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## Abraham and Lot-- A Contrast

*"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." - Gal. 3:9.*

ABRAHAM, THAT grand character of Old Testament times, has been a never-failing source of inspiration to the true Christian, who sees in this man of faith his own spiritual experiences exemplified. In his call, his journeys, his mistakes, his obedience, it has pleased the Lord to show forth the life of each follower of Christ. Well has Abraham been called the file-leader of a great spiritual host. The study of his life is of great importance to all who have grasped the full significance of the "exceeding great and precious promises" and who are endeavoring to "so run as to obtain." And since divine wisdom has seen fit to record in juxtaposition the experiences of Abraham and his nephew Lot, this study is devoted to the beautiful spiritual lessons obtained from contrasting these two characters, who reveal two types of minds or dispositions which have been markedly manifest in the two great spiritual classes of the Gospel Age. These two classes are shown in type by the priests and Levites, and in the New Testament are referred to as the "little flock" and the "great company." In 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 we find a more particularized description of both these builders on the true foundation; which, together with other references in Scripture, are sufficient to reveal that two classes of believers grow side by side, of which only one will become the "overcomers."

### Abram's Call and Separation

"Now the Lord had said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." - Gen. 12:1-3.

Thus begins the life of faith. As Abrams (that is, in the walk of faith) we leave the land of Great Babylon, the ground of false and perverted worship and self-exaltation. The spirit of faith awakes in this land of confusion. God speaks, and, as at creation, great results follow. Babels may grow

from men's words to one another, saying, "Go to, and let us make." The walk of faith begins not from man: the Word is its author and finisher.

The call was, and is yet, personal. God says, "Get thee out, and I will bless thee." And so we read in Isaiah 51:2: "I called him alone, and blessed him." Others may note something of the glory of this manifestation and may witness some of the outward circumstances accompanying the call, as did those who went with Paul to Damascus: but as Paul says, "They heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me." (Acts 22:9.) For the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit and cannot heed the call of God but continues to abide on the ground of sense; while the spirit of faith goes forth, it knows not where, to finally stand in the strength of the Lord on the ground of promise, a "land of milk and honey."

The call contains both grace and truth; grace, in the promise, "I will shew thee a land, I will make thee fruitful, I will bless thee"; truth, in the separating word, "Get thee out," obedience to which is the proof of faith in the "I will." This promise is the gospel which was preached to Abram. (Gal. 3:8.) This promise concerning future glory and inheritance is based on God's unfailing "I will," for the Scriptures with one voice testify it is the Lord Himself who saves, through faith, the simple and blessed means of salvation. Men are slow to apprehend this truth, and often feelings or works, or something in us is looked for as the ground of future blessing and salvation.

But the call is not only of promise but also to separation. God purposes to separate His saved ones to Himself, so the word of truth comes, commanding sanctification. Men often preach God's "I will" without the accompanying "Get thee out," and the results will always reveal their error. Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, said to the fishermen, "Follow Me" -- here is separation -- "and I will make you fishers of men" -- here is the never failing "I will." So again, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor"-here is separation, for He was "separate"-then follows the promise, "I will give you rest." And so elsewhere, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people; wherefore come out and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." (Matt. 4:19; 11:28; 2 Cor. 6:17, 18.) But at first, though "the spirit is willing, yet the flesh is weak." Even faith may shrink from all that the separating word claims from it. We are slow to believe that apostate things are to be forsaken and not improved and would fain mend them rather than leave them. So let us note the way the call was obeyed, for it reveals our steps also. The word was: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy **kindred**, and from thy father's **house**." Abram gat him out from his country, and even from his kindred, but not from his father's house. He obeys, but not wholly, and thus reveals how the spirit of faith in us, while able to leave the more outward things, the natural pleasures and affections, cannot at once leave the more inward things. Nature yet is strong, and so, like Abram of old, the spirit of faith in us endeavors to take with it into the land of promise the "old man," which has never truly known the call of God. Yes, it is written not that Abram took Terah but "Terah took Abram" (Gen. 11:31), thus showing that the grand promises of God at first stir up to activity even the old life in us. But Terah can never pass the Jordan; his pilgrimage wearies him, and he can but reach Haran, and so "he dwells there." "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and they came to Haran and dwelt there." And there they are stopped until this "old man" dies. Then Abram starts again, and now nothing stops him, for now "they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came." Stephen specially marks this in Acts 7:2-4. We are slow to learn this lesson, but it must be learned. Even faith cannot take the "old man" into the place of promise. It has often been tried; a new bond draws us heavenward, but the old one as yet has claims on us, and so we start with both, only to settle down short of the promised land. Eventually we are freed; the "old man" is buried out of sight, the meaning of our baptism dawns upon us the call is recollected, and we become once more pilgrims.

## **Abraham in the Promised Land**

Having passed Jordan, the land of promise, the "higher ground" is reached. And here the spirit of faith, as shown in Abram, is introduced to new trials, which stumble some, who, though on the right way through grace, yet find this "higher ground" so unlike that which flesh and blood would have chosen.

True faith has now brought the believer the long journey to the land of Canaan, and now the chief marks are pilgrimage and difficulty and want, yet of communion with God and happy worship. Abram dwells in tents to the end, possessing nothing abiding here save a burial place. He moves from place to place, with "no certain dwellingplace." Others can dwell snugly in some "city of the nations," but the Abrams of God go, not knowing whither. They are what some call changeable, a common charge against the walk of faith. Men can dwell in refuges of their own manufacture. We can tell where to find them even to the end, because they take no forward steps, are never changed. But he who has heard the call of God cannot be trusted with the care of this world's cities. The world has long judged such as madmen, nor is its judgment wholly wrong. A madman is one who sees, or thinks he sees, what others see not. The called of God see what others see not, and they walk accordingly. Their pathway is ever unintelligible to the men of this world. Nevertheless, the Lord knoweth them that are His; He knoweth the path of humiliation that His elect trod, and when He hath tried them, they shall come forth as gold. How beautifully have all these truths been exemplified in the life of our blessed Master, our forerunner!

## **Abram's Altar and Trials**

But Abram has not only a tent, a temporary abiding-place while he waits for that "city which bath foundations," but he now has also an altar, in worship receiving fresh revelations. "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord." (Gen. 12:7, 8.) In Ur, God had said, "A land which I will shew thee." Now He says, "A land which I will give thee." We now observe also that here "the Lord appeared." Before this He had "called" and "spoken." The Lord now shows Himself, for faith has brought Abram to new trials which need special revelations, and these are not withheld. And thus it has ever been. As has been well said, "Angels' visits are only few and far between, because we so seldom are in the place really to require them."

The special trials of this stage are first "the Canaanite" and then "a grievous famine" in the land. (Gen. 12:6, 10.) Canaan, the son of Ham, may figure the mere outward religiousness which has ever been a trial to the true child of God. This and a period of seeming neglect by the Lord in things necessary, leads to failure in trial. The Canaanite and the famine drive Abram down to Egypt. The faith which led to the ground of promise at first has not strength to be steadfast there. It is ever thus. Peter had faith to step out on the waters but not enough to walk far when there; he had faith to follow Jesus into the High Priest's palace, but he lacked faith while there to witness faithfully. Every act of faith brings us, into greater trials, where greater faith will be needed. Thus it is that many who walk by faith have failures, which those know not who do not attempt so much.

Abram's trial leads him to Egypt, and then Egypt leads him to deny his wife. One wrong step, if not immediately retraced, requires another. A step was taken to avoid trial without asking the Lord's counsel. Then, the Lord and His counsel and care being for the time forgotten, His promise respecting the seed is forgotten also. And but for the Lord, those affections or principles of spiritual truth figured in Sarah (which the spirit of faith ought to defend and cherish most

carefully, for from them must spring the promised fruit) would be defiled by contact with earthly things, the human wisdom or reasonings figured in Egypt.

And thus are we warned that our spiritual nourishment can never be obtained from the wisdom of this world (Egypt), but that if we find ourselves while on holy ground (the place of separation) in a condition of spiritual famine in the sense that we seem to lack, let us abide close to our altar; the Lord is near. The cloud that hides. His sunshine is there to test our faith and obedience, and we dare not leave this ground to lean on any arm of flesh. And having once made the mistake, let us immediately, like Abram, return back to higher ground, "to the place where his tent was at the first." (Gen. 13:3.) Still more trials await. The long-looked-for fruitage must appear; yea, we shall have to climb Moriah and there offer that which is most precious to us, yea, that which God Himself has said would be the very means to accomplish His great promise to us; and yet we shall go forth as did Abram to offer our Isaac in fulness of faith. Victory in small trials will but lead to greater and greater trials, till God shall say, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." - Gen. 22:12

All this and more is the experience of every true Abraham of God, though not always is it visible to our understanding, neither is it always necessary that it should be.

### **Abram and Lot Separated**

It is at this stage in Abram's experience, when, having returned again to the place to which God had originally called him (places to us would represent states of mind), he is now brought into direct contrast with his nephew Lot. Hitherto they had walked together. "Abram walks with God," but "Lot walks with Abram." Time and again this is brought to our attention. (Gen. 12:4; 13:1, 5.) Lot represents those who live in religious outward things, striving to please God and also man, and succeeding in doing neither. They take right steps because others take them, and make sacrifices because others do so. They are righteous souls but wholly unable to walk where the men of faith walk, leaving them as soon as they resolutely press on to the best things. Only after Abram returns again to his altar and his dwelling in tents does Lot find occasion for leaving him. "Flocks and herds," various gifts, now become an occasion for manifesting the tastes and thus of separating the inward and spiritual from the righteous outward man. The real cause is that the one seeks heaven, while the other still lingers after the things of this world. One looks ever on the hills of promise; the other has an eye turned toward the plain of Jordan. For we read: "Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw the plain of Jordan, that it was like the land of Egypt." (Gen. 13:10.) In this lay its attractiveness to him. The excuse is found in the "herds" and "flocks," and he at once separates himself and goes **down** Jordan-ward.

How often there have been strifes about flocks! Neither numbers, nor an abundance of gifts can make brethren dwell together in unity. Often gifts may be an occasion for strife, for schism is the growth, not of spiritual poverty but of spiritual wealth. Even so, at Corinth, where "they lacked no gift," there was strife among the herdsmen, the more because the gifts abounded, while they were "yet carnal." (1 Cor. 1:7; 3:1.) Lot did not depart from Abram in Egypt. It is when Egypt is left behind and the men of faith seek resolutely to go up to the higher ground that brethren are thrown together in a way previously unknown. The lack of outward things stirs up the outward men, who will always choose the lower ground where their natural tastes find more that is in accordance with them. The things of time and sense keep their, from discovering what they really are within, and outward things prevent them from coming to themselves. For it is only when we are stripped of things around that we really learn what spirit dwells within. The one fears to search out the evil within and ever seeks to hide it from self and others; the other is content to learn itself, if it may learn God, preferring to be weak with Him than strong without Him.

## LOT'S STEPS OF DECLINE

Unlike souls sooner or later must separate. No bond or arrangement can long keep men together if there be not one spirit. Few things search us more than collision with our brethren, and though for a while the path of faith becomes more lonely, it draws the true believer ever closer to his God. As outward men drop away from us, the Lord more and more reveals Himself.

Let us note the steps of Lot, which are ever the same in all ages; the gradual degrees of decline have their lesson for the spiritual man who will take heed thereto. First "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld"; then "he chose"; then "Lot **journeyed** east, the direction he originally came from; next "he dwelled in the cities of the plain then he "pitched his tent **toward** Sodom"; then he "dwelt in Sodom" and finally he "sat in the gate of Sodom," the official position of an elder and judge of the city. (Gen. 13:10-12; 14:12; 19:1, 9.) Here we finally find him trying to serve two masters, God and Mammon; still a righteous man, still endeavoring to be pleasing to the Lord and yet dwelling in the place of his own choice. Well does Lot picture those who though righteous and saved and holding the truth yet never seem to apprehend the inward spirit of it. True believers dwell apart with God, while the Lots, dwelling in Sodom (the world of the senses) strive by efforts to improve it. And as they labor in the fire, they comfort themselves that while the Abrams are useless to the world, they are doing something for it. But Sodom cannot be helped, much less saved, by unchastened, outward men. Lot has yet to learn this; while therefore Abraham is at Mamre, Lot is in the gate of Sodom, calling its sinners "brethren." - Gen. 19:7.

## Three Forms of the World

Our attention has now been directed, in the study of these two characters who reveal the inward and outward religious Christians, to their contacts with three forms of the world, Babylon, Egypt, and Sodom. These have ever been recognized as used of the Lord to show forth spiritual truths. Abraham abides separate from all; Lot is finally delivered from Sodom. Space precludes a lengthy discussion of all the meanings embodied in these three places: but briefly, Babylon figures the ground of religious confusion; Egypt, the ground of worldly wisdom; and Sodom, the ground of the senses. None should have difficulty in discerning these meanings in the records of the Bible. In the Book of Revelation, these three forms are set before us in their relation to the experience of the true Church. In Revelation 11:8 the great city is seen as "Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." In chapters 17 and 18 the same great city is seen as Babylon. In chapter 16 we find the plagues of each of these cities. The "noisome sore" (Rev. 16:2), the "waters turned to blood" (Rev. 16:4), the "kingdom full of darkness" (Rev. 16:10) -- these are the plagues of Egypt. (Exod. 9:8-11; 7:17-20; 10:21-23.) The "drying up of the Euphrates, and the invasion of the kings of the East" (ver. 12)-this is the judgment of Babylon. (Jer. 51:13, 36; 50:38; Isa. 44:27, 28.) The "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and great hail" (Rev. 16:18) -- this is the destruction of Sodom. (Gen. 19:24, 25.) In all of this there is food for "him who discerneth all things, but is himself discerned of no man." - 1 Cor. 2:14-15.

Abraham ever abides separate, on the higher ground of true religious faith. His are the great promises of God; his is the blessing of Melchisedec; his is the trial of Isaac; and to him alone God reveals His purpose as regards the destruction of Sodom.

Lot, dwelling in the place of his ill-choice, is caught in the strifes of Babylon and Sodom, yea, is even taken captive, only to be delivered by Abraham, who leaves the quiet life of promise only to rescue a brother out of Babylonian captivity. Thus is Abraham brought into collision with Babylon, that is, the religious world. He fights not with Sodom. His place is separation from and

intercession for it, not war against it. And strange as it appears that true believers will not join in the strifes of Sodom or Babylon, it seems yet stranger that, if either is assailed, the religious world should be that which is fought against. But so it has been from Christ's days to these; Pharisees are judged, while open sinners are pitied. This is indeed a mystery, and the motives of the men of faith are seldom understood.

Thus is Lot freed by Abraham. As one has well said: "The pilgrim brother is the means through whom deliverance comes. The man who has been alone with God is the man who can break the chains of Babylon for his unfaithful brethren. And many a gift yet comes to failing souls through brethren with whom they hold no communion, whom they judge as extreme in their views, and to whom they practically prefer the company of such as know not God. Sooner or later, however, God vindicates His own. The pilgrim brother is the helper in time of need."

### CONTRASTS IN DIVINE MANIFESTATION

We now approach the final chapter in the destruction of Sodom and the deliverance of Lot. Many spiritual truths are revealed in the manner of divine revelation of this judgment, in the record of God's dealings with Abraham and Lot in connection with it. And the contrast is so manifest that clearer than ever it is revealed that the man of faith alone can please the Lord whereas the "friendship of the world is enmity with God." A double-minded man is ever unstable in all his ways. "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 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 forever." (John 2:15-17.) Lot finds no peace in Sodom, "for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." (2 Pet. 2:8.) Its judgment has now drawn nigh.

Let us contrast the appearance of the divine messengers to Abraham and to Lot. The details are full of significance to all who will spiritually consider them, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

First, in the manifestations of the heavenly visitors. Concerning Abraham we read, "The Lord appeared to him at midday, and lo, **three** men stood by him." (Gen. 18:1.) Concerning Lot, we read, "there came two angels to Sodom at even." (Gen. 19:1.) Abraham receives three visitors, one of them the Logos, the spokesman of God. He receives them in the light of full favor. Lot receives but two, and that in a time of declining light.

Second, the ground they stand on is distinct. Abraham is "in the plains of Mamre, in his tent-door"; not only having given up the world, but content to be given up by it, which is far harder. His place is the ground of promise, in marked separation from outward things. Lot is "sitting in the gate of Sodom," taking a place of power, hoping to correct the faults of others who are living in self love, and calling them "brethren."

Third, the contrast is shown in the reception of their guests. Abraham "**ran** to meet them"; his desire for communion is at once granted and is undisturbed, for by the self mortified pilgrim, communion is easily obtained. Also having but the one master to serve, he stands before Him in peace. Not so with Lot. Of him we read, "he **rose** up, and though welcoming, shows not the same alacrity as his kinsman. For communion, he must needs strongly importune, for his request is at first denied in the words, "Nay; but we will abide in the street all night." Again the communion is marred by the intrusion of the men of Sodom. He is forced away from his guests by those among

whom he dwells Lot, with two masters, the Lord and the world, can satisfy neither nor is himself satisfied. The communion of saints is unknown in such a state.

Fourth, the feast prepared by each shows a difference. By Abraham "a calf" is slain; there is the pouring out of life. "Fine meal" is added, for true saints can grasp the highest aspects of Christ's death, apprehending Him as the "ox" and the "fine flour" in which was no unevenness. Of Lot, we read (Gen. 19:1): "Lot made a feast and did bake unleavened bread." The word here translated "feast" is elsewhere more correctly rendered "a banquet of wine." (Esth. 5:6; 7:7; Isa. 25:6.) The Septuagint here renders it "a drinking," an acceptable service, yet not so costly as that of Abraham and well picturing a lower view of the same offering to those who see it only as the "unleavened bread and wine."

The fifth contrast is in the state of the respective families. Abraham to the question, "Where is thy wife?" can reply in the words he could not have used in Egypt, "She is in the tent." And thus if we walk with God, we are in no danger of having our affections and principles defiled by the world's rough handling. Poor Lot's case is otherwise. The women of his household are in jeopardy, offered to the men of Sodom, in hopes of staying worse abominations. If our dwelling is in the world, our purest principles are in danger of being abused; nay, often they are abused, for the world, if it touches, cannot but dishonor them. The Lots press liberty and peace and other fruits of righteousness on the world, hoping that in embracing these it may be somewhat bettered. But the principles are periled or defiled, the world mean while being made not a whit the better. But the Lots do not believe this until bitter experience proves it.

The sixth contrast is in the attention paid the guests. Abraham waiting on his guests "stood by them" in calm communion. Thus do men of faith ever speak with the Lord and in this communion receive fresh promises, as did Abraham. Not so with Lot, who "went out," anxious for his children. Not one word is recorded as addressed by him to his guests while they are in his home. The Lots can but speak to their children or the world and repeat the warnings they have received, to flee lest they be destroyed. And even here Lot reveals himself. The Lord said, "**Bring** them out"; Lot says, "**Get** you out." He warns others but himself remains. How many righteous Lots in Sodom are yet attempting thus to bear the Lord's message. Even while they preach, "This world is condemned," they linger in it until eventually the Lord in mercy forcibly removes them.

In the seventh contrast we note the words addressed to each. In declaring the fate of Sodom to Abraham, the Lord speaks as a friend, saying, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I will do?" To the faithful souls the Holy Spirit "takes of the things of Christ." "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15.) But to Lot the message is, "We will destroy this place escape for thy life, lest thou also be consumed." To the world, the Spirit speaks only "of sin, and righteousness, and judgment." And though worldly Christians speak with assurance, yet so long as they remain in the world, they will hear God's voice warning and alarming them.

In the eighth contrast we see also how unlike are the prayers of these two men. Abraham, with confessions that he is "but dust and ashes," importunes for his kinsman, finally yielding his will to God's will. Lot, on the contrary, styling himself God's "servant," prays for self in a prayer which throughout is a struggle to obtain his own will. The Lord had said, "Stay not in all this plain." Lot answers, "Oh, not so, my Lord"; that is, not Thy will but mine be done, to justify which he speaks of grace "Not so, my Lord, for Thy servant hath found grace in Thy sight." This is ever so. Christians in the world plead grace as a reason for self-indulgence and for obtaining their own will. Then again, what confusion is in Lot's prayer. He speaks of the mercy shown in saving his



life (for while he yet "lingered," the angels forcibly brought him without the city - see Gen. 19:16) and yet of "some evil" (he knows not what) taking him. He acknowledges divine power in the sparing of his life and yet fears to heed the divine injunction. He says, "I cannot escape to the mountains, lest I die." Thus he pleads for his own way to the encl. his last request being for Zoar, a little matter -- "is it not a little one?" And in this he is heard, the gracious answer being one of the unnumbered proofs that as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is the Lord's mercy to all that fear Him.

The ninth and final contrast is their conduct after the judgment of Sodom. Abraham gets up early to the place where he stood before the Lord, as though yet waiting on Him. In safety from his secure vantage ground, he beholds the destruction in the plain.

Unfortunate Lot, unsatisfied with his self-chosen refuge, gets up to the mountains, without a command, only to fall there grievously. First wine and then his daughters cast him down. As another has well expressed it, "When outward men, through mere alarm of judgment, attempt without command to walk where faith walks, their very gifts will cause their fall. The higher the ground the harder for them to occupy it. There the cup of blessing, misused by Lot's daughters, that is, by the evil working of those principles which have been produced and are most cherished by outward men, will give occasion for those very principles first to corrupt, and then to be themselves corrupted by, those who cherished them. Thus will righteous Lots unintentionally produce out of their own self defiled principles a seed to their own shame."

There is thus presented to the Christian in panoramic form the lives of these two patriarchs to illustrate the proper and improper steps of those who draw nigh the Lord. The Abrahams, hearing the call in a far-off land, go, "not knowing whither," and after many trials reach the condition of separation from Babylon, Egypt, and Sodom, dwelling in tents to the end, strong in faith even unto Moriah, abiding by their altar in communion with the Lord, in all things doing God's will and not their own, and finally attaining unto the promise.

The Lots walk well for a while, and then their steps of self-will assert themselves gradually until finally they are found in a condition of bondage from which they are unable to free themselves. The testing time comes, their works are burned, and they suffer loss, but are themselves saved through the boundless mercy of the Lord. But their own wills are revealed even unto the end, and the clinging to the things of this world results in painful loss. "Remember Lot's wife." The Lots are memorials to the truth of our Master's words, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." - Luke 9:62.

Of the Abrahams, God says, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." - Psa. 50:5.

- *W. J. Siekman.*



## "This Thing Is From Me"

1 Kings 12:24

HAVE you ever thought that everything concerning you concerns Me too? For "he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eyes." - Zech. 2:8.

"You are very precious in My sight" (Isa. 43:4). Therefore it is My special delight to educate you.

I would have you learn that when temptations assail and "the enemy comes in like a flood" that *"This thing is from Me."* Your weakness needs My might, and your safety lies in letting Me fight for you.

Are you surrounded by people who do not understand you, who never consult your taste, who put you in the background? *This thing is from Me.* Thou camest not to thy place by accident; it is the very place I meant for thee.

Have you asked to be made humble? See then, I have put you in the very place where this lesson is taught; your surroundings and companions are only working out My will

Are you passing through a night of sorrow? *This thing is from Me.* I have let earthly comforters fail that by turning to Me you may obtain everlasting consolation (2 Thess. 2:16, 17).

Has some friend disappointed you? One to whom you opened your heart? *This thing is from Me.* I have allowed this disappointment that you may learn that "The best Friend to have is Jesus."

Has some one repeated things about you that are untrue? Draw closer unto Me, thy shelter, out of reach of the strife of tongues for I will "bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." - Psa. 37:6.

Have your plans been all upset? Are you bowed down and weary? *This thing is from Me.* You made your plans and then came asking Me to bless them, but I would have

you let Me plan for you, and so take the responsibility, for this thing is too heavy for thee. "Thou art not able to perform it thyself alone" (Exodus 18:18). You are only an instrument.

Have you longed to do some great work for Me, and instead been laid aside on a bed of pain and weakness? *This thing is from Me.* I could not get your attention in your busy days, and I want to teach you some deep lessons. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Are you suddenly called to a difficult position? I am trusting you with difficulties, "for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto" (Deut. 15:10). Remember every interruption that would make you impatient, every word that pains you, every revelation of your own weakness, are divine instructions; the sting will go as you learn to see *Me in all things.*

## **"Blessed Are All They That Wait for Him"**

**Isa. 30:18**

I longed to walk along an easy road,  
And leave behind the dull routine of home,  
Thinking in other fields to serve my God;  
But Jesus said, "My time has not yet come. "

I longed to sow the seed in other soil,  
To be unfettered in the work, and free,  
To join with other laborers in their toil;  
But Jesus said, "'Tis not My choice for thee. "

I longed to leave the desert, and be led  
To work where souls were sunk in sin and shame,  
That I might win them; but the Master said,  
I have not called thee, publish here My name. "

I longed to fight the battles of my King,  
Lift high His standards in the thickest strife;  
But my great Captain bade me wait and sing  
Songs of His conquests in my quiet life.

I longed to leave the uncongenial sphere,  
Where all alone I seemed to stand and wait,  
To feel I had some human helper near,  
But Jesus bade me guard one lonely gate.

I longed to leave the round of daily toil,  
Where no one seemed to understand or care;  
But Jesus said, "I choose for thee this soil,  
That thou might'st raise for Me some blossoms rare. "

And now I have no longing but to do  
At home, or else afar, His blessed will,  
To work amid the many or the few;  
Thus, "choosing not to choose, " my heart is still.

*"And Patience was willing to wait." - Pilgrim's Progress.*

## A Habitation of God

*"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom all the building fitly framed together grower unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are budded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." - Ephesians 2:19-22.*

"THEN sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." - Exod. 15:1, 2.

Our thoughts on this subject will be on how this work has been carried on. It is obvious that there is a great spiritual gap between the conditions set forth in Exodus 15 and Ephesians 2.

The song of triumph sung by the children of Israel was engendered by their miraculous deliverance from the clutches of Pharaoh at the Red Sea. Israel had crossed over dry shod while Pharaoh's host had perished in the turbulent waters. The event being so marvellous a deliverance for the Israelites and so catastrophic for the Egyptians showed the unmistakable hand of God. It was therefore fitting that their song should have been one of triumph and appreciation, giving voice to the desire for building Him an habitation.

What kind of habitation had they in mind? Probably something like that the Israelites had seen during their long sojourn in Egypt. The God who had so marvelously just interceded on their behalf was the God who in the ten plagues had exposed the impotence of all the gods of Egypt, and was therefore worthy of a place in which to dwell, be it a temple comparable to what they had seen in Egypt or something even more pretentious. It was indeed a commendable desire but one to be realized in a vastly different way than anything they had conceived.

### A PRIMITIVE BEGINNING

"And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass [copper], and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exod. 25:1-8). To Moses the Lord also commanded "look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." - Exod. 25:40.

Men of appropriate abilities were enlisted for the work of erecting this most unusual sanctuary. Nothing like it had been seen in Egypt or anywhere else in the world before or since.

This typical arrangement became a permanent feature of the tribal life of the children of Israel for the duration of their wilderness wanderings and in part at least after they entered the promised land.

## THE TEMPLE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The next step in the development of the true "habitation" came centuries later when strange things had befallen the most important part of this typical arrangement -- "the ark of the covenant". It had been taken into battle against the Philistines and was lost to them and remained away from its appointed place for a number of years. By divine interposition it again came into possession of the Israelites and under King David's supervision was placed in the tabernacle of David there to await the time of transfer to the temple yet to be built.

Thus we come to the next development in the preparation of a "habitation" for God, and we turn to 2 Samuel 7: "And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; that the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said unto the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." Succeeding verses in the chapter reveal that it was not the Lord's will that David's plan should be carried out. The Lord had never indicated to David or anyone else that they should build him a house.

However, the Lord had plans for building a house; not of the kind that David had in mind but one in which David indirectly would have a part through his descendants, and that the kingdom associated with that house would be established forever. (Read 2 Sam. 7:4-17).

David was quite overwhelmed at this revelation. "Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" (2 Sam. 7:18). David was quick to appreciate the great honor conferred upon him and quick to acquiesce in the Lord's will. We would not suppose that David realized the full significance of what the Lord's plan was, even though by inspiration he wrote much concerning the blessings which would in due time come to the people of the earth through the kingdom of the great "antitypical David."

It fell to Solomon to carry out the plan conceived by his illustrious father David, utilizing the mass of material gathered together by David for that purpose, plus the timber from Lebanon, and the stones prepared in the quarries exactly to specifications. The great temple was erected and in due time with appropriate celebration it was dedicated with great solemnity, and was miraculously accepted.

"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. Then spake Solomon, the Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in forever." - 1 Kings 8:10-13.

Solomon's dedicatory prayer was a heartfelt outpouring of love and worship to a living, loving and merciful God, in which was included about every circumstance or contingency that could possibly involve Israel and in which they would have the protection and mercy of Jehovah, if they would turn always to him. Seemingly now had come the ideal arrangement for the fulfillment of the wish expressed on the shore of the Red Sea after the great deliverance-"we will make him a habitation."

History records how far short of the divine requirements this arrangement proved to be. There was still a wide gap to be bridged before the realization of Eph. 1:22: "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit."

## **THE TEMPLE DESTROYED**

Israel's enemies by God's permission came and destroyed the great and beautiful temple built by king Solomon and carried away all the precious vessels to Babylon. Seventy years later according to prophecy they returned in sufficient numbers to begin the work of building a new temple and the reinstatement of its religious services. Here we find an interesting and significant link in the prophecy of Zechariah 6:11, 12: "Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son- of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord."

Even though the typical temple was to be rebuilt in Zechariah's time and the ritualistic services resumed, this prophecy indicates that it would be but a temporary restoration, for hidden in this passage is the certainty that another of different dimensions was in prospect. The man whose name is the BRANCH is an obvious reference to Christ, and how fitting, for it is He indeed who builds the spiritual, the antitypical temple.

So we conclude from the record thus far given that neither the tabernacle in the wilderness nor the magnificent temples at Jerusalem, were the fulfillment, the realization of the ideal "habitation", a dwelling place for God. "For the most high dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48), although His presence was manifested in the tabernacle as well as in the temple at appropriate times. It was not in Solomon's temple so wonderfully conceived and constructed, that God found the habitation he desired.

To the question, "Is the Lord to be satisfied with temples made with hands," we find the answer suggested in Isaiah 57:15: "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."

Where in a sin-cursed earth could this be fulfilled? How could one so holy, high and lofty find habitation with sinful man? The Scriptures declare that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and also in reference to the law dispensation that the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins. The blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanseth us from all sins. - Heb. 9:22; 10:4; 1 John 1:7.

On the basis of this cleansing only, was it possible to find the material for a habitation of God. Remembering that according to the prophet Zechariah the "man whose name is the Branch" is to build the temple of the Lord, we would expect that the work would begin at the first advent of Jesus, and it was even so, for early in his ministry he began to set forth the qualifications (the specifications) for the building, which would be a "habitation of God through the spirit."

First, the foundation must be laid and since it was as the apostle Paul declared in 1 Cor. 3:11: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," we would expect to find in the life, death and teachings of Jesus the basis for a vital and effective relationship with God, eventuating in the inestimable privilege of being a fit habitation of God.

In opening his ministry in the sermon on the mount, Jesus set forth those qualities of character which would constitute fitness for a part in this habitation: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are they that mourn, blessed are the meek, blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure

in heart; blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake" (Matt. 5:3-12). Such as have these qualities may rejoice and be exceeding glad; being the happy recipients of the compensations attached to each one of these adorning characteristics.

These individuals have hearing ears for the comforting and encouraging words from the blessed Master's lips: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls." - Matt. 11:28, 29.

Responding to this gracious invitation in complete self surrender, we enter upon a life time of submissiveness "under the mighty hand of God," thus beginning to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," realizing it is God "who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure," willingly heeding the words of Jesus: "If any man would be my disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed." - John 8:31.

Discipleship involves receiving instruction, discipline of mind and body in the interests of the new creature. In the case of the Christian it means simply being in the school of Christ. No other instruction, no university curriculum, can meet the individuals needs, or provide a deep understanding of the meaning and purpose of life than the course of discipleship with Christ.

The immediate compensations for such a course are priceless and point forward to a consummation of hope beyond the grasp of the finite mind. This first thought is beautifully set forth in the words of the Master found in John 14:23: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Who of us have ever plumbed the depths of this statement? How many hearts have burned at the prospect of such a lofty privilege of being a fit habitation of the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity!

The future prospect is set forth in 2 Peter 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Supported also by 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

What a cleansing and sanctifying thought is found in the above loving words, particularly in those of the Master-"My father will love him and we will come and live with him." We are reminded of a plaque found in many homes inscribed with the words "Christ is the head of this house, the unseen guest at every meal, the silent listener to every conversation."

It may be true that the import of these words are on occasion forgotten for reasons which would be revealed by a playback of a tape recording of what goes on within the privacy of one's home. It may surprise many how often the unseen Guest is forgotten, and we cringe at the thought of his ears being open to some of the things which come from unbridled tongues. "We will come and live with him" could well be an effective and controlling thought in our efforts, to make our home a more fit habitation of our Heavenly Guests.

Responsibility in this connection is forcefully presented to the Corinthian brethren by the great apostle Paul, who in dealing with what to us in our day would be considered gross immorality, sets before them the sanctifying thought that they as individuals are the temples of the holy spirit: "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." - 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

Again, in some timely advice on what kind of work or building should be reared on the true foundation which is Jesus Christ and showing how such work would be put to the test, Paul suggests a most helpful way by which this work could be made to stand such test: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." - 1 Cor. 3:16, 17.

The sacredness of this habitation of God is a sobering thought, suggesting that self-examination is incumbent on each member of this special class, that there be no desecration by thought or deed of the sacred precincts.

The words of the same apostle to the brethren at Ephesus will bring us to the end of our train of thought. In his message Paul takes them to a lofty plane of spiritual thought and suggests in his prayer for them an effective way of maintaining this desirable position (Eph. 3:14-19).

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Being rooted and grounded in love is according to the apostle a necessary condition to the fullest understanding of all the vast dimensions of the love of God, as revealed in the "Plan of the Ages," God's "eternal purpose" which is according to the Revelator that "He may dwell with all mankind and be their God and they his people ... When God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, when there shall be no more crying, no more pain: no more death, for the former things will have passed away and all things made new." - Rev. 21:3-5.

Meanwhile the prior work during this Gospel Age of building a spiritual habitation for God, goes on to its glorious consummation, a habitation "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." - Eph. 2:20-22.

- *J. B. Webster*



## Daniel's Resurrection Hope

*"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." - Daniel 12:13.*

THUS the beloved Daniel is told that the communications are at an end. With the conclusion of the disclosures regarding the strange and eventful times and the mysterious but significant chronological predictions, the highly favored Prophet is dismissed by the angel of the Lord from his life-work, with the consoling testimony that all is well with him and that he will stand in his own lot in the "end of the days."

The words "go thy way," contain no thought of disrespect; they do not signify, "go hence," that is, "depart, die"; nor do they mean "go away, instead of standing here waiting for an answer." Rather the words are the angel's choice manner of conveying to Daniel's mind the fact that there is nothing more to be revealed, no further communications on the great and momentous matters that had been under discussion. The words are quieting and restful, as if to say, "be at peace, rest the matter now." "Go thou thy way till the end," we understand with the noted Theodoret, and most interpreters, to mean, "go thy way to the end of thy life"; not the "end of the days" mentioned just subsequently, when he would stand in his lot; for he could not live on through all the centuries intervening till the "end of the days." Daniel was then a very old man, and as there was nothing more to be communicated to him he was told to rest the matter and go on his way, that is, fulfill the remainder of the course of his natural life without expecting the fulfillment of the prophecies in the present lifetime; he must wait for the disclosures of future times. "When that should occur which is here called 'the end of the days,' he would understand this more fully and perfectly. The language implies, also, that he would be present at the development which is here called 'the end,' and that then he would comprehend clearly what was meant by these revelations. This is such language as would be used on the supposition that the reference was to far distant times, and to the scenes of the resurrection and the final judgment, when Daniel would be present."

Daniel was told that he would "rest." Undoubtedly the meaning is that he would rest in the sleep of death. The messenger had already mentioned those who "sleep in the dust of the earth" coming forth, and the allusion here would seem to be the same as applied to Daniel. The fact that he would thus rest and sleep implies a waiting period -indeed waiting for the long promised morning. "The end of the days," when he would stand in his lot, was manifestly far distant from that time; significant developments were to intervene and the long list of predictions that had been recounted in chapter 11, were all to find their fulfillment, which would mean an extended period of strife, revolution, and momentous changes before that consummation would be reached. But Daniel's peaceful sleep would not be disturbed by any of these changes or events; he would rest through it all.

"This also is such language," says Mr. Barnes, "as would be employed by one who believed in the doctrine of the resurrection, and who meant to say that he with whom he was conversing would repose in the tomb, while the affairs of the world would move on in the long period that would intervene between the time when he was then speaking, and the 'end' or consummation of all things -- the final resurrection. I do not see that it is possible to explain the language on any other supposition than this. The word rendered 'shalt rest' would be well applied to the rest in the grave. So it is used in Job 3:13: 'Then had I been at rest'; Job 3:17: 'There the weary be at rest.'"

It is then obvious that the word "rest" is applied to the waiting period in death, just as the word sleep is used. This place of rest was not pointed to by the angel as the desirable goal for Daniel, neither is there any intimation given that it was a place of pain and suffering. Since he had pleased Jehovah throughout his lifetime as a faithful and obedient servant, his portion at death could not in any event be one of punishment. Neither would he be resting in heaven during all this time, for the angel made no reference whatever to such being in prospect for Daniel. Not only so, but our Lord, who gave His message more than five hundred years later, declared that "no man hath ascended up to heaven," thus precluding the possibility of Daniel resting in heaven at death. Besides, "in death there is no remembrance of Thee." We are left to the one and only conclusion, namely that Daniel fell asleep and has rested with all his forefathers, with all the holy Prophets preceding him, in the sense of waiting in death for the due time, waiting for the dawn of the Millennial morning of the resurrection. For this morning time all humanity are waiting in the "rest" of the death-sleep. They have neither pain nor pleasure, sorrow nor joy, for "the dead know not anything." - Eccl. 9:5.

It is recalled that death itself is the wages of sin originally pronounced upon our race; but because of redeeming love providing the ransom price represented in the Lamb of God, who by His death cancels the claims of justice against our race, the sentence is set aside so far as Adam and all his posterity are concerned; and they now have hope of coming out of the tomb. In view of this fact, going into death, the grave, now merely means a temporary suspension of existence; or figuratively speaking it means sleep, in the sense that the death state is to be broken by the awakening time, the morning, the resurrection.

It was in view of the Divine Plan to bring all humanity out of the tomb, even from the time the curse was pronounced, that throughout the Old Testament times it became the custom to speak of all the world, both of the good and the bad, as falling asleep in death. Daniel and all the holy Prophets of ancient time saw sufficiently of the great scheme of redemption to recognize that the resurrection of the dead was planned. St. Paul, in addressing the Hebrews and recounting the sufferings of holy men of old, tells us whence they derived the inspiration that enabled them to serve God obediently in the face of every kind of suffering. He says that they, "Through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, T the violence of fire, escape the edge of the sword, out' of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." - Heb. 11:33-35.

In concluding the prophecy to Daniel the angel had said, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. 12:2.) This, without doubt, is a reference to the same thing mentioned by Jesus, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28, 29.) Again, St. Paul says: "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:15.) And last of all, St. John relating what he saw and heard on Patmos, says: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." - Rev. 20:6, 12.

It was therefore manifestly the great and stupendous redemptive work of Christ, culminating in the resurrection of the dead that was communicated to Daniel -- this which truly constitutes the very heart of the Christian religion and center of the Divine Plan. Not only so, but he saw what is

most distinctly explained in the revelation of the New Testament times, namely that there was to be a division or distinction in the great awakening time -- "some to life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." In a previous vision the venerable Prophet had been given an insight into this future period wherein he saw that "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." (Dan. 7:27.) Here then a special saintly class are pointed out as given decided precedence in the resurrection.

As the Scriptures clearly set forth, the Church called, chosen, and faithful, in the Gospel Age, between the two Advents of the Redeemer, is now on trial. They are tempted and proved in all points as was their Master. They walk in His footsteps, bearing the cross after Him. They are disciplined and chastened and developed in character that they may be qualified to be joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom -- "kings and priests unto God"; and to be judges with Him of the vast multitudes of humanity during His great triumphal reign of one thousand years. These then are most surely among those who are referred to by the angel as coming forth to life, having passed successfully their trial during the present time.

Additionally there may be included with these another class of righteous ones who will also have precedence over humanity in general, because in a previous Age they were faithful to God, having trusted, suffered, and obeyed; and who likewise under His supervising providence developed character and therefore are prepared for a better resurrection than the masses of mankind. Such faithful ones are to be found during all the long stretch of the four thousand years from faithful Abel to our Lord's First Advent. These were not called to be joint-heirs with Christ and to be His Bride; this heavenly prize was not then open to any. The sacrifice for sin not yet having been made, no actual justification to life, nor complete freedom from the original condemnation could be granted any. Nevertheless certain promises were made to these faithful ones of ancient time, looking toward the great era of the resurrection, and they were given to understand that a more blessed resurrection would be theirs than the others of the race. - Heb. 11:35.

As for the other class coming forth "to shame and everlasting contempt," these may be understood in a general way to include all humanity who have not in the present life come to know God, and who have not been freed from death's condemnation. While some have interpreted the angel's words to mean that these come forth to a hopeless state of shame and condemnation and that they will without further opportunity or trial be consigned to a state of endless torture or to complete destruction, yet to our understanding this is not the thought and is far from the truth. The facts to the contrary are that all having gone down into sin, degradation, and death, will come forth in more or less a state of shame and contempt, since there is no possibility of change in the tomb; some more and some less, owing to the degree of wickedness and degeneracy during the present life. Since they are all members of Adam's race for whom Christ died, they accordingly share in the great redemption which He has wrought. - 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:17-19.

They will come forth to times of refreshing and restitution which will be administered under the rule of the Kingdom of God for their uplift and restoration to paradise. The word "everlasting" used in this text does not mean without end; rather the original conveys the idea of age-lasting or an indefinite time, the thought being that the shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible state of mind continues in the individual. Wholesome chastisements and stripes, all in the nature of reformatory punishment, will be administered to each one according to his requirements; and as they respond to these disciplinary measures and yield to the commands of earth's new King and to the principles of righteousness, their shame and contempt will gradually pass away and they will feel the reviving effects of the restitution processes lifting them out of

weakness and degradation back to perfect life, which will mean to them back to eternal life. (Isa. 26:9.) Such as will not yield to the blessed influences after full knowledge and opportunity will come under a second death sentence; and from this there is no recovery promised, no second redemption.

One thousand years is the time allotted to this coming dispensation, during which time those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake and come forth. (Rev. 20:2, 3.) Indeed, this is the great thousand-year judgment day during which Satan will be bound and evil and sin of every description will be restrained and temptation removed, when a full and impartial trial will be given to all of the awakened ones not having had such an opportunity in the present life.

How the heart of the beloved Daniel must have been stirred as he heard the angel assuring that he would "stand in his lot. The words would surely signify that there was a place reserved for him. When that due time should come, Daniel would be remembered. He would be found in his place. "The language is derived from the lot or portion which falls to one -as when a lot is cast, or anything is determined by lot. (Comp. Judges 1:3; Isa. 57:6; Psa. 125:3; 16:5.) Gesenius renders this, 'and arise to thy lot in the end of days'; that is in the Messiah's Kingdom."

The evident meaning to be drawn then is that Daniel need have no apprehension for himself as to the future; that was not now revealed to him, and the subject was left in designed obscurity. "He would 'rest,' perhaps a long time, in the grave. But in the far distant future he would occupy his appropriate place; he would rise from his rest; he would appear again on the stage of action; he would have the lot and rank which properly belonged to him."

Just what conception the words would convey to Daniel's mind we may not fully determine, for he gives us no statements on that point. But it is clear that it is such language as would be appropriately employed by one who believed in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and who purposed to direct the mind onward to "those far distant and glorious scenes when the dead would all arise, and when each one of the righteous would stand up in his appropriate place, or lot."

### **A GOODLY HERITAGE FOR DANIEL**

In the light of further revelations made to the children of God since Daniel's day we are privileged to understand much more clearly about what Daniel's "lot" will be than he himself could then apprehend. Daniel's faith and piety are indirectly referred to in the grand review that St. Paul gives of the worthy ones of ancient time. (Heb. 11:33.) As has just been noted foregoing, though there was no calling before the First Advent to become joint-heirs with Christ, no offer of the Divine or heavenly nature to any prior to the great sin-offering made by Christ, yet during those long centuries while the world waited for the Redeemer, the record is clear that there was a class of faithful ones developed, of whom we read that on account of their faith and loyalty to God they were privileged to enjoy certain special blessings and to have advantages above the masses of humanity in the way of Divine communications being made to them and promises given, the substance of which was that they would not only experience a resurrection from the dead, but would be given positions of honor and dignity in connection with Messiah's glorious reign. The Apostle Paul finally concludes his eulogy of these holy ones, telling us that "these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us [the Gospel Church], that they without us should not be made perfect." - Heb. 11:39, 40.

More than this, we now see that there will evidently be two phases to the Kingdom of God when it is inaugurated here on earth—a spiritual, invisible, or heavenly phase, and an earthly, visible, or material phase. The inference seems to be clear and strong that while the Church of this Gospel Age will occupy the former—the heavenly, the other class of faithful ones will constitute the latter—the visible phase, as our Lord said to the unbelieving Jews who were rejecting Him, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God." It should be observed that the Savior does not state that He or the Apostles will be seen with Abraham. Since Abraham and other ancient worthies will be upon the earthly plane, as members of the human family, they will not be spirit beings; humanity will see and mingle with them as members of the earthly phase of the Kingdom.

"We are not given explicit information as to the exact manner in which these two phases of the heavenly Kingdom will harmoniously operate; but we have an illustration of the manner in which they may operate, in God's dealings with Israel through their representatives, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, the Prophets, etc. - though the coming manifestations of Divine power will far exceed those of that typical Age; for the work of the coming Age comprises the awakening of all the dead and the restoration of the obedient to perfection. This work will necessitate the establishment of a perfect government among men, with perfect men in positions of control, that they may rightly order the affairs of state. It will necessitate the appointment of proper educational facilities of every character, as well as philanthropic measures of various kinds. And this noble work of thus elevating the race by sure and steady steps (under the direction of the unseen spiritual members of the same Kingdom) is the high honor to which the ancient worthies are appointed, and for which they will come forth prepared soon after the final wreck of the kingdoms of this world and the binding of Satan, their prince. And as the divinely honored representatives of the heavenly Kingdom, they will soon receive the honor and co-operation of all men." It is then as we consider various Scriptures and facts together that we are given a strong hint of what Daniel's "lot" will be and where he will "stand" as one of the highly favored worthies occupying a position as one of the earthly rulers or "princes in all the earth." - Psa. 45:16.

Daniel would stand in his lot "at the end of the days," that is at the close of the period that had been mentioned by the angel, when the consummation of all things should take place. "It is impossible," says Mr. Barnes, "not to regard this as applicable to a resurrection from the dead; and there is every reason to suppose that Daniel would so understand it. No other interpretation, therefore, can be affixed to this than that it implies the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and that the mind of Daniel is left at the close of all the Divine communications to him, looking into the far distant future. His attention is directed onward. Fragments of great truths had been thrown out, with little apparent connection, by the angel; hints of momentous import had been suggested respecting great doctrines to be made clearer in future ages. A time was to occur, perhaps in the far distant future, when the dead were to be raised; when all that slept in the dust of the earth should awake; when the righteous should shine as the brightness of the firmament; and when he himself should 'stand in his lot' - sharing the joys of the blessed, and occupying the position which would be appropriate to him. With this cheering prospect the communications of the angel to him are closed. Nothing could be better fitted to comfort his heart in a land of exile; nothing better fitted to elevate his thoughts."

How appropriate that the book of this sacred prophecy closes with a definite statement concerning the sublime and glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead! The resurrection hope was fitted to soothe and console the mind of Daniel as nothing else could, in view of all the troubles which he then experienced and of all the darkness which rested upon the future; for what all most want "in the troubles and in the darkness of the present life is the assurance that after having rested in the grave, in the calm seep of the righteous, we shall 'awake' in the morning of the resurrection

and stand in our lot, in our appropriate place, as the acknowledged children of God 'at the end of the days.'"

Though we are now far removed from Daniel on the stream of time, and have approached nigh unto the "end of the days," in the early dawn of the new dispensation (in a lapping period of the two Ages), yet we are still in the nighttime of the old dispensation, and therefore like Daniel, it is eminently proper that we should look onward for the fulfillment of all our blessed hopes and expectations. Indeed, all the revelations of God terminate in this manner, leaving the faithful believer to look beyond. All the Divine communications given through the Prophets, our Lord, and the Apostles are thus adapted to direct the mind forward to those most blessed and happy scenes connected with the great consummation.

Today we have all that Daniel had and far more; we have what Daniel had not -- a clear revelation of the entire Plan of God, embracing all the ages required to consummate all His holy purposes. In those many luminous communications of the Spirit made since the Redeemer's Advent there is afforded us in a still clearer manner, a knowledge of those glorious truths respecting the termination of the reign of sin and death and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God -truths that are fitted to cheer and sustain us in the time of trouble, to elevate our minds amidst the dark scenes of earth, and to comfort and uphold us as we approach the mystical river. Verily, with much more distinctness than Daniel beheld them we are permitted to contemplate the truths respecting the state of the dead, the resurrection hope for all, the scenes connected with the rapture of the Church and the restitution of all the willing and obedient to paradise.

And still further, we now have through the special dispensation of knowledge and- light shining upon our pathway, an understanding of the work and offices of the great Redeemer Himself-His Advent, His nature and mission while in the days of His flesh, thence His glorious resurrection to the unspeakable heights of the Divine nature, and the fulfillment of His blessed, "Lo, I am with you alway." We behold through Him the assurance that all His faithful cross bearing, footstep followers will be raised up together with Him to share His honor and glory preparatory to entering with Him upon those blessed offices of delivering and uplifting the human family, recovering for all the righteous and obedient, all that was lost of life and home in paradise. Though there are various details associated with the resurrection of both the Church and the world still obscure to our eyes, there is afforded us in these latter days all that is essential to give inspiration and courage in fighting the good fight of faith, in the endeavor to secure the crown of life, while we onward press in the valley of shadows-"till the morning breaks, and the shadows flee away."

- R. E. Streeter

## **Entered Into Rest**

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