

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER
USPS #871620

Periodicals postage paid at the post office in Newark, Ohio 43055.
POSTMAN, send form 3579 to the printer:

THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER
675 N. Cedar Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

This periodical carries no subscription price; however, it is partially maintained through the gifts and offerings of its readers, with the balance of the expenses being paid by the local congregation.

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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13:1-23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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Website: www.godsacres.org

Vol. 30 May 2000 No. 5

Quest
Editorial

**The Seraphims
Part 2 of 2**

Isaiah 6:1-4 reads: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

In Part 1 we answered the questions: What are these seraphims? Are they angelic beings? and What type of creatures are they? In this issue let us consider these seraphims' description and attributes. How many seraphims are there? We need to do as Isaiah 34:16 says: "Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate [for every dark saying in God's Word, there is a mate somewhere else in His Word that will bring light to it]: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them."

Isaiah 6:2 says, "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings" Where else are these beings depicted? Revelation 4:8 says, "And the four beasts [The word "beasts" confuses some people. The Greek word is **zoon** (which means, 'a living creature'), not the word **therion** (which means wild, vicious beast), which is used in Revelation 13:1 and 13:11 when it talks about the beastly, hideous creatures.] had each of them six wings" Here are the same living creatures, or seraphims, and there are four of them. Remember that they represent the saints.

Ezekiel saw the same thing in Ezekiel 1:5a, which reads, "Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures [the same thing Isaiah and John saw]." Again, who are these living creatures? Romans 6:11 tells us, "Likewise reckon ye also

yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Those who have Jesus Christ have life. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." The living creatures are those who have experienced the saving graces of Jesus Christ and are alive unto God. When the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, He took men who were dead, gave them life, set them on fire, and they became living creatures.

The four beasts are the living creatures. Revelation 5:8 states, "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts [or living creatures] and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." If these creatures have vials full of odors that are the prayers of saints, who is holding the vials? The saints. Who are the creatures? The saints.

Verse 9 says, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us." These four creatures that John spoke of in Revelation, Chapter 5, and that Isaiah called *seraphims* (**seraph**, the burning), the ones set on fire, in Isaiah, Chapter 6, are the redeemed of all ages.

The question that arises is, Why, according to Revelation 4:8 and Ezekiel, are there only four? When you go back into the Old Testament economy, old Israel was divided into four major divisions. As they journeyed, they had the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle, or the tent where the Lord's presence dwelt, and they had it in the midst of the camp. Then they took the twelve tribes and broke them into four major divisions and camped on all four sides where the presence of God was in the midst. Those four camps represented all of Israel, or all the people of God. In this New Testament dispensation, these four divisions represent all of New Testament Israel: those who have the presence of God in their midst. It portrays the people of God, or the church, down through the ages of time.

[continued on page 25]

Revelation 18:1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of

every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

The Habitation of Babylon

Part 1 of 2



Brother Roger L. Decker

Differences Between Babylon and the Church

I want you to focus your attention on verse 2 of our Scripture text: "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." By the help of the Lord, we want to look at "Babylon the great."

The word *Babylon* comes from the word *Babel*, which means "confusion." You can trace its origin back to Genesis, Chapter 11, at the tower of Babel where the people intended to build a tower that would reach from earth into heaven. That is exactly what Babylon tries to do—build up an image from earth to Heaven. We

find that they all spoke one language, but God confounded their language and the building program stopped. Genesis 11:8 says, "So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city." Why is there confusion today? People refuse to take the Word of God; instead, they take the creeds and doctrines of men. Confusion is not in the Word of God; it comes when you stray from God's Word.

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The church was not built on Peter. You can find in John 1:42 what Peter's name means: "And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld

him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." The church is built on the Rock, something solid. Someone may ask, "What is the Rock?" Matthew 16:17-18 tells us: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." What is the Rock upon which the Church of God is built? A divine revelation from God; the Church of God is divine.

Jesus told Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but His Father in Heaven. Where did the Church of God come from? She came down from the Father

above. The Church of the Living God is divine all the way through; she did not just spring up. All the other churches sprang up from the earth. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church [singular]." He did not build two or more churches. There is one Church of God, and you have to be born again and possess the Spirit of God to see it.

The Bride, The Lamb's Wife

Revelation 21:1-10 reads: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven [not an offshoot of something else, but it was coming down from God out of Heaven], prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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. And 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me,

saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit [it is by a divine revelation] to a great and high mountain, [Where is the Church of God? She is in the top of the mountain.] and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem [from where did it come?], descending out of heaven from God." The church is not some human organization; she came down from God out of Heaven. The Church of God is separate and distinct, and "she is the only one of her mother" (Song of Solomon 6:9). There is not another one like her. She answers to Jerusalem, "which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26).

What is the New Jerusalem? Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us: "But ye are come [He did not say you will come, but you are come. This is not something out in the future or a city over in Heaven, but you can be a member of the New Jerusalem right now, not out in a millennium that is not going to come.] unto mount lion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angel; To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

The Church of God is divine; her members are divine. Jesus said in John 10:9, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." All of God's sheep come through the same Door—Christ. All her members have come through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:13-14 reads: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" There is no other door to the Church of God. Joseph Smith, Mohammed, the Pope of

Rome, a priest, or a preacher is not the door to the church. Christ is the door to the church. No one gets in the Church of God without first coming through Christ. When you come through Him, old things pass away and you become a new creature. The Church of the Living God is made up of new creatures, and it is called the New Jerusalem.

Who Is the Head of the Church?

In our Scripture text we find that something else appeared. Through every age of time wherever God has had Truth, there has always been an imitation. Our Scripture text says in verse 2, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation [or dwelling place] of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

There is nothing good in Babylon. God is saying "Come out of her" because it is a habitation of devils and a hold of foul, nasty, hateful spirits. Why is Babylon as it is? The people did not come through the Door. They did not get into the Holy Jerusalem, or the New Jerusalem. Had they come through the Door (Christ), their lives would have been cleaned up. If they did not come through the Door, then they are not in the Church of God; they are in Babylon. Babylon accepts members by voting people in, by baptizing them in, by letting them join and become members, and by having them subscribe to established regulations set by a denomination or the minister and established bylaws of the said church.

How does one get into the Church of God? Acts 2:47b says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Psalm 87 is a prophecy concerning our day. Verses 5-6 read: "And of Zion [What is Zion? The Church of God.] it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself [speaking of God] shall establish her. The LORD shall count,

when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah." How can you get into the Church of God? You must be born into her through a born-again experience.

Christ is the head of the true church. God did not have Jesus put His head on several churches. Literally, if you saw three or four bodies with one head you would call that a freak. There is only one head per body. Colossians 1:18 says, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

Christ is the head of the Church of God, but that is not so in Babylon. The head of the Catholic Church is the pope; therefore, it cannot be the right church, because that is the wrong head. Some Protestant churches have bishops at their head and others have Doctor So-and So. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah said the government would be upon His shoulder. The Church of God is governed by the Holy Spirit, but Babylon is not. Babylon is controlled by conferences, committees, boards, and human authority. Babylon puts more emphasis on what some human head says than what the Word of God says.

Pagan Customs and Traditions

When we speak of Babylon, we are not speaking of people but of the system that governs that body. We want to compare the system with the Word of God to let you see whether it lines up with it. In Revelation, Chapter 13, we find it speaks of a beast that rose up out of the sea, or out of the minds of the people. According to the Bible, this beast symbolizes Roman Catholicism, and Roman Catholicism got its power and its authority from paganism, or old pagan Rome. That is the reason

it still has many of pagan Rome's old customs of worship. Many things that Roman Catholicism does can be traced back to old pagan customs and traditions.

We read in Revelation 13:5-8: "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them [that is the same spirit they have yet today; they have not changed]; 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."

In this message we want to uncover some of Roman Catholicism's pagan practices and place them alongside the Word of God.' Revelation 17:5 states, "And upon her forehead was a name written, . MYS- TERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Notice that this woman is called a harlot. The true church is likened to a bride who is chaste, one whose garments are without spot or blemish. This woman called "MYS- TERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS" is presented as an unclean woman.

Remember, the Roman Catholic Church got its power and authority from old pagan Rome. What are some of Roman Catholicism's practices? They worship Mary, pray to Mary, and call Mary "the Mother of God." These practices came from old pagan customs. The pagans worshiped the mother goddess and also the sun. What do you see in Roman Catholic churches? You see statues of Mary, prayers are recited to Mary, and Mary is exalted right alongside, if not more than, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They teach that the rea-

son one prays to Mary is that she can take the request to her son and use her influence to get Him to answer. This infers that Mary is more compassionate, more understanding, and more merciful than Jesus.

In reciting the rosary, the Hail Mary is recited nine times as often as the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. The rosary is a chain with fifteen sets of small beads, and one large bead marks off each set. A metal bearing the imprint of Mary joins the ends of the chain, and from there hangs a short chain at the end of which is what they call a crucifix. The beads on the rosary are for counting prayers, words that they recite repeatedly. This practice did not originate in Christianity. Beads are used yet today in other lands and in other religions.

"Doctrines of Devils"

Roman Catholics repeat the Hail Mary using the rosary. They say, "Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women. Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." That is darkness! When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, did He tell them to get some beads, or a rosary, and recite the Hail Mary? No! When Jesus said that men ought always to pray and not to faint, if it were necessary to have a rosary, He would have taught us that, but it is not necessary. You can get hold of God without using a rosary or reciting Hail Mary.

Hail Mary is recited nine times. What does the Bible say about this type of worship and praying to Mary? Exodus 20:4-5 states: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." In God's eyes,

worshiping or praying to idols is idolatry.

In front of most Roman Catholic churches are statues of Jesus and Mary side by side; that is idolatry and blasphemy. Mary cannot forgive sins. You are wasting your time if you pray to Mary. If your wife's name were Mary, you would have just as much effect praying to her. Why can Mary not forgive sins? Because she did not die for you; Jesus Christ died for you.

Colossians 1:13-14 tells us, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." First Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." No one else can forgive your sins except Jesus Christ; there is no other mediator between you and God. Mary cannot help you. The Bible says Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant, or the New Jerusalem.

First Timothy 4:1-4 says: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."

The Roman Catholics forbid the priests to marry. Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is honourable in all." The Bible says that marriage is honorable in all, but that is not what the system of Roman Catholicism says. Also, at one time the Catholics were not allowed to eat meat on Fridays. I used to work with people who were in Roman Catholicism, and the company changed the menu in the cafeteria and started having fish on Fridays. However, the Bible says that

every creature of God is good and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving.

Roman Catholicism does not believe in the new birth, but Jesus said in John 3:3, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In verse 5 he said one cannot enter into the Kingdom of God unless he is born again. That is not even taught in Roman Catholicism.

"Speaking Lies in Hypocrisy"

The Revelator said to give Babylon a double cup, yet people pat her on the back today. Babylon is sending more souls to hell than the honky-tonks and the houses of prostitution. Nevertheless, people run around and pat her on the back and say, "It isn't so bad." You need to get your nose in the Book to see what God thinks about her. According to God's Word, Babylon deserves a double cup! God hates those false systems of worship. They have His people in bondage and without victory. People long to get hold of God but cannot because they are in darkness.

In Roman Catholicism prayers are offered up for the dead, and masses are held for the dead. The Bible plainly teaches that after death is the judgment, not purgatory. There is no hope once death has sealed one's soul in eternity. All opportunities to get saved are gone once death comes upon an individual. "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (Ecclesiastes 11:3).

People give the Catholic church money to hold masses for souls in purgatory. They are told that by holding masses and praying for the dead, they can obtain the release of tormented souls. Money and prayers for the dead go together. The priests admit that they have no way of knowing when souls pass out of the supposed "purgatory" and into

Heaven. For this reason, there is never a settled peace concerning the deceased. There is always a possibility that more money should be given for masses for the loved ones who have died. Roman Catholicism plays upon one's love and the tender memories of those who have died to take money for masses and long prayers. What did Jesus say to the Jewish priests in His day? Matthew 23:14 says, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

The Catholic priests can perform either high masses or low masses. High mass can be very expensive, and it all depends on the amount of flowers and candles used and the number of priests taking part. High mass is usually sung in a loud tone of voice. In a low mass only six candles are used. It is less expensive, and they conduct it in a low voice. The Irish have a saying that goes like this: "High money, high mass; low money, low mass." They call those who die without anyone to pay for masses in their behalf "the forgotten souls in purgatory." They remember these souls in special prayer on November 2, a time called "All Souls' Day." What did Jesus say to His disciples in Matthew 19:23-26? "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

If the payment of money for masses could get people out of a supposed "purgatory" and into Heaven, then the words of Jesus would not be so. Instead of it being hard to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, the opposite would be true. Ac-

According to Roman Catholicism, if a man has riches, entering the Kingdom of God is easy. Contrariwise, Jesus said that entering the Kingdom of Heaven would be difficult for a rich man.

Psalm 49:6-7 reads: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." No one can redeem his brother's soul with money. Only One can redeem you. If money cannot redeem a brother when he is alive, how can it redeem one after he dies.

Saved By Grace Through Faith

Read what the Apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Money cannot redeem your soul. It takes the precious blood of the Lamb.

Acts, Chapter 8, tells us of those who got saved down in Samaria. We find that a man called Simon the Sorcerer wanted the disciples to lay hands on him so that he might receive the Holy Ghost. Verses 18-21 read: "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

Souls cannot be purchased with money. When many people come to God, they are in bad shape spiritually, financially, and morally, but that does not stop the blood of Jesus Christ. When a person comes to Jesus Christ in old-time repentance,

it makes no difference if he or she has only two nickels or a million dollars. It still takes the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse a soul from sin. Salvation is by grace, and it can never be merited by money, human works, or sacrifices. The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." You are saved by grace.

You cannot buy your way into the Kingdom of God. However, you do have to watch that you do not have a love for money, because it will take you out of the kingdom. You must keep money in its rightful place. Nothing is wrong with laying aside money for needs that may arise, but you need to watch that a covetous spirit does not get hold of you. Often the more one makes, the more he spends on himself and the more in debt he becomes. Also, the more money one makes, the more of this world's goods he has to take care of. You cannot buy your way into the Kingdom of God. Furthermore, you cannot buy your way out of a supposed purgatory, because there is no purgatory.

If one dies short of coming through the Door and being cleansed from sin, that person will end up in hell. If death should overtake people who have not lived right and have not given time to God, there is no chance for them to change their destiny. Luke, Chapter 16, speaks of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man died and was buried, and verse 23 states, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." The angels carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, which denotes rest. Verse 26 says that a great gulf is fixed between Lazarus and the rich man "so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Purgatory is a lie. Once a person dies, his eternal destiny is fixed and settled. Those who go to hell can never leave there. If death should overtake you

or if Jesus should come before you are saved, you are going into hell, a place of eternal torments.

"Come Out of Her, My People"

The system of Roman Catholicism is filled with darkness, and it is not going to be converted. Our Scripture text says in verse 2 that Babylon is a habitation of devils and foul spirits and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Why? They can dwell there in safety. All the unclean, foul spirits can dwell in Babylon and not be stirred or challenged with the Word of God; they can be at rest. They are like the strong man that is armed: his goods are at peace. I trust that you can see why God is so against Babylon.

If you are in Babylon, you need to flee; run for your life. Our Scripture text says in verse 4, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues [or judgments]." God is putting judgment on Babylon. You may say, "I want to stay in Babylon to help the people." Friend, you cannot help anyone when you are disobeying God. You are in disobedience if you stay there. God did not say, "Stay there and help others." He said, "Come out of her." In other words, you must stand aloft from her. You had better not keep company with people who have rejected light; you need to avoid them.

How can you help those who are in Babylon? You must walk in the light as God directs it upon your pathway. Also, you should treat people right in a false system of worship and try to bring them to Truth. God knows more about influencing souls than we do. He said, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). According to Revelation 18:2, Babylon is a habitation of devils. What is a habitation? It is a dwelling place. The church is a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit,

but Babylon is a dwelling place of devils, or demons. Another translation says, "She has become a resort for demons, a fort for every unclean spirit, a refuge for every filthy and detestable bird."

Demon-possessed people can hide behind Babylonian walls. Those who are devil possessed can slip into Babylon and never be disturbed. They can hide behind her teachings. They may measure to her creeds and conform to her teachings; nevertheless, it is a hold of every foul spirit. People can carry spirits of bitterness and partake in her services; they can sing specials or be players on the instruments and not be disturbed. Those with spirits of lust and worldliness and those who are lovers of pleasure can walk into Babylon openly and become members of that church or organization, but they cannot get in the Church of God. Why? They have to come through the Door, and when they come through the Door, they must become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The Hold of Every Foul Spirit

Someone may inquire, "How can you know when foul spirits are working on people?" They manifest those spirits when the Word of God is preached by a man of God. Some shake their heads and say that he is a judgmental preacher. Others say, "You are preaching at me" or say, "That's your idea." What do the saints of God do? They rejoice in the Truth while those who have rejected Truth sit there and manifest the foul spirits that have hold of them.

Foul spirits can live in Babylon and never be molested or tormented. Though they are living in sin, if you were to ask them how they are getting along spiritually, they would say, "I'm getting along great! I'm getting my soul fed." On the contrary, their souls are not getting fed; their flesh is getting fed, but they are not spiritual, so they cannot discern the difference.

The Prophet Jeremiah wrote in

Jeremiah 5:25-31: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

My friend, what will you do in the end? Those who do not come through the Door (Jesus Christ) climb up some other way, and as Jesus said, "the same is a thief and a robber." Babylon is full of those who have unclean and hateful spirits, but all they have to do is make a religious move and they are accepted. The doors are open wide for them to come as they are, but that is not so in the Church of the Living God.

Today many people want a cheaper religion. Babylon is full of cheap religion, where people do not have to get rid of anything and they can live as the world does, dress as the world does, act as the world does, and talk as the world does; yet they still take the Father's name. You do not have to go far to find cheap religion, but souls there are slipping into hell.

Babylon the great is fallen. Though many are looking for a shortcut to Heaven, there is only one way, and that is through Jesus Christ. God does not want His people in the filth of Babylon. Revelation 18:6 says, "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works:

in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." In other words, we are to put judgment on her. She was rewarded once under the sixth seal, and now she is being rewarded again under the seventh seal. She is being rewarded double for her sins and iniquities. God worked through Brother D. S. Warner and other reformers to send forth the message, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" and "Come out of her, my people." Right in this seventh-seal dispensation, wherever there is a true man of God, he is proclaiming the same message.

Many ministers no longer proclaim that message. Why is that? They would be preaching against themselves. As I said earlier, Babylon is sending more souls to hell than all the saloons and houses of prostitution. God's wrath is stirred against her. I repeat, I am not speaking against people but against the false systems of worship that tell people they can get to Heaven some other way besides the Bible way.

Anything that is top quality is going to cost you. The Church of God is on the top of the mountain. When you buy a car, you get what you pay for. If you want top quality, you must pay top dollar. When you take the cheaper route, it will cost you more in the end. Becoming a member of the Church of the Living God will cost you. You may ask, "What will it cost?" You must give up all sin and uncleanness and every foul spirit. If you are in Babylon, you need to come out of her, take a stand, and separate yourself from her.

Again, Revelation 18:2 reads, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Since Babylon is fallen, there is no use to try to prop it up. The message is, "Come out and stand aloft from her; be separate and touch not the unclean thing."

(Cassette C-1117E)

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a

rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

The Fatality of Building Wrong for Eternity



Brother Esau Brooks

The Importance of Doing What God's Word Says

Our Scripture text is very solemnizing and very challenging. If you look into this Scripture seriously, you will move in God's direction. These are not the words of Matthew, John, or another Apostle, but they are the divine words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was about to close one of the most marvelous messages of His entire ministry here on this earth. This message began with Chapter 5 and continued through Chapters 6 and 7. How many people would like to sit under a message of that length today? If you will note, His message was not divided into sections. It begins, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain . . . And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying . . ." (Matthew 5:1-2). (Today He is still "saying.") In the closing part of this message, Jesus attempted to show His hearers the importance and the benefits of letting His Word affect their hearts, govern their practices, and convict their minds.

In verse 24 of our Scripture text, Jesus said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them . . ." God's message was never intended merely to be enjoyed. The purpose of His sending the message was to provoke action. Therefore, in essence, He stated, "One who lets these sayings govern his actions and his practices is likened unto a wise man." Thus, we can conclude that hearing the message and doing what the message requires is wise.

Too many of God's people are getting in the habit of merely going to church to hear. It is time to arouse yourself to do something about these messages. Remember that Jesus said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them . . ." In other words, you must let them convict your mind to the degree that you act wisely.

Then, Jesus said, "I will liken him unto a wise man." Where is the wisdom? The wise man built his house upon a rock. Any sensible, rational person will agree that building one's house on a rock is wise. People need to stop building their spiritual houses anywhere they

choose. Jesus pointed out the importance of not only hearing but also doing. In so doing, He likened it to building your house upon a rock. Why? Your building is subject to being tested. If you think you are going to spring any surprises on God when you arrive at the Judgment, you are mistaken. Long before then, God will know which side you are on, and not only He but everyone who takes heed will know also.

Many religions are in the world today, and they are influencing many people. Sad to say, in most cases, men and women are suffering from the wrong influences. When I was a boy, I used to think that if one were religious, that was good. However, in time I learned differently. Friend, if you have not learned this, I pray that you will learn the difference. Just because one is religious does not mean it is good. There is such a thing as false religion. A religion is false when it comes short of producing in your life what God intends it to produce. Too many are lagging behind the revelations of God's Gospel that is being sounded out constantly. Going to church has

become fashionable. Hearing a message and then going out and following one's same selfish ways has become the practice of these days. Nevertheless, there is going to be a Judgment, and on that day people will meet God face to face. Second Corinthians 5:10 tells us, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Being a Hearer and a Doer of the Word

Friend, when was the last time you thought about the Judgment? When was the last time you thought about how you might fare at the Judgment? Oh, I know there are many other things to think upon and occupy your mind, but nothing is more important than thinking about how you are going to fare at the Judgment. The Judgment is not going to be a casual meeting with God, but rather a time when God will bring every one of your works into Judgment; He will reveal every secret thing. Therefore, you need to have your sins washed away by the blood of Jesus. Eternity and the Day of Judgment are going to be very serious.

Look at the words with which Jesus introduced our text (verse 21), "Not every one . . ." Today the prevailing thought is, "If one is a church member, he or she is going to Heaven." Nevertheless, many church members are going to find themselves short of Heaven on that day. My friend, you are not going to Heaven because you belong to a church. If you search your Bible carefully, you will see that not a word is mentioned concerning joining a church. As far as the Bible and Heaven are concerned, there is only one church. The only way to become a part of that church is not by shaking a preacher's hand but by being born again, not physically but spiritually. God's Word lets you know that you must be born of water and

the Word. The water, in this case, is not speaking of drinking water, but symbolically, it is referring to the Holy Spirit. Salvation is a divine work, not a work of culture; you cannot culture yourself to be saved.

Jesus illustrated His message by comparing two kinds of builders: one who hears and does His sayings is likened to a wise man, and one who hears His sayings and does them not is likened to a foolish man. We all belong to one of these two groups. No matter how well educated you are, if you are not among those who are hearing and doing, God said you are among those who are hearing and not doing; therefore, you are acting foolishly. God evaluates things quite differently from the way man does. Today a man is considered wise if he has a lot of education. However, the Word of God is telling us what makes the difference. What makes the difference is whether you hear and do or whether you hear and fail to do. To which of these two groups do you belong? You can know right now which group you are in.

I have heard people say, "No one knows who is going to Heaven." On the contrary, you can know. Jesus made it plain. Verse 21 states; "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." When Jesus used the word "doeth," He was not speaking of doing the will of God now and then, but of doing the will of God consistently.

Do You Know for Certain That You Are Saved?

Our Scripture text brings an alarming condition to our attention. Many people are going to arrive at the Judgment deceived. Friend, are you going to be among them? People are going to arrive there trusting in things that they have done in the name of the Lord, but no change of heart has been effected in them; in other words, no change has been

practiced by them. Living for God consists of more than being a mere professor of religion or being called a brother or a sister. It consists of "he that doeth the will of my Father."

Jesus said that many will say to Him in that day (the Judgment Day), "Lord, don't you know me? Remember when You heard my prayer? Remember when I asked You for a job and You opened the way for me to get a job?" Friend, are you going to be one of that class at the Judgment? Jesus was saying that many people are going to be like that. They will live out their entire lives on this earth, whiling away their time and ending up at the Judgment depending on absolutely nothing positive or real.

How do you know that you are a child of God? Have you really been born again or do you just think you have been born again? You must find out before you die, because after death comes the Judgment, and you will not have a second chance. Verse 22 says, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" God's reply will be, "I never knew you." In other words, "All the while you were talking and professing, I never knew you." My friend, are you sure that the Lord regards you as a child of God? You may say, "My preacher said . . ." Well, he can say anything, but it is what God says that you should be interested in. Will He say to you, "You were prophesying, casting out devils, and doing many wonderful works in My name; but I have never met you"? You need to know for certain before you die that Heaven knows you as a child of God.

Some time ago a man was dying, and he was going through quite a demonstration, crying out to God. Many people were reacting very favorably to the way he was acting, so when someone said to me, "Isn't that a wonderful way to die?" I said, "I know a better way to die than crying out to the Lord or praying. I

know a way of hearing from God when you are dying." It is not good to have to be praying at death; that is when you need to be hearing from Heaven.

Friend, you need to stop the practice of going your own way and believing that all is well when in reality you have not heard from Heaven. Again, verse 24 of our Scripture text states, "Therefore [or for this cause] whosoever heareth these sayings of mine [they are still His sayings], and doeth them . . ." Too many people have it in their minds that it does not matter what they believe and that as long as they are sincere, they will make it through. However, it is not that way. You need to read your Bible to find out what "Thus saith the Lord."

The Seriousness of Being Unprepared to Meet God

People today are so busy doing other things that they do not take the time to do what the Lord says. They say, "Oh, yes, I know He said that," but their doing it is another matter. Jesus illustrated the seriousness of arriving at the Judgment unprepared to meet God by bringing to our attention the two kinds of builders. Everyone is building a refuge for eternity. Jesus wants us to see the importance of building right. Jesus introduced two kinds of builders and presented two very important facts about them. First, they resembled each other. Second, despite their resemblances, there were great differences between them. The Lord wants you to find out which of these two groups of builders you really belong to.

You might be a religious person, but does Heaven know anything about you? You may say, "Well, of course, Heaven would have to know about me." No, Heaven does not have to know. I am speaking regarding Heaven knowing about you, not from the sense of being a creation of God, but in the sense of being redeemed of the Lord. The points in which these two builders resembled

each other are quite plain. First, they both heard the same sayings of Christ, and that is important. Today everyone is hearing something. Some may not be privileged to hear the Gospel, but they are hearing a gospel. Second, as we look upon these two builders, we see that both saw the need of a house; that is the reason each built a house. Everyone sees the need of salvation, but how many are striving to get saved? We cannot say that the Word that was preached to these two builders was not heard or was heard in vain, for they both saw their need.

Third, both built a house--the wise and the foolish. They each planned to build a house, and they each started and ended. Verses 24 and 26 say: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." Both heard the sayings, both saw their needs, and both began to build.

Another point of similarity between the two builders was that both houses were subject to the same kinds of tests. This is something that many people are not counting on. If you listen to God's Word and follow it (I know that is not the popular way), you will arrive at the Judgment knowing exactly what spiritual condition you are in. Sinner friend, if you keep on playing the part of a fool, you are going to end up as one. There is more to living than breathing. There is more to life than amassing wealth and enjoying the frolics and pleasures of sin. Life is real, and it is loaded with far-reaching consequences. Every individual in this lifetime is setting in motion actions that will be used either to justify or to condemn him or her. Friend, when you are through rejecting the message and disregarding the preacher, it is not over. If you do not want to hear it, you can walk out and ignore it, but

you will still face it at the Judgment.

Standing the Test

We all can get ready for the testing of our spiritual houses. (I am using the term houses in the same sense in which our Lord used it, designating an experience with God.) What were the tests to which these buildings were subjected? The first was the rain of affliction. To many, the stern preaching of the Word of God is an affliction they do not want to endure. Paul said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:3). The second test was the storms and the floods. Verse 27 of our Scripture text says, "And the rain descended, and the floods came." My friend, merely going to an altar or shaking a preacher's hand or being admitted into a church or being regarded as a Christian is not enough. If you are building for eternity, you need to make sure your building will stand the tests here before it has to stand the test at the Judgment.

The testing comes through the form of afflictions, floods, and storms of false doctrines and deceptions. Saint, you must have an experience that can stand the shaking. God said, "I am going to shake heaven and earth, and all that cannot stand the shaking will be shaken loose." Many today are being shaken loose, and many cannot understand it. Too often people sympathize with and try to help those who have been shaken off. Frankly, when it comes to eternity, only God can help people. In some cases, if you are not careful, those people will only damn your soul rather than your helping them. This is very serious!

I once heard the story of a mother who asked her children, "What would you like to be when you grow up?"

One said, "A lawyer," another said, "A judge," and another mentioned something else.

She said, "Why don't you want to be a minister?" One boy an-

swered, "Oh, no, Mama."

"Well, why don't you want to be a minister?" she asked.

"Well, because he says things that people don't like to hear." No one finds pleasure in saying things that people do not like to hear. That is the reason about 99.9 percent of the so-called ministers today have changed their way of preaching. They have gone from preaching to pleasing. Places where the old-fashioned Gospel is going forth are becoming more scarce all the time.

There used to be a time when there were camp meetings all over the country, and they all were dedicated to the preaching of the one soul-saving Gospel, but that is not so anymore. In many places if you were to go to fellowship God and deepen your experience, you would be confronted with elements and spirits aimed at turning you against your brother; that is pitiful. It is as if hatred has become a part of the Christian life, but it has not! That is the reason many will say to Jesus, "In Thy name have I done this and that," but He will say, "Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." What about your practical life? It is time for people to realize that if they are going to make it to Heaven, they must comply with the requirements of Heaven. Suppose God was to take everyone who professes to be saved into Heaven as they are without requiring anything. How long do you think Heaven would have a heavenly atmosphere? If all the strife that is going on down here were going on up in Heaven, it would not be Heaven. The Bible lets us know that in Heaven everything is peaceful, joyful, and orderly. There will not be any disgruntled people walking around saying, "I don't think you ought to be doing this or that."

The Need of Listening Closely to God

The next point of resemblance between the builders was that each rested with the security of his build-

ing. The foolish man felt as secure as the wise man. He was not worried; he had no doubts. He was contented that his building was as good as the other building. However, when the wrong was discovered, it was too late. Friend, do not make that same blunder today. Make sure, with the help of God, that you hear the sayings of God and do them. If you do not, you will not make Heaven. I am hearing some things in these last days about how people feel about God that shock me.

Some people have said to me, "Did you know that it was God who started sin? He made the devil, and sin started in Heaven." No, He did not! Had sin started in Heaven, what assurance would we have that it would not start again? Had the devil been in Heaven in the first place, how would we know that he would not be there again? The only way we can be sure is to know that the devil has never been in Heaven. Some preachers tell people that the devil was in Heaven and that he took about a third of the angels from God, and they say that in order for God to get him out of Heaven he had to declare war. The thing they cannot tell you is how the war was fought or with what kinds of weapons they fought. It is all silliness, because there never was and never will be a devil or a war in Heaven. That is one reason I feel so good about working to go to Heaven.

You may say, "But I have heard some good preachers who preached that." Friend, I am telling you what the greatest Preacher of all, Jesus Christ, has said. You may say, "Don't you read in the Book of Revelation that there was war in heaven?" Well, which heaven? The Bible tells us there are three heavens. One reason people err in these things is that they refuse to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God and let Him teach them.

When I got saved, I knew nothing about the Gospel, the Truth, or the Church of God. There was no great teacher like Gamaliel for me to sit at his feet and be taught by. Nev-

ertheless, when the tests and trials came that caused me to begin searching, I sat in the school of Jesus, and He taught me. I will never forget when I went to the God's Acres camp meeting for the first time. I marveled when I heard Brother Emerson Wilson preach, for he was preaching the same thing God had shown me in Honduras. Now, I did not know Brother Wilson. I had never seen the man in my life, yet we were preaching the same Truth. More recently, Brother Roger Decker preached a good message on the kingdom, and as he was preaching, I thought, "He is preaching just what God had shown me!" I had not been taught by him. If God can teach me in Honduras the same message that He is teaching God's people in America, God can teach anyone who will listen.

I do not have to contact others to find out what they are doing. God reveals the truth to me through His Spirit. Friend, He can also reveal it to you through His Spirit. Too many people are so busy hearing this one's side and that one's side. I do not want to hear anyone's side. I want to hear what God has to say; that is how I make decisions. I do not make decisions because someone is pressuring or compelling or indoctrinating me. When things come up, I pray and ask the Lord what to do. Now, I do not pray as Balaam did. He prayed to find out which way he would have the advantage. When I pray, I want to find out what God would have me to do. If I were to disobey God and listen to others, I would get locked out of Heaven, and they would not be able to do a thing to help me. I am going to listen to the Lord and do what He wants me to do! I have known the Lord since 1949 when He saved me, and I have never found Him to fail once.

The Wise and the Foolish

Now we will look at the other side of the picture in our Scripture text. I want you to notice the things in which these two builders differed.

Though they closely resembled each other in many things, they differed in some areas. One area they differed was in their character. Jesus called one builder wise and the other foolish; that was the main difference. There is a great difference between being wise and being foolish. If you are wise, you will select in this life the highest object of pursuit, and you will adopt the best means to obtain it. You are not going to get to Heaven by listening to just anyone and everyone. If you are going to make it to Heaven, you must do what God told the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. When Elijah and Moses stood before them with Jesus, Peter said, "Let us make three tabernacles. One for You, Lord, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." Then the Scripture tells us a cloud came over all of them, and a voice from the cloud was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear Him." We need to shut up and hear His voice today. You may say, "Well, I want to hear what Brother So-and-So and others have to say." Friend, hear Him, and when He is finished with you, He will have you well straightened out.

If you are going to make it to Heaven, you must persevere until the object of your pursuit is realized. The wise man considered the value of the soul. He meditated intently on the soul's security and adopted the efficient means for its eternal welfare. If you are wise, that is what you will do. I do not mean this disrespectfully, but if you are not doing that, then you are playing the part of a fool.

The next point on which they differed was in their practice. One was a hearer and a doer and the other was only a hearer. One had the name and the other had the nature. One professed to be a builder, the other possessed the qualities of a builder. One talked and admired while the other was doing. A builder who knows what lie is doing starts with a solid foundation and builds right. The trouble with too many spiritual buildings today is that they are built without foundations. They

are up in the air like castles in the sky. Anything that goes up without a foundation will come down. The foundation is the principle part of a building. All good builders know that. A builder starts by first laying a solid foundation. No matter how costly and how beautiful a building might be, the results are dependent upon the foundation under it. This is so with your salvation. You may speak ever so eloquently, but if your foundation is not resting on the Rock, your building will fall.

While one man built on the rock, the other man built on the sand. Do you know why he built on the sand? He knew nothing about building, and he would not listen. That is the way many people are today. They begin to go to church, but they are not in a congregation two weeks before they want to tell the pastor how to run the church.

I have heard people say, "The devil is so smart." No, the devil is not that smart. It is just that people are too dumb to learn. He is working on people in the same ways he worked in the Garden of Eden. Yet, people still do not learn. They do not learn because they will not listen to God. You may talk about how much you love and appreciate the Truth, but those words are going to be put to the test. Truth does not change according to the whims of people. Men may change, but not Truth.

Make Sure Your House Can Stand the Test

Nothing can make up for the error of the foolish man. The "rock" represents Christ—His sayings, His demands, His requirements. The "sand" represents a mere profession and self-righteousness. One who builds on the sand depends on anything or anyone else but God and what He says. Last, the builders differed in their results. The one who built on the rock remained unmoved in his affliction; he remained steadfast despite the rain and the flood.

A real experience with God will stand any test. Job testified of how

good God was and how determined he was to be true to Him, and then his tests came. God said to the devil, "Have you considered My servant Job?"

The devil said, "Oh, yes, he can talk like that because You have him hemmed in. If You put forth Your hand and touch him and take what he has, he will curse You to Your face [that is how presumptuous the devil is]."

God said, "Okay, I will turn him into your hand. You do what you want with him, but do not touch his life." The devil destroyed everything Job had—his children and his possessions; then he stood off to see what Job was going to say.

In essence, Job said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Then Job's wife rose up against him and said, "Are you still holding your integrity?"

Later, Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." An experience with God can stand any test.

To build on the sand is to be undermined, never settled, and likely to be affected by any condition. When the rain came and the floods swept and the wind blew, the house on the rock stood firm, but the house on the sand fell. My friend, that is a totally irreparable loss. Do not end up like that foolish man. You will if you are only a hearer and not a doer. Obeying God is what qualifies a man for Heaven.

To the sinner, God says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). Sinner friend, you must confess your sins, and then He will be faithful and just to forgive you. Men will tell you, "Join the church of your choice" or "Come and shake the preacher's hand, and you will be saved." Contrariwise, you must do what God says to make your way to Heaven. You need to make sure that you are building right for eternity so that when you get there, you will not be disappointed.

(Cassette C-4156E)

Luke 13:10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight,

and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away

to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

Healing to the Glory of God



Brother Cleve Green

Giving Glory to God

I want you to notice verse 13 of the Scripture text, which says, "And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God." Sometimes the reason people's afflictions return is that they do not continue to glorify God. Everyone should have been happy that this woman was healed, but there are always critics in a crowd.

When this hypocrite spoke up and criticized Jesus, He spoke a great truth. Verse 17 tells us, "And when he had said these things, all his adversaries [all those who opposed and criticized Him] were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him." Child of God, when God heals someone, you ought to rejoice. You would rejoice if you were the one who was healed. I

wonder sometimes how God's people can keep so silent when God heals a brother or a sister.

People at ball games rejoice and throw their hats in the air; yet when they go to the house of God, they are quiet. Church, let us rejoice! Psalm 150:6 says, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD." One Old Testament writer, speaking of the priests being clothed with salvation, wrote, "Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness" (2 Chronicles 6:41). He was speaking of this Gospel Day, a time when the saints of God would shout aloud and praise the Lord.

I want you to notice that this woman in our Scripture text was not named. She had no fame, but she

glorified God when He healed her. If you look in a dictionary, you will find that infirmity means "an affliction of the soul or the body." Our Scripture text states in verse 11, "And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity . . . and was bowed together." This woman's infirmity was a physical infirmity. Something was wrong with her back, and she had been bent over for many years.

There are three approaches to divine healing. First, there is an extreme to completely ignore divine healing. In fact, this message has become an offensive Gospel in many places that have Church of God written over the door. I once asked a sister who spoke of having a doctor's appointment, "Have you ever tried James 5:13-15?" and she was insulted. Friend, when the Word of God insults you, something is

wrong in your soul. If you have left Truth, you need to get back to it.

The preachers in many areas have quit not only preaching divine healing but also practicing it. Preaching something you do not practice is difficult. It takes faith to keep this message alive. People may get down and wash their brothers' feet and yet not have good experiences. They might tithe a tenth of their income and do many things for God, but it takes faith to trust Him completely for healing.

Once when I was asked to speak at a camp meeting, I tarried before God and prayed, and He gave me a message on divine healing. However, after I had preached about fifteen minutes, some preachers left the auditorium and went out to the pop stand to drink soda pop. This message has become an offensive Gospel to many people. Brother, sister, you had better wake up to the Truth of God's Word. Many so-called Church of God congregations do not preach divine healing anymore. Church, we must embrace this glorious truth. We are raising a generation of children who knows little or nothing about God's power to heal. My wife and I raised our children on divine healing. God has been our Physician since we have been married, and He has healed our children. In 1953 we moved into Caldwell County to pastor the church at Granite Falls, North Carolina. A man at a service station asked, "Where are you heading?" and I said, "Granite Falls." He said, "Man, I wouldn't take my children in there for any amount of money." At that time Caldwell County had the highest number of polio cases in the nation (they had seventy cases). When we moved there, we trusted God for our children. Many people were excited when their children got a little fever, but we trusted in God and put our children in the hands of the Lord.

Today we are living in a "pill" age, but I have only one pill to recommend, and that is the "Gos-pill." It will supply all our needs!

It Is Better to Trust in the Lord

The second extreme that people turn to is professional healers. Child of God, you do not have to leave the Church of God to get healed. If you have faith, God can heal you. He has everything in the church that His people need. Many people have been led away by false teachings and have poured money into such things. May God help people to get their eyes open. Saint, do not be misled by everyone who is performing miracles or is seemingly healing the sick. In Revelation 16:14 you will find that even devils can perform miracles. It says, "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Friend, do not be misled. The reason you need to know the Truth is to know if a man of God is preaching the Truth. You also need the gift of discernment. The Bible tells us, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). False ministers are preaching in pulpits, on television, and on radio. They have gone out to deceive the very elect, if possible. This is the reason the Bible instructs you to know those who labor among you. You need to know those whom you are following, lest you be led astray.

The devil can heal, perform miracles, and deceive people. Professional healers say, "Thou cancerous devil, come out." However, cancer is not a devil; cancer is a disease. One proof of a true man of God is that he can cast out devils. Beelzebub cannot cast out Beelzebub. If the person is willing, many evil spirits can be cast out if a man of God lays hands on him. You need to be sure that the man you are following is preaching the Word and can cast out devils. The Bible says to try the spirits, to know whether they are of God.

In the third approach to divine healing, the devil is moving people

away from trusting God completely. Some are roosting too low, spiritually speaking. They are not in the top of the tree. No wonder the devil is knocking off some folks so easily. I want to encourage you to saw off the low limbs and climb higher. Saint, you should not take the course that worldly people take, with no faith and no belief in the Word of God. It is safe to put yourself in God's hands. Then when the Lord heals you, the vilest critic will have to say that God did do the healing. I want to encourage you to put yourself in His hands and see what He will do. If your faith is weak and you feel that you must go the way of man's repair program, ask God to strengthen your faith. Pray that your faith will become stronger so that you can take God's healing route. If God has healed you by His great power of healing, let Him have the glory.

The Bible says in Psalm 118:8, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." This simply means that you are safer trusting God for healing than trusting man. A man is limited in power and does not have all wisdom. You are better off trusting in God Who has all wisdom and all power. It is better to trust the Lord. Child of God, if you believe it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man, then why not do it? Man is limited in knowledge. Often he does not know the answer and he makes mistakes, but God does not make any mistakes. God has all power.

God can be everywhere at once. I thank God that I have my Physician with me everywhere I go. While I have Him with me, my family has Him at home. I do not have to telephone Him; that is too slow. I might die while dialing the number. I have a straight line to Glory, and I can talk to Him anytime. He is my Great Physician!

Statistics reveal that many surgeons are unfit to operate. Friend, do you see what a chance you are taking when you do not go God's route? Church, let us trust the Lord

for healing. Let us preach divine healing and practice it.

Healing to the Glory of God

We need to get back to this old landmark and rediscover the old paths and see what God will do! All of us would like to see more miracles and greater healings. Well, put your case in God's hands and see what He will do! We can read about the woman with the issue of blood in Mark, Chapter 5. This case is an example in the Word of God of how limited and finite man is and of how unlimited God is. The Bible lets us know that she went to many physicians and spent all she had, yet she grew worse. One day she heard about Jesus and said, "If I can just touch the hem of His garment, I will be healed." This woman had been afflicted for twelve years with an issue of blood. No doubt, she was frail, anemic, and weak in body, but she reached out to touch Jesus. Touching Jesus in that large crowd was not easy for her, but she was determined to touch Him. Saint, it will not be an easy task for you to press your way through the crowd today. Some of the "crowd" may be your unbelieving family or your critical neighbors. Your co-workers may have all kinds of ideas and remedies for you. However, the Bible has only one remedy: healing to the glory of God, healing that comes by faith in the divine promises of God.

Keep in mind that this woman had to press through a moving crowd, because Jesus was going to pray for Jairus' daughter. So she had to walk faster than Jesus was walking to catch up with Him. I do not know how long it took her. It may be that she was almost exhausted when she got there, but when she finally reached out and touched His garment, she was made whole by the power of God. She was healed of the issue of blood that she had for twelve, long years. Jesus turned and said, "Who touched my clothes?" Now, a great crowd was there, so

the disciples said, in so many words, "You are touched on every side."

When Jesus asked who touched Him, the afflicted woman came and fell down before Him. Jesus said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole." Friend, do not expect a preacher to pray the prayer of faith for you. You must have some faith. Now, if you are unconscious, the man of God will have faith for you; otherwise, you must have faith. The blind man who came running to Jesus said, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus said, "What would you have Me to do?" and the man asked to receive his eyesight. Jesus said, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" and he said, "Yea, Lord, I know Thou art able." Who had the faith? The blind man had the faith.

The centurion who came to Jesus had many servants. When one servant was sick, he could have sent another servant, but the centurion himself went to Jesus. Jesus saw that he had faith and said, "I will come and heal him." The centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." He was a captain of an Italian band of more than one hundred men. He continued, "I have soldiers under me, and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth and to another, Come, and he cometh." Yet he told Jesus that he was unworthy that He should step under his roof. Notice the great humility this man came with. Friend, if you expect to receive any help, you must come to Jesus with a humble heart. You cannot come with pride and haughtiness and expect to get healed by the power of God. Regarding this centurion, Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith in all Israel." Although this man was a Gentile, when he heard about Jesus, he had faith. Jesus then turned to the centurion and said, "Thy servant is healed. Go home." That centurion did not receive more than you can have today. He had the words of Jesus, and you also have them. If you will believe the words of Jesus, you can be

healed.

Divine healing is to the glory of God. When the woman with the issue of blood was healed, God received glory. If you do not tell others about your healing, God will not receive any glory. He wants your healing to His glory!

Alternate Methods Whereby People Can Receive Help

Let us look at the methods whereby people can receive help. First, there is what people call "climatic healing." Some people in the early stages of certain diseases can receive help by going to the arid climate of the Southwest. They do not get healed instantly, but they can recover after staying for months or even years. While this climatic healing may help in some instances, it is not healing to the glory of God. God wants your healing to be to His glory. He wants you to be healed because you have exercised faith and hung on to His promises. No doubt, everyone would like to trust the Lord if they could get healed instantly, but God does not always heal that way. Many times He does, but sometimes He sees fit for one's faith to be tested. He said in His blessed Holy Writ that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold tried in the fire.

Let us look at another method of healing. Nature has a repair program. I do not know what some unsaved and unbelieving folks would do if it were not for nature's repair program. Nature corrects many conditions, but this is not healing to the glory of God. The unsaved man, the agnostic, and the atheist can benefit from climatic healing, from nature's repair program, and from man's repair program. Although man has done some commendable things, this is not healing to the glory of God. The physician gets the credit for this. God is the One who should get glory and praise and honor for His great healing power.

God has a way for His people to

receive healing to His glory, and we ought to find that path. On that path we can trust God completely for the healing of every sickness and disease. Glory be to God! I am glad for healing to the glory of God!

Climatic healing, nature's repair program, and man's repair program cannot heal you immediately. You may convalesce for months and suffer much pain. Yet, when folks come to God, they expect God to heal them instantly. He can and sometimes He does, but not always. He may want to test your faith awhile. The Bible says in Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength . . ." Sometimes it is good for us to wait awhile. God has three ways of answering prayer: yes, no, and wait awhile. We all like to hear Him say yes, but sometimes we get impatient when He says to wait awhile. Many folks have become discouraged and their faith has faltered because God did not move quickly.

While God does not always come in a hurry, He has never been too late. You cannot accuse God, the Great Physician, of being too late. People thought He was too late when Lazarus died. In essence, they said, "Jesus, had you been here, we know You could have healed him." Jesus let them know, "I am the Great Healer and the Great Resurrecter." They said, "We know that we will be resurrected again in the last day." Jesus looked to heaven and wept and said, "Lazarus, come forth," and he came forth. It is a good thing He said "Lazarus," otherwise every one of the dead would have come forth. God does not always come in a hurry, but He is never too late.

Reasons People Fail to Receive Healing

I want to mention reasons that people do not get healed. There is the fear of suffering. Some of the greatest lessons are learned through pain and suffering. Job learned a great lesson through his affliction. He did not have any pain relievers

or a godly pastor to visit him every few days and encourage him as many Christians have today. Also, he did not have a godly companion to stand beside him and encourage him in the things of God. In fact, his wife said, "Why don't you curse God and die?"

Job did not even have a friend to encourage him. His so-called friends said, "Job, if you had not sinned, you would not have this affliction." However, it was just the opposite. God saw in Job one who would stand the suffering, and God allowed the devil to test him. I believe God still talks to the devil. Maybe He has talked to the devil about you, and the devil has said, "Yes, but let me test him awhile. Let me send something upon him." The devil can put an affliction on you, and he can pull it off.

Often people get prayed for, but because they still have pain, they say, "I guess I'm not healed." The pain is more real to them than the promise. Child of God, the promise ought to be more real than anything! If the pain comes back, you should say, "It still hurts, but praise God, I'm healed anyhow." You can be like the man who was prayed for at a camp meeting several years ago. After they prayed for him, he was still limping, but he said, "It still hurts, but I'm healed. Praise God!" Too many folks say, "Well, I want to feel better before I testify." You use the same faith for healing that you used to receive salvation. You had to believe that God saved you before you had any feeling. You had to believe that He redeemed you and that you were His child before you had any feeling. Likewise, you must believe that you are healed before you get any feeling. In spite of the doubts, the symptoms, and the pain, you need to believe that you are healed.

You may say, "I don't want to claim healing if I am not healed." You are not claiming that the pain is gone. You are just claiming the promise and glorifying God. You may say, "I am afraid that I will have

to suffer awhile." Well, all the other routes that men and women are taking have plenty of suffering. Some people will suffer until the last day they live in this world because they have taken other routes.

Church, let us take the Word of God. Now, you may be persecuted, misunderstood, and looked down upon by your family. There may come a day when you will get locked up in jail for your faith. Yet, in spite of it all, stand on the Word of God. Too many of God's people fear being different, fear being persecuted, or fear being misunderstood. Some preachers are afraid of offending someone. Well, some folks have to get hurt before they can receive help. The only way some folks can be awakened is to jolt them. We are living in an age when we need an old-fashioned, teeth-jolting Gospel.

In Red Cross training, they teach how to save a person who is drowning. If that person is hysterical, he will drown you and himself too, if you are not careful. Therefore, the Red Cross teaches you to slap him cold. While that may sound cruel, it is necessary to save a life. So it is in the spiritual. Sometimes the blessed Word slaps you up one side and down the other. As soon as you get up from being knocked down, you may get knocked down again. Well, God wants to give you some spiritual exercise. My friend, just keep digging and measuring to the Truth of His Word.

Truth is like a sharp sword, and some folks get cut down by it. The only way you can be safe is to get on the old Truth and ride it. You are not going to get cut down by a riding mower if you are riding it, but if you get off and get in its way, you will get cut down. Getting in the way of Truth and bucking up against it is dangerous.

Some people are afraid to trust in God for fear that they might die. Well, many people who have taken other routes have died too, but somehow folks are not afraid of that. The Word of God is clear. The more

I study it, the clearer this subject of divine healing rings out.

Shortly after I was saved, God began to deal with me along this line. He said, "I want you to trust Me for healing." I said, "God, I'll do it. Sink or swim, live or die, I am going to trust You." I began to lay aside things that I thought would hinder my faith. Well, it was not long until I had a test. I had a throbbing headache and walked the floor with it. I obeyed James 5:13-15, which says to pray if you are afflicted, but I did not get any relief. The devil said, "Why don't you try a BC (a remedy I used before Christ)?" I said, "Devil, I won't do it." I did not get healed instantly. I suffered for an hour or two. Then God moved, and the pain eased. The next morning I felt that I could jump over a wall and run through a troop. I have trusted God the very best I know how ever since. God has been my Great Physician, and I am glad to recommend Him to you.

Friend, do not try the "BC" route; just go to Jesus and take Him as your Great Physician. I have heard people say, "My faith is so weak. I know the Lord can heal. I know He has, and I know He will." That is historical and future. What you need to believe is, "I believe He does when I pray the prayer of faith." That obligates God. When you believe He does, He has to do something.

Ways to Strengthen Your Faith

There are three ways to strengthen your faith. First, you must quit doing anything that hinders your faith. Second, exercise what little faith you have. If I were to tie down my arms for a year and not use them, I doubt that I could lift them above my head at the end of a year. Similarly, if you tie down your faith and do not use it, it will weaken.

Today we do not have to use faith as much as the old pioneers did. Some of those old timers had to pray in groceries for the table. God

called some preachers to go to camp meeting to preach, yet they did not have any money. Nevertheless, they went down to the train station praising God for the transportation that He was going to provide. Often someone would walk up to them and say, "I feel that I should give this money to you." They had faith for transportation and faith for food. Most people do not have to pray their food in now, and many have good vehicles to drive. They do not have to pray for clothing as some saints used to. However, there is plenty yet to pray for. God wants us to use faith. If you do not use your faith, it is going to dwindle. One of the best ways to use faith is to trust God for healing. I do not know a better way to exercise faith. Before long, the devil will see that you have a test, but trust God anyhow.

The third way to improve your faith is to pray and ask God to increase your faith, believe that it will come, and then launch out on the promises of God. Many people are too fearful to launch out on this promises. You need to launch out on the Word of God as did Daniel of old, the three Hebrew boys, the old patriarchs, and the saints in the New Testament. Some folks treat stepping out on the promises as if they were tissue paper. Their attitude is, "I am going to hold to the old reliable routes of healing and watch others to see if this promise of divine healing will hold. Friend, you might as well forget receiving divine healing. You have your faith in other routes of healing. You need to believe the promises of God as if they are concrete. God has never failed, and He never will. Praise the Lord!

Fear Brings a Snare

The Bible says in Proverbs 29:25, "The fear of man bringeth a snare [if you are afraid, you need to get on your knees and pray and rebuke that devil of fear]: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe." Glory to God, I have found it so! I am like an older sister who was

singing, "His yoke is easy, His burden is light," and someone hollered, "How do you know?" She said, "I've found it so." I am glad that I have put my case in God's hands and found that I am safe in Jesus. The fear of man brings a snare. There is fear when you cannot trust God fully.

Job said, "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me" (Job 3:25). Through it all, Job sinned not and came through victoriously. God was well pleased with Job, and He said to the devil, "Have you considered My servant Job?" The devil said, "Yes, but You have a hedge around him." God said, "All right, I will take the hedge down." The devil stripped Job of everything he had. He was a wealthy man. He had hundreds of camels, sheep, and donkeys. First came a messenger saying, "The Sabeans have stolen your oxen and donkeys." Then a messenger said, "Fire from heaven came down and burned up your sheep and the servants." Another messenger said, "An enemy came and took away your camels." Finally, yet another messenger came and said, "The wind destroyed the building where all your sons and daughters were dining, and every one of them is dead."

Despite all that job lost, he humbled himself before God and said, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." He did not say, "Lord, why have You allowed this to happen to me? Why have You mistreated me so?" When Satan went back to God, I can imagine that God was smiling when he said, "Now what do you think of My servant Job? You could not move him, could you?" Then the devil said, "Let me afflict his body. A man will give everything for his life." God said, "All right, but you cannot take his life." (If God did not shelter and protect us, the devil would take our lives.) The devil afflicted Job with boils from the top of his head to the soles of his feet, but he stayed true to

God. His affliction did not last only a few days but several months. Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him."

Some people have said, "If God will heal me, I will trust Him." That is no good. You cannot buy God. You should say, "Live or die, sick or well, I will trust You. Lord, if You heal me, fine, and if You do not heal me, I will serve You anyhow."

The fear of men is causing many folks not to get the blessing when it comes to healing. The Bible says that perfect love casts out fear. Friend, is your love perfect? God gives us love when we are saved, but He perfects our love continually. Something is wrong with your love if it does not cast out fear. This does not mean it will cast out all fear. Some fear is good. For example, we should be afraid to disobey God. If we cast out all fear, we would not have any fear of displeasing God. I would be afraid if I were on a railroad track and my car stalled just as a train was coming. However, the writer was not talking about that kind of fear. He was speaking of fear that the devil tries to impose upon you—being afraid to obey the Word and being afraid of what men may say or do. Child of God, you need to put your case in God's hands and leave it there.

Having Faith in an Unfailing God

Divine healing was the greatest drawing the early church had. A great revival broke out after the crippled man was healed at the Gate Beautiful. Thousands of people were stirred, from the poor to the rich, and five thousand men were saved. Peter said to the crippled man, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Peter reached down, the crippled man reached up, and a power of God went through that man's body. He jumped up and began to leap and praise God. I wonder how many of God's people would rejoice if they saw a crippled

man jump out of his wheelchair or blind eyes opened or the dead raised to life again. If you were close to God, you would rejoice. You may weep for joy, or laugh with a holy laugh, but there will be some demonstration of rejoicing over God working a mighty miracle.

You may ask, "Is it God's will to heal me? I want to be healed if it is God's will." I have good news for you. Third John 2 says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." God wants you to have a healthy soul and a healthy body. It is a trick of the devil to make you believe that you have to be afflicted for a long time.

Often people have faith in those whom they do not know. Have you ever been driving up a mountain in a hurry and a truck driver in front of you signals that it is safe to pass? You cannot see around him, so he waves his hand as if to say, "Go on around. I can see up the road, and it is clear." He is a man that you have never seen before, yet you entrust your life to him and go on around.

You may be driving down the highway and come to a temporary bridge. There is no fear in your mind that the bridge will not hold you. You may say, "Well, if it is unsafe, the highway department would not have it open." However, they could be mistaken. Many people have more confidence in the highway department than they have in God. Men have erred in their judgment, but God has never made a mistake. No man putting his hand in God's hands has ever failed. No man has ever been able to say, "God failed me." Man has failed God, but God has never failed man.

No doubt, you have confidence in true saints. If they told you they were going to do something for you, you would believe it. You would say, "Well, it is as good as done." Let me use this illustration: Suppose that your sole source of heating your home and cooking your meals was coal, and this particular winter you were without the proper means to

buy coal. If I were a coal hauler and found you in dire need, I would say, "Friend, the Lord has put it on my heart to give you a truckload of coal for your winter supply." You would probably go to your neighbor's house rejoicing before the coal ever came and say, "Praise God, I got my winter's supply of coal. I didn't know how I was going to manage to get the money to buy it." Your neighbor may say, "I don't see it in your backyard," but you say, "That's all right, I have the coal hauler's promise that he is bringing it," so to you it is just as good as the actual delivery of the coal. Now, something could happen to cause me to fail in fulfilling my promise, but nothing can keep God from fulfilling His promise. Glory to God!

Having Confidence Toward God

We read in 1 John 3:21, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." In other words, if your heart condemns you, you cannot have confidence toward God. There must be a reason for so much weak faith today. I lay a large part of the blame at the feet of the ministry for not preaching and practicing this old-time truth. The modern church world and many people who claim to be Church of God have sent the sick to the hospital when God has given the command to pray the prayer of faith. It is much easier to say, "Sister, you had better get to a doctor or a hospital." The old-time preachers stayed all night or even a day or two until they prayed through.

Much of this modern ministry today consists of school-made preachers who do it because Mama wanted them to preach or because they thought it would make a good vocation; therefore, they cannot pray the prayer of faith. You may say, "Well, preacher, I am in a congregation like that. What should I do?" You are not without promise. You should not compromise. The Bible says, "If ye abide in me, and my

words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). If you can find one other brother or sister to agree with you, Matthew 18:20 says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

We read in Mark 11:24, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." You can claim the promise and get healing even if there is not a Church of God preacher within a thousand miles. All you need to do is claim the Word and hold God to His promise.

People have made too many excuses. They say, "Oh, I used to believe it like that." Well, why do they not believe it now? Many old-time saints have had miracle after miracle performed in their homes. At one time they had faith and confidence in God. They understood this old truth and trusted God for years. Now, because of a compromising ministry in so many places, they have let down too. This is a reproach. Saint, just because some have compromised does not give you any right to compromise. Remember, you must stand in the judgment bar of God. If God has revealed Truth to you, you must walk in that light; do not back away from it.

God's "Prescription" for Divine Healing

God's Word gives us a prescription text. If you go to an earthly physician, often you will get a prescription. Well, the Great Physician did not leave you without a prescription. James 5:13 states, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." An affliction is defined as, "a trial, a test, a persecution, or a slight ailment." No matter how the devil pounces on you, God's Word says for you to pray.

When you worry, you do not trust God. There is a difference between worrying and carrying a soul

burden. A soul burden will drive you to your knees and cause you to get hold of God and pray through. Worry cancels energy far faster than a hard day's work, and it dumps toxic poison into the bloodstream. You are much more susceptible to disease when you are worried. It puts a hardship on your physical body. If you trust the Lord, what do you have to worry about?

James said if any is afflicted, let him pray. Saint, if you are in a trial and the neighbors are persecuting you, the boss is treating you rough, or your family is misunderstanding you, you can pray. James did not say, "Go and talk to the neighbors" or "Tell it to the church," but he said to pray. You need to talk to Jesus about it. A good way to start trusting the Lord for healing is to trust Him for a headache or an upset stomach. Then as the Lord heals you and you become stronger in faith, you can trust Him with bigger things. I do not believe that David could have faced the giant had he not killed the bear and the lion. No doubt, the devil was there saying, "David, what are you going to do if you don't hit him?"

Friend, when the devil says, "What are you going to do if the Lord does not heal you?" do not entertain that thought in your mind. If spells doubt. Do not allow the enemy to trouble you with any thought of "What if . . ." The Hebrew boys said, "O king, our God is able to deliver us, but if I He does not, we are going to trust Him anyhow." You may say, "I'm afraid that I might die if I trust the Lord." Well, are you saved? Do you want to go to Glory? Are you ready to go when the Lord gets through with you? If you have lived for Him, He will keep you here until He is through with you. The world's best medical specialists could be in your bedroom, saying, "'You are going to die tonight," but you will live another twenty years if God wants you to. On the other hand, you may be getting along fine, but if God says it is time for you to go, you will die.

James went on to say, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Everyone believes that Scripture because there is no suffering involved. Anyone can sing or whistle a tune when he is happy. However, there might be some suffering in this: "Is any afflicted? Let him pray." You might have to suffer awhile. Verse 14 says, "Is any sick among you [It is hard to have the faith for yourself when you are writhing in pain, so God gave some instructions]? let him call for the elders of the church . . ." The Bible says that you are to call. The preacher is not supposed to find out about your illness through others. Sometimes I have visited and prayed for folks and felt that I was imposing on them. They did not seem to want prayer. When I asked, "Do you want me to pray for you?" they answered, "I guess it's all right. I don't guess it'll hurt anything." When people said that, I felt like walking out.

Not only should you call for the elders of the church, but you need to have faith when they come. Again, James 5:14-15 states: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Praise God! Again, you should not entertain any thought of what if He does not heal you.

Exercising Faith

You need to be like Brother I. M. Headin when he was afflicted. He was a wonderful man of God who has gone on to his reward. He was sick in bed, barely able to move when a letter came that said, "Dear Brother Headin, we feel it in the order of the Lord that you come and preach in this camp meeting." Brother Headin began to pray. His wife said, "What are you going to do? You can't go. You are sick and can hardly get out of bed. You cannot even dress or feed yourself. How are you going to the camp meeting?" He

told her, "I am going by faith." He began to pray, and as the Lord gave him a little strength, he began to put forth effort to get out of bed. (After some people pray the prayer of faith, they do not put forth any effort. They just lie on their beds of affliction and wait on the Lord to pick them up. They need to exercise some faith.)

Brother Headin finally worked himself off the bed. As he got dressed, he started praising God for his healing. He went down the stairs, step by step, barely able to make it, but he said, "I thank you for healing my body. I thank You, God, that You are going to enable me to preach in the camp meeting." He did not say, as some folks do, "Lord, I believe You are going to heal me." Instead, he said, "I thank You, Lord, that You have healed my body." When Brother Headin got to the bottom of the stairs, God touched him mightily, and he jumped and shouted the praises of God, and then he went on to the camp meeting. Praise the Lord! God is no respecter of persons. He wants to do the same today. Church, we need it more now than ever. We are living in a world of skeptics and unbelievers.

We need to trust the Lord and prove beyond a shadow of doubt that He is the Great Physician. He heals all manner of sickness and disease. The Bible tells us in Matthew 4:23, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." Hebrews 13:8 states, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." That obligates Him to heal our bodies. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. When you look to God in faith, believing, He will heal your body.

James wrote, ". . . the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." First, one must repent of his sins. No willful transgression is forgiven unless a person repents of it. Also,

you need to confess your faults. Many people have not been healed because they talk about the preacher or fight with others. Friend, if that is what you have been doing, you need to confess your sins. Have you been running down the preacher or the saints? If so, you must confess your sins so that you may be healed. Verse 16 says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Standing on God's Promises

Going back to verse 13, notice the word "let." If you follow this word through the New Testament, you will find that let is a commanding word. For too long many have treated this as a privileged affair. Let us see what the Word of God has to say. Second Timothy 3:16-17 tells us: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." You will not be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" unless you have faith for healing.

Look again at this commanding word let. We read in Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue." Does this mean you can or cannot let brotherly love continue and "sill retain your integrity with God? It simply means that you must let brotherly love continue. You cannot do as you please about it. Verse 5 says, "Let your conversation be without covetousness." Does that mean you can or cannot, that it does not make much difference either way? I believe this commanding word in James is just as effective as the commanding word in Hebrews. People have leaned on the hand of man for too long when God has promised to be our Great Physician. Romans 12:9 says, "Let love be without dissimulation." Dissimulation is hypocrisy. Therefore, the Scripture is saying, "Let love be without hy-

pocrisy." In other words, do not say "I love you" to someone's face, and then stab that person in the back when he is not around. That is hypocritical love, not divine love. Though the Scripture says "let," that does not mean you can do as you please. It means that you must let your love be without hypocrisy if you are going to retain your integrity with God.

Another example of the word "let" is found in Romans 13:1, which says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Does that mean that one has the choice of being subject to the power of God? No, it simply means what it says. When God says, "let," it is a divine command. My friend, God's Word means what it says.

The Old Testament writer said in Proverbs 6:21, "Bind them continually upon thine heart [he was speaking of the commandments and the Word of God], and tie them about thy neck." We read in Proverbs 7:3, "Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart." Church, we need this truth bound upon our hearts. If you have this bound in your heart (not in your head, but in your heart), it will be real to you, and it will help you.

Too many people are stumbling at the Word of God. First Peter 2:8 says, "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." Friend, you should not stumble when the light shines on your pathway. Old traditions, ideas, and opinions of men are what make you stumble. Won't you trust God for your every need? He is willing to send you the help you need if you will take hold of His promises.

(Cassette C-1737)

Many people believe in God,
but not many believe God.

Luke 19:1 And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him

joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

I Must Abide



Brother Irwin Seshier

The Answer to a Man's Salvation

As we break in on these Scripture verses, we find that the word was out: a man named Jesus was going to pass by. Who was He? What was He preaching? What was He doing that made Him so important? What was He doing that made things so exciting? The people's curiosity was stirred. People all around the countryside had heard about Jesus, and He was on His way through Jericho. Zacchaeus was curious about something that day that was going to be the answer to his salvation. He was a short man, so he wanted to get the best viewing advantage that he possibly could. He was trying to see this man called Jesus.

Zacchaeus was a rich man, rich with worldly possessions, but poor when it came to spiritual possessions. Worldly possessions can crowd out spiritual possessions. Matthew 6:19-20 instructs: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and

where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Riches on this earth do not make a man more spiritual. You are going to leave this world with nothing; you cannot take worldly possessions with you.

Our Scripture text says in verse 3, "And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature." Today the devil is putting things such as circumstances, doubts, fears, and unbelief in front of people to prevent them from seeing Jesus. Then people say, "I would serve the Lord, but. . ." or "I would become a Christian if. . ."

Where does sin leave you? Sin will leave you empty. Your spiritual gas gauge may read "Full," but you are empty. After awhile, sin will grind you down so low that you will feel that the pit you are in is so deep that you have no way out. Sin does not care how low it takes you or what

you look like when it is through with you. The effects of sin are unpleasant. Now, it looks enjoyable on the surface, but sin's pleasures are only for a season. You need to consider the end thereof. Sin will take you further than you want to go, it will keep you longer than you want to stay, and it will cost you more than you want to pay.

People need to quit giving God excuses. Some say, "I would serve the Lord if my wife or my husband would live for Him." That is not an excuse. You must be determined that you are going to serve the Lord no matter what the circumstances, no matter what the cost, no matter what is going on, no matter who you have to face, and no matter what opposition you have to endure. If more people would get that determination in their hearts and lives, they would not give up so easily. Friend, if you do not have that kind of determination, you need to earnestly seek the Lord until you do.

The Call of the Lord

Verse 4 of our Scripture text says, "And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way." Dear one, if you are going to get help from the Lord, you need to get up to a higher level. Proverbs 16:17 says: "The high-way of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul." Proverbs 15:8 states, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."

The Lord said He would never leave you or forsake you. He will protect you, guide you, lead you, and feed you. What more could you ask for? Child of God, look what He has done for you already. He is everything you need. When you need a protector, He is there. When you need a guide, He is there. When you need a physician, He is there. He is everything in one.

Zacchaeus had a desire to see Jesus. That is the key. Had he not had that desire, he would have continued his own way. Something miraculous was about to happen. In verse 5 of our Scripture lesson we read, "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house." Zacchaeus did not look around in that tree to see if there was another man up there named Zacchaeus. Saint, do you remember when the Lord called your name and you answered? There was something about His call. Zacchaeus made haste and came down and left the life of sin.

Sad to say, many have heard the call of the Lord but have failed to yield. When the Lord spoke Zacchaeus' name, he knew he needed to move. Why did he feel that he had to move? Because that opportunity might not have come again. His time of visitation was right then; that day was his accepted time.

The Lord is passing by many individuals today, but they are failing to move. This is serious. The time of visitation is now, and the opportunity

may never come again. Proverbs 21:29 states, "A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way." Friend, what are you going to do with Jesus?

The account of Zacchaeus would have had impact had it ended there, but something more happened when Zacchaeus made the move. We know that something miraculous happened because Zacchaeus was a different man coming down from the tree than when he went up. The Bible says that when he came down, he received Him joyfully. Any man or woman who accepts Jesus Christ into his or her heart and soul will have joy, because a change takes place. That change is an instant change—from darkness to light.

When Jesus comes into your heart, your spiritual eyes are opened, and you will let others know that there has been a change. You cannot keep it hidden. You will not say in a whisper, "Guess what? I got saved, but I am so ashamed." No, salvation is nothing to be ashamed of. Other people let you know how they feel about things. Why can't you stand for Jesus? You will have joy in your heart when you accept Jesus. You will not try to hide it. Christian friend, aren't you glad the Lord made a visitation to you? Where would you be if He had not made that visitation. The goodness of God is so great to save us and set us free from the bondage of sin. Old things pass away, and all things become new. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Zacchaeus was a changed individual, a new creature in Christ Jesus, in the twinkling of an eye.

Beware of Satan's Tools

The Bible does not say anything about Zacchaeus having to sign a pledge card, having to shake a preacher's hand, or joining a church on his way down from the tree. He did not become a member of a denominational church; he became a member of God's church, the Church

of the Living God. He was born into the precious Church of God. Many people say, "You need to join the church of your choice." Friend, in reality, you do not have a choice. Only one church is mentioned in the Bible, and that is the Church of God. There is no confusion when the Bible mentions only one church. People become confused when men put forth their own ideas. Many say, "Now, you really do not have to believe that way. We all are going to Heaven." Sad to say, all are not going to Heaven.

Verse 7 of the Scripture text reads, "And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." The critics were there too. Those who criticize and find fault are always going to be around. The crowd thought it was so terrible that Jesus was going to be a guest with a man who was a sinner. Some people act the same way today. Well, who were they at one time?

If you live for God, you will meet people who are critics, complainers, doubters, and scoffers. Some may say, "You can't live that way. You can't live above sin." Gossipers, fault finders, and backbiters will make sharp, cutting remarks and critical statements. Some people love to make accusations and critical remarks. They can run down a man of God and the saints and not even blink an eye. Much of that would cease if people would say, "I don't want to hear that garbage." When people know that you will listen, they will just keep filling your ears. When you start listening to such things, you are going to be affected.

We are in a race, dear saint, and the devil is using everything he can to knock us out of this race. He is not going to come to you with horns and a pitchfork. He is going to work through individuals who have wrong spirits in them. The devil is out to destroy. His ultimate goal is to destroy Truth. He does not care who he uses or what manner he uses as long as he gets the job done.

Often people make moves that they feel are best for them. You may

say, "This is the way I feel I should go." Well, have you prayed about it to see if it is the Lord's will? Have you sought an answer from God? You need to find out what the Lord wants you to do. Some people make moves without one thought of eternity and how souls might be affected.

Salvation Brings a Definite Change

Zacchaeus knew within his heart that he was a changed individual. He did not have to go around asking people if he was different. He was willing to give up all to God and not hold on to things that would bring him down. The Lord will give you the power you need to help you overcome the cigarette habit, the drug habit, the alcohol problem, or anything else that has you bound.

How do we know that Zacchaeus was a changed individual? He said, ". . . if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Luke 19:8). Salvation had come to his house. Salvation will make the vilest sinner clean. You may be in the most terrible pit that one can think of and say, "There is no hope for me," but the Lord can make you clean. Sinner friend, you have to give up what you have been doing and what you want to be and be willing to change your life. You cannot just sit and say, "Well, He can change me if He wants." You cannot get help that way. You have to make a move, and then the Lord will help you.

In verse 10 of the Scripture text we read that Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Dear one, the Lord is still seeking lost individuals. The things of this old world will never satisfy. Have you ever seen a dog chase its tail? It does not make any headway at all.

Zacchaeus could have gone his own way that particular day. He could have had something to do that he felt was more important. What is more important than the salvation of your soul? People put much importance on other things, but this is

something that is more important than anything in this old world. Hebrews 2:3 says, "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."

Second Thessalonians 2:13 states, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Some people do not want Truth. If you do not have the Truth, you do not have anything. In the Church of God, you are going to hear Truth.

Truth will guide you. Truth and light are together. When you are exposed to more light, you can walk in more truth and understanding. John 16:13 tells us, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." If you walk in all the truth that God reveals to you, He will show you more light. We need that guiding light today. The Holy Spirit guides us into all Truth. We cannot go this route on our own. We need to be made aware of the many pitfalls, and the Holy Spirit will lead us.

It probably would have been very easy for Zacchaeus to call upon a few friends to inquire about what they thought he should do before he made a move and maybe have them check out this man named Jesus. However, Zacchaeus saw his need, and he did not have time to check Him out. The Lord was checking him out. It was he alone that Jesus called. Dear one, you have to listen to what Jesus has to say to you personally. Too many listen to what others have to say. You need to listen to Him more every day. Have you been guilty of lending an ear to what someone else has been saying? You need to stand up for the right. Truth is what sets you free, dear one. If you do not stand by Truth, you are going to be lost.

Truth is exciting, and this way of

living is exciting! Happiness and contentment are contagious. David Seaberry once wrote, "Enthusiasm is the best protection in any situation. Wholeheartedness is also contagious. Give yourself if you wish to get others." Saint, people in the world are looking for the very thing that you have. Nothing out in the world can satisfy you like Jesus can. God help us not to take for granted the things that God has given us. We have Someone to talk to who understands us. People in the world do not have anyone to talk to. We have One who will steer us in the right direction.

The world is a cruel and cold place. As a Christian, you must treat people right. If you are truly a Christian, you will treat people right. Mark Twain once wrote, "Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." You need to treat people with kindness.

Does the Lord Abide in Your Heart?

Looking back at the Scripture text, Jesus told Zacchaeus, "I must abide," and that is the only thing that will do with Jesus. He must abide within your heart. Sadly, people are letting other things crowd out what the Lord is telling them. They are letting material gain crowd out what Jesus wants. First John 2:15-17 instructs: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Dear one, this old world is going to pass away one of these days.

Do you have the determination that Zacchaeus had? Do not let things crowd out Jesus. Do not let the things of this life press you so that you miss the opportunity when Jesus passes by. That is what most people are doing today. Hosea 9:7 says, "The days of visitation are come, the days of rec-

ompense are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred."

The woman said in Matthew 9:21, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." That woman had her faith in Jesus, and she put forth great effort. Likewise, you have to put forth effort. Others cannot do it for you. You have to follow the Lord. You cannot depend upon your parents to make it for you. You must be born again; your heart has to be made right. Old things have to pass away, and new things have to come in. You have to have heart surgery: that cold, stony heart has to be replaced with a heart of flesh, seething that the Lord can work with.

The reason that the Lord cannot work with many people is that they have hard hearts. Every time you

reject the Holy Spirit, your heart becomes harder. Some people cannot get the help they so desperately need because they have rejected the Holy Spirit repeatedly. Dear one, do not reject the Spirit of God. If He is talking to you, listen to Him.

Many listen to other things besides the Spirit of the Lord. The devil would lead them to believe that by listening to others, the Spirit of God is leading them. Do not go on impulse. Is the Lord talking to your heart? Is He saying to you, "I must abide"? Dear one, He must abide in your heart if you expect to make Heaven your home. Heaven is a holy place, filled with glory and with grace, and sin can never enter there. Many people think they can sin more or less each day and make it into Heaven. Friend, that is not going to be the case. That sin-more-or-less religion

cannot get you to Heaven.

Dear one, do not keep rejecting and grieving the Holy Spirit. We sing a song in the choir entitled "Dark Clouds Roll Back." It says, "Oh, how sweet the name of Jesus, How it calms my doubts and fears; And how it fills my soul with glory, When that lovely name I hear. At the very thought of Jesus, All earthly treasures grow strangely dim. For all my longings and every one of my searchings, I found all them when I found Him. Dark clouds roll back, The sun starts shining. Pain and heartache just disappear. My burden's lighter, the day is brighter. When that lovely name I hear." If you have a need in your heart, won't you seek the Lord?

(Cassette C-4202A)

(Guest Editorial-continued from page 2) Numbers, Chapter 2, tells how Israel broke down and camped and how each of the four major divisions had an insignia, or a standard. The standards of those four divisions were the same symbolic expressions that represent these living creatures. For example, Judah was a lion's whelp and had the lion. Each of these four living creatures was one of the insignias that identified part of the camp of Israel.

What is the lesson? Though the Gospel Day consists of seven distinct time periods, it has had only four major epochs: the morning time, the dark day, the cloudy day, and the evening time. As we look at the description of the saints in these various ages, we can see the predominant condition of each epoch. Revelation 4:7 says, "And the first beast was like a lion [a lion is the king of beasts: it knows no fear, and it is a conquering beast, which was a picture of the morning-time church that Revelation 6:2 says 'went forth conquering, and to conquer'], and the second beast like a calf [a calf is a sacrificial animal, portraying the sacrificial nature that the church manifested during the eras

of persecution and martyrdom], and the third beast had a face as a man [this portrays the saints in bondage to man and man rule during the dark night of papalism and the cloudy day of Protestantism], and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle [this portrays the evening-time church, revealing that the church has risen above the old, earthly level and can soar to the highest mountain; an eagle is the only creature that can fly right in the face of the sun, which is where the church is going—soaring into brighter days, or brighter and brighter truths]."

Thank God, we do not have to walk in darkness, groping in religious confusion. Jesus said in Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you." However, between the asking and the receiving, 2 Timothy 2:15 instructs you to "study," and then God will bless your efforts.

The fourth beast, which is like an eagle, is not a molting eagle but a flying eagle. This depicts the evening-time church and her move back to a position of the full light of the glorious Gospel of Christ.

What about the Old Testament

brethren? Jesus said you will sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matthew 8:11). How did they get in? This beast had eyes before and behind (Revelation 4:6): we look back to Calvary and they looked forward to Calvary, but the focal point of it all is Jesus Christ and the work wrought on Calvary. The Old Testament brethren gained a reprieve for their sins one year at a time. Hebrews 10:3 declares, "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Once a year they sacrificed a lamb, an atonement lamb, and their sins were reprieved one more year. When Jesus died on Calvary's tree, the first thing He did was made the spirits of just men (those Old Testament justified brethren) perfect, or complete, and brought them in. That is the reason Hebrews 12:23 says, ". . . to the spirits of just men made perfect."

The first thing the blood did was this: it went back and took the Old Testament brethren's sins that were rolled up to the foot of the Cross and made those justified men perfect, or complete. Hebrews 12:23 refers to the church as the "general assembly"

because there are two chambers. For example, in the state legislature, we have a House and a Senate. When the House convenes, you say, "The House is in session," and when the Senate convenes, you say, "The Senate is in session." When they both come together, you have a "General Assembly." In Jesus Christ, when the Old Testament and the New Testament met together, the church is the general assembly and church of the firstborn.

In Isaiah 6:2 and in Revelation 4:8, why do these creatures have six wings? A wing is a manner of conveyance; it is designed for transport. Look where these wings are: "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain [which means two] he covered his face . . ." (Isaiah 6:2).

Two wings portray two things: First, in the face of deity the saints are always aware of their position and exhibit humility. Isaiah 57:15 says, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Second, when it says "with twain he covered his face," not only do they exhibit humility in the face of deity, but they cover the mind to protect the thinking, transport evil thoughts away, and convey proper, wholesome, and

godly thinking to a proper place in our lives. Isaiah saw them with their wings over their faces. Peter put it in these terms: "Gird up the loins of your mind" (1 Peter 1:13).

Look at the next description: ". . . with twain [or with two] he covered his feet . . ." We all know that feet are what we walk with. There are two wings and two feet. What does this tell us? The saints are very cautious about how they walk. In Psalm 119:101 the Psalmist said, "I have refrained my feet from every evil way." Those wings portray being lifted from the quagmire of sin and raised to a spiritual place, or being resurrected in Jesus Christ and being lifted above the position of this old world. Psalm 116:8 says, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." The way you walk has much to do with whether you stand or fall. Wings denote a divine manner of conveyance to enable us to do things we cannot do in our own human strength.

What about the last two wings? "... and with twain he did fly." These wings designed to keep us above the level of this old world so that we can stay in the presence of God and enjoy His fellowship; they are the Word and the Spirit. We read in Isaiah 6:3, "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy . . ." Why did he say the word *holy* three times? Because

man is a three-fold being. Through this experience that Jesus Christ came to bring, we can be holy in spirit, holy in soul, and holy in body. It is only because of the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit. When you let each one have His rightful place in your life, it will be holy, holy, holy, and the whole earth will be full of His glory. Where is that glory? When the Revelator got a picture of the church, he spoke of her "having the glory of God" (Revelation 21:11). The glory of God resides in the saints, or the church.

This is a beautiful, encouraging picture that Isaiah saw of our day. It portrays the experience that the saints have that enables them to be a part of God's seraphims so they can live pure lives and be holy in soul, spirit, and body and enjoy the presence of God on a daily basis. They are set on fire, and that shows a world that is dead in trespasses and sins that one can live a victorious life in Jesus Christ. These seraphims that our lesson text speaks of in Isaiah 6:2 that were set on fire portray the experience and the position that the redeemed hold in this Gospel Day. It is a heartwarming and encouraging vision of the experience that we are privileged to enjoy as the redeemed.

Brother Earl R. Borders



A New Printer for *The Gospel Trumpeter*

After seeking God's face for divine direction, Brother Bernard Wilson and his companion felt that it was God's will for them to move to the Newark congregation from Racine, Wisconsin, where he had pastored for several years. It was only after the death of our printer, Brother Ron Kane, that it became evident as to why Brother Wilson and his wife felt the Lord's drawing to move to the Newark area. After much prayer, Brother Wilson felt impressed to become the new printer for *The Gospel Trumpeter*, to continue the work of helping to spread the Truth of God's Word through the printed page to reach the current distribution of approximately 18,000 subscriptions, both in the United States and in many foreign countries.