

“ON EAGLES’ WINGS MINISTRIES”

“See how I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto myself.” Exodus 19: 4.

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Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year! I am extending thanks for your love and support during 2016. Your notes and gifts have blessed this ministry.

*“But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister **for them** who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:13, 14.* So far, as I continue to scan through this amazing subject, I am totally blown away by the nuggets of truth that seem to softly emerge from within the pages of the Holy Writ. It is as if a new door opened before me, and as if walking down the corridors of a modern museum, on either side there are displays of intriguing “Master Pieces” that capture the eyes and the minds of those who purposely linger and linger to absorb the beauty that their eyes behold.

The previous chapter dealt mostly with the words of Christ concerning a people who will be like unto the angels. Because of the intricacies woven into the words of Jesus, I am compelled to linger a while in Luke 20: 34-38. Let us take this trip very slowly so as not to miss a single truth. Speaking of resurrection, we quickly gravitate to the idea and confession of Martha. She said: *“I know that he shall side again in the resurrection at the last day.” John 11:24.* I like to say that she had her doctrine correct (like the church world at large) but she missed the present reality that was standing in front of her. Listen to the word that was designed to change the world and vanquish death for all time: **“I am the resurrection!”** Hallelujah! No need to wait for the year two thousand and 50 or 60 or 75.

But let us look a little closer at what Jesus actually said. *“The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world **and the resurrection from the dead**, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.* Let us take this slowly! Notice that Jesus did not say *the resurrection of the dead*, which would mean the general resurrection as a worldwide event. Instead, he alluded to a resurrection **from** or **out from among the dead**. This is the same sentiment expressed by Paul when he wrote: *“If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Phil.3:11.* Let’s be clear about this before moving on! Jesus alluded to a people who qualify to be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from (out from) the dead.

Let us look at a verse of scripture that is seldom mentioned in sermons and bible studies at the local level. At this juncture, we are agreeing that those counted worthy in Jesus' conversation, were resurrected from the dead—not with the dead. Here we read: *“Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, **not accepting deliverance**; that they might **obtain a better resurrection.**”* Hebrews 11:35. They had opportunity to escape torture and be delivered. But they sought a better resurrection that will place them in the ranks of the martyred saints because they lived and reigned with Christ during the first thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20. So the allusion is that only a special group of people will be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of which he spoke.

Let us observe the fact that what Jesus alluded to differs from what John wrote. *“And I saw the dead small and great stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”* Rev.20:12. The dynamics mentioned by Christ that alluded to only those who are counted worthy to participate in that resurrection, sets it apart from the idea of a “general resurrection” as we could easily suppose.

Here again is what Jesus said! *“But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (world means age) and the resurrection from (or out from) among the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children (sons) of God, being the children (sons) of the resurrection.”* It is obvious that Christ was not speaking of a general resurrection; In fact, he singled out only those who were accounted worthy and not every Christian in the local church. But those accounted worthy are called sons of God and are not subject to death anymore. The term “worthy to obtain that world” simply means being worthy to occupy that certain period of time.

We want to be sure that we understand the case in point! It will be a qualified group of people (called the sons of God) who will be partakers of that world (age) and that resurrection. There is another aspect of the Lord's words that sort of jumped out at me; and I invite you to join me as together we scan through layers of truths with the intent of arriving at a brand new horizon. After speaking of the world and the resurrection for the group to be its partakers, Jesus said: *“Neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children (sons) of God, being children of the resurrection.* Why would Jesus mention that they cannot die anymore, being like the angels? Do we associate death with angels? Of course not! Because angels are spirits that are invisible to us! There are times when they appear to human beings, like in the case of Daniel to whom the angel Gabriel appeared; also to Mary and to John on the Isle of Patmos.

This leads us to consider what body these sons of God will possess being equal to unto the angels. Immediately when Christ died, many of the saints that slept came to life, and after the resurrection of Christ, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and many of the saints were seen walking the streets of Jerusalem. What connotation can there be to the reasoning that these sons of God cannot die anymore? The only practical answer to the question must be their bodies or their physical appearance. It must be that they seem to be humans to such an extent that Jesus had to remove the chance of them dying from the entire narrative.

That truth should not be taken lightly or entirely ignored. Certainly, if they were mere spirits like the angels (in terms of bodily appearance) dwelling on an invisible plain, the thought of them not dying anymore would be redundant to say the least. But pause for a while and think about the enormity and profound impact of this truth. These people who have experienced the resurrection and have become equal to the angels appear to be humans in such profound ways, that Jesus thought it was necessary to add the notion that they cannot die anymore.

We should also note that even though a thorough change has taken place in these sons of God, they were not taken to heaven. They were left right here on earth and added to the mandate of angels being made equal to them. If we take this down a notch from the spirit realm to life on this terrestrial plain, we must picture these resurrected people waking about, perhaps still caring for their families and going about their normal human responsibilities without other people knowing that they cannot die any more. We can call this the miracle of the ages: and it certainly will sneak upon a sleeping world. Think of a people that cannot get sick anymore, and can move through closed doors like Jesus leaving the upper room as if through the wall. That will be because we shall go through our metamorphosis resulting the loosing away of all physical restraints and we move like the wind as Jesus said that is the function of those who are born of the Spirit.

For good measure and added knowledge let us revisit Paul's letter in which he wrote: "*For this corruptible **must put on** incorruption, and this mortal **must put on** immortality.* Let us be clear in our understanding here! A dead person or one who has died **cannot put on** incorruption or immortality. Putting on, is like standing before your dressing table or bathroom mirror and **putting on** your clothes. Let us stop for a moment and reflect upon the many years when we read Paul's letter regarding the change we just quoted above. We agreed with, and embraced that truth, but did we ever look deeply into the ramification that is implied in that process? Sure enough, the story is well known and well preached, especially among those who cater to the concept of the "secret rapture."

But did we ever stop for a moment to consider the sort of body that remains after the change occurs? I am sure that many preachers and teachers, including myself have read with gusto and taught with excitement that indeed this mortal must put on immortality. But we never took the matter further to focus upon the kind of body that will result by the change, especially the form of body we will have. But there is one thing that the scriptures did not say. The wording of the scripture, does not suggest that we will become invisible disembodied spirits after we are changed. With that in mind, we must conclude that after the change, we will still possess a physical body—visible—and workable—except that it is now immortal and incorruptible.

Although I began preaching in 1967, it was only a few days ago while working on this series that the idea of what form our bodies will assume after the change occurs began to impact me. What also caught my attention is that Jesus said those who were counted worthy to be a part of the resurrection, cannot die anymore. Do you remember that? So it dawned upon me that if they were disembodied—invisible spirits—Jesus would not remark that they cannot die anymore. It would not matter one way or another to others. So even after being in the resurrection, they gave cause for it to be said of them, that they cannot die anymore. (I am emphasizing this point purposely) These points are so important to me that I want you to get the same feeling that I now have. Thus, I feel the need to keep repeating these thoughts: because, like I just said, for years we never focused our thoughts and sermons on the subject of the glorified body with which we shall be clothed.

As we reflect upon the metamorphosis that our bodies must go through, we understand that putting on immortality, means acquiring that change while still alive as human beings. Millions upon millions of sons of God will not suddenly take off from the earth because of the change we are talking about; only to reappear hundreds or thousands of years later. It is important to slowly consider the next point in our study. Paul alluded to a point in time this way: *“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1st Corinthians 15: 54.*

The single word of great importance featured in this verse is “WHEN.” It specifically points to a future time from Paul’s day: but the greatest events that will envelop creation at large, will at that time open mankind to changes that the angels sought to know. When the time finally arrives, without fanfare and blaring trumpets, we will begin to experience the change from mortal to immortality: and from corruptible to incorruption (as a work in progress.) Obviously, Paul and the other apostles thought that this glorious event would occur in their day.

Watch Paul's language in expressing certain truths! "**We** shall not all sleep, but **we** shall all be changed." *1st Corinthians 15:51*. And again: "*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the rump 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.*" *1st Thessalonians 4:16, 17*. Did you notice that Paul included himself as a participant of these great events? That is because the apostles got revelations of the events that were to occur; but at first they did not know the timeline relative to the visions.

Peter offers a glance into this very issue. "*Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister the things which are now reported unto you.*" *1st Peter 1: 11, 12*. Peter said "unto us" but later said that this glory will be at the revelation of Jesus Christ. See verse 13. This glorious revelation of Christ did not happen in the days of the apostles. In a matter of a few years they all died or were killed. But the message is true and will unfold as prophesied.

I feel impressed to repeat that this change will not happen on a grand display on our exterior. We will continue to go about our daily chores; and will continue to do what we have always been doing. Angels will not be waiting at the front door of our local church, waiting to zap us like a fairy with a wand. There will be no grandiose display of angelic formations, each with a trumpet in hand. But with all restraints removed, there will be a people unveiled upon the earth that will work as one with God in bringing to fruition the will of God's total restitution of all things.

As we continue to walk with Christ and continue to be absorbed by the Divine Life that flows directly from the throne of the Most High, without observation or prompting from us, the cells of our bodies will continue to change from glory to glory. "Thank you Jesus!" This truth is the greatest part of the "Salvation Story" because it announces the completion of our redemption that began upon Calvary's cross. Think of it my friends! It is at this juncture that we, along with the angelic hosts can echo: "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*"

I am always reminded of Paul's exhortation: "But we all with open face (uncovered from the vain traditions of men) beholding as in a glass (a looking glass or mirror) the glory of the Lord, are changed into **the same image** from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." *2nd Corinthians 3: 18*. Indeed, "the cells of my body, speak forth a new life; every atom radiate his glorious light. Rejoice O earth at the sound of my voice. I'm a new man walking, I never walked before." This song was composed years ago by a brother in Phoenix, Arizona. BE BLESSED!

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