

IN THE PARADISE OF GOD.

– REV. 21:1-7,22-27. – JUNE 23. –

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

PARADISE, the garden of God, was applicable as a name to the Garden of Eden, in which our first parents resided while they were still in harmony with God, before their disobedience; and the same term is Scripturally applied as a name to the new earth when restitution blessings shall, during our Lord's second presence (the Millennium), be brought to perfection as the fit abode of those who, under divine favor, shall then prove worthy of life everlasting. It was to this paradise that the Apostle Paul was in vision "caught away" when given a glimpse of various features of the divine plan, not then due to be understood by the Church in general – "things not lawful to be uttered." (2 Cor. 12:4.) John the Revelator was similarly caught away in vision, and shown some of these wonders of the Paradise epoch; but only in symbols, which he was permitted to report, and which have been comparatively misapprehended until now, in the Lord's due time, the holy spirit is guiding his people into the truth on this subject, as well as others, because it is now nigh at hand, and "meat in due season" for the "household."

Our Lord refers to this paradise in language which identifies it with the first paradise of Eden, saying, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:7.) It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death on Adam and his race. That tree in the midst of paradise was called the tree of knowledge, and our Lord's promise is that the overcomers of this present age

shall have full liberty to partake of that tree of knowledge, and under most blessed and satisfactory conditions, when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under divine approval, and not bring a curse. It is this same paradise of the future on this earth that our Lord referred to when addressing the penitent thief, he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee this day, Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

This Paradise, we recall, is elsewhere referred to [R2832 : page 199] by the Apostles as "the third heaven" – "a new heavens and a new earth." (2 Cor. 12:2; 2 Pet. 3:13.) They are not referring to new worlds, nor to heavens ranged one above another, as many have supposed, but, as already shown,* what is termed the first heavens and earth or order of things, passed away at the flood; and that the heavens and earth "which are now," the present order of things, are reserved of God to pass away with a great fire of trouble, revolution, etc., which shall utterly destroy them – the present spiritual powers and the present earthly or social arrangements. "Nevertheless, we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This will be the third heavens, and third earth, or the new heavens, and new earth, which will differ from the present condition of things in that it will be righteous, whereas the present is unrighteous, imperfect. The "new heavens" will consist of the new spiritual ruling powers of the future, Christ and the glorified Church, as the present heavens consist of the nominal religious systems, which, claiming Christ for their Head, in a very large degree bow to Antichrist, the god of this world, the prince of this world, "who now worketh in [through] the children of disobedience," and who is captivating and blinding the whole world with the exception of the few, the eyes of whose understanding have been opened, who are under special blessing and leading, and are taught of God, – the "little flock," "heirs of the Kingdom." – Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4.

[*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., pp. 66-70:1,318.](#)

It is to this new heavens and new earth condition, this paradise, that our lesson introduces us. As the "new heavens" does not mean a new place of God's throne, and a new throne of God, but new conditions, and signify the spiritual power and control of Christ and his Church in glory, so the "new earth" does not mean another planet, but a new social order on this planet. The declaration is that the former heavens and former earth (which are now) will then have passed away and be no more. All present institutions are to utterly perish in the great time of trouble with which this age is very shortly to end. "And there shall be no more sea." As we have already seen, the sea is a symbol for the masses of people in a restless and unstable anarchistic condition, just as the land represents the social order, and as the mountains represent the kingdoms of the present time. As there is no reference to the physical earth and physical heavens being destroyed, so there is no reference to the physical sea being obliterated. The symbol signifies that under the new arrangement, under the control of the new heavens or spiritual powers, the reconstructed social order will be so satisfactory, so complete, so thorough, that there will be no more sea-class, no more restless people, no more dissatisfaction, no more anarchists; everything will be reduced to law and order; and law and order will under the new regime secure justice to every creature, obliterating the differences of wealth and power as they now exist.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

In the symbolism of Scripture a city represents a government; as for instance, symbolic Babylon is denominated "that great city [government] which ruleth over the kings of the earth." The New Jerusalem, as a symbol, represents the new spiritual government of the Millennial age. It is not earth-born, it is not reared by men, but, as here pictured, it descends from

God out of heaven – it is spiritual in every sense of the word – of God and not of men. It is for this kingdom, this government, that our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come – thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. But additionally to this it reminds us that in the government of the future, the judges of the world are the saints, now being selected through faithfulness in trial and tribulation, and that these are frequently called the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in the Kingdom. The Revelator elsewhere strikingly bring this thought to our attention: the angel calls to him, "Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." – Verses 9-11.

We are not to think of this holy city as being composed of literal stones, coming down through the air; we are to remember, on the contrary, that the saints of this present time are "living stones," as the Apostle Peter explains. (1 Pet. 2:4-7.) This glorious city will not be visible to the natural eye – neither Christ nor the saints in glory can be seen of men; only those "changed" from human to spiritual nature see these matters in the full; but the whole world will be quickly made aware of the fact that a new government has been instituted, – a government of righteousness, and with all power, and that thereafter whosoever doeth righteousness shall be blessed, and whosoever doeth evil shall be punished.

THE GLORIFIED TEMPLE.

The third verse of our lesson associates this city with the other figure of a symbolic Temple, which the [R2832 : page 200] Lord is now preparing, of which the saints will constitute the "living stones" and "pillars;" for it is declared that the tabernacle (dwelling) of God shall be with men in this city (government or kingdom). God will dwell in this glorious city or government – it will be his Temple, and the world of mankind will approach God in it to receive the divine blessings, as Israel approached the typical Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical religious services. Thus God, represented in his Church (the Christ, Head and body) will dwell with men (the world of mankind during the Millennial age) and they shall be his people; – all mankind will be treated from the standpoint of reconciliation, the propitiation price for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) having been paid at Calvary, and the due time having then come for the manifestation of divine favor, all peoples shall be treated as the Lord's people; none of them shall be treated as aliens, strangers, foreigners from God and his promises and his blessings.

While the Millennial Kingdom will be the Kingdom of God's dear Son, it will also be the Kingdom of God, because God's dear Son and his joint-heir, the Church, will be in absolute accord with the Father, and all that shall be done under their control will fully and completely represent the divine will respecting men. Nevertheless, it will be a separate Kingdom from that of the remainder of the universe, as the Apostle Paul indicates. (1 Cor. 15:24,25,28.) "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet....And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject to him that did put all things under him....Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father," – at the close of the Millennial reign.

Since God is the Author of all the blessings of redemption and restitution, and since every good and every perfect gift cometh down from our Father in heaven, it is with appropriateness that the record declares [R2833 : page 200] that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" – from the eyes of mankind. Tho it will be Christ and the Church who will be doing it, nevertheless, the Heavenly Father will be recognized as the first cause, the fountain of every blessing. The wiping away of tears implies a gradual work, such as we see will be the process of that glorious time. Man will not be exempt from every weakness and trial and difficulty at the beginning, but if he will conform to the laws of the Kingdom, all cause for distress will gradually pass away, as restitution blessings will lift him out of death into perfect life. "They that hear [obey] that prophet [teacher, the Christ, Head and body] shall live; but it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hear that prophet [not render hearty obedience to his requirements] will be cut off from amongst the people [in the Second Death]." – Acts 3:23.

Other Scriptures show us that the work of the Kingdom will begin with those who remain over at the time of its establishment, and that these, under condemnation of death, will at once be blessed with the knowledge and opportunities provided through the ransom, and if they accept these they will immediately be released from condemnation, that they may at once go on and upward on the way of holiness, toward perfection; and subsequently those who "sleep in the dust of the earth" shall come forth to more or less of shame and lasting contempt, as they begin to realize their mental and physical decrepitude, the results of their depravity. Nevertheless, these also, under the blessings of the Kingdom, may make progress up to perfection, losing their sin-blights, and simultaneously losing the "shame and contempt," – whose lasting will be only so long as their cause continues. Thus these may progress in the way of righteousness, so that only those who sin wilfully shall die, and

then each for his own sins only, and not the father for the son's sins, nor the son for the father's sins. – Jer. 31:29,30; Dan. 12:2.

The whole work of the Millennial age is summed up in few words, and we are brought to its culmination in the declaration, "There shall be no more death; neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." What a glorious sun-burst of blessing is in these words! What a grand fulfilment will be there of the Apostle's declaration respecting "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began!" This declaration, however, applies to the very end of the Millennial age, and not in full to any previous time in that age, for other accounts show us unmistakably that there will be imperfections and chastisements and stripes throughout the age, while mankind is being *lifted up*; or as our Lord expressed it, the raising up of mankind throughout the Millennial age, step by step, will be a "resurrection by judgment," chastisements, disciplines. (John 5:28,29.) And even at the close of that age we are shown, in another pen-picture of that time, that there will be a severe trial and testing to demonstrate to what extent the enforced obedience of that age shall have rightly affected the hearts of those who experience its blessings, so that their love will be for righteousness, and that they will hate iniquity. (Rev. 20:7,8.) All who in that final test shall manifest that his heart contains anything aside from full loyalty to the Lord and the principles **[R2833 : page 201]** of righteousness will have his part in the Second Death.

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

The fifth verse of our lesson comprehensively grasps the entire Millennial age; our Lord Jesus, then in the throne of earth's dominion, declaring, "Behold, I make all things new." This expression does not relate merely to rocks and trees, etc., but to

the great work which our Lord undertook; *viz.*, the regeneration of humanity – of so many of Adam's race as would, under favorable conditions of knowledge, experience and assistance, develop characters in full accord with the divine will. The end of the Millennial age will see the work completed; – all the wicked destroyed, all who will not hear the voice of that prophet, teacher, governor, cut off from amongst the people in the Second Death, and all the willing and obedient made new, brought to the complete perfection contemplated in the original divine plan.

John was to write this matter, because the testimony is true, is faithful, as is the one who has promised. This asseveration of faithfulness and truthfulness implies what we see to be the case; *viz.*, that present conditions seem so contrary to all this grand restitution outcome that it cannot be fully believed and trusted by any except those who have learned to walk with the Lord, and in their weakness to lean upon his might, – to trust to his power to accomplish all the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised. To all others these things will appear untrue, and God will appear unfaithful, and the matters which we are here discussing will seem "idle tales," as fables and golden fancies: but to us who believe these promises are precious, and he from whom we receive them is precious, correspondingly as we know him and trust him. – 1 Pet. 2:7.

The one enthroned (the Christ) declares at the conclusion of the Millennial age, "It is done;" my great contract is accomplished; "I am the Alpha and the Omega [the A and the Z], the beginning and the end." It was the Father's good pleasure that the Blessed One, the Only Begotten of the Father, should accomplish the entire program of redemption and restitution; and that incidentally, by his obedience in the things which he suffered that he should prove himself worthy to be forever the associate and representative of the Father, through whom and by whom all things should continue, as he was the one through

whom all things were made that were made. It is this one who, during the Millennial age, will extend to all the willing and obedient the water of life, everlasting life – the privilege of perpetual existence. But they must thirst for it, must desire it; and this desire must be manifest in obedience to the terms, the laws, upon which it will be supplied freely. Our Lord declared to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," and that anyone believing him, trusting him, tho he were dead, yet should he live, – attain to perfect life, escaping from death conditions, until at the close of the Millennium he shall have life in the full, unrestricted sense. And he who thus liveth (attains to life) and still believeth, trusteth in the Life-giver, and is obedient to his directions, *shall never die*.

Our Lord adds, "He that overcometh shall inherit *these* things, and I will be to him a God, and he shall be to me a son." Those addressed are not the Bride class, selected during the Gospel age, but the sheep class of Matt. 25, – such of mankind as during the Millennial age become the Lord's sheep and obey his voice. To these at the end of the Millennial age, in harmony with the Father's plan, he says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They are not invited to inherit the Kingdom prepared for us, in joint-heirship with the Lord, the heavenly Kingdom. But they shall inherit the earth, the purchased possession – they shall come back into all the good estate of father Adam, which he lost for himself and his children through disobedience, but which Jesus redeemed with his own precious blood, and will restore at the close of the Millennium to all the children of Adam who shall have accepted his gracious favors and been regenerated by him, and thus become his sons, and he their God – their "father." – Isa. 9:6.

THE HEAVENLY CITY RESPLENDENT.

Here our lesson turns to a consideration of the city, the glorified Church, the kingdom class, who, during the Millennial age, will be "kings and priests unto God, and reign upon the earth," "a thousand years." (Rev. 5:10; 20:4.) This City class, the glorified Church, it is declared will have no need of the sun or the moon. Nothing in this statement indicates that the world will not have and need both sunlight and moonlight during the Millennial age, and subsequently, "as long as the sun and moon endure." (Psa. 72:5.) And while it will be true that the Church, as spirit beings, will not have need of literal sunlight and literal moonlight, nevertheless, this is not the thought. The sun and the moon here are symbolical, as in Chapter 12:1; the sun signifies the light of this Gospel age; the moon signifies the typically reflected light of the Gospel in the Law and the prophets of the previous dispensation. The glorified Church will have no need of the light which in the present time she so much enjoys through the Word and spirit, and the Law and the prophets. She will have, instead of these, a much more excellent glory, **[R2833 : page 202]** to which the Apostle refers when he says, "Now [with all the light, privileges and opportunities which we enjoy, both as respects the representations of God through the Law and the prophets, and through the instructions and leadings of the spirit in the present] we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known." – 1 Cor. 13:12.

The Church, the Temple of God, will be so filled with all the fulness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor; – will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our

Lord referred in Matt. 13:43, "Then shall [R2834 : page 202] the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" – our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, of course being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." (Mal. 4:2.) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord's glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us, saying that Christ is the Head of the Church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the world's blessing during restitution times. – Verse 22.

When this Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth, its blessings of healing, refreshment and life, mental, moral and physical, upon the world of mankind, the nations shall walk in the light of it. (The words "of them that are saved" are not in old MSS. Indeed, it is because they are *not saved* that they need this special light during the Millennial age, in order to their enlightenment, their salvation, their restitution.) "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it." (The words, "and honor" are not found in old MSS.) The expressions "nations" and "kings" are not to be understood as signifying that the world of mankind during the Millennial age will be divided into nationalities and kingdoms as at present: the word "nations" here signifies peoples, and is intended to show that all peoples, and not merely the people of Israel, will be thus favored under God's Kingdom. The word "kings" represents those princes or chief ones of the earth who, during the Millennial age, will be the chief representatives of the heavenly, spiritual, invisible Kingdom of Christ. These princes, as we have already seen, will be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the faithful prophets of the previous dispensation, who, loving God before the call to the Kingdom and to the Bride class, cannot be of it, but because of their faithfulness will be the princes whom the Lord will establish in

all the earth – first making them perfect individuals, and qualifying them for their office, as a reward for their faithfulness to God in the dark times in which they lived – their manifestation of love for righteousness and trust in the Omnipotent One.

The bringing of their glory into the city, the Kingdom, signifies their acknowledgment of this heavenly Kingdom, their rendering of tribute of praise, thanks, worship and obedience to it as God's agency. And this rendering of glory to the Kingdom will continue throughout the entire Millennial age, as the princes throughout the earth will make known to the people that not in their own names or authority do they rule and execute judgment and establish righteousness, but in the name and as the ministers and representatives of the glorified Christ. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord's Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished; and this is indicated in verse 26.

Then, in consideration of the fact that this book of symbols, while relating to the future, is addressed to God's consecrated elect Church in the present time, and in view of the fact that this message would be communicated to and more or less understood by those who would seek to make their calling and election sure to a part in the glorious city, the 27th verse is added, declaring that "In nowise shall there enter into it anything common, or he that doeth abomination and falsehood – but only they who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." The Lamb's Book of Life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for

the Church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, and under their influence we are expected to keep our garments unspotted from the world; to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to hate every contamination of the flesh upon our robe of righteousness; and to seek immediately in prayer for the removal of any spot or wrinkle or any such thing from our wedding garment, – that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."
