

Eternal Weight of Glory

"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life"

—John. 8:12

THE Scriptures point out that Jesus is the example that we must follow. To follow Jesus we must deny the flesh and glorify God in word and deed, always walking soberly, and doing that which would please our Father in heaven, for we have been blessed above all people on earth.

How? Because we have been called to a high and holy calling from the darkness of the world that surrounds us, to be sons and daughters of our heavenly Father. And we have been given the hope of eternal life in the Age to Come, for we have opportunity to take part in God's plan of preparing a people for His Name.

We should be the happiest of all people in the world, for our hearts were divinely opened that we might understand the Truth of the Gospel. We have understood the "precious promises" in their true light, and we were anxious to become a part of the family of God, so that we too could rejoice in the One Hope.

Has our zeal and love for the Truth increased since our baptism, and since the Light was revealed unto us, that we might not walk in darkness? Or has our love diminished? ARE we the happiest of all people? We should be.

True, we have many causes for sorrow, and sometimes we are troubled, but Paul says—

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed.

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"While we look not at the things which are seen; but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:8-18).

We must keep our mind on the things which are not seen, for perhaps we are looking too much at the temporal things which we can see, as the Israelites did in the wilderness. If we do not look forward to the coming of Christ with all our heart, then we should search it to find out what causes us to wish that the time of his coming might be delayed.

Perhaps our once fervent love and zeal for the Truth has cooled, and the vision of the Kingdom of God and what it will mean to us has faded with the passing years?

Let us with all of our minds strive to keep the vision of those things that God has prepared for those that love Him at all times in the forefront of our minds.

It is written that man cannot comprehend all of the glorious things which are prepared for those who are found faithful and await them in the Kingdom of God, but in God's love and wisdom many things ARE revealed to us, so let us dwell on them to keep the vision of the Coming Age bright before our eyes!

Let us renew in our minds some of those great and precious promises that God has given to His children. The greatest promise of all is that if we are judged righteous we will be given eternal life. This promise was because—

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life."

If we are found faithful we shall be changed from a flesh-and-blood body, to a body of flesh and spirit, and will be bodies subjected to death no longer, but will be spirit bodies, for Paul says (Phil. 3:20-21)—

"Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body."
He also says (1 Cor. 15:44)—

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

"It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

The only body we know is a natural body, which we have now, and as Paul says, it is weak, it is corrupt. How wonderful it is to look forward to a body which will be perfect, and incorruptible, and have no death in it!

It is impossible for us to imagine having a body which never grows tired, never will be sick; no more tired muscles, or aching bones. Never again will our minds and bodies need sleep to function properly, for when we are given eternal life we are given the assurance—

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles;

"They shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).

And we are also promised we will be made equal unto the angels, for Christ said—

"But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

"Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels;

"And are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35).

The angels are spoken of many times in the Bible, and if we will study carefully we will have a preview of what lies in store for those who are made immortal. These immortal beings were seen on many occasions by mortals.

We have on record that 3 appeared to Abraham, and he invited them to dine with him, and they ate of the meal prepared for them. Not that it was necessary to sustain life, as is the case of mortal life, but it gives us a picture of their personal reality, and their friendliness and sociableness with Abraham, and harmlessness to one who obeys God.

But to the enemies of God in their destruction, they will show no mercy, as the Sodomites experienced when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. One day soon, and not far distant, we will have the prospect of becoming acquainted with them, and of sharing the wonderful life which they enjoy, as immortal servants of God.

Also during the time that Daniel was a captive in Babylon an angel named Gabriel appeared unto him with a message from God. This same angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to make that startling announcement that she would be the mother of Jesus. It had been over 500 years since this same angel Gabriel had appeared to Daniel, yet he was the same powerful immortal being. Time had not made any change of the power of his spirit body.

And so will it be with us. Going from one place to another will present no problem to us when we become immortal for it is written of an angel that he was—

"Caused to fly swiftly."

Crude popular notion (and also taught by many of the world's churches) is that an angel has wings, but we know that is not true. Wings would be useless in outer space. The power that enables an angel to fly from one place to another is the spirit-power of God. This power does not need any external contraptions to assist it.

Man with his limited power can send a missile to the moon in a period of a few days, but it takes 1000's of men and years of planning and 100's of millions of dollars, But God with His unlimited power can transport an angel infinite distances in the "twinkling of an eye," for nothing is impossible with God.

Let us think of these marvelous truths, brothers and sisters, and keep striving for that privilege of becoming "like unto the angels."

Let us read of another promise made unto us in Rev. 2:26-23, which Christ revealed to John on Patmos—

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

"And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I have received of my Father.

"And I will give him the Morning Star."

It is very difficult for us to realize that we may be among those who will take vengeance upon the enemies of God, and bring destruction upon human beings, for at present we are exhorted to be meek and lowly, kind and gentle, and to accept wrong to the point of turning the other cheek.

We are exhorted to follow in his steps, for he came "as a lamb led to the slaughter." We too must go through this period of probation during which we must manifest these lamb-like qualities, and overcome the flesh, before we are given the honor of assisting in the work of subduing the nations. When Christ comes the 2nd time, he will come as a lion, with power and strength, which no man or nation can resist.

Let us refer to our elder brother, Dr. Thomas, for what is meant by the phrase, "I will give him the Morning Star." Dr. Thomas says—

"The morning star is also promised to him that overcomes. To appreciate the importance and value of this great promise, we must know what is signified by the phrase. The 'Morning Star' is the star belonging to the morning. The morning is alluded to in Gen. 49, where it is written concerning the tribe of Benjamin (styled a 'wolf')—

"He shall tear in pieces: **in the morning** he shall devour the prey: and at the evening he shall divide the spoil."

"In these words of Jacob's prophecy of 'what shall happen to Israel in the latter days,' we are instructed to look for a period in which Benjamin shall devour his enemies instead of being himself devoured, as he has been for the last 1800 years. This is styled 'the morning'—an era of triumph and conquest for Israel.

"The 'morning' referred to by Jacob in his prophecy is manifestly the time of the rising of a Sun in the political heavens, because he is treating of a great political revolution in the affairs of Benjamin and the rest of the tribes.

"The Eternal Spirit, in His multitudinous manifestation, is the Sun belonging to the morning of that great day, in which the world shall be ruled in righteousness, and Yahweh's glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"When God raised up the dead body named Jesus, He transformed it into a spirit-body. This became the Bright Star, the bright particular star, of that galaxy of stars pertaining to that morning when 'Israel shall do valiantly.'

"The Bright and Morning Star, then, the Eternal Spirit glorified in Jesus, promises to give the morning star to him that overcomes. In other words, that he shall be a glorified constituent of the One Body when it is adopted at the manifestation of the sons of Deity. He will then be a star pertaining to the Millennial Dawn—a 'morning star.'

"Of all the stars of the New Heavens, Jesus will be the brightest, for in all things it is the Father's will and pleasure, not only that all the fulness shall dwell in him, but that also he shall have the preeminence.

" 'There is one glory of the sun'—and that is his. 'There is another glory of the stars'—and that is his brethren individually. 'There is another glory of the moon'—and that is the glory of his companions collectively. As his Bride, they—

"Look forth as the MORNING: fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

"He that overcometh, to him it shall be given to be one of these— a splendid one sparkling in the glory of the great and fearful Name of Yahweh."

Dear brethren and sisters, how wonderful are these promises! And we should dwell in loving meditation on these wonderful things that have been promised us, for they will give us strength in our fight to overcome the flesh.

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Let us turn to the prophecy of Ezekiel, for he tells us about the Temple to be built when Christ's Kingdom is set up on earth, which is to be a "House of prayer for all nations." It is to be a magnificent structure where all people will come to worship God in the Future Age.

As Kings and Priests we shall officiate in the services of this Temple, for we read (Ez. 44)—

"The sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of My Sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me;

"They shall come near to Me to minister unto Me, and they shall keep My charge."

Once again let us accept Dr. Thomas interpretation. He says:

"These 24 elders (mentioned in Rev. 4:4) are the 24 orders of the sons of Zadok who shall enter into the Sanctuary of Yahweh to minister unto Him. The Lamb is there in the midst of them. They are before the throne, and in the Temple ready for the service continually, and shall meet in sweet communion with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets and the apostles, and Christ himself."

There is nothing in this world that can compare with this glorious state so let us continually keep these promises of God before us and meditate upon them continually, that it may be our happy lot to receive that promise of Christ –

"He that overcometh I will make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out."

The day is very near when we shall leave these everyday surroundings which we know now. We will leave behind our homes, our jobs, the neighbors which live around us, and those of our families who do not know and understand the Truth, and are not responsible to God, all of these things which we now see and know will be left behind.

We will be called to the judgment seat; our probationary period will have ended; things here which have seemed so important to us will be nothing.

And with the end of our probation period will also end the Gentile reign on the earth. The oppressive and wicked reign of the kingdoms of men will come to a close, and God's Kingdom will be established in the earth. Then Ps. 102:13 will be fulfilled:

"Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Zion, for the time to favor her, yea, the set time has come."

The "Set time"—we are told there is a set time when God will again favor Zion, for—

"When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory."

Christ shall come in all his glory, and shall build up Zion again. This is the event for which we are preparing ourselves now, for today is the day of salvation. Now—today— we are given the time to "work it out with fear and trembling."

How far are we along this road of developing the mind that is pleasing to God? Do we have the mind of Christ?

These are very vital questions, for we must be prepared to inherit eternal life when the time comes. We shall not have another chance; the door will be closed. If we are not found worthy of eternal life, then there can be only one other sentence pronounced upon us, and that is shame, punishment, and death. We will not be permitted to return to the comfortable life as we know it if we are not accepted, for the rejected are warned—

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the lake of fire prepared for the Devil and his angels."

The ones who are rejected will be thrust out to wander in those nations that are being subdued and they will, literally and figuratively, be a "lake of fire prepared for the Devil and his angels," because of the wars, terror, and destruction that will prevail there. Since the time is so near, let us—

"Lay aside EVERY weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Let us put away those things that might hinder us, and with God's help conquer the mind of the flesh and become spiritually-minded men and women—for therein alone lies peace and hope. It is so easy to let the flesh have its way, and do those things that are contrary to the will of God.

What is it that causes us to act this way? Why is it that we so often fail to do that which is pleasing to God, and do what is pleasing to ourselves? The Bible tells us the answer—

"THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED: WHO CAN KNOW IT?"

These are plain words: the true facts are brought into focus by one simple statement. All of the great swelling words of our great scholars and many ministers are cast aside, and the light of Truth clearly reveals the character of natural man: his heart is wicked and deceitful, and who can really know it?

God's Word tells us how to combat this natural evil condition of man, for God is wiser than man—far wiser; there is no comparison. He knows man, for He made him. He also gives man a remedy for his sin-stricken condition—

"FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, FOR THIS IS THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN."

This is too simple an answer for the majority of men, so they seek other remedies, and will not accept the true source of help for man.

They do not like to accept the facts that all men are evil—are wicked. Yet in our daily news accounts these facts are proven by what men do to their fellowman. We are shocked and horrified when we read reports of parents who torture their helpless children. This shows to what depth the mind of the flesh can descend when it is not disciplined by God's Word.

We feel that we could never become so cruel and heartless, but anything contrary to God's commands, no matter how small it may seem to us, is performed by the mind of the flesh, and is abhorrent to God. We must manifest the mind of Christ in both word and deed.

Just to SPEAK the Truth is not enough, we must manifest the fruits of the spirit in our daily walk. If we do not, we are deceiving ourselves when we say we are brethren of Christ, for the Scriptures plainly tell us—

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, THEY are His sons."

We can only claim to be the sons of God and the brethren of Christ if we manifest the mind of Christ—gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness. How hard do we try to develop these characteristics? Do we have these desirable qualities that God demands in His children? Do we spend the time we should in preparing our minds and hearts so they will be filled with the fruits of the Spirit?

We must each take our part, and do our best to serve God to the fullest extent of our ability. Let us remember that one of the fruits of the Spirit is Faith, but it is a dead faith if not accompanied by works. We are commanded to—

"Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees."

"Feed the flock of God which is among you."

This is an important work for each brother and sister. It is not only our duty, but our joyful privilege to strengthen and comfort the little flock, by being faithful in attendance of meetings. We can be cheerful, we can show our love by our kindness, we can do everything possible to keep peace and harmony in the Body.

To do this we must be of one mind, for the love of God and Christ is the only factor that will keep harmony and peace, for they must be founded on TRUTH. But in any case, we must always manifest love, and gentleness.

We know there are times when we all fall short of this mark, but let us keep in mind that this is what we are striving for, to have love for all of the brethren, not just a few. And to do this we must refrain from criticism, for we can always find some reason to criticize, but this is the mind of the flesh. Paul says—

"Whatsoever things are true, honest, pure, just, of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

If we will let our minds dwell upon these words, there will be no unjust and harsh criticism or picking at flaws of others, for when we were baptized we became members of the Body of Christ, and from that time our growth began in the Truth.

And there can never be a pause in this growing process, for when we cease to grow, we start downhill. If we step aside and begin to do our own pleasure, and follow our own wilful way we begin to wither. Our growth must be steady and meaningful; it must be "going on to perfection."

This steady growth is not accomplished by any easy or shortcut methods. It takes daily meditation on the Word of God, it takes prayer, it takes study with the brothers and sisters. We need the support and encouragement of each other.

God has placed a grave responsibility upon the brothers who speak and give answers. Let us rise faithfully as Christ's brethren to this responsibility, for we will be called upon to give account of ourselves on this point one day.

We do many things to please ourselves. Do we strive as hard to do things to please God? Christ set an example for us when he was on earth; he said his mission was—

"The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn."

He went about teaching others, healing the sick, doing his Father's will, and at last laid down his life for his brethren. He did not think of himself, but rather—

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

"I do always those things that please the Father."

This was the mind of Christ: **let it be our mind also.**

There are many in the Brotherhood today who have problems and burdens. Let us help in whatever way we may, for this way we develop true love for all members of the body, for when love grows we grow. Then when our trials come—for they must come, for God chastens those whom He loves, as sons—we will be able to withstand our trials. We are told that it is—

"Through much tribulation that we enter the Kingdom."

No one will get in the Kingdom without having trials, but:

"God is faithful and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear."

Let us strengthen ourselves—calling upon God while He may be found, for one day our trials will be over. We are no longer—

"Without God in the world and aliens from the covenants of promise."

We are a privileged few who know the true purpose of God, and have God—a truly merciful and powerful Creator. And we have Christ as a mediator, who is a righteous judge, and knows the weakness of the flesh.

But let us not be so absorbed in temporal things, so weak in faith as to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming," for he comes like a thief in the night. Let us be ready to meet him when he comes.

—B.E.
