

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 235

THE TABERNACLE OF GOD WITH MEN

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, *Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men*, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev. 21:3).

BEHOLD! This is the word with which John begins his description of what he saw next. Someone has said that the word “behold” in the scriptures is the “Stop, Look, and Listen” sign of the Bible. It always calls for special attention and directs our focus to a truth of unusual importance. The word comes from the Greek *idou*, a demonstrative participle. There are four things we should understand about this word. First, it bids the reader or hearer to give attention to what is being said, as if we were to say, “Now listen!” Second, it is used when an event is specified which seems impossible, yet occurs. Third, it is an exclamation of one pointing out something and calling attention to it. Fourth, it means to observe what is about to be said and consider it thoroughly.

Now let us look at the words that follow: “Behold, *the tabernacle of God is with men*,” is how we find it described in the King James Bible. It is significant to note, however, that the verb ‘*is*’ does not appear in the Greek text. A more literal translation would be, “Behold the tabernacle of God with men!” That is, the tabernacle of God is with men — ***behold it!*** The tabernacle of God with men is the holy city, New Jerusalem! The tabernacle of God with men is the bride of the Lamb! ***Look at the bride! Fasten your eyes upon the holy city! Behold the tabernacle of God with men!*** By the time we reach this chapter of the Revelation every spiritual mind has figured out that the tabernacle of God is not a tent in the wilderness, nor a temple on mount Moriah, nor a literal city floating down out of space and setting down somewhere in the Middle East, but the tabernacle of God is a spiritual people that has been built up a spiritual house, made of living stones, fitly framed together and compacted by every part, raised up in the earth to be an habitation of God through the Spirit. That is the mystery!

Our problem has been that with carnal minds and natural thinking we have conceived of the holy city in the way we know cities on earth, cities having tall buildings, streets,

businesses, residential areas with homes, schools, and churches. To us this is a city — this is New York City, Detroit, Miami, or Seattle. Yet none of the above stated things have anything whatever to do with the real city! Should you tear down all the buildings and everyone live in tents, you would still have a city. The most frightening thing of all would be to remove all the people, leaving only the buildings. Then you have a ghost town where the wind whistles eerily around the buildings, shutters and doors bang and hinges squeak mysteriously in the night, while tumbleweeds careen wildly down the streets and bounce off into the darkness. Your spine will tingle and your skin crawl should you have to spend the night there alone! This speaks to me that a city is not buildings or streets or anything else — the city is *a people!* A city is a body of people compacted together, living in the same locality, walking, working, and functioning together as one harmonious whole. The indwelling of God in a people is expressed so beautifully in the little chorus:

I was born to be Thy dwelling place,
A home for the presence of the Lord;
So let my life now be separated unto Thee,
That I may *be* what I was *born to be!*

There are three symbols — the temple, the bride, the city. It seems to me that the intent of the Holy Spirit is that if you miss the significance of one, surely you will pick up on the other! It's as if the Lord says, "Consider this now, my child; I'm giving you three symbols of the same thing — you should discover the key in at least one of them and understand by now that the New Jerusalem is *not a place*, nor is it a *thing*." The problem untold millions of Christians have is that they have all their life-time heard the unrelenting drumbeat of carnal-minded sermons preached by carnal-minded preachers who extract from the Bible a carnal-minded "theology." They have bombarded our minds with pictures of saints driving a golden Rolls-Royce down the golden street of heaven to their mansion right next door to Jesus. Somehow I can't find that scene in the scriptures! I know it sounds really nice, and a polished orator can move congregations to tears or shouts of glory with sentimental stories about their mansion over the hilltop where they stroll hand in hand with Jesus. But these shallow-minded, spiritually stunted, self-anointed preachers are incapable of asking the simplest, most basic questions, much less uncovering the sacred realm where one discovers the deep things of God.

Have you considered, my brother, my sister, should you inherit a mansion next door to Jesus, what kind of mansion it would be? What all would you want included in that mansion? Now, first of all, how could each of us have a mansion *next door* to Jesus? If New Jerusalem were a literal city, it would be 1500 miles high, and 1500 miles wide. Your mansion might just happen to be 1500 hundred *miles* from Jesus! At best, we might be able to get four — one on each side, one in front, and one behind — next door to Him. None of the other millions of redeemed ones could ever hope to secure that coveted location right next to Him! And if there is no night in the city, you would not need a bedroom in your mansion, so you might want to include in your prayers the reverent request for the Lord, when He builds your mansion, to omit the bedroom. Since your food will be the fruit from the trees by the river in the midst of the city, doubtless you will not need a kitchen or dining

room in your mansion. Seeing that you will have your “house from heaven,” a body like unto His body of glory, I don’t think you will have any use for a shower, bathtub, or toilet. That eliminates all plumbing and you can also forget the bathroom!

The Lamb who dwells within us is the light of the city, the omnipresent glory of God lightens it, and there is no night there, nor any need of the sun, nor of the moon; therefore you would not need any electric current for heating, cooling, lighting, or appliances of any kind. Obviously there would be no electric company in the city nor any need for wiring in your mansion! That eliminates the electric contractors. You would be clothed in the white, spotless, glistening garment of Christ’s very own righteousness, which can never be soiled, and will never wear out, and from which there is no need to change into any other garment, so you would not need more than one such garment, making closets unnecessary. And just as Jesus in His resurrection could pass through walls and locked doors, appear and disappear, and travel at the speed of light with no vehicle of any kind, is it not reasonable to assume that you can eliminate the garage. Furthermore doors would be meaningless and the very walls themselves of no consequence whatsoever! In your glorified state it is doubtful you would need sofas or chairs to rest upon, and I’m certain there will be no television, stereo, or video games, so you can ask the Lord to delete from the plans both the family room and the living room!

What does that leave now — let us think! The carnal mansion of man’s unspiritual imagination has entirely vanished like a feather in the wind! Multitudes of Christians entertain such childish and silly notions of heavenly mansions next door to Jesus — not so much because they love Him or long to be near Him, but only to enjoy the creature comforts such an estate would afford. Their interest is on the level of the luxuries indulged in by the rich and the famous of this world, and this sad and pitiful picture has been with us throughout the ages as God’s little children with unsanctified hearts and unenlightened minds have injected their infantile imaginations into the holy words and deep mysteries of the Spirit of God. The traditions of the past have so dimmed their understanding that every truth is derailed and made to conform to the carnal desires of the man of flesh.

Let us now take note of the wonderful promises Christ has given those who love Him and are His called and chosen elect. In John 14:2-3 Jesus says to His disciples, “In my Father’s house are many mansions (Greek: *abodes, dwellings*). I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you *unto myself*; that were I am, there ye may be also.” Here we must ask the blessed Spirit of Truth to uncover the hidden things from before our understanding and reveal the things that from the foundation of the world have been kept secret. The word “mansions” is found in only one place in the King James Bible. “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” The word “mansions” is obviously a mistranslation. The Amplified Bible says, “In my Father’s house are many dwelling places.” Both the New English Bible and Wuest’s translation say the same. The Revised Standard Version, Phillip’s translation, Goodspeed and the Jerusalem Bible all say, “There are many rooms in my Father’s house.” The Greek word *mone* should be correctly translated as “abodes” or, as the Amplified Bible renders it, “abiding places.” In the Father’s house are many “abiding places,” with no allusion to size or grandeur. Furthermore, the reference is not to the space available inside the house, but rather to the

very **framework of the house itself**. For it is NOT WE who dwell in the Father's house — it is the FATHER HIMSELF who dwells in and fills the house. We ARE the house! According to all the teaching of the apostles from the book of Acts all the way through the Revelation WE ARE the house of God, WE ARE the temple of God, WE ARE the habitation of God, WE ARE the body of Christ, and WE ARE the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem! “He that overcometh will I make a *pillar in the temple of my God*, and he shall go no more out” (Rev. 3:12).

Read it again. The “mansion” is not for YOU to live in! A few verses later in the very same chapter of John's Gospel the Lord makes it crystal clear what He is talking about. “If any man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him*, and **make our abode (Greek: mone)** with him” (Jn. 14:23). Very beautiful is it to notice that our Lord here employs the same sweet and significant word, with which He began this wonderful series of encouragements, when He said, “In my Father's house are many *mansions (abodes, dwelling places)*.” “Mansions” in this verse is the same Greek word as “abode” in verse 23 (*mone*). If the translators had been consistent in their rendering of this word *mone* verse 23 would read, “We will come unto him, and make our **mansion** with him.” The message is clear — God is preparing YOU and ME, beloved, as His place to live, dwell, and have His abode. Our *mansion* is IN GOD, and God's *mansion* is IN US. Glory! But it's not a “mansion,” as we think of it, it's simply a *place of dwelling*.

The church system has taught us that we have a mansion in the sky. Great singers, before vast crowds of thousands intone with melodious voice, “I've got a mansion just over the hilltop,” and the carnal mind gets blessed with the thought that since we don't have much wealth and riches, or many yachts or mansions down here, God has prepared a grand mansion for us on that beautiful “Isle of Somewhere.” This sounds sweet to the emotional, carnal mind, but how far from the truth it is! This deception is so imprinted in the minds of the people that naught but the overflowing grace of God can ever erase it. They understand not that God's separated and elect saints **are** that beautiful home, full of life and light and love, where no power of darkness, sin, or death can ever invade or operate.

Consider with me again these faithful words of inspiration: “In my Father's house.” **My Father's house!** We have preached long and loud about **our house** when in reality it has never been about **our house** — it's always been about MY FATHER'S HOUSE! “I go to prepare a place for you.” Does this not explain why when Jesus came in the flesh He was born into the home of a carpenter and was raised the apprentice of a carpenter? The life of Christ is the greatest parable of the ages! The Father's house has been under construction for two thousand years and what a house it is! We are not the beginning of the Father's house, it is almost completed and Christ is now doing the trim and putting on the finishing touches. It is not “our house” next door to Jesus, it is the Father's house and the place He is preparing for each of us is a place within the framework of His house, as a room in His house, as a living part of the edifice, WHERE HE CAN DWELL IN US! Oh, yes! “Now therefore ye are...of the household of God; and are *built upon the foundation* of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; *in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye are builded together* **FOR AN HABITATON OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT**” (Eph. 2:19-22).

A habitation is a dwelling place. The Greek word for habitation in this passage means “a permanent residence.” Every enlightened believer knows that God does not dwell in man-made temples or buildings. Instead, our Lord has chosen to live in a temple of living stones — that is, in the hearts, lives, and bodies of His people. All who are “in Christ,” that is, joined together in union with Him to be the dwelling place of God (God was *in Christ...*), are His house, His temple, His holy city — His abode, His *permanent residence!* Surely that means that He will never depart, never vacate this temple to live in any other! God has no other physical residence, no nation, no capital, no temple, no mountain-top, no planet, no solar system, no far away galaxy. Of all the marvelous galaxies still undiscovered or unexplored by man, and all the trillions of planets that fill them, God chose to dwell on this tiny sphere called earth; and He chose man as the place He would inhabit here, making the redeemed men to be the “habitable part of His earth.” Of course, the Lord is everywhere, His presence filling all things. But God makes His “home” in His people! And they are His *permanent dwelling place.* What a wonder that is!

God has always cherished having a place to live. To Him there is “no place like home.” The dwelling place of God, from its simplest beginnings in Genesis to the grand finale in the book of Revelation begins and concludes the whole scheme of God’s purpose to indwell a people through whom to reveal Himself to creation. The first mention of a house for God appears suddenly in the early days of the patriarchs when Jacob, fleeing for his life, came to a certain place and camped there for the night. He took of the stones of the place and arranged them under his head for a pillow and after the setting of the sun he lay down to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and he saw the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. Then he saw the Lord standing at the top of the ladder, and the Lord spoke to him, renewing with him the covenant He had made with Abraham and Isaac. And Jacob awoke out of his sleep and in his wonder and excitement he cried, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than *the House of God*; this is the gate of heaven!” And so, Jacob took the stone he had used as a pillow and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. Jacob then made this profound statement to the Lord: “And this stone which I have set up as a pillar will be *God’s House!*” Bethel was a simple house — made up of one stone! It was, however, an anointed house, for Jacob had poured oil on its top. Not a very pretentious house for the great God of the universe, but it was at least a beginning and the revelation was birthed in the earth that blessed night that God will have a house in the midst of men, it will be an anointed house, and it will be built of *anointed, living stones!* What began in Genesis with *one stone*, is finally perfected and completed in the Revelation as a dazzling city of precious stones and gold!

The concept of residence implies limitation. It excludes all aspects of creation that do not conform to its specifications. The term tells us nothing about God’s essence or His nature, but something about how He chooses to express, reveal, and manifest Himself. Consider what a residence means in human terms. An individual wakes up in the morning and goes off to work. At the office or on the job he reveals himself as a professional or accomplished person in his field. His behavior, activity, speech, and social interactions are all in relation to this professional role. Now, should he be a teacher or professor, to his students he is one thing, to his colleagues, something else, and to his superiors another thing

altogether. At noon he steps out to a local café for lunch and thus assumes an entirely new and different identity — that of a customer. Or perhaps he stops by the doctor's office — now suddenly he has become a patient! Let us say he has a room or apartment which he rents out to a tenant — to this tenant he becomes transformed yet again. He becomes a landlord. Suppose someone wants to know who and what this person really is. Of all the identities that he assumes during the course of the day which, if any, is *really him*? Is there no situation in which this individual divests himself of the various “roles” that people and circumstances demand of him, and is just simply “himself”?

Catch him at home! In his residence he is free of projecting any particular image. Home is the exclusive domain where he can *be himself* and *reveal himself as he is*. It requires no effort and no pretense. The idiom “feel at home” or “make yourself at home” suggests such a meaning. Just *be yourself — total freedom for self-expression!* And that is what it means to be the *house*, the *residence*, the *abode* or *dwelling place* of God! It is the locale where God can express, reveal, and manifest His infinite essence and nature in this limited and finite setting. It is the special and restricted place where God can *be all that He is*, He can *be God*, and He can truly *be at home* while doing so. Such was the case in the tabernacle in the wilderness and in the temple in Jerusalem. Only there was His glory visible, His Godhead explicit. In the rest of creation His divinity was and is obscured, just as the essential identity of a person is obscured by the masks he assumes in playing the various roles required of him. God's “masks” are the natural laws and processes in which He conceals Himself, so that He can animate and guide creation without overpowering it with His majesty. But God's spiritual house, His spiritual temple, His chosen abode is where He is seen as He really is! God can be present in many ways everywhere in His creation, but He can only *be God*, in all that that means, and He can only fully *be Himself*, and *be at home* in the chosen place of HIS RESIDENCE!

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God with men! And He will dwell with them, and they shall **be** His people, and God Himself shall **be** with them, and **be** their God.” I love the Weymouth translation of this passage, “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “*Lo, God's dwelling place is among men and He will dwell among them and they shall be His peoples.*” Ah — GOD IS MOVING IN WITH MAN! Actually, INTO MAN, for He dwells *among them*. So it's really not about a mansion you can live in, but you becoming a mansion that *He can live in!* It's about you becoming an habitation of God through the Spirit! Through the ages men have been visited by God, but in this hour its not about another *visitation*, He's building a *habitation!* Don't seek God for another visitation (revival), ask Him to make you His habitation. It's about God filling your whole being with His glory! It is God revealed in His people! BEHOLD THE TABERNACLE OF GOD WITH MEN! The result of God living in the same tent that we do is that it puts the curse in reverse — no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain (Rev. 21:4). Not because we flew away to some far-off heaven somewhere, but because all that God is is living in the midst of us and His life has swallowed up every aspect of the curse, and there is a new heaven and a new earth and there is no more sea! No more wicked, no more wickedness, no more rebellion, no more war, no more crime, no more drugs, no more tragedies, no more heartache to tear apart our emotions, disturb our minds, and devastate our lives. Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you.” The “place” is

a condition, a state of being, the experiencing of Himself within ourselves by the triumph of His life! Oh, the wonder of it! The city is a people. The hour has come to favor Zion and to make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. So many people are just watching and waiting for “over there” to deliver them from “down here.” Won’t it be a shock to find out that our mailing address “over there” is the same one we have “down here”! It will be a mighty interesting day when that awareness dawns on the horizon and God begins to manifest Himself through His manifest sons and daughters right here on this earth, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption. Isn’t it wonderful!

Though ultimately this experiencing of God among men pertains to all men universally, there is also a very personal application in each of our lives. The Greek text says that John heard a great voice from *the throne*. We have discovered this throne within ourselves, in the authority and power of God residing in our spirit. We are aware that there is a throne or a secret place of divine life and power within where a special voice speaks to us. We know this voice, and it has a wonderful message for us: “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men.” To each of us personally the voice proclaims, “I will dwell with you and be your God. I will wipe away all tears from your eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” He didn’t say, “I will show you how or teach you the ways.” God didn’t give Moses, or Abraham, or Joshua, or David, or even Jesus a book by which they could learn to do great and mighty things for God. Oh, no! He always said, “I will be with you, I will bless you, **I WILL DO IT!**”

Such is our problem today. We want a book on twelve easy steps to overcoming. How to live victorious in three days. Seven keys to being a manifest son of God. If we can just find the method, the secret to success, then we can move into the place God has for us. The words need to be quickened within us, “**I WILL DWELL IN YOU AND BE YOUR GOD!**” God is not giving us formulas for success, patterns for overcoming, methods for conquering death — He is giving us Himself. When we have the Lord as the reality of our lives we no longer need the formulas, the patterns, the outward program, for it is now His work in us subduing every enemy, and conforming us into the image of God. How awesome and wonderful it is to know that God is living in us, and the Revelation unfolds for us the beauty, the grandeur, the glory, and the majesty of the reality! This is not something that we can conjure up within ourselves but it is the unfoldment of the Lord Himself. He brings us to this realization: “He will dwell with us, and we shall be His people.” On the personal and individual level our “people” — that is, our thoughts, feelings, attitudes, desires, emotions, hopes, yearnings, all the elements of our being — will be living in oneness with God. God will live in and through us in all our hoping and planning, in all our coming and going, in all our speaking and doing. God will move in and become our conscious awareness at all times and in all things. It is indeed wonderful!

“For we are laborers together with God; ye are God’s husbandry, *ye are God’s building*” (I Cor. 3:9). “For every *house* is *buildd* by some man; but He that built all things is God. And...Christ as a son over His own *house*; whose *house are we...*” (Heb. 3:4,6). Would God that all the saints might see that since WE ARE THE HOUSE OF GOD, our dwelling place is not inside the house as an occupant, but within the very framework of the house — part of the superstructure. Every part of a building has its specific place to “abide.”

What would happen to a building were the roof to say, "I'm tired of being up here, exposed to the fierceness of the summer sun, the beating of the rain, and the chilling snows of winter. I have decided to come inside and abide on the floor!" Or, should the doors announce, "We're tired of hanging here on the wall, pushed and pulled all the time. Let's go up and rest on the roof." Or, suppose the walls were to declare, "We don't like this position; we're going out and lie on the lawn!" Or if the carpet curled up in the bathtub, or the electric range floated up to the ceiling. "Ridiculous!" you say. Yes — but the point is just this. In every house — each stone, board, nail, window, and furnishing has its special and unique abiding place. And all together, in perfect order, each fulfilling its place and function for which the architect designed it, they form the complete, harmonious, perfect building, a place of habitation for those who desire it.

Ah, we are given the transcendent and glorious privilege of entering into Father's house! Not as a guest, or occupant, but as part of the very substance of the building itself to be DWELT IN, FULLY POSSESSED AND INHABITED BY THE FATHER HIMSELF! Jesus said that if this were not true, He would have told us. But because it *is* wondrously true, He has prepared a place for us in this glorious habitation of God! When Jesus came He was the only tabernacle of God on earth! "The Father dwelleth in me." And now He has gone away, and come again, and prepared a place for *us* in this tabernacle of God, bringing us into relationship with the Father, that as sons we might be filled with ALL the fullness of God! Our Lord is setting forth the great revelation of His sonship to the Father, opening up to the minds of these wondering disciples a relationship with God that no man had ever understood before. This revelation of sonship was the truth that was so difficult for the Jews to receive. Their carnal hearts comprehended not that GOD WAS IN CHRIST, that Jesus was in very fact the *embodiment* and *personalization* of the invisible Father on earth, and that it pleased the Father that *in Him* should **all fullness** dwell.

It is a blessed and wonderful truth that all that the Father is was deposited in Jesus. The body of Jesus housed the Father-Spirit. When Jesus moved, it was the Father moving in Him. When He spoke, it was the Father speaking. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that *dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works*" (Jn. 14:10). Did you notice that those words are found in the very same chapter and in the very same context of His teaching about the "many mansions" in Father's house? When Jesus looked, it was the Father looking through Him. When He stretched forth His hand, it was the Father stretching His hand. This, precious friend of mine, is the glorious "place" where Jesus dwelt as the habitation of God, this was His plane of existence, His sphere of life, His state of being. When Jesus walked on earth He was the only body-building of God, but one beautiful day He thrust wide open the door into that exalted realm and proclaimed that in His Father's house are MANY ABODES, MANY DWELLING PLACES, and that He would go to the Father and prepare A PLACE FOR US.

Since Jesus dwelt in a spiritual realm of relationship with the Father, we know that the place prepared for us is a spiritual rather than a natural sphere. It is a heavenly realm. It is the realm of the Father's indwelling, the realm of sonship. It is a place in Father's house where He can live and move and have His being in us. It is not only a place prepared *for* us, but a place prepared *in* us. What has Christ prepared in you? A place where there is perfect

peace. “In the world ye shall have tribulation...IN ME ye have PEACE” (Jn. 16:33). What has Christ cultivated in your spirit? A place where there is fullness of joy and righteousness. What has He enjoined you to have? Longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance. What is Christ preparing in you? Goodness, faith, and divine love. What has Christ brought you into? He has ushered us into dimensions of His wisdom, knowledge, power, and glory. All of this is just the Father coming to make His abode with us, to dwell, live, and manifest Himself IN HIS HOUSE! What a PLACE he has prepared for us!

Having ascertained that the Father’s house is a spiritual temple, we can easily understand the meaning of there being in this house or temple many mansions, or rooms, or chambers, as we look at the beautiful type of Solomon’s magnificent temple. Not only was there the outer court, the holy place, and the most holy place, but we also read, “And against the wall of the house (temple) he built chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and the oracle: and he made chambers round about: and the nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad. The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up the winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third. And then he built chambers against all the house five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar” (I Kings 6:5-10). In chapter thirty-five of Jeremiah we find that the different chambers were for persons of different rank, signifying that whatever place or chamber we become in the house of God will serve as a *unique expression* of the Father in us and through us, according to how we have yielded unto Him!

The following vision was received many years ago by a young sister in Argentina. If you can interpret it with a spiritual mind you will see that under the metaphor of “houses” the Holy Spirit has portrayed for us those bright celestial realms *in the spirit*, composed not of cold hard stones, but of living realities possessed by living members of a living temple of living stones who are built up a spiritual house, the habitation of the Almighty Father. The vision is as follows: “The Lord set me free from the heavy oppressions of the enemy and I was enabled to enter into His presence most easily and quickly. Then He carried me away to the sphere where He resides in His great Cloud. When I looked He showed me a great many most wonderful houses but they were not at all like (natural) houses down here. They were like great, beautiful arches of light, each by itself distinctly separated one from the other. They were so beautiful they truly appeared like most wonderful riches for they were like glowing gems of purest celestial light of some material I could never explain.

“There was a marked difference between the houses on the different spheres. Those on the same sphere were more or less of the same appearance and were of a great number, but those on a higher sphere were vastly different and far more wonderful. The highest sphere of all was so gloriously brilliant that I could only behold in amazing wonder without being able to describe it. Each separate sphere was most markedly different, superior, harmonious, and far more brilliant than the sphere below it. So great was their light and so glorious their shining that they outshone the sun by far. Nevertheless, I could not ascertain the number of spheres.

“These arches — or domes of light — were not things separate from Him but they were a PART OF HIMSELF. This was the most surprising of all! They were parts of His

very person. Each separate sphere was made up of a part of Himself but was such a different *manifestation of Himself*. Each higher sphere was so much superior and wonderful than the one before. I thought afterwards of an illustration from my own mind to try to describe it: As a young lady prepares herself in one way to work in the kitchen, in another way to go out to tea, but in still another way she beautifies herself to go out for an evening gala celebration. ‘These are the riches of Myself,’ He said, ‘and are most distinct one from the other. I have offered every one of these dwellings in every sphere to every one of my children. Although I have given to every one the same opportunities, many will be satisfied and will resign themselves to lower spheres because they do not want any more of Me. Each one will reach the place that his heart truly desires which will be given to him. Because some will not make the effort to reach out for any more (of My indwelling) they will have no more for they do not want any more’ — end quote.

Ah — there are many mansions or chambers or dwelling places in God’s house, many spiritual levels with various elevations and degrees of prestige and honor, and each of us must find his own. “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead” (I Cor. 15:41-42). The Father’s house contains many positions, many levels of expression, many planes of glory. Some saints have tried to seize some coveted position as did the mother of James and John on behalf of her two sons, who came to Jesus, “...worshipping, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom” (Mat. 20:20-21). Jesus did not deny that these positions existed, but He did say, “To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, BUT IT SHALL BE GIVEN TO THEM FOR WHOM IT IS PREPARED OF MY FATHER” (Mat. 20:23).

We do not vie and compete for positions in Father’s house, but we rejoice that there are “many mansions,” there is ample room, there is room for each one and Christ Himself is preparing a place for us! This spiritual house is the reality of which the earthly temple was intended to be the dim prophecy and shadow. In the architectural drawings in the heavens of God’s Spirit there is a place designed for each of us to become a “chamber.” Or perhaps we will be a “pillar” in the temple of our God! Oh, what a great house it is! The question is, Shall we become it, or shall we not? The old rabbis had a tradition which, like a great many of their apparently foolish sayings, covers in picturesque guise a very deep truth. They said that, how ever many the throngs of worshippers who came up to Jerusalem at the time of the Feasts, the streets of the city and the courts of the sanctuary were never crowded. And so it is with that great heavenly temple. There is room for all! There are throngs, a great multitude that no man can number, but no crowds. Each finds a place in the ample sweep of the Father’s house, like some of the great palaces that barbaric Eastern kings used to build, in whose courts armies might encamp, and the chambers of which were counted by the thousand. And surely in that ample accommodation, you, and I, and ALL MANKIND shall find a place where we may become an expression of the Infinite Father, for He shall at the consummation be ALL and IN ALL! Aren’t you glad!

As mentioned earlier, the tabernacle in the Old Testament is the type of God's dwelling and fellowship with His people. Typically, in the tabernacle God met His people, manifested His glory, spoke to them, made them one with Him through the sacrifices and ministry of the priesthood, and fellowshiped with them. The idea, therefore, of the tabernacle is fellowship, communion, and union with God. And the idea of the tabernacle of God with men in the New Jerusalem is the perfection of this fellowship, communion, and union. In this union God's people become fully like Him and see Him as He is. They know even as they are known. They see face to face. This is the essence of the blessedness of the city of God! The tabernacle of God with men and the city, the holy city, are now identical and co-extensive. This was not so in the old dispensation of shadows. God dwelt in the temple particularly; but His presence did not fill the city. But in the vision of John we are shown wondrous things! The city has become the tabernacle, and God's abode shall be with men perfectly and completely. We shall be like Him. And God shall dwell in all of us perfectly. He shall fill us, enlighten us, quicken our love, raise up His wisdom, glory, nature, and power within us beyond measure, and bind us to Himself with unbreakable bonds of eternal fellowship, communion, and union. But that is not all! The glory of God shall so radiate through us and out from us that it shall lighten the whole earth and the nations shall walk in the light of this city and be so filled with glory and so exalted in honor that they shall come and bring into the city all the glory and honor of the nations! In other words, they shall come in worship, offering up unto the Lord as a sacrifice of thanksgiving all the honor and glory He has so lavishly bestowed upon them!

This is also the ultimate realization of all prophecy. Thus, for instance, we read, "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Eze. 37:27). And again, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto *all people* a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain *the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations*. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off *all faces*; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 25:6-8). And almost the entire sixtieth chapter of Isaiah refers to the same thing, including the salvation and blessing of all nations and all people. What a word!

In one of his later writings Paul Mueller wrote the following exhortation. "Father is giving His elect and chosen ones a new and greater vision of the fullness of His glory, of the highest spiritual realms of Tabernacles and of the kingdom of God. He is moving us beyond Pentecost and is guiding us into all truth and showing us glorious things to come (Jo. 16:13). As we grow in the Spirit, we will see that our old personal identities of this fleshly realm are being swallowed up into Christ and we are being given a new name along with a new nature. We now see the greater glory of the 100-fold realm in God, and we are earnestly and sincerely walking toward that final spiritual goal in Him. Thank God, the Day has come when all the carnality of man, which was prevalent at Pentecost, is being removed from us. We are also being birthed into the greater glory and fullness of Tabernacles, to inherit the blessed fullness of the kingdom of our Father.

“With wonder, anticipation and hope, John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, saw the spiritual, heavenly, new Jerusalem ‘*coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*’ As we all may know, the bride is not an individual; she is a company of prepared saints of the Lord. They are ready to be joined unto Christ, their Head, in a grand and glorious union, which may be ‘*the marriage of the Lamb.*’ And then, John heard a great voice out of heaven saying, ‘**BEHOLD, THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IS WITH MEN, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.**’ This is the grand fulfillment of the last great feast, the Feast of Tabernacles!

“The promise and glory of Tabernacles is the coming of the Lord to the earth to dwell with and in all mankind. He comes in His fullness to dwell with all men and to establish His dwelling place, His tabernacle, here on earth. God Himself shall dwell in and among all mankind. His ‘people’ will include *all men everywhere!* God Himself shall be with all men, and He shall be their God in the full sense of the word. This is what Tabernacles really is! And it is nothing less than this! Tabernacles is a high and holy realm in God that is more glorious than anything we have yet experienced! God has something far more glorious in store for His people and for the world than what we can see through this veil of flesh. And He is revealing it to His elect, by the Spirit. Launch out into the depths of His Spirit and experience Him! Be blessed by all the Spirit is revealing in this new and more glorious kingdom Day!” — end quote.

So, my dear friends, if you are still looking for a mansion over the hilltop or a cabin in the corner of Gloryland you are going to be disappointed. Christ has prepared a place for us alright — a place IN HIM — which is far more glorious and exciting than some tangible, carnal possession. He has raised us up to sit with Him, and in Him, to share His sonship and the indwelling of the Father in the higher than all heavens. The place He has been preparing for each one of us is not only a world to come, or a heaven somewhere, but a position, a place of eminence, a place of glory IN HIM — there to reveal all the magnificence of the INDWELLING FATHER to all the endlessness of the unbounded heavens!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY

If you would like to receive these studies write to:

J. Preston Eby
P.O. Box 371240
El Paso TX 79937-1240

All writings are distributed on a free-will basis.