.” The truth of the matter is that man’s life, and history itself, is but a “vapor” (James 4:14). Concerning the brevity of life Peter wrote, “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away” (1 Pet 1:24). However, if a person does not have faith, this is not at all the way life seems. In the flesh life can be tedious, and even seem too long. But faith leaps past the circumstances of life in the body and cries out “shortly!” It fully acquiesces with the saying, “For yet A LITTLE WHILE, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb 10:37).

By using the phrase “shortly come to pass,” the Spirit is teaching us to live with the promised future in mind. We are not to become burdened down with the abrasiveness of life in the flesh. This is precisely the point being made in reference to our afflictions. “For our light affliction, WHICH IS BUT FOR A MOMENT worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:17, NIV). From the standpoint of time, our afflictions are neither light nor momentary. However, from the viewpoint of faith, they are – praise the Lord!

Because “the just shall live by faith” (Heb 10:38), the Spirit appeals to our faith, not our intellect. As you know, faith has to do primarily with the heart, the very citadel of our person. As it is written, “shall not doubt in his HEART, but shall believe . . . slow of HEART to believe . . . Let not your HEART be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me . . . If thou believest with all thine HEART. . . believe in thine HEART. . . For with the HEART man believeth . . . a true HEART in full assurance of faith” (Mk 11:23; Lk 24:25; John 14:1; Acts 8:37; Rom 10:10; Heb 10:22).

Hope is not an intellectual thing, bounded by human logic. It is something that thrives upon Divine commitment, spanning time and looking at the end of all things. That is why the Spirit speaks as He does – He is speaking to faith. What consolation would be brought to suffering saints by saying, “these things will come to pass in one hundred years . . . five hundred years . . . a thousand years”? What miserable theologians they are who lead us to think in such a manner!

Let your faith take hold on the message as it stands. Your battle will not be long! What you are yearning for will soon be here. Once, when referring to the seventy-year long Babylonian captivity, the Lord said, “For A SMALL MOMENT have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In A LITTLE WRATH I hid My face from thee FOR A MOMENT; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer” (Isa 54:7-8). From the standpoint of time, that forsaking certainly did not seem like a “moment.” The judgment poured out upon them did not appear as “a little wrath,” or “for a moment.” The expert in language and the meaning of original words could certainly not have brought much comfort to

believers by an etymological analysis of those Divine utterances.

Nor, indeed, can those who traffic on the roads of language bring delight to our hearts by telling us what they imagine “shortly” to mean. So far as faith is concerned, the next meaningful thing on the Divine agenda is “the end.” It is this way because what the Lord has promised cannot fail! Be strong in hope and fight the good fight of faith. It will soon be over! The Lord “will finish the work, and CUT IT SHORT in righteousness: because A SHORT WORK will the Lord make upon the earth” (Rom 9:28). Your faith can take hold of that, and your hope can look forward to it.

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## Part 30 - I AM COMING QUICKLY

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 30 of 37

#### I AM COMING QUICKLY

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Verse 7, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV). The phrase "I am coming quickly" is repeated in verses 12 and 20, as well as the eleventh verse of chapter three.

Other versions read, "I am coming soon" (NIV), "I come shortly" (GENEVA). The word translated "quickly" has the following lexical meaning: "speedily (without delay)" (THAYER), and "as qualifying action quickly, swiftly, rapidly" (FRIBERG).

The versions that translate the word "soon" or "shortly" have missed the point. Jesus is not referring to the time of His coming, which He Himself, He said, does not know: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory . . . But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father" (Mark 13:26-32). That is, the Son is fellowshiping with the saints in the matter of waiting for His coming. In the Revelation He is depicted as sitting upon a "white cloud:" awaiting the word, "Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe" (Rev 14:15). This being true, Jesus could not possibly mean that He was coming "very soon," as a significant number of translations read.

The idea is that Christ's coming will not be a gradual unfolding of His glory, like the rising of the sun, or the sun making its progressive journey, or "circuit" (Psa 19:4-6). When He comes, His coming itself will be instant and without delay. The things that will take place at that time will all happen simultaneously, although there is a kind of sequence of them. Jesus will come in all of His glory, with all of the angels in their glory, and in the glory of the Father (Matt 16:27; 25:31; 19:26). There is no way that such an appearing can be secret, or occur without anyone knowing it. When Jesus comes the last trumpet shall sound (Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52). The glorified Christ will be seen as He is (1 John 3:2). The present heavens and earth will pass away with a "great noise," being "burned up" (2 Pet 3:10-12; Rev 20:11). A new heavens and a new earth will be revealed (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1). Jesus will call all of the dead, both godly and ungodly, out of the graves (John 5:28-29). Those who are "alive and remain" will be changed, as mortality will come to a grinding halt (1 Thess 4:15-17). Death will be swallowed up in victory (1 Cor 15:54-55). The grave will have been thoroughly overcome (1 Cor 15:54-55). Angels will gather the wicked (Matt

13:41). Angels will also gather the saints (Matt 24:31).

All of this will happen "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor 15:52).

Here is the manner of the Kingdom – "quickly." The word means suddenly and without delay. It is something that cannot be averted, or caused to happen after the appointed time. Jesus earlier told the churches, "Behold, I COME QUICKLY" (3:11). Later in this chapter He will say it again, "And, behold I COME QUICKLY, and My reward is with Me" (22:12). His last words to the church are, "Surely I COME QUICKLY" (22:20). Then there will be no opportunity to repent, adjust ones mindset, or make preparation to face the Lord. The sound will go forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev 22:11).

The surety of His return is thus announced.

It is as though the Lord is saying, Do not settle down in this world – I AM COMING QUICKLY! Do not allow your thoughts to fasten on the transitory – I AM COMING QUICKLY! Whatever adjustments must be made in your mind and conduct, must be made now – I AM COMING QUICKLY! Look toward heaven, lifting up your eyes – I AM COMING QUICKLY!

How we need these blessed words! While in this world, men can get used to delays, caught up in procrastination, and living in a state God simply will not accept or honor. The cry that went out to Israel goes out to the world of our time: "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O Israel." (Amos 4:12). It is time for the coming of the Lord to be declared with power. Songs that speak of His coming must be restored. If people are not ready for the coming of the Lord, professed Christians or not, they will be rejected and forever separated from the Lord (Matt 24:42-43). Only those who are "ready," and have made due preparation, will be identified with Him,

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## Part 31 - THE PRONOUNCED BLESSING

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 31 of 37

### THE PRONOUNCED BLESSING

"Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Verse 7, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV).

Other versions read, "he who HEEDS the words of the prophecy of this book" (NASB), "the person who OBEYS the words" (CJB), "FOLLOWS the words" (GWN), "IS KEEPING the words" (YLT), "he who OBSERVES AND LAYS TO HEART AND KEEPS the truths of the prophecy (the predictions, consolations, and warnings)" (AMPLIFIED).

The etymological meaning of the word translated "keeps" is as follows: "to attend to carefully, take care of properly, to guard; indicates safe custody" (THAYER), "keep in view, take note, watch over; literally; guard; keep, hold in reserve, preserve for a purpose; hold in custody; maintain, keep" (FRIBERG); "to cause a state to continue" (LOUW-NIDA).

This is the same kind of keeping to which Jesus referred when He said, "He that hath My commandments, and KEEPETH them" (John 14:21), and "If a man love Me, he will KEEP My words" (John 14:23). The idea is to RETAIN, not forget, and maintain a lively remembrance of. That means there are long-term benefits to be realized by maintaining a hold on the sayings of the prophecy of this book. That postulates that the words have been heard, are being heard, and are occupying the mind.

And what, then, will we do with this marvelous book – the Revelation God gave to Jesus, to give to the angel, to give to John, to give to the churches? If we looked at the use the average church makes of this book, we would think it was a sort of optional writing – only meant for a select few, and having no real importance. We might also conclude it really has no pertinence for the life of faith. But that is not the way the Spirit treats the book. He challenges us to take hold of the words of this book, pronouncing a blessing upon those who keep it, maintain it in their minds, and refuse to forget it.

This is the second time this very blessing has been given. "BLESSED is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, AND KEEP THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN IT" (Rev 1:3). To be "blessed" means to be "happy" (THAYER), "fortunate" (FRIBERG), "enjoying favorable circumstances" (LOUW-NIDA), "privileged recipient of Divine favor" (GINGRICH).

What does "keeps the words of the prophecy of this book" mean? The word "keep" literally means to guard (from loss or injury) . . . to maintain . . . hold fast. Keeping these words involves hiding them in our hearts (Psa 119:11) – keeping them close so we can ponder them. It is maintaining them within the range of our recollection, refusing to allow anything to push them from our hearts and minds. To "keep" the words of the prophecy of this book is to recognize their value and relevance to the good fight of faith.

Thus a blessing is pronounced upon the person who reads the words of this book, hear the words of this book, and keep or retain the prophecies of this book. Preachers are to preach it. Teachers are to teach it. The body of Christ is not to be ignorant of the Revelation, given by God to Jesus for the

churches. Woe to that processed leader who ignores this word from heaven!

The fact that individuals retaining the words of this book are blessed, confirms its importance to the believer. This is not a novel book. Rather, it is rich with blessing.

The expression “prophecy of this book” places it in the “profitable” and “edifying” category. Elsewhere the Spirit affirms, “But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and comfort” (1 Cor 14:3). This message, therefore, like all prophecy, is for us – “the redeemed.” It contains something we need, and will yield indispensable spiritual benefits. These benefits are all objective and intentional. They do not simply occur. “Edification” is the process whereby the child of God is built up, strengthened, and brought to maturity in Christ. “Exhortation” is a means whereby the soul is stirred, and the believer prompted to conduct his life in strict harmony with the truth. It moves the child of God to do something with the truth. “Consolation” or “comfort” is the process through which the heart is calmed and the abrasiveness of life dulled. In consolation hope is aroused and the will is strengthened for spiritual action. All

of these can be found in The Revelation.

I want to underscore the importance that is ascribed to this book. It is called “PROPHECY” five times. “The words of this PROPHECY” (1:3). “The PROPHECY of this book” (22:7,10,18). “The book of this PROPHECY” (22:19).

It differs from most prophecy because it is a vision. Thirty-five times in Revelation John says, “I SAW” (1:12,17; 4:4; 5:1,2; 6:1,2,9; 7:1,2; 8:2; 9:1,17; 10:1,5; 13:2,3; 14:6; 15:1,2; 16:13; 17:3,6; 18:1; 19:11,17,19; 20:1,4,11,12; 21:1,22). This book is a sort of animated prophecy in which the truth is painted in active colors. By doing this, the truth is more hidden to those possessing no appetite for it. It is like a Kingdom parable, filled with life, yet obscure to those in the flesh.

The character of both good and evil are emphasized in Revelation. For example, Jesus is referred to as “Alpha and Omega (Rev 1:8), “the Beginning and the End” (Rev 1:8), “the First and the Last” (Rev 1:11), “the Son of God” (Rev 2:18), “He that liveth” (Rev 1:18), “a Lamb as it had been slain” (Rev 5:6), “the Son of Man” (Rev 14:14), “the Lamb” (Rev 5:8) “the Lion” (Rev 5:5), “the Root of David” (Rev 5:5), “Man Child” (Rev 12:5,13), “the Word of God” (Rev 19:11-13), “King of saints” (Rev 15:3), and “King of kings” (Rev 17:14).

Triumphant believers are referred to as “kings” (Rev 1:6; 5:10), “priests” (Rev 1:6; 5:10), “the servants of our God” (Rev 7:3), “the woman” (Rev 12:4), “the bride the Lamb’s wife” (Rev 21:9), “they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9), and “called, chosen, and faithful” (Rev 17:4).

Satan, is called a “serpent” (Rev 12:9), “Abaddon” (Rev 9:11), “Apollyon” (Rev 9:11), “a great red dragon” (Rev 12:3), “the great dragon” (Rev 12:9), and “the devil” (Rev 12:9).

In each of these depictions vivid pictures are painted of activity, objectives, and destinies. This book tells us of the birth of Christ (Rev 12:1-5), the death of Christ (Rev 1:18; 2:8; 5:12; 13:8), the triumph of Christ (Rev 19:11-16), the second coming of Christ (Rev 3:11; 16:15; 22:7,12,20), the ultimate triumph of the saints (Rev 12:11; 19:8), the glorified church (Rev 19:7-8; 21:10-27), the false church, Babylon the Great (Rev 14:8; 17:5-7; 18:2-3), the demise of Babylon the Great (Rev 14:8; 18:2-3), the end of the world (Rev 21:1), the new heaven and the new earth (Rev 21:1), the casting of Satan out of heaven (Rev 12:3-4), the objective of the devil (Rev 9:5-11; 12:4,9; 20:7-8), and the demise of the devil (Rev 20:10). How can any writing possibly be more relevant?

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## Part 32 - A PARTICULAR KIND OF PROPHECY

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 32 of 37

### A PARTICULAR KIND OF PROPHECY

"Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book" (Verse 7, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

This book is "prophecy" – like the visions of Daniel and Ezekiel, it portrays the truth of God in

picture form. Remember, Daniel spoke of the triumph of the Kingdom of God as a small stone, hewn out of mountain without hands, crushing a gigantic statue, and eventually becoming a mountain that filled the whole earth (Dan 2:31-45). Ezekiel saw the awakening of Israel as a valley of very dry and scattered bones, brought together by a powerful word, and made a living army by the Spirit of God (Ezek 37). He also spoke of the healing virtues of the Gospel as a flow of life-giving water issuing from the heavenly altar, and eventually becoming a great river no man could cross (Ezek 47).

Other examples of this type of prophecy include Joseph's dreams concerning his appointed superiority. In the first Joseph and his brothers were seen as twelve sheaves of grain, with the brother's sheaves bowing down to Joseph's. The second pictured personalities as heavenly bodies, with the sun, moon, and eleven stars making obeisance to Joseph (Gen 37:7,9). Another prophecy of famine, and the means to sustain life during it, was given Pharaoh and interpreted by Joseph. In it, seven years of plenty were portrayed as seven "fatfleshed and well favored" cows. Seven years of famine were seen as "poor and very ill favored and leanfleshed" cows that consumed the fat ones (Gen 41:2-27).

This, then, is not a strange type of message. These few examples confirm God uses this method to communicate vital and relevant truth – prophecy. When men spend time haranguing about whether the figures are literal or spiritual, they rob the book of its power. One might as well argue about the cows of Joseph's dream or the waters of Ezekiel's vision.

In John's vision the glorified Christ was depicted as standing in the midst of His churches, assessing them and making judgments (Revelation chapters one thru three). The unfolding of the purpose of God is seen as a book full of writing, which had to be opened, or revealed, by the glorified Lamb of God (Rev 5:1-5). Satan is set forth as a great dragon, seeking an opportunity to destroy Jesus as soon as He was born, and after failing in that effort, turning his attention to the people of God, persecuting them (Rev 12:1-5,13). The survival of the church is seen as a woman being given a hiding place in which she was nourished (Rev 12:14-17).

Working through false Christ's and false prophets, Satan's initiative of darkness is seen as a great city, Babylon the Great, that forms alliances with the world, persecutes the saints of God, and is finally thrown down and destroyed by God (Rev 14:8; 17:5-18; 18:2-10,21-24). The apostasy of the church is seen as a beast being "given . . . to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (Rev 13:7). The judgment of Babylon is set forth as causing praise in heaven among the servants of God (Rev 19:1-6). The saints in total, finally being joined to the Lord, are depicted as commencing with a "marriage supper" (Rev 19:7-9), and having readied themselves, they become Christ's "wife" (Rev 19:7).

The people of God on earth are commanded to come out of the religious monstrosity of Babylon the Great (Rev 18:4). The glorified church is seen as a great city, coming down from heaven, and having the glory of God (Rev 21:9-11).

Let every soul be encouraged to take hold of “the prophecy of this book.” If you keep it, the Lord will see to it that you are edified, exhorted, and comforted. You take care to retain the message, God will see to it being effective in you.

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## Part 33 - A HASTY RESPONSE TO AN OVERWHELMING VISION

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 33 of 37

#### A HASTY RESPONSE TO AN OVERWHELMING VISION

"Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." (Verses 8-9, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

#### HE SAW AND HEARD

Notice how John describes the message he is writing to the churches. It is what he "SAW AND HEARD." It was a vision accompanied by a verbal commentary. Among other things, John's response confirms that the gravity of the message got through to John. He did not have the option many preachers and teachers have taken to this message, ignoring the Revelation both in their study and in their preaching. Neither was he acting as a mere robot. He had eaten the book of Divine destiny that was in the hands of the Lamb. He describes it this way: "And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter" (Rev 10:9-10).

John ingested the message and saw its implications. While salvation brings great and marvelous benefits, it also initiates a fierce war. Those who embrace the truth will be opposed by the devil and his hosts. There will be suffering, hardship, and times when the truth appears nearly extinct. Satan will be "loosed" as well as "bound," and God's witnesses will be slain as well as come to life. There will be martyrs, whose blood is shed because they are God's witnesses. Saints will be driven into isolation, yet be nourished from the face of the serpent. There is the sound of resounding hope even in staggering trouble.

John has seen a vision, and heard the Divine commentary of a most arresting phenomenon of an opposing "beast": "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, AND TO OVERCOME THEM: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear." (Rev 13:7-9). Daniel was exposed to a similar message: "And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn MADE WAR WITH THE SAINTS, AND PREVAILED AGAINST THEM" (Dan 7:20-21). In both the Revelation and the prophecy of Daniel, this was not the way things would end. Both the vision of Revelation and of Daniel are followed by Divine activity which brought the anarchy to an end (Dan 7:22; Rev 13:10).

In all of this, the conquering Lamb will maintain strict control, governing His Kingdom with His people in mind. Believers will triumph, and all of their enemies will finally be thoroughly defeated. At last those who embraced the Savior will reign with Him, world without end. For them, conflict will be forever ended, and the effects and recollection of their warfare forgotten.

That is the resounding message of this book, and John “saw and heard” it. He was not only exposed to the message, he perceived it.

#### JOHN FALLS DOWN BEFORE THE ANGEL

This is the second time John so reacted to a heavenly messenger. Both occasions are during the crescendo of the message. The first was when a blessing was pronounced upon those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:10). The second is when a blessing is pronounced upon those keeping “the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (22:8-9). Both times John “fell to worship” the messenger. Both times the heavenly messenger responded, “See thou do it not,” refusing to receive homage from the aged Apostle. How careful the holy angels are to keep the focus upon the Living God and His Christ!

This is not a novice falling down before the angel of the Lord. Nor, indeed, is it some weak and thoughtless believer. John knew the worship of angels is strictly forbidden by the Lord (Col 2:18). Never are we allowed to worship the creation, whether it be heavenly bodies or heavenly personalities (Rom 1:25). How is it, then, that John attempts to worship at the feet of this angel?

It is more the greatness of the vision than the weakness of the Apostle that caused this reaction. There are revelations so grand and glorious that they cause unusual reactions. Upon hearing of the contamination of God’s people, Ezra tore his clothes, pulled hair out of his head and beard, and sat appalled (Ezra 9:3). On one occasion, Daniel received a revelation that caused him to “faint,” be “sick for days,” and be “astonished” (Dan 8:27). Upon seeing Peter, whom an angel, of the Lord had directed him to call, Cornelius “fell down at his feet and worshiped him” (Acts 10:25). Unlike the Pope and other imposters, Peter refused to allow such a response.

Such revelations bring men to the border of human capacity and ability. Were it not for the grace of God, they would cause men to be undone altogether. The message delivered to John was like a mighty tidal wave that swept over his soul. It put everything together, and provided a grand overview of eternal purpose. It held the future glory before John himself, who was being oppressed because of the Word of God. The glory of it all burst upon his soul, and his flesh fell at the feet of the angel. It was an overwhelming vision, and John’s flesh was simply not up to it.

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## Part 34 - "DO IT NOT!"

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 34 of 37 "DO IT NOT!"

"Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not

do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." (Verse 8-9, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

There is a gentleness in the voice of this holy angel that is worthy of note. He does not strike John down like Herod was stricken for improper conduct (Acts 12:22-23). He does not take away John's speech, like the angel did to Zachariah, father of John the Baptist (Lk 1:19-20). Instead, he simply reminds him of the facts in the case that made falling down before him unlawful.

"I AM THY FELLOW SERVANT." What a word is this! He does not say John is his FELLOW SERVANT, but that he is John's FELLOW SERVANT. Notice the extent of those with whom the angel identifies himself: John, the prophets, and those who keep, or retain, the words of this book. In doing, the angel acknowledged the supremacy of salvation. He confesses that angelic intrigue is caused by what men have been given in Christ Jesus: i.e.— "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. EVEN ANGELS LONG TO LOOK INTO THESE THINGS" [NIV] (1 Pet 1:12). Holy angels are, indeed, serving God. They are also "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb 1:14). While uninformed men are intrigued with angels, holy angels are intrigued with the salvation wrought for men, desiring to look into the Gospel. There are aspects of God revealed in His great salvation that have never before been seen or comprehended by holy angels.

Angels are involved in the same program as the saints of God. They are "FELLOW servants." From the standpoint of time, we have come into their fellowship (Heb 12:22). The angels know this, and we do well to also know it. But from the standpoint of experience, we have realized some things they have never known: being "born again" (1 Pet 1:23), being saved by grace (Eph 2:8), having access to God's mercy (Heb 4:15-16), being seated together with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6), being joint-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17), having the promise of the world to come being subject to us (Heb 2:5-9), the prospect of judging the world and angels (1 Cor 6:2), the anticipation of the Kingdom being given to us (Dan 7:18,22,27), and being conformed to the Image of God's Son (Rom 8:29). Candidly, there should be more praise to God for these remarkable and unparalleled benefits.

We must learn from this angel that the salvation of God (Lk 3:6; Acts 28:28) – which no angel has ever experienced – is infinitely greater than most professing Christians know. It is appropriately described as "so great salvation" – indeed, it is so great that those who neglect it cannot possibly escape Divine retribution. As it is written, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him" (Heb 2:3). Indeed, it is so great that the fellowship within it includes a vast number of holy angels (Heb 12:22), appropriately referred to as "fellow servants."

The servants of God are not permitted to worship one another, whether they be angels, apostles, prophets, or other peers. Such personalities are not to be vaunted by men. They cannot be treated as though they were Divine.

Jesus said of professed servants being honored, "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" (John 5:44). If a holy angel refused to receive inordinate honor from men, what must be said of men receiving such honor?

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## Part 35 - "YOUR BRETHREN THE PROPHETS"

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

#### Lesson 35 of 37

#### "YOUR BRETHREN THE PROPHETS"

"Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of YOUR BRETHREN THE PROPHETS, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." (Verse 9, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV).

What a marvelous triad! The angel, the Prophets, and those who keep the words of this book. From one point of view, there was a vast difference between those mentioned. Yet, from another perspective, they were united.

This is a most arresting word – spoken by a holy angel to John. He forbids John to fall down before him, declaring that he (the angel) is John's "fellow servant," and a brother to "the prophets." An ANGEL has delivered The Revelation to John – an angel who was given the message by the exalted Christ, who was given it by The Almighty God (Rev 1:1). We have glimpses here and there of angelic activity in behalf of the holy prophets. Elijah was visited by an angel (2 Kgs 1:15). The mighty angel Gabriel unveiled things to Daniel (Dan 8:16-19). An angel "talked" with Zechariah (Zech 1:9,11). Such prophets were "brethren" with John in Divine purpose. Like John, they also labored in isolation and were persecuted. Their message drove a wedge between them and their peers.

The holy prophets are consistently lauded in Scripture. With great sternness the Lord warns, "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm" (1 Chron 16:22; Psa 105:15, NKJV). Since the "world began," we are apprized, God has spoken "by the mouth of His holy prophets" (Lk 1:70; Acts 3:21). Peter admonishes us to "be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets" (2 Pet 3:2). If ever there was an unappreciated segment of humanity, it is the holy prophets! The holy angel remembered them, and we do well to do so also.

There is a marvelous unity within the Kingdom of God that is not being given enough attention these days. The closest of all unions is that of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. As it is written, "These three are one" (1 John 5:7). None of these Divine Beings speak or act in contradiction of Another. Though they are not equal to these "three," the holy angels are also united with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit in Their purpose. There are also exalted personalities like archangels (1 Thess 4:16; Jude 1:9), cherubim (Gen 3:24), seraphim (Isa 6:2,6), living creatures (Rev 4:6,8), and twenty-four elders (Rev 4:4,10; 5:8). All of them are united, with no friction or contradiction among them.

In Christ Jesus, we have been integrated into this gloriously united congregation, headed up by God the Father, the exalted Lamb of God, and the Holy Spirit. This is affirmed in the epistle written to Hebrew believers, who had a far better understanding of these things than the

contemporary church. The affirmation is found in Hebrews 12:22-24. This is taken from the New King James Version: "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of The Firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel" (Heb 12:22-24). The angel speaking to John is pointing out that he himself

is a member of this body of personalities.

The point to be seen here is this: the message given to John is in strict harmony with the message of the Prophets. It does not represent a new agenda, or a different Divine initiative. The book of the Revelation deals with the same Kingdom prophesied by the Prophets (Dan 2:44), announced by Jesus (Matt 4:23; Lk 8:1), and expounded by the Apostles (Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20; 1 Thess 2:12).

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## Part 36 - THEM WHICH KEEP THE SAYINGS

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

Lesson 36 of 37

### THEM WHICH KEEP THE SAYINGS

"Blessed is he who **KEEPS THE SAYINGS** the words of the prophecy of this book . . . I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which **KEEP THE SAYINGS** of this book." (Verses 7 and 9, Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

What a marvelous reality is here unveiled! Not only is the angel linked to the Prophets and to the Apostles, he also identifies himself with all who "KEEP TH SAYINGS of this book." Earlier in the text a blessing is pronounced upon those who "keep the sayings of this book" – who retain them, hide them in their heart, and do not forget them.

This postulates that those in Christ have a grasp of what is affirmed in The Revelation. It presumes they are not ignorant of what was revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos. Yet, this knowledge is not at all common in the churches of our time. Within the professed churches there are preachers, teachers, and members who pay little or no attention to this Revelation. Who is there among us who does not know this? Even though the book is referred to as "The REVELATION of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:1), it is generally considered to be mysterious, and beyond the understanding of the people. Is this really something God does – give a revelation to His people that cannot be comprehended? Did He really give a word to Jesus, who gave it to an angel, who gave it to John, who wrote it down and had it delivered to the churches, yet cannot be understood? Who among us is willing to contend for such an absurdity?

Can it be that those who see no value in this book, and do not see it as a revelation from God through Jesus, are really on a spiritual level where God **DOES NOT PERMIT** understanding? Could it be that, like parables, this revelation has been written so those who do not have "ears to hear" cannot comprehend it? In a sense, the book of The Revelation **IS** a parable – filled with likenesses and traits of God, Christ, the saints of God, the devil, spiritual enemies, etc.?

Remember, Jesus explained to His disciples why He spoke to the multitudes in parables: "This is the reason that I speak to them in parables: because having the power of seeing, they do not see; and having the power of hearing, they do not hear, nor do they grasp and understand. In them indeed is the process of fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, which says: You shall indeed hear and hear but never grasp and understand; and you shall indeed look and look but never see and perceive. For this nation's heart has grown gross (fat and dull), and their ears heavy and difficult of hearing, and their eyes they have tightly closed, lest they see and perceive with their eyes, and hear and comprehend the sense with their ears, and grasp and understand with their heart, and turn and I should heal them.1 (Matt 13:13-15; Isa 6:9-10) [Amplified Bible].

How would anyone go about confirming this is not precisely the state of the nominal church? What kind of evidence exists that supports the postulate that the people have been "born again" (1 Pet 1:23), made "partakers of Christ" (Heb 3:14), have been "delivered from this present evil world" (Gal 1:4), and have been raised up and made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places" (Eph 2:6)? Or, is there one willing to affirm that these realities have no evidence? Is it not written, "By this **WE KNOW** that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments" (1 John 5:2). And, "The Spirit itself **BEARETH WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT**, that we are the children of God" (Rom 8:16).

When the things of God are not understood, a serious condition exists. That is why we are told that the exalted Lord has given gifts to the church "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ" (Eph 4:14-15). Do not doubt for a moment that the book of the Revelation was address to the churches to be understood, and to comfort them in the good fight of faith.

Think of it! The holy Prophets were given glimpses of the great salvation we enjoy, and foretold it. The truth was expanded and interpreted to the holy Apostles, and they declared it. Now those who receive that word are brought into the fellowship, being joined to angels, Prophets, and Apostles. Those who KEEP THE SAYINGS of this book can certainly boast of no startling revelation like those given to Prophets and Apostles. They can, however, enjoy fellowship with them both, as well as the holy angels.

The angel charges John to "worship God" because it is His purpose, and both angels and men are His servants. That "worship" is not divorced from understanding, comprehension, and discernment.

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## Part 37 - CONCLUSION OF SERIES

### THE COMING STATE OF GLORY

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for

the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." (Revelation 22:1-9, NKJV)

### Lesson 37 of 37 CONCLUSION OF SERIES

The glory of the book of Revelation is realized in the impact it registers upon the believing heart. It awakens hope, strengthens faith, and soothes the troubled soul. It opens the mysteries of spiritual life, showing us our labor is not vain in the Lord. It is a disclosure that majors on outcomes or consequences. It is not a book of procedures or Divine direction, although some of those necessary things are included. Nor, indeed, is it simply a heartless unveiling of the future, as though it were unrelated to the good fight of faith. Myriads of professed believers ignore this book because they imagine it has nothing to do with "the Christian life," whatever that is perceived to be. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The book of Revelation confirms that Jesus is presently evaluating the churches. It boldly announces that He holds the destiny of all things in His hand. The devil and his wicked horde are under His control, as well as all of the saved. At his word Satan can be bound or loosed, saints can die or live, truth can flourish or be withdrawn. We do not live in an ungoverned world, nor are the events occurring in our time mere happenings of chance. Faith can take hold on this.

The Lamb is reigning, Satan is losing, and the saints are winning! That is the way it is, and we do well to keep those sayings in our hearts and minds. The sound of this consistent message may appear to contradict both logic and appearance, but it is still true. Faith can see it, and hope can rejoice in it.

Remember, "we are saved by hope" (Rom 8:24-25). Where hope is weak, Christ's yoke is difficult and the burden heavy. The commandments become grievous, and the world presses hard upon us. It is no wonder the average church member possesses so little confidence, appetite, or spiritual stamina. Hope is being starved by an emphasis on problem resolution and a focus on earthly involvements. Instead of a stream of living water issuing from many pulpits, there is a cloud of life-stifling, suffocating, dust. When the Holy Spirit holds before us the affairs of this world, He filters the vision through the purpose of God. Faithfully, He unveils the outcome of all things to us, also confirming everything is being thoughtfully governed by the very One who saved us. Satan is shown to be aggressive and powerful, but not invincible or omnipotent. His purpose will be frustrated, and his ministers cast into the lake of fire with him.

As these things are clarified to the soul, the ability to fight a good fight of faith and finish the course set before us is granted. The clearer heaven is in our eye, the less dominant the world

becomes. The more we hear about our inheritance, the less we want to hear about this present evil world. How glorious to have a book that feeds these longings, confirming to our hearts the blessedness of being in Christ Jesus. We can endure Satan's rage if given to behold the glories of the world to come. Tell us of the things close to the heart of our Lord, and we will renew our strength.

Given O. Blakely

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