

# Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the  
whole Counsel of GOD

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Thou  
crownest  
the year  
with thy  
goodness

PSALM 65:11

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## A NEW YEAR'S SUGGESTION



Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Phil. 4:6

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Editor: Gene Hawkins

# Definite Sign Posts Of The End

Gene Hawkins

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow:... Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” Matt. 6:34

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.” Dan. 8:23-24

The above text from Daniel centers on the question one saint asked another saint in Dan. 8:13. “...How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” There are a number of commentaries and modern day teaching that declare that the “...daily sacrifice...” referenced here was taken away when Antiochus Epiphanies, the Syrian, invaded Jerusalem and desecrated the temple. History records that this ungodly man offered a sow on the altar, thus polluting it. However, the answer to the question above in regard to the **time** when the temple should be cleansed is recorded in the very next verse as “... he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Dan. 8:14 There is no record in scripture or history declaring that the temple was restored 2300 days after Antiochus’ ungodly deed. Scripture is very precise that it was restored at some point in time, for Jesus was presented to Simeon there 33 days after His birth in Bethlehem as Joseph and Mary complied with the requirements of the law. Lk. 2:22 & Lev. 12:4 Not only so, but when Daniel “...sought for the meaning...” of the vision, he was told “.....Understand, O son of man: for at the **time of the end** shall be the vision.... And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the **last end of the indignation**: for at the time appointed the end shall be.” Dan. 8:15-19 The term “...last end of the indignation:...” is none other than a reference to God’s indignation against Israel during the coming tribulation because this vision is centered upon that nation. Thus, Daniel is informed “...in the **latter time** of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding

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dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he ... shall destroy the mighty and the **holy people.** (Israel) And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; ...and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand..... wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.” Dan. 8:23-26

The entire world has now reached the “...time of the end...the last end of the indignation...the latter time...” and the ...many days...” which have transpired since Daniel’s vision. That fact is quite evident due to a number of “signs” which are very prevalent at this present hour. Three of the greatest reveal a time “...when the transgressors are come to the full...” and when the false prophet of the end time appears, wherein “...through his policy also he shall cause **craft** (fraud, deceit, guile treachery) to prosper in his hand...” Finally this same ungodly man, only typified by Antiochus Epiphanies, “... shall also stand up against the Prince of princes;” that is, Christ Himself Who will shortly take charge in these end days of The Church Age.

4 There can be no doubt that the entire global population is now bearing witness to the appointed time “...when the transgressors are come to the full...” Jesus’ words in the above text from Matthew’s Gospel “...Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,” may likewise be applied to the incredible day of evil which permeates the entire planet earth. He also warned that “...as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt. 24:37 One specific element of those days was that “...GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Gen. 6:5 Simply stated this means that man himself is directly responsible for the unprecedented transgressions which will fully transpire in these last days.

There was a time when the gross atrocities reported throughout our world today were somewhat confined to lawless, unregenerate nations, often called “third world countries.” However, other major nations such as China, Russia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, where even mentioning the name of God is forbidden, have also been accused, according to numerous reports, of violating “human rights.” China, Iraq, Iran, and Syria have especially been singled out for the torturous damage and death

of their own citizens. One example from the BBC is seen in this headline: **“China has been accused of committing crimes against humanity and possibly genocide against the Uyghur population and other mostly-Muslim ethnic groups in the north-western region of Xinjiang.”** Another record from Wikipedia declares that, “China collects genetic material from millions of Uyghurs. China uses facial recognition technology to sort people by ethnicity, and uses DNA to tell if an individual is an Uyghur. China has been accused of creating “technologies used for hunting people.” Such accounts abound on the internet, thus reaffirming Daniel’s prophecy asserting that transgressors will literally engulf this entire world during these last days.

Both China and Russia have aspirations of “ruling the world” and will employ any means to do so. China, at this present hour, is surely poised to invade Taiwan, and after the debacle in Afghanistan, most are convinced that the U.S., supposedly one of Taiwan’s strongest allies, will do absolutely nothing to stop it. Russia is engaged in a similar situation with Ukraine, insisting very recently that this small nation not be admitted to NATO, which would then defend her.

Recent years have seen the assertion that America seemed to be the only bastion of human safety and the setting forth of anything even resembling Godly righteousness. This assertion seems to be reinforced by the fact that peoples from every nation around the globe have been clamoring for admittance to the U.S. However, recent months and even years have borne evidence to the fact that this nation which was once founded on godly scriptural principles has now degenerated into lawlessness, whereby America, too, may now be described as one wherein “...transgressors are come to the full,...” The worst part of it is that such devastating wounds have been self-inflicted. Current American policy on the Southern border has opened wide the door to the ungodly and unprecedented flow of both human and drug trafficking. That same liberal policy also opens the doors of prison in order that known criminals may be released to commit further crimes without restraint. There has also been an urgent drive in many states to “defund the police,” insisting that, in essence, “men are not so bad. They just need to be understood, and therefore it would be better to send a trained counselor to a crisis situation, rather than the police who would arrest them.”

Another glaring fault is that of denial. While the current administration has finally admitted that there is a crime wave sweeping across the nation, the White House press secretary insists that it is due to the pandemic. The Speaker of the House also acknowledged the problem of crime but said, "Lawlessness springs from I don't know where."

Such opinions and policies of leadership provide absolutely no restraint against ungodly men, who then run rampant against the very premise of law. God defined the real problem, stating emphatically, "...that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil **continually.**"

6 Riots across America in recent years were also largely and deceitfully dismissed as being "peaceful" even though graphic pictures in the background of T.V. reporters showed entire neighborhoods being burned and destroyed by fire. Looters were free to steal and destroy any personal property they pleased, and without any kind of consequence. Recent calamities such as that which occurred during a Christmas Parade in Waukesha, Wisconsin, when a man drove his SUV into the crowd, killing a number of people and injuring many more, was greatly minimized by some mainstream media. This is nothing less than fraud and deceit, a policy, as seen above, of Satanic power demonstrated by the very spirit of the antichrist and false prophet. CNN reported that it was "an SUV which drove into a crowd" as though the automobile itself was responsible rather than the ungodly driver who had an extensive rap sheet and was out on bail after having attacked his girl friend with the same SUV. Automobiles, guns, knives, stones, or any other weapon are not responsible for these "transgressions." That distinction once again, must be attributed to the wicked hearts of men, "whose imaginations are only "... evil continually..."

Such lawless behavior is literally incited by those who absolutely refuse to prosecute such offenses. Many of the rioters arrested in Minnesota were simply "bailed out," due to the pleas of some prominent politicians, so they could go their merry ways and commit more mayhem against innocent people. The current "snatch and grab" phenomenon sweeping this nation today, whereby looters literally break into prominent businesses and then smash display cases with hammers to gain access and steal valuable merchandise in full view of cameras, are simply ignored. If any are arrested they are soon released, and many

without any kind of bail imposed. Consider this A.P. headline: **“Teen who fatally stabbed Chicago boy, 15, gets probation.”** Police are absolutely distraught and totally frustrated after risking their lives to apprehend dangerous offenders, who then suffer no consequence whatsoever because ungodly prosecutors refuse to uphold the law they are sworn to protect.

Blame must also be laid at the feet of American policy for rampant and horrendous transgressions in Afghanistan due to the fact that that government was unconditionally turned over to The Taliban, a known terrorist group with a very long history of lawlessness. Their first action was to release notable enemies of the state from prison to resume their reign of torture and murder in that land.

Can anyone dare argue that this world is on the verge of seeing Daniel’s emphatic assertion; “...when the transgressors are come to the full,...” come to complete fruition?

God has a clear answer for all these massive infractions of law. King Solomon, a political leader with the longest reign of peace in scripture, defined the problem and solution as follows. **“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”** Eccl. 8:11 Due to man’s rejection of God’s Word and the fact that Daniel’s prophecy will be fulfilled to the letter, it is quite certain that none of these nations will take Solomon’s advice. The wickedness of men will wax worse and worse as God’s Word declares and will only stop when Jesus takes rule of this world, thereby establishing His government of total righteousness.

Furthermore, both America and the rest of the world are currently following the same path of Israel and the result will be the same. **“For Israel hath forgotten his Maker,...”** Hos. 8:14 Just as Israel was taken captive by Assyria at the time then present, so also this entire world will be plunged into the tribulation directly because they have rejected the very God who made them, and left the natural creation as proof of His Very Existence. Rom. 1:19-20 It is rather ironic that the world and especially the U.S. spend much of their time, energy, and money trying to control their perceived problem of “global warming or climate change,” an endeavor which belongs only to God, and yet completely ignore the responsibility God did give to them in governing and instructing men.

Finally, it must be understood that all these facts

surrounding the time when the daily sacrifice is taken away are in view of the “last times” and more importantly for every Christian who is looking for Him, the coming of Jesus. Note also that neither the aforementioned false prophet nor the antichrist have yet been revealed, but their Satanic policies of fraud and deceit are clearly in focus as noted above. The ultimate target, which is Jesus, “... the Prince of princes;...” is also becoming very prominent, for wicked men would love to destroy any semblance or recognition of God. The removal of the daily sacrifice through the deceit of the false prophet has not yet come to pass, but it is eminent and imperative to end time prophecy. Quite a number of major tribulation events are measured from this point, one of which is “... from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” Dan. 12:11 The prophet later pinpoints this blasphemous act as taking place in the middle of the tribulation week. “And he (the antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate,...”

8 Dan. 9:27 Jesus likewise warned of this same abominable time when He answered the questions of the disciples, “...when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” One of His direct answers detailing the end time events of our day, is “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)” Matt. 24:15 Daniel is very specific in declaring that the antichrist will set up his own image in the temple exactly 1290 days AFTER the daily sacrifice is taken away. Since there are only 1260 days in the first half of the tribulation week, this means that the tribulation will start exactly 30 days after the daily sacrifice is taken away.

Many have looked intently for this milestone in prophecy to take place, but it has not happened yet. Some have thought that since Jesus is coming for the Philadelphia believers BEFORE the tribulation even begins as He promises in Rev. 3:10 “...I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation,...” then He must needs come during the 30 day interval after the aforementioned sacrifice is removed. This would surely be a direct violation of His coming as a thief, for surely no thief would



give a 30 day warning of his arrival. It is a glorious scriptural certainty that the whole Church will have been taken to glory before the middle of the week, thus no member of that body will be present when the antichrist is revealed and his image set up in the temple. However, the **full overcoming** body of believers typified by the Church at Philadelphia **must** be translated prior to the beginning of that awesome week of horror. Since He will come as a thief, it would seem that Jesus would come for this special entourage **BEFORE** the daily sacrifice is taken away. Quite simply, there surely will **NOT** be a 30 day grace period to **get ready** for that trip to glory. Paul likewise admonishes, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light,...Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; (Christians)...But let us, who are of the day, be sober,...For God hath not appointed us to wrath, (of tribulation) but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," I Thess. 5:4- 9 This once again would mean that He could come at any moment. There seems to be no unfulfilled prophecy or signs yet to be realized. What better way to ring in this New Year than to welcome This Glorious Personage from on High?

9

***"...be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44***

***JESUS IS COMING!***

Jesus is coming,  
He's coming, I know-  
Coming for those  
Who are longing to go  
Way up to heaven  
To live with Him there.  
He's coming with glory  
That is debonair.  
We don't know the hour,  
We don't know the day,  
But we know He is coming  
To take us away.  
Come, dear Lord Jesus,  
Come quickly, I pray.

Beula Clark

## THE LAODICEAN TIMES!

Ray Quintana

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; ...I know thy works...” Rev. 3:14

Laodicea means the rights of the people. Today we are living in that time when men are demanding their own rights. There are civil rights, animal rights, parent's rights, human rights, children's rights, and prisoner's rights - you name it - and even the Church insists on it. Believers are greatly challenged to resist being drawn into this demand in the midst of all the ungodly things happening around us. We are bombarded at school and at work. The work place often requires some to team up with folks that live ungodly lives and their decisions are based on their lifestyle, which is not according to scripture. When we are placed in these situations, our rights as Christians are usually violated.

10 We hear of many wrongs that are committed against Christians. But God! It is imperative to remember that He has allowed these things and we must look to Him for deliverance. The Church as a whole has bought into this Laodicean condition as well. Recently, I witnessed several churches that have fired their pastors and replaced them with someone who can speak more dynamically online because many have not returned to services due to COVID and are not tithing. Churches cannot pay their bills, so the need for giving is increased. Nothing was mentioned about the Word of God going forth, just the need to increase giving. Many have decided to employ a business person who can eloquently speak to those attending services online just to increase tithing. Jesus said, “...he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd,... seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep,... and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” Jo. 10:12-14

This same Shepherd is now The Judge, writing “...unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans....These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness,...I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot:... So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Rev. 3:14-17 The tendency of human nature is to gradually chill into lukewarmness. The letter

to the Laodiceans is above all these others in Rev. 2-3, the epistle for demonstrating the great spiritual decline in these present times at the end of this Church Age.

Paul also mentions the Church at Laodicea in his letter to Colosse. He was well acquainted with it and does not utter a word of censure in regard to it. We may infer that this particular Church, at that time, was in a sound state. However, evidence is clear that in the process of time it degenerated and became careless, lax, and indifferent. Perhaps its best men were dead; and its wealth seduced it into worldliness. Freedom from persecution may also have engendered carnal ease, or neglect of prayer, causing a gradual backslide. Regardless of cause, it declined to the point of being neither cold nor hot. The battle for Christians today is to vehemently avoid ever getting into such a state. We must look to the Lord for everything including when our "rights" may be violated. Instead of taking things into our own hands, we must seek the Lord and His truth for our lives.

The Lord's address to the Church at Laodicea begins by declaring, "I know thy works,..." indicating that "Nobody else knows you. Men think better of you than you deserve. You do not know yourselves. You think your works to be excellent; but I know them to be very different." The Judge views with searching eyes all the works of His Church. The public can only read reports, but Jesus sees the hearts for Himself. He knows what is done, how it is done, and why it is done. He judges a Church not merely by her external activities but by her internal pieties searching the heart and trying the reins of the children of men. He is not deceived by glitter, but tests all things, and values only that gold which will endure the fire. Our opinion of ourselves, contrasted with His, may be very different, for we may not always be in alignment with God's Word. If we stand out as a church notable for earnestness and distinguished success, rather than being fervent in spirit, or eager for the things of God, we have missed the mark. A lack of vital desire to know His Word, and a lack of real love for Jesus are sad signs of fearful degeneracy. 11

The Laodiceans were not cold, neither were they hot. They were neither infidels, nor earnest believers. They did not oppose the Gospel, neither did they defend it. They were not working mischief, neither were they doing any great good. They were not disreputable in moral character, but they were not distinguished for holiness. They were not unbelieving, but they were not

enthusiastic for zeal and faith. The major characteristic about the Church of Laodicea is complacency. The people are absolutely passive, engaged in neither right nor wrong. He asserts, "I wish you were hot or cold because if you were cold at least you could be reprimanded and make a change." They are rather in a major state of complacency, wherein they did not even realize anything was wrong.

When people get into the condition of half-hearted faith, tolerating the gospel but having a sweet tooth for error, they do far more mischief than genuine heretics. These words may sound strong, but Jesus said, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Rev. 3:16 He is nauseated by such conduct, and cannot endure it. Some might conclude, "See there! A Christian can lose his salvation because He will spue them out of His mouth." Note here that, if they were still in His mouth, it means He never swallowed them and they never did become a part of the body! They were never unified with Him at all! This analogy graphically speaks of many today who are only professors who have never actually been incorporated into the Body of Christ.

12 Jesus also said, "...I stand at the door and knock..." This is not the position our Lord would hold in reference to a truly flourishing Church. He would, instead, dwell in the midst of the Church, revealing Himself, to those in harmony with Him. His presence fills our worship with spirituality and life, meeting us at the table, spreading a feast for us. It is He Who causes the word to sound out from our midst. True saints abide in Jesus and He in them.

Jesus said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me..." Jn. 17:9 I do not think Christ ever prays for the church of Rome, but what would He pray for? "And after these things I saw another Angel come down from Heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with His glory." Rev. 18:1 This "Angel" is none other than the Lord Jesus preparing judgment for the harlot. "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. 18:2 Jesus' declaration at this point announces the fall of the greatest religious system in the world. The woman referenced as Jezebel in His letter to the Church at Thyatira is exactly the

same woman identified as the great whore that sitteth upon many waters. The word Catholic means “universal, involving mixing and mingling all.” This also has a similar meaning to Babel, and Catholicism surely boasts in such “mixing and mingling” among all nations throughout the world. God does not recognize this as His Church. He calls her Babylon, or “confusion.” Romanism and religiousness is popular today because they allow a man to get a deputy to do his thinking for him, and to do his praying for him. If man keeps his brains in somebody else’s head, and then carries his heart in somebody else’s bosom, it is no wonder Laodaceanism can flourish within the Church today.

It is said of this Romish church, “How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” Rev. 18:7-8

There are churches for which He is pleading, for He has declared that, “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.” Isa. 62:1 Mighty are His pleadings for His people, and countless are the blessings which come in consequence. It will be an evil day when He casts a church out of that interceding mouth, and leaves her unrepresented before the throne because she is none of His. This prospect is not to those by grace who have never left our first love. The Lord Jesus will never stop praying for His own elect. Jesus said, “...to him that overcometh...” a seat upon Christ’s throne is promised. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Rev. 3:21 This overcoming, is overcoming the present Laodicean condition which prevails across the globe today, with its different degrees and various grades. God intends that all men should claim the promise of Rom. 8:17. “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” All believers will not take advantage of this opportunity, but God’s definition of overcoming is suffering with Christ “...that we may be also glorified together.” That type of attitude is nowhere to be found in the Laodicean condition.

Our Lord's remedy is gracious counsel. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire..." Rev. 3:18 This reminds me of the passage in Isaiah inviting men to "...come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55:1 This truth teaches us that one remedy for lukewarmness is to "start over," just as we began at first. We were on fire when first converted. What joy, peace, delight, comfort, and enthusiasm we had when first we knew the Lord! The gold that God wants to give us is deity, which comes by virtue of the new birth...the very life of Christ Himself! Gold is literally implanted in the heart of a believer. Further, "...that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, (the righteousness of Christ, the only righteousness that God will ever accept) that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear..." When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, not even the piercing eyes of God can find anything wrong with it, because we are just as righteous as Jesus was and there is no fault in that righteousness. Then "...anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see." Today some of Christendom reject the infilling of the Holy Spirit, but that is the meaning of these words, as men must be anointed with that Spirit in order to see the depths of His truth.

There will be a full overcoming group of saints who will be translated out of this world and yet they have to overcome this very condition of Laodiceanism. It is so difficult not to demand our rights when so much of godliness has departed our nation. We want our rights and we have been violated, but we must be instructed in the Word of God. "Since ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Col 3:1-2 Overcoming Laodicea in the end of this age requires complete focus on things above.

There is nothing that we can do about those conditions. We cannot change anything in order to bring about revival as some propose. Nothing will turn that impending tide. The only alternative is to heed Jesus' instruction to the Church at Philadelphia, for it too must contend with the Laodicean condition of these end times. Separation unto The Lord, as noted above, is the key here and it must be rigourously maintained, for the Laodicean condition dispensationally carries the Church right up to and into the tribulation period. The bulk of the Church will go into the tribulation period.

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:” Rev. 3:17 They say they are rich and this is exactly what men are doing today. This is especially true in religious circles where men often measure spirituality by natural riches, which is so deceiving because natural riches are not the measure of spirituality. Paul explains it thus: “Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain.” I Tim. 6:5-6 Gain is not godliness, but this is the condition in which we live today and we must contend with this Laodicean condition as full overcomers.

We do not have to be part of the Laodicean condition permeating the entire globe. Our objective must be to await the soon coming of the Lord, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” I Thess. 4:16-17 Three major things claim special notice in this passage: first, the descent of the Lord Himself; second, the resurrection of the those that have slept in the Lord; third, the translation to heaven of the full overcomers alive on the earth at that time. 15

The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. The Savior promised, I will receive you unto Myself; the Apostle Paul declared that the saints shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. Jesus also promised, “...where I am, there ye may be also;...” and the Apostle Paul assures us, “...so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Paul further exhorts, “...comfort one another with these words.” Does that not just make your heart leap! Verily our faith rests upon an impregnable rock! Jesus, who had compassion on the multitude, shed tears at the graveside of Lazarus, and wept over Jerusalem; Who healed the sick, cleansed the leper, and restored the dead to life; Who stilled the angry waves, cast out demons, and emancipated the captives of Satan; Who was despised and rejected of men, condemned to a malefactor’s death, and was crucified on the accursed tree; Who rose again on the third day, ascended to heaven, and took His place at the right hand

of the Majesty on high; Who has been given the Name which is above every name, at which Name every knee shall yet bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Yes, this same Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout.

Throughout long centuries Christ has waited for the fruit of His travail. As the Apostle James says, "...Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it." Jas. 5:7 Long indeed has the Lord of the harvest waited. Thus, too, we read of the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Rev. 1:9 Jesus longs for us "Till we come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature in the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:13 And now the time of waiting is just about over. It is almost time for the last moments of this dispensation to run out. Now the hour is upon us for which the Redeemer has waited so long. Now the time is soon to come for the Head to be literally united with the Body. Now it is almost that time when Jesus will see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

**16** Gabriel was granted the honorable privilege of announcing to Mary the first advent of Christ, yet not even he will be entrusted to this work. Christ Himself shall give the gathering shout. The Lord Himself shall descend, "I will come again,..." was and is, His promise!

Our hope is soon to be realized when we will meet the Lord in the air, rather than in the Heaven of heavens. Could it be for the purpose of privacy? The eyes of the world shall not gaze upon that holy scene, nor will even the angels (so far as Scripture indicates), witness that first moment when the Redeemer shall meet us in the air. What a wondrous privilege and marvelous prospect for the full overcomer! Truly, such love passeth knowledge. As full overcomers, we will have been made joint-heirs with Christ. His inheritance and blessedness shall be shared with us. He shall come to take us to His place! But are we, and shall we be, fit to dwell in such a realm? Yes! This is for the Philadelphia and Smyrna company and will not include the Laodicean Church. Theirs will come later when they take their place as servants waving palms. Let our eyes, however, be opened to behold by faith the glory soon to be revealed!



## ***A REMINDER FOR 2022***

The following item is entitled "The First Prayer in Congress," and was found in Thatcher's Military Journal, dated December 1777. We reprint it now as a reminder to our leaders and to each one of us.

"O Lord, our Heavenly Father, High and mighty King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the Kingdoms, Empires, and Governments. Look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, on these American States who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on Thy gracious protection, desiring henceforth to be dependent only on Thee. To Thee, they have appealed for the righteousness of their cause. To Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care. Give them wisdom in council and valor in the field. Defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Convince them of the unrightness of their cause; and if they persist in sanguinary purpose, O let the voice of Thy own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle!

17

Be Thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly. Enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may be speedily closed; that order, harmony, and people may be effectually restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety prevail and flourish among Thy people. Preserve the health of their bodies and vigor of their minds. Shower down on them, and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world; and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come.

All this we ask in the Name and through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, THY SON, OUR SAVIOUR. AMEN."

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The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." Prov. 10:22

# REFLECTIONS

*...From the Editor*

“The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.” Psa. 34:15

18 God is a spirit. However, David describes Him in this Psalm in terms with which mere mortals can identify. Peter explained the spectacular events on the Day of Pentecost by declaring that “...he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” Acts 2:33 The above text asserts that God can also “see and hear” the cries of the righteous. David further associates Almighty God with the characteristics of men, declaring that “The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Furthermore, “The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth,...The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.” Psa. 34:16-19 The LORD surely does both see and hear His people in their miseries, and His response is one of glorious deliverance.

David undoubtedly had a great number of experiences whereby he could testify firsthand of the accounts above, but there are also a great number of other scriptural examples which likewise demonstrate God’s “seeing eyes and hearing ears.” Hezekiah followed this same pattern when he was besieged by Sennacherib, after having received a letter from him, which he then “...spread it before the LORD.” The king then “...prayed... LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. II Kings 19:14-16 Hezekiah not only cried out for his own deliverance, but desired that The LORD “...hear the reproachful words of Sennacherib...” “Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands,... and

shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them... as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezepth,...?" II Kings 19:10-12 Sennacherib likened the God of the Universe to any other heathen God, thus God answered the cry of Hezekiah for, as noted above, "...The face of the LORD is against them that do evil,..." God proved He was true to His Word as "...the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand:..." Not only so but Sennacherib's own "... sons smote him with the sword:..." as he worshiped his own heathen god. II Kings 19:35-3

David further expressed his confidence in The LORD when he actually requested Him to "Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock,... For thou art my rock... Pull me out of the net...for thou art my strength." Psa. 31:2-4

The Psalmist follows this same pattern, again calling on The LORD to "...Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy." Psa. 86:1 Thus, David demonstrates those to whom God will bow down in mercy, for He will always respond to the humble cry of the needy. He then recognized further need by calling on this same merciful God to "Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee." V. 2

Psalm 27 also describes God as One, claiming two major features of mortal man with which all may identify. "Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice:...When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. Hide not thy face far from me;..." Psa. 27:7-9 The next two verses connect with these to describe a relationship which surpasses those of mere mortals. "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." V. 10-11 Responding to God's invitation to "...seek ...my face..." signifies a more intimate fellowship with Him, and according to David, He will still be there even though natural ties may fail. The glorious cry of our own hearts as we enter this new year of tremendous uncertainty must also be, "Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice...O LORD,...lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies."

## *God's Timing and Purposes*

Dr. Vicky Moots

“A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.” Ecc. 3:4:

When I first read these two phrases, I thought they were pretty much saying the same thing in a different way. But they are actually different, because you can weep without mourning, and you can laugh without dancing. To “weep” means to “manifest strong emotion by crying, or shedding tears”. We cry in pain or in sorrow, and sometimes we cry with joy, but tears are necessary for weeping. God gave us tears to moisturize our eyes and to cleanse them, but weeping also cleanses the soul.

When is it a time to weep? We are to weep not only for our own sorrow, but also along with others who are weeping, to share in their sorrow or their pain, as Paul commands us in Rom. 12:15, “...weep with them that weep.” By weeping with them we are entering into their feelings and showing compassion.

20 John 11:33, records this account of Jesus' emotions regarding the death of His good friend Lazarus: “When Jesus therefore saw her [Mary, the sister of Lazarus] weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” Then in v. 35 we read, “Jesus wept.”

Jesus was not only weeping because he loved Lazarus but also because of the sorrow that others were experiencing. He was weeping with those that wept, even though He knew that He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. In addition, he could have been weeping because of their unbelief.

After He miraculously brought Lazarus out of the grave, their tears were turned to tears of joy and laughter. Rom. 12:15 also tells us that we are to “Rejoice with them that do rejoice...” I'm sure that Jesus likewise joined in their laughter and rejoicing. He had previously spoken to His disciples in Luke 6:21: “... Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.” Because of the hope that we now have in the resurrection, there will one day also be a time of laughter in place of our present time of weeping, when we again see our loved ones' faces.

Another time that we should weep is when we cry tears of repentance. Luke gives us an example of this in Luke 7:36-50 when he relates the story of a woman in the city “which was a

sinner” who came to the Pharisee’s house where Jesus was eating. Verse 38 tells us that she “stood at his feet weeping and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head...”

Can you imagine how many tears it would actually take to wash someone’s feet? She was truly pouring out her soul at Jesus’ feet. As she wept and washed the dirt of the earth away from Jesus’ dusty, tired feet, He in turn, washed the dirt from her tired, sinful soul as He said to her in v. 48, “...Thy sins are forgiven,” and in v. 50, “...Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

Even after we are saved, there will likely be times in our lives that we need to weep at the feet of Jesus to repent of our wrong attitudes or actions toward others or toward God, just as Peter did after he cursed and denied Jesus at the time of the crucifixion. We read in Luke 22:62 that after Peter heard the cock crow, he remembered the words of Jesus and “...went out and wept bitterly.” He also poured out his soul, and Jesus forgave him.

We don’t find many tear-stained altars in churches today. Neither sinners nor Christians seem to be spending much time weeping. It seems as though the tears have dried up due to spiritual dehydration, from a lack of the Living Water, a lack of hearing the Words of Jesus.

I believe that today is the time for weeping, a time for soul searching, tears of repentance, weeping for ourselves and others; for then will come the time for laughter. David declared in Ps. 126:5-6, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

The Apostle Paul was a good example of this. He told the elders of the church at Ephesus, in Acts 20:19, that he had been “Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears...” And in v. 24 he said, “...neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy...” The tears came before the joy and the laughter. He sowed the seeds of the gospel, not only with his words but also with his life, and He watered it with his tears so that it would produce fruit for rejoicing. God will likewise use our tears to make us fruitful.

We may go through some dark times of trials and weeping, but the morning will come, as David stated in Ps. 30:5, “...

weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” The night doesn’t last forever, and neither do our tears.

David also described our times of weeping poetically in Ps. 84:5-6 when he said, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee... Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well...” “Baca” means “weeping”. It is not a literal valley but refers to any place of tears. It is a valley that we may have to pass through many times in our lives, but God can collect all those tears and turn them into a well of refreshing and cleansing if we give them to Him.

We can also choose to intentionally go through the valley of Baca, as Paul did when he said in Phil. 3:10, “That I may know him [Christ]...and the fellowship of his sufferings...” He chose to enter into, to fellowship and share, the emotional suffering of Jesus, and was also willing to suffer physically for Him as he preached the gospel. Why? For the joy that was set before him, just as he said regarding Jesus in Heb. 12:2, “...who [Jesus] for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...” Paul looked forward to the joy of reigning with Christ as His bride. But the cross and the time of weeping and suffering come before the crown.

22

One day the time of weeping will be over. There will be no more need for tears, as we read in Rev. 21:4: “...and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain...” Hallelujah! What a day of laughter and rejoicing that will be!

“...a time to mourn, and a time to dance.” Ecc. 3:4b “Mourning” means “to express deep sorrow.” The most common use of the word “mourn” is to grieve the loss of a loved one who has died, but it can also apply to our grief over the loss of anything that is important in our life. A person who has had an amputation of an arm or a leg may mourn the loss of that limb, or a woman who has had a mastectomy may mourn the loss of her breast.

Israel mourned the loss of the Ark of the Covenant when it was taken in battle by the Philistines. When Eli, the high priest, heard the news that the Ark had been taken, he was so grief-stricken that he fell over backwards and broke his neck and died. It was more than 20 years later before the Ark was able to be brought back by King David. The time of mourning was over, and now it was a time to dance, which is exactly what David did,

as we read in II Sam. 6:12,14: "...So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbedom into the city of David with gladness...And David danced before the LORD with all his might."

Exodus 12:12,29,30 records a time of great mourning for those who failed to apply the blood of the lamb to the door posts of their house as had been instructed by God: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment...And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." However, for those who obeyed God it was not a time of mourning. The blood of that first Passover lamb was their protection, as we find in v. 13: "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you..."

The death of the lamb not only spared them from death and a time of mourning but also became their ticket to freedom out of the land of Egypt and bondage, because after that plague of death, Pharaoh hastily sent them away. This is confirmed in v. 51: "And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt..."

However, by the time they reached the Red Sea, Pharaoh had changed his mind and pursued after them with all of his army. Now they were again faced with death, for they were trapped between Pharaoh's army and the Red Sea. But God miraculously rolled back the Red Sea so that they could pass through it by faith to the other side on dry ground without drowning.

Paul tells us in I Cor. 10:1-2 that their passing through the sea was a spiritual type of baptism, a picture of death with Christ and resurrection on the other side. They did not go over the sea or around it, but through it. We must go through death with Christ before we can have victory. Death brings mourning, but resurrection brings victory.

When the Egyptians tried to pursue them through the sea they were drowned because they did not do it by faith. It is only by faith that we have victory over death. Heb. 11:29 We read further in Ex. 14:28,30: "And the waters returned, and covered

the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them...Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore.” God brought victory.

Then came the time for singing and dancing instead of mourning, as we read in Ex. 15:1-21. Verse 1 says, “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously...” And in v. 20: “And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.”

Perhaps you are currently going through a difficult time of mourning, feeling like you will drown in a sea of tears and heartache because of a loss that you have experienced that seems overwhelming, but by faith, God can bring you through it to the other side and give you victory. David proclaimed victory over his time of mourning in Ps. 30:11 when he said, “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.”

Sackcloth was a coarse, black cloth made from goat’s hair, that was often worn in Bible times together with the burnt ashes of wood, as a sign of mourning. Notice that David did not say, “I” put off my sackcloth, but “thou” put off my sackcloth. God is the one who removed his black, emotional garment of sorrow and clothed him with gladness, the joy of the Lord, for He is the One who heals the broken heart. Only God can change our time of mourning into a time of dancing.

Do not cling to your grief and sorrow and mourn for your losses forever. Give them to the Lord, as we are instructed in I Pet. 5:7: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” We do the casting, and He does the caring and the carrying. It’s time to let go of our sackcloth and ashes. The Lord is willing to do for us what He promised to do for Israel in Isa. 61:3, which is a prophecy concerning their restoration, for He wants to restore us also: “...to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...” So, let’s give God our sackcloth, and grab our timbrels, and dance and shout for joy!



## THE OPEN DOOR

Mary M. Bodie

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Rev. 3:7-8

It seems to me that this is a very appropriate text for a message at the beginning of the new year. These words of Christ to this church are especially fitting for us today. Overcoming saints of the end are herein addressed. These are scattered in all parts of the world; not the folks of any one city, neither of any one denomination. The Philadelphia church is composed of a select company of saints who measure up to the requirement, brotherly love, which is the meaning of Philadelphia. But this does not signify that they love all the evil that is manifest, even if it is religious. They do not love wrong doctrine, though saints may be spreading it; nor people's wrong ways, though they may be. Christians. Jesus hated "the deeds of the Nicolaitanes," and commended the church at Ephesus for the same violent hatred Rev. 2:6. (Nicolaitanism stands for clergy over laity, which is in full-fledged evidence in our midst today).

25

Those of the Philadelphia church love all who love the Lord. They love all those that call upon the Name of the Lord in truth, and do all that they consistently can to help them. But again we say, it does not mean that they love their evil ways, condone their backslidings, indifference, and lukewarmness, nor fellowship their sectarianism and division; but they love the people of God and seek to do them good. They love not in word only, but also in deed. Active love is what the brotherly love church exemplifies, not passive love nor sentimental feeling; but a positive love that does good, reaches out and helps, and never hurts nor seeks to harm anyone.

This brotherly love church has many members who are scattered throughout the world; yet they are in harmony with each other in the Spirit, and in perfect accord with God and His purposes in the universe. We believe that this is a timely message to the Church of today, for it has special reference to the end of the age. This wonderful overcoming church is developed and matured at the close of the dispensation committed to the Church. She is the overcoming living remnant of the great bulk of believers that arise to meet the Lord at His coming when the first trumpet sounds.

John addressed seven letters to seven cities of Asia. He was so instructed by the Lord, the Judge, seen in the first chapter walking in the midst of the "seven golden candlesticks" - Rev. 1:12. These were literal cities to which John wrote. There were more than those seven churches established at the time of John's writing. But in these, we have given to us in full, a view of this whole Church Age. The geographical position of these churches indicates the above fact. They almost present a circle, as reference to a map will prove. Beginning at Ephesus and following a circumference, Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea are reached at a comparatively short radius. They represent, as it were, a prophecy of the Church Age. The different features, the blessings, the errors, and the revivals - everything that has been in evidence in Christendom from the beginning until the present time - are seen in some measure in these churches. Also, the rewards to the overcomer in each church are given.

We will look at the address to the Philadelphia church somewhat in detail. It has several unique features that separate it from the others.

#### A UNIQUE UNVEILING

26 First. There is a striking manifestation of the risen and glorified Lord to this church. In each of the other letters, He is shown in some character as revealed in Him, as He walks in the midst of the churches - Rev. 1:12-20. But, to this church, He is unveiled in a new character; a distinct and glorious consummating Figure is revealed to the church of brotherly love. He is the Christ of universal empire, of world dominion, the Christ of power. Benjamin, "the Son of His right hand," is here seen. This is a character of more than Church import. It is the crowned Christ, the exultant conquering Christ, the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" who is unveiled to this conquering company of the end-time. The Lamb, who later will be acclaimed in the highest heavens as worthy to open the book, judge the world, and fulfill the remaining dispensational purposes of God, is here manifested to those who have been found worthy to be with Him in that great day.

But the question may be asked, "What interest has the Church in the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has the key of David? He is not her King, but rather her Head and Lord." The key symbolizes authority; therefore, we infer that the essence of this letter is governmental power. The Lord desires the church of "brotherly love" to know that all authority in Heaven and earth is in His hand and shortly it will be in evidence. To them He is unveiled as absolute Despot, Monarch of all He surveys, which these words indicate, "He that openeth, and no

man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." All the world problems are His to solve, and the sceptre of universal empire is His to wield, at the time when this church is ready for the open door. He has not been unveiled heretofore in this character. It remained for this church to bring Him forth as the Sovereign of the fifth world empire; therefore, we say, we are faced here with a momentous situation and one of vast significance to the saints. We have several citations from the Old Testament which throw some light upon the subject.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." - Isa. 22:20-24.

Just previous to the above, in the same chapter, we read of one Shebna who was removed from the office of steward over the king's house. We can readily discern from the text that he became vain and foolish with pride because of the honor attached to the office; hence, had to be removed. Isa. 22:15-19.

Eliakim, who is styled the servant of Jehovah, is put over King Hezekiah's household in the place of Shebna in the same capacity that Joseph served with Pharaoh. He managed everything; all authority was in his hands. He bought all the provisions and portioned out to the household. He was a "father" to the inhabitant of Jerusalem and Judah, a wondrous type of Messiah. He carried the key of the house of David upon his shoulder (the key hung from a scarf flung over the shoulder). This is symbolic of Christ and His office as the Sustainer of the government of God - "Upholding all things by the Word of His power" Heb. 1:3 So "He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open." All access to the royal house was through Eliakim; but the anti-type transcends the type, for the government of God shall be upon Messiah's shoulder. Isa. 9:6, Shebna (who built), whom Eliakim (God builds) succeeded, is a type of anti-Christ who will usurp for a short time the place of Christ as Overseer of the house of God. Let us look at several other Scriptures in this connection, for the Bible is the best commentary that I know of on the Bible.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Isa. 9:6,7 We read further that the zeal of God will be exercised to the uttermost to bring these things to pass for His Son. For the zeal of His Father's house had burned in His bosom (Jn. 2:17), and now the zeal of the Father will burn in His own bosom for His Son's honor and glory.

On Christ shall hang all the glory of the Father's house; everything will depend on His mighty shoulder. He will sustain all the vessels of honor. The small and large will be held up by Christ. Does not that Scripture, "vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons," prove that there are different grades of believers in the great house of God? II Tim. 2:20. The "Son over His own house" is able for all the responsibility. Heb. 3:6.

28 Let us look at another Scripture in this connection. "Out of him (Judah) came forth the Corner (stone), out of him the Nail, out of him the Battle Bow, out of him every oppressor (ruler) together" Zech. 10:4 The word "nail" is that used for the large peg inside the Eastern tent upon which everything hung. Judah in that glad day of her restoration shall be under a native Ruler, not a foreigner. On Messiah the Cornerstone hangs all the glory and hope of Israel. The "Nail" will be fastened in a sure place; that is, in the eternal house of God (Jerusalem). For Christ is firmly entrenched there. He will be the Centre-Pole, the large Peg in the universe of God, upon which all the other poles and pegs are dependent.

The nail that was fastened in a sure place (Shebna) shall be "cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off;" namely, all the house of the fleshly seed with its last false prophet and king shall fall. Christ and His seed, a new creation, shall enter into the secure abode to go out no more.

Now let us turn back to our text and note how marvelously the Scriptures we have read fit in with it. We saw that Christ was unveiled to this Church at Philadelphia in this unique character as the One that had "the key of David; the One that had the right to the throne of David, which signifies world dominion. It signifies that the time is ripe for Him to assume the government, and the Church be made aware of the royal honor and majesty that belong to her Lord and Head by right

of birth and conquest.

### A UNIQUE TESTIMONY

The second mark of distinction between this church and that of the others is in the manner of her commendation. Her works are mentioned as are those of all the other churches, but here they are not specified. There is no need to do so. It is the brotherly love church; hence, the works are works of love, laboring diligently for others without money and without price. These works were first works, the expression of the first love which they had not lost. They were the ordained works to which they had been called; therefore, worthy of praise. The "brotherly love" was not in name only, but in deed and in truth; for they were practically living out the Christ life. The poured out sacrificed life of their Head was in manifestation. The Lord knew it and commended their works. He adds, "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name." "A little strength" is a great compliment, we infer, for it was not said to any of the other churches. They had borne witness to His Word; now He bears witness to their faithfulness. They had been true to His Name. The Lord Jesus Christ was their Head and they were joined to Him, not to any sect or body of people who had taken some other man's name; hence, later He will write His new Name upon them.

29

### A UNIQUE HONOR

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door" - 3:8. This is the third mark of distinction. Here is an unmatched privilege accorded to these full overcomers. They had entered the open door of highest privilege on earth, and now they are invited to enter the "open door" of highest reward in the glory and assume with Christ the reins of government of the universal empire. That is, world-sovereignty, a joint-heirship to the throne of David, is offered to the Philadelphia church; for remember, it is in the character of King, that He is revealed here. Yet He is not the King of the Church, but her Head and Lord.

"The key of David" symbolized; hence, we would say that the essence of the letter is governmental power, the possibility for the overcomers of reigning with Christ in the most absolute sense, for there are degrees of honor in the Kingdom of God.

Every system or kingdom, as to government, teaches the above order. There is first the king, emperor, or president; then his wife ruling conjointly with him. But there are other places and most necessary appointments of trust given to relatives and friends. These are all reigning with the leader, but not in the same degree or absolute sway. So with Christ's Kingdom. All will reign, but not all will wield

the sceptre as one with the Sovereign of the universe. This privilege is only offered to the church at Philadelphia. The value of the offer is always according to the power of him who makes it. Here it is the Christ of world sovereignty. He has "the key of David," and broadcasts His message to the overcoming church and invites her to enter into cooperation with Him in regard to all God's purposes. He actually challenges her to hold fast and let no one deprive her of the crown which she has now, by right of the open door which He has set before her; for the Christ of absolute authority declares, "no man shutteth" what He has opened. Hallelujah!

### THE UNIQUE PROMISES

30 There are three great promises made to this congregation. The first is by way of vindication in relation to the opposition of Satan. "Behold, I will make them ... come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Rev. 3:9 "The synagogue of Satan" refers to organized religious people - the, corrupt, degenerate, apostatized church dominated by the spirit of anti-Christ that opposes, denounces, and derides all reality and spirituality. But He who has all authority, to whom all men must bow, declares that all opposers will have to bow to His Bride too. They will be made to acknowledge her claims and her place as His very own. He will manifest her as the one whom He has loved. Who will dare condemn whom He justifies? Not one; they will all be made to justify her, too.

Then there is the second promise, that of deliverance: "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" Rev. 3:10. The Philadelphia church has learned to be patient. She is waiting for her Lord, occupying till He comes, doing His will in all things, working according to plans and specifications. Eph. 2:10. She sees the world situation through anointed eyes, and is not deceived by any false hopes regarding its problems or its peace. Her hope is built on Christ, and His sovereignty is unveiled to her. She is just patiently looking for Him to speak the word and she will meet Him in the air. He has promised to keep her out of the tribulation, "the hour of trial," which is coming upon all the world. None can escape the awful crisis except those whom He, who has all authority, shall keep out. They will enter into that open door in triumph before the fiery trial begins on earth. Their fiery trial is on now; but it is of a different character. They are overcoming now. The whole world will be tried, as well as the worldly believers; but the overcomers will not be here then.

"Behold, I come quickly," the Man of world destiny declares to this waiting church. He says it will not be long until the trial is over, and her patience is perfect. Oh, what a climax! Surely, in the face of this comfort and encouragement, she can laugh at the light afflictions. He adds, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," as though it was already on her head. It is, in a sense, just like the open door; the crown is hers if she insists on her rights by reigning now, living in the power of the reigning kingly life that is hers in the Kingly Man that died and rose for her. If she will not be denied the privilege of reigning now and lets nothing and no man overcome her in any way, she will keep her crown and shortly be manifested as wearing it and sitting upon a throne with Christ. Rev. 4:4.

The third promise in this series is a pillar, and three sublime names upon it. The temple of God is emphasized, which is the whole Body of believers grown up into Christ and glorified; but this overcomer has a pronounced place in that temple which is "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" - Eph. 2:19-22. He becomes "a pillar," a solid massive support, having the centre place in the holy temple forever; for "he shall go no more out." Stately, sturdy, strong, he is able to hold up the government of God as copartner with Christ. He not only gets something as a reward for his faithfulness; but, he is made something eternalized in the Temple Divine.

Then observe the embellishments emblazoned upon that pillar - "the Name of My God" is the first. The affixing of God's monogram identifies the pillar as a part and a very large part of Deity. Some would argue that the latter is presumptuous language; but they are the words of Jesus. It is true humility on our part to receive them and praise God, thereby becoming "partakers of the Divine nature." The provision that is made for man's ultimate triumph and glorification is beyond our feeble words to express. Our fallen estate, which our eyes behold continually, greatly hinders the appropriation of the magnitude of the result of redemption. God's Name upon the pillar announces His good pleasure in the overcomer and his identification with Him. He is not ashamed of these pillars, for His own Son "is not ashamed to call them brethren." He acknowledges them as part of Himself. Heb. 2:11.

The second majestic adornment upon the pillar is "the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem." It is further teaching on the same line - or better, added glory on the same pillar. There are three Jerusalem's mentioned in the Bible: The earthly city in Palestine. Then there is "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," the present throne of God. Heb.12:22. The same is "Jerusalem which is

above ... which is the mother of us all" - Gal. 4:26. Finally, the "new Jerusalem," the one mentioned here, which will constitute the seat of God's government for one thousand years. It will be the true metropolis, the city from whence all earth-rule will have its authority and power. Thus, again, we have a hint of the world-sovereignty in the name of the city being engraven upon the pillar. The most marvelous thing in this respect is the fact that the city is composed of "living stones" (I Peter 2:5) and is called "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife" - Rev. 21:9. That great city, with huge walls and stupendous foundations, "as a Bride adorned for her Husband," is seen "descending out of Heaven from God. Having the glory of God." Rev. 21:2,10,11 And the overcomer is a part, a great part, of that city of God.

32 Then the third glittering mark which further identifies, beautifies, and eternalizes the pillar is the writing upon it of Jesus' "new Name." This surely is "Bridegroom" or "Husband." He was content to live while on earth without a wife. He made Himself a eunuch "for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake" - Matthew 19:12. But here we see His reward. He has a Wife; therefore, He has a "new Name." The overcomer of Philadelphia is a great part of that company who share His love and fellowship. His Name written upon her denotes His ownership of her. She is thus sealed as His own Bride or Wife because she had become like Him, yielding to Him day by day while she walked in fellowship with Him down here. The Lamb's Wife is lamb-like and He expresses this fact by publicly identifying her. She is a reproduction, a part of Himself, the full answer to the words spoken of Adam and Eve, "They shall be one flesh." Gen. 2:24. This is indeed a marvelous reward.

I praise the Lord for this wonderful hope of being like Him for ever, and I praise Him for having the opportunity to qualify for that place in the glory. Some people do not know we can be like Him. They think that it is blasphemous; but it is true, for God has said it. We have such a place set before us, and such an open door set before us, and such a high and holy calling set before us. Let us yield with our whole heart to God, and let Him fit us now for the place of honor with Christ. I often wonder how the folks will feel who have let the golden opportunities slip away when they see glory that they have missed. I think that I would cry. But it is written, "God shall wipe away all tears" -21:4. Oh, what priceless privileges are given unto us. May the Lord help us to buy up the opportunities.

(Orig. Print 1926)



## HOSEA

### Ch. 2

“Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.” Hos. 2:1

This message from God through the prophet Hosea is a continuation of that found in Chapter One. Names, once again, tell the story for “...Loammi...” “not my people” has now become “...Ammi...” signifying that this nation is now known as the people of God. The name of Hosea’s daughter “Loruhamah,” or “no mercy” has been changed to “Ruhamah” for this nation has now experienced the abundant Mercy of God, showing that Israel as a nation has not been forever forsaken. Hosea’s exhortation; “Say ye unto your brethren....” And “Plead with your mother,...” V.1-2 must of necessity be directed to the faithful remnant in Israel. It is gratifying to realize that despite great spiritual declension in Israel quite a number of times, God has always had a faithful remnant like unto Elijah’s day when God assured him that, “...I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal,...” I Kings 19:18 There will likewise be such a faithful remnant in Israel, just prior to their restoration which is here prophesied. 33

The plea from this remnant continues as they are further instructed to plead for their mother Israel “...for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts;” V. 2 Scripture is very clear in numerous places that Israel will without doubt be restored, but that is conditional. She must repent of her adulterous ways “...put away her whoredoms...” God will “re-marry” this chosen nation, as is illustrated by Hosea, who will shortly take Gomer unto himself again, but there can be no substitute for national repentance. God’s threat in the next verse is not an empty one in order to achieve this objective. “Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.” V. 3 All this came to pass during the Assyrian captivity, but the greater fulfillment has most assuredly come to pass during this present Church Age, and such “judgment” will yet be realized further when Israel makes her covenant with the antichrist. Isaiah calls it “...a covenant with death, and with

hell...” Isa. 28:15 Daniel describes the same covenant in Daniel 9:27. “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Hosea further expresses these same tribulation woes, declaring that “...I will not have mercy upon her children; for they be the children of whoredoms.” V. 4 Though the aforementioned National restoration will most assuredly come to pass, it cannot come until this “unfaithful wife” of Jehovah has bowed to her Messiah in repentance and put away her idolatry, “For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.” V. 5 Herein are recorded some very specific charges and a detailed definition of what “whoredom” means. The message here is reinforced in V. 8, wherein God asserts that He, rather than the nations had supplied all these needs, “For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold,...” Israel attributed all these glorious “blessings from the LORD” to the nations, as stated above, “...I will go after my lovers, that gave me my bread and my water...” That practice is here called whoredom and idolatry and it is very important for men of our day to understand such terms, because the False Church in the end of this age of grace, is likewise indicted for exactly the same offense.

(To Be Continued In Feb. Issue)

### **God Bless You!**

***“God bless you!” This is what my heart would say;  
“God bless you now, tomorrow, and alway!”  
This is my wish, it oft would be my prayer -  
That God’s rich blessing be your portion rare.  
God bless you much in things which cannot fail -  
Things of the spirit - joys which never pale;  
Triumphs in Christ; the riches of His grace;  
Strength from His Word; Himself your dwelling place.***

***J. Danson Smith***



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**'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and  
forget not all his benefits'...**

**Psalms 103**