

THE JOY SET BEFORE US

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Very appreciative of the final lesson that we had yesterday. And I hope, brethren, that your minds are still focused on the lessons that Br. Kenneth brought to our attention yesterday afternoon. Because, in many respects, what we want to consider with you this morning is really a continuation of those thoughts.

The Joy Set Before Us. Our key text is found in Hebrews the twelfth chapter, verses one thru four. *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving (and we'll correct it) for sin. (the sin-offering).*

This is a very beautiful set of scriptures for us to consider as we meditate upon the memorial that is before us. As we meditate upon our Lord and what He did; and what we too have entered into; to lay down our lives in sacrifice with him.

How important it is for us to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. These verses bring many things to mind, but among them is the thought that we cannot do this on our own - we must look unto Jesus, we must consider Him. Otherwise we will faint in our minds. We have to do everything in our might, with the help of the Lord, to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us. To remove every hindrance. And to always bear in mind the joy that was set before our Lord, and the joy that is set before us. So that we can strive, earnestly, to be participators in His baptism, His death baptism, to walk in his footsteps; and to count very highly the privilege of being sharers in the sin offering, and its attendant experiences.

But we have to ask a basic question, a question we ask ourselves, that would help us so to strive, and that is, **why**. Why is it that we look unto Jesus?

Why is it that we consider Him? Why is it that **we** have desired to follow in His footsteps? **It is, should be, must be, for the joy that is set before us.** We need to know what that joy is. What was the joy that was set before Jesus, what is the joy that is set before us? Now friends, this is not going to be an academic lesson; it has its academic aspects, but it is not something where we can just make a list, like yesterday, and go down point by point.

There is a Manna text for March fifteenth, and we would like to read the second paragraph of that Manna text, because it is very fitting. " The life of faith is an individual matter, as well of the heart as of the head. It is far more than an acceptance of doctrines which we consider Scriptural and therefore true; it is the <assimilation> of that which we have proved to be the Truth, so that its principles become our principles, and its promises our inspiration." Its principles become our principles, and its promises become our inspiration.

In Volume six, page 118, page 119, Brother Russell considers our theme text, or for this hour, our key text, Hebrews twelve. and he considers this matter of the joy that was set before our Lord. And he presents four points there; we'll share those with you. ①It was a joy for our Lord to render service to God. And this, of course, has to be our highest motive -- is to glorify God, and this was part of that joy. ②It was a joy to redeem mankind -- the prospect of rescuing them from sin and death. ③A joy to consider the prospects of being the ruler and blesser of the world; to be both the king and the priest of the world, to reveal to them God's character and plan, and to uplift them out of the conditions of sin and death. ④And it was a joy for him to consider the prospects of being a partaker of the Divine nature. And all of these are elements of the joy.

But we tend to attach joy to things, to objects. And in reality, that's not according to the scriptural definition. Charley Brown says "Happiness is a warm puppy." You're familiar with that phrase. But sometimes we confuse happiness and joy, and they're very different, from a Scriptural perspective. Happiness tends to be contingent upon circumstances, or upon objects, or things, and when those circumstances change, or those objects become tarnished, or removed from us, then we loose our happiness. The warm puppy dies. Then our happiness is gone, it turns to sorrow. But for the Christian it's more than that.

And so we ask the question, again, What was the joy that was set before Jesus? And we want to emphasize the article **the** joy, because though all these things that we've mentioned that Br. Russell suggests to our mind, they're, they're aspects of it. But I personally believe that there is something that constitutes **the** joy. Was it the joy of the special exaltation to a high office? Was it the joy of the personal reward for faithfulness? Was it the joy of being in the presence of God? Again, all these **things** are notable objectives, and they could be and will be a great source of joy to those who attain to them, for ourselves as well as for our Lord. But the **Joy** that was set before Jesus, the **Joy** that is set before us, is something that is far greater, far more satisfying, though it encompasses aspects of all of these. And if we were to try to describe it, we're faced with the problem that it's impossible to describe -- really.

There is a Manna text, I think --I think it's either a Manna text or Songs in the Night, you probably will recognize it, where Brother Russell says it seems impossible to describe love itself. The best that we can do is describe its effects -- paraphrasing. This subject, in many respects, is like that. It seems impossible for us to describe the joy that is set before us. Because it is more than the things that we associate with it, though these things help us to appreciate it. **It is an attitude that springs from the motivation that we possess. The joy that is set before us is an attitude that springs from the motivation that we possess.** It is this joy that inspires us. It is this joy that we should dwell upon; to think upon; to meditate upon.

In Philippians 4:8, we all know that text "Think on these things." How important it is for us with these favorite Scriptures that we have and that we meditate upon, that we never let them get old, that they are always new to us, that they are constantly growing the richer and the better as we use them in our own lives. "Think on these things." We should ask ourselves "What are our dreams?" I don't know about you, I like to dream. Joseph was a dreamer, you remember, he was criticized for that. Sometimes we can be criticized for being dreamers. But friends, the Scriptures admonish us to be dreamers in a good way -- to think upon these things, to keep the ideal before the mind's eye. The heavenly vision that motivated and captivated the Apostle Paul -- he was transported to the third heavens. And we, too, can be transported to the third heavens, in our minds; and we should meditate and dwell upon those things. To imagine what the practical realities of the Kingdom will be.

As we enter this Memorial season, let us re-double our efforts to try to purge out the old leaven, to get rid of the impure thoughts, the things which distract us from our goal. And to meditate upon **these** things, the good things: love, innocence, humility, honesty, purity, faithfulness, loyalty.

One of the concepts that our Lord Jesus portrayed before His disciples and us embodies a lot of these points. They all are attributes of child likeness. When I think of a child, I think of innocence, love, humility, honesty, purity, faithfulness, loyalty. These are things that we should dwell on. Now, unfortunately, in our society, it is beginning to rob children of many of these things, and that is a terrible tragedy. But friends, we can look for, and we can dream for, long for, the time when those things are going to be restored to mankind. Though we can never restore totally their innocence, but we can bring back all of the good things that have been lost as a result of the fall. That's what restitution's all about -- restoring them to a former condition -- their likeness to Adam. And this is part of that. And we can dwell on these things. Can we dwell on it too much? I don't think so. Is it possible that we could wear it out, become stale? No. We're talking about the fruit of the Spirit, which the Apostle delineates, and he says at the end of that "Against such there is no law," there is no limits on these things. We are free to meditate upon, and to think upon them as often, as long, as much as we want to and can; and we should. We should reinforce thinking on those things. To flee from other thoughts of an opposite nature, recognizing them for the enemies that they are.

The world around us is so wicked, and it is becoming increasingly so every day. And in discussing these things with the brethren, it's a fairly constant theme, the brethren are appalled, and amazed, and we look at the things that are happening in society and it's hard for us to fathom how quickly things have deteriorated. And so it's all the more important that we dream about these things -- the Kingdom realities. These are not castles built in the sky on the air; because these things are going to come to pass.

Now someone will criticize us and say "Well, you're not living in the real world, you've got to be realistic, brother, you have to realize that this is not the way things are." That's true. We have to have a healthy recognition of the dangers that are around us, just like we have a healthy fear of fire. We have to be aware of these things. But brethren, we should not think upon them any more than we have to. The portion in the "Vow" which talks about

nothing akin to spiritism and occultism. It's an important principle that applies, should apply to us in other areas as well.

We shouldn't dwell on these things any more than necessary. But if someone says that you're not living in the real world, we're in good company, because our Lord was with us in that respect as well. His kingdom was not of this world; our kingdom is not of this world. We are not of this world, just as He was not of this world. The love of the world is enmity with God. Love not the world, nor the things of the world.

The Lord is training us to be a sympathetic high priest. And we can, and we should sympathize with the world of mankind. So we're supposed to love the world, but yet there's another Scripture that says "don't love the world". Well, I, I think we understand the difference between the two. There is proper and there is improper love for the world. We are to love righteousness, we are to hate iniquity. And our love for righteousness, and our hatred for iniquity, is going to become stronger and stronger as we grow in love. Love is an outgrowth, excuse me. **These things, loving righteousness and hating iniquity are a natural outgrowth of our development of love.** As we develop true love, we will naturally love righteousness and hate iniquity, because we can see all around us and in us the consequences of unrighteousness, and the benefits of righteousness as the Lord, in His merciful providences in our behalf, has worked out in our consecrated walks and lives. We have no sympathy for the sin, we must hate it -- passionately, because of what we have seen that it has done to mankind. But we are to love the sinner. We are to have no sympathy with unrighteousness, impurity, unholy, in ourselves or in others, but must view these things as our enemies. However, we can, and we should, and we must sympathize with the world of mankind, with one another. Sorrows, distress, disappointment, fears, failures, heartaches, discouragement, despairs, all of these things should touch us, as it touched our Lord.

It's a concept, and here again, in all of this, we're trying to convey a concept, and it's probably one of the hardest things to do. So we try to utilize examples. You are familiar with the expression "We shall pass this way but once." And a part of that goes, "If there be any good thing I can do, (I don't remember it exactly) let me not defer it nor neglect it, for I shall pass this way but once." I don't know what vision that brings to your mind when you think about it. But I would like you to consider it from a perspective that maybe you hadn't thought of before. And it's something that has been a

great source of incentive, motivation, and encouragement to me, I want to share it with you. We shall pass this way but once. You know, when it's all over, brethren, when it's all done, I'm not just talking about our present lives, but when the thousand years has ended and the Kingdom is turned back over to God, and God is once more all in all, and the universe is forever purged from sin, it shall not rise up the second time, He will destroy both root and branch, there will be nothing ever, again, in the universe that will be out of harmony with God. Now that's wonderful! We want to dwell upon that. But we should also dwell on another aspect. And that has to do with some of the things that will pass away, when we come to that time. And some of the things that are going to pass away represent opportunities for us at the present time which we will never have again, which others will never have again. Unique opportunities. And if we can view these things in this vein, perhaps it can become an incentive to us to appreciate them more highly.

So, let your imagination go for a moment, brethren, if you can, and think about all the things that will never be. Now as I go down through the list, and your list could probably be much longer, we can only touch on a few of them, the tendency might be -- well, some of the things you are talking about -- good riddance! I just as soon not see them any more. And to some extent that's a proper perspective; but, from another, we want to appreciate the present opportunities because of the privileges that we have of participating in the sin-offering and what that is doing for us and what it will ultimately do, not only for mankind, but for future generations yet uncreated. There will never be any opportunities ever again in the history of the universe for all time to suffer for righteousness sake. Now is the only time, brethren. Now is our only opportunity to suffer for righteousness sake. We have special opportunities of fulfilling the commission of Isaiah 61 that will pass away, that will never be possible again. Now, certainly it will be possible to preach the good tidings, perhaps in the future, but there is a sense in which we have the privilege of doing that now which will forever pass away; It won't be necessary -- the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It will no longer be possible to bind up the broken-hearted -- there won't be any broken hearts. Now is the opportunity, now is the time, for us to be practicing and preparing for the privileges of binding up the broken hearts under the new covenant arrangement, the Messianic portion of the millennial reign. For when that's over with, it will be gone forever. Think of the privilege that we have now to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives -- there won't be any captives anymore. To open the eyes of the blind -- they're all going to see. To give

beauty for ashes because all will be beautiful. To give joy for mourning -- there will be no more sorrow and mourning. To give garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness because there will be no more heavy hearts. There's many others that you could add to this; it will no longer be possible to dry the mourner's tear, to pray for those in trial and distress, to give words of encouragement to those in need, to say, "I'm sorry." Never again. It won't be necessary. To give, to lend, a sympathetic ear. To keep a night vigil with a sick friend. To feel the pain, to shed the tears, to drink the cup of sorrow. Now is the only time that that privilege will be granted, and when its gone, it will be gone forever.

Now, once it's gone, friends, as stated before, we will not mourn its departure. We will be glad that it's gone. Unless, unless we have missed some of the opportunities of the present time, and then that joy might be mitigated, to some extent, with regret that we had not availed ourselves adequately of such privileges. You look at the life of our Master, and we look at His ministry, and the things that He did -- and I'd like to believe that He considered these things -- He realized that this was a unique opportunity that would never be offered to anyone again, and he drank -- he drank -- of that cup to the very dregs. And it is a bitter cup; but yet it is co-mingled with joy even at the present time because we realize the purpose. We realize why. And why? It is because of the joy that is set before us. We recognize the purpose that these things are serving in the development of our character in the preparation of us for our future position. And it's the only way that it could be done. But when these things pass away, forever, in their place will be new joys, new experiences, new opportunities. And Br. Kenneth brought to our attention, last night, that those opportunities are going to be throughout all eternity. The new wine of the Kingdom is only going to grow better with age, and it will become more joyful throughout eternity.

With the privileges we have with the world under the new covenant, we will be granted opportunities that will be preparing us for the even greater possibilities of the future, in the ages to come. Maybe we don't think about that. It's important for us to realize that now we're being prepared for the position of sympathetic High Priest. But I'd like to, to think upon, to dwell upon, the fact that what we're going to be doing in lifting up the world in the Kingdom, is also a preparation. It's our first most important project for many, many, many to follow. Now sin will never be permitted again, that's true, but we will be associated with our Lord, our Head, our Master and given the privileges, not only in the Kingdom, but beyond, in the ages to

come: to teach, to instruct, to nurture, to sustain, and to bring to the point of crystallized character all whoever will be created as God's intelligent beings. Not just in the Kingdom, not just when the Spirit and the Bride say come and take of the waters of life freely under that arrangement, but throughout all eternity.

The joy that is set before us. Now, what does this mean to you, what does it mean to me, what is the joy that is set before us? What is it that moves you, that motivates you, that inspires you? Now, frequently you will hear someone say "Now that was an inspiring song", or "That was an inspiring story", or an inspiring poem, or inspiring talk -- whatever it might be. **What is it that inspires us? What is it? It is our Joy. The joy that is set before us. This is tied to this motivation.**

Now, there's many well-intentioned people in the world who have a rather narrow concept, and a selfish concept of salvation. Thoughts of glory are part of it, as we've mentioned before. But, if that was the only think that I was interested in, personally, was just the idea of glory, and what I'm going to get out of it, quite honestly, I'd be perfectly satisfied to just stay right here upon the earth. I think we'd all feel that way, if all we are interested in is what we are going to receive. And, mind you, there is really nothing wrong with that, that is what the majority of God's creatures are going to do throughout all eternity is to be recipients of God's favor. But I think the reason why most of you are sitting in this room and consecrated your lives to God, have to do with this matter. It's because you weren't satisfied with just simply being recipients of God's favor. That having seen that, there's the desire to go beyond it. To be so in love with the concept of the Kingdom and the blessing of all the families of the earth that we want to **do** something about it, to participate in it, not just to be recipients, but to have the grand and glorious privilege of giving to others, of being the blessers of all the families of the earth, and of future creations.

Yes, there is much, much more to the joy that is set before us. When we think about dealing with the world of mankind in the Kingdom, what thoughts does that bring to your mind? Once again, the idea of thinking upon these things and trying to project yourself into the Kingdom, I think it's a useful exercise. These things have to be very practical to us in the sense that we believe them so much that we could put ourselves in that position. And we can be dreaming about what it would be like to bless all the families of the earth, to be dealing with the world of mankind like our

children. And the Scriptures portray this. One of the titles of the Christ is "The everlasting Father". This isn't just a title that applies to Jesus, but it applies to the Christ, head and body. And we as participators with Him as a part of that arrangement will have the privilege of all the families of the earth being our children. And to deal with them on that basis. Now, when we think of the relationship that we have with our Heavenly Father, and I like to think about that a lot, the most precious thoughts that come to my mind are that relationship that we have: Father and son, Father and child, and how precious that is to us. But, friends, why are we experiencing this now? Well, one of the reasons, I believe, is that we can be touched, is that we can realize that relationship so that we can imitate our Heavenly Father.

One of the principle objectives of the plan of God is to educate them to God's true character so that all of His intelligent creatures can imitate Him, to be like Him, and for us there is a very special way in which this will be true, because we will have the privileges that none others will have. The world of mankind, as our children, to orchestrate their affairs, to over-rule in their experiences, to teach them -- just like God is doing for us, through His son.

So many who name the name of Christ, through no fault of their own, mistaught, have a very selfish and narrow view of their calling, as they see it. They see heaven, more or less, as a reward that they receive because they suffered, and they had hardships, and because of the good deeds that they did in the present life. They have no conception of the real purpose for these experiences, which we, by the grace of God, have been privileged to see: "Blessed are your eyes for they see, blessed are your ears for they hear." These are wonderful truths. "Shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," our Manna text this morning told us.

The Lord is not giving us these experiences to prove or disprove our worthiness. None of us is worthy of anything except death. And if it wasn't for the grace of God through Christ and His ransom sacrifice, that what we would all get. He's not trying to see whether we're worthy. These experiences are to prove us, in the sense of testing us, in the sense of developing us for our future work, for our future position beyond the veil. It is only with this thought in mind that we can get a true perspective of what the Christian life really is all about.

Galatians, the third chapter, is such a wonderful chapter, such a wonderful study. The Gospel preached before unto Abraham, that he would bless all the families of the earth, and then the opening up of that concept that Jesus was the promised seed, and finally that if we are Abraham's -- if we are Christ's then we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

According to the promise: the promise to bless all the families of the earth. We have an objective, and incentive, a motive, that others are not privileged to see, and which should constitute the joy that is set before us.

Now, all of this should help us when we view the world of mankind and their experiences and the things that are around us and in our own lives: to be inspired, to be motivated, to be energized to faithfulness. Every time that we see or experience sorrow, pain, despair, disappointment, death -- this should move us, it should prompt us to action, to activity in the Lord's service to make our calling and election sure, to inspire us for the joy that is set before us.

When you think of this concept of the promise given to Abraham, what does it mean to you? What do you think about when you think about blessing all the families of the earth? What do you think about when you consider that Scripture just quoted, that we are "Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise to bless all the families of the earth" -- to lift them up, to bring them back, to bring them **all** back? Not just as some mass of humanity that we picture before our minds. I think a part of our sin-offering experiences, and part of our experiences that are to make us sympathetic high priests are to help us to think of the world of mankind as individuals. And this is such an important concept. There might be a tendency on our part of taking the world of mankind as this kind of "thing" and you stick it in a box and it's, you know, there it is: there's mankind. We don't want to do that. You think about two million people who starve in Ethiopia. Well, no mind can really grasp that, it doesn't mean anything. But when you think of one person, and you think of their life from its beginning to its end, and you look at them as a person, as an individual, then that touches us. And that's the kind of experiences that Jesus had in His walk. He wasn't just dealing with the masses. What he was moved with compassion on the multitude, it wasn't this "animal" that you can't really put a name on, it was the individuals in that multitude. So, when we think of blessing all the families of the earth, I like to think, I like to dream about, that in that process, we are going to have the privilege to come to know them, individually, one by one -- just like the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus has come to know us. I think that's

going to be our privilege: that we will take a personal interest in every word of their individual lives, and in their progress up the Highway of Holiness, and in the development of their character, and that we will be consciously aware of where they are in the crystallization of their character.

The Scripture says to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith. At the present time, our contacts with humanity are primarily with ourselves, but it should not be all that we come in contact with, is one another. It's so important that we are touched with the feelings of the infirmities of mankind. We must realize why we have these experiences, that it is preparing us for our future mission: to bless all the families of the earth. This is our training. And so, we should become acquainted with mankind, with their joys, with their sorrows, with their problems and trials and failings. And in order to do so, we have to be somewhat detached from the world. In the world but not of the world. We have to rise above the trappings of our present existence -- you know, that's so hard to do. The pace of life is so hectic, and the tendency for all of us is to become so absorbed in our jobs, in our families, even if they're in the truth. You know, there's things that we have to do: obligations. But as the needle is true to the pole, you remember that Manna text, how important it is that we are thinking about, that we are meditating upon "these things" -- the joy that is set before us, and not to become distracted by the things of this life.

"To lift our thoughts on wings sublime,
Above the trivial cares of time,
Uplift the parting veil and see . . ."

You know the words, friends, but what do you see? What vision does that bring before your mind? The heavenly vision that the Apostle Paul had, the heavenly vision that we are to have. How often do you see that vision, how often do you meditate upon it, where do you see it, what is it that prompts you to be reminded of it? As we grow and develop in the Christian character and likeness to our Lord, I believe that, more and more, we are going to be thinking about this. Every waking hour of every day: that everything around us is going to become a reminder of the joy that is set before us. There's a verse, or a portion of a hymn, the words "It sanctifies -- or He sanctifies our common task." Now, we're pulling it out of context to make a point. This concept of the truth, of the joy that is set before us, can sanctify our common task, our common existence, our day to day drudgery, so that it is no longer a drudgery. If we can look at it from this perspective, if we can "drink it in",

as a part of that drinking of the cup of joy co-mingled with sorrow, of participating in the sin-offering experience, then it can sanctify every experience of every day because we can assimilate it, we can appropriate it, and it can become a part of our incentive to faithfulness. Everything that happens to us, every thing that we see around us, that we read in the newspapers, that we hear on radio, can become a reminder of the joy that is set before us.

Throughout eternity, I believe, that we will continue to have these grand and glorious privileges of the joy that is set before us, of giving to others, for beings yet uncreated on other planets in this vast and unlimited universe, to introduce them to life, to acquaint them with the character and the plan of God; to train them up into the fixity of character that will be worthy of granting eternal life. On page 69 and 70 of volume six there is a very beautiful passage we'd like to read: Brother Russell talking about the new creation says, we quote, " It will readily be seen that no other class of beings could be found so well adapted to the divine intention of ruling and blessing the world. Their original identity with mankind, as "children of wrath even as others," fully acquaints them with the weaknesses, the imperfections, the besetments and trials to which humanity is exposed through sin and constitutional weaknesses: and this prepares them to be moderate rulers and merciful priests, as their full perfection in the divine nature will qualify them to be absolutely just as well as loving in all their decisions as the judges of the world in that, the world's judgment day." And that's part of the joy -- end of quotation -- that's part of the joy we have -- to be associated with Christ the thousand years of uplifting the world of mankind. But Br. Russell goes on, and we'd like to go on, to quote " But while this great and important work of uplifting, ruling, blessing and judging the world of mankind and the fallen angels will, as a work, be specially committed to these New Creatures of the divine nature, and while no other beings in all the universe will be so well prepared as they to do this work (for which under divine guidance they are being specially trained and prepared), nevertheless, this is not by any means their entire mission or work. On the contrary, the thousand years of the Millennial reign will constitute but a beginning of the exercise of the glory, honor and immortality of these New Creatures. At its close when the Kingdom shall be delivered up to "God, even the Father," and to mankind as the glorified agents of the Father to rule the earth, a still larger sphere for the exercise of their glory, honor and immortality will open before the New Creation; for is it not written that the Heavenly Father has not only made his Son a partaker of his

own divine nature but also a sharer of his throne--and that the Son is set down with the Father in his throne? (Rev. 3:21) And even though in a sense he leaves that official position during the Millennial age in order that he may specially administer the affairs of his earthly purchase and dominion, it surely does not mean that having in the fullest sense finished the work that the Father gave him to do, he will be any less glorious or occupy a position any less dignified than that accorded him when he ascended up on high after having, by the sacrifice of himself, paid for us the penalty of sin."

Continuing to quote. " We know not what great works in respect to the future our Creator may have in view for his Only Begotten and well-beloved Son, whom "he hath appointed heir of all things"; but we do know from our Master's own lips that the promise is ours that when glorified we shall be like him and see him as he is, and share his glory, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Whatever, therefore, shall be the future activities of the Only Begotten as the "heir of all things," we shall be with him and share his work and share his glory as we shall share his nature also. While this is as far as the written Word of God carries us, it can not be sacrilegious for us to look into the book of nature in the light of the divine plan, and, using the divine Word as the telescope, to discern that the various planets or worlds all about us in every direction are not being formed in vain either; and that some time or other there will be works of creation in these; and that when that time comes he who in all things has had the pre-eminence will continue to have pre-eminence and will still be the chief in the direction of all the divine forces. We need not anticipate a repetition in the other planets of the sin-experiences of our world, the earth; but, on the contrary, may rest assured that this one exhibition of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" and of its terrible results can be, and will be, used of the Lord as a perpetual lesson to the beings yet to be created in his image in other worlds, who shall learn by observation and instruction instead of by experience."

The remainder of this section is also worthy to read and to re-read. And what an incentive that it should be for us to realize that the scope of our opportunities are as infinite as the mind of God. "Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache

nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay--not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete." `Rev. 21:4` (Vol 1, study X, p191-192) [*copied from HTDB and not exactly as read by Br. Allen*] These are wonderful words of life, wonderful things for us to think about, to dream about, to look forward to. The Joy set before us.

Dear friends, let us be faithful to the heavenly vision. May the Lord bless each of us to that end.

Closed with Hymn #66.