

The Deep Things of God

*“Eye hath not seen,
nor ear heard,
neither have
entered into the
heart of man, the
things which God
hath prepared for
them that love him.*

*But God hath
revealed them unto
us by his Spirit:
for the Spirit
searcheth all
things, yea, the
deep things of God.”*

*—I Corinthians
2:9,10*

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE

Apostle Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as the holy power of God. He explains that its revealing power operates for the benefit of the Lord's people during the present Gospel Age largely through the written Word of God. It is referred to by Jesus as “the Spirit of truth.” (John 16:13) Only those whose hearts are surrendered to the will of God and whose lives are dedicated to knowing and doing God's will as revealed

through his Word are capable of understanding its message to them. They are able to appreciate it to the extent that they are inspired by it to lay down their lives in sacrifice for the divine cause. These know and, as Paul says, “speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God

ordained before the world unto our glory”—to show us the path to glory.—I Cor. 2:7

While these hidden things of God are referred to as a ‘mystery,’ they are mysterious only to those who are not dedicated to following in the Master’s footsteps and are not walking in the “path of the just [which] is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18) To these ‘the deep things of God’ are gloriously simple and understandable, regardless of the degree of their education. The understanding of the plans and purposes of God is attainable by all whom the Lord has called. These are called according to his purpose, and invited to participate in his great program for the recovery of the human race from sin and death.

THE THINGS PREPARED

Paul tells us that the natural ‘eye’ and the natural ‘ear’ cannot appreciate the things which God ‘has prepared for them that love him.’ He then explains that these things are revealed to us by the Spirit—that revealing power of God that ‘searcheth all things, yea, [even] the deep things of God.’ This indicates that the deep things of God are in a very large sense an understanding and appreciation of the things which God has prepared for us as the footstep followers of the Master.

What has God prepared for his loved ones of this Gospel Age? The Scriptures reveal the answer to this question to the full extent it is possible for our finite minds to comprehend. However, in approaching the subject it is well to remember Paul’s statement that “now we see through a glass, darkly; but

then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” by the Lord.—I Cor. 13:12

In a reference to one of the things which God has prepared for those who love him, the Apostle John wrote, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”—I John 3:1-3

We are thus reminded of the limitations of our understanding while still in the flesh. The promise is clear that as sons of God we will be made like the glorified Jesus, but it does not clearly appear what is involved in this. The reason for this is that Jesus is now a divine being, and we do not understand fully what a divine being is like. Therefore, this full depth of knowledge has not yet appeared to us, and will not until we are actually made like him in the “first resurrection.”—Rev. 20:6

A PLACE PREPARED

Another precious promise pertaining to the things which God prepared in his plan for those who love him assures us, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will

come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—John 14:1-3

We are here confronted with an incomprehensible thought so far as human perception is concerned. Jesus takes us one step further than the Apostle John, however, for from his words we know that we will not only be like him, but will also be with him in a place which he went away to prepare. We know that in the universe there is a mansion for the angels, and there is an earthly mansion for God’s human creation. We know a great deal about this earthly mansion but, as for the others, our knowledge is very limited. Especially is this true of the ‘place’ which Jesus said he would have ready when he returned to receive his bride unto himself.

THE KING’S DAUGHTER

In Psalm 45:13-15, the glorified church which will be the “bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Rev. 21:9), is referred to as the “king’s daughter.” The king is the great Jehovah, our Heavenly Father. “The king’s daughter is all glorious within [in character]: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace.”

What a glorious prospect is here symbolically described. No words known to our human minds could describe in detail just how wonderful this aspect of the things ‘prepared’ really is. We rejoice in such a hope, and praise God for the love which provided it. We are fortunate, indeed, if we have

entered into “this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”—Rom. 5:2

THE DIVINE NATURE

The Apostle Peter wrote of the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God whereby we are made “partakers of the divine nature.” (II Pet. 1:4) Here we are reminded that the promises of God are designed to prepare us to receive that which they assure us will be ours if we are faithful unto death. We ask, though, what is the divine nature? It is God’s nature—immortality. It is the highest of all natures in the universe, and God has designed that he will share it with his sons, beginning with Jesus and including all his faithful followers.

One of the conditions associated with the promises of God, pertaining to the bestowal of the divine nature, is the willingness to lay down one’s life in sacrificial service. This requirement is part of the outworking of the Creator’s grand design for the recovery of the human race from sin and death. Jesus’ faithfulness in sacrifice is portrayed in Isaiah 53:12, where his personal reward is described, “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great.” The ‘great’ here referred to is his Heavenly Father, and when raised from the dead Jesus was exalted to the express image of his Father. “All power” was given to him “in heaven and in earth.”—Matt. 28:18

Continuing in Isaiah 53:12, the verse adds, “and he shall divide the spoil [the reward] with the strong.” Here we are informed that the reward Jesus received from the Heavenly Father he will share with the ‘strong.’ This is a reference to

those in the Gospel Age who are “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” (Eph. 6:10) These are the overcoming ones who have been blessed in following Jesus’ admonition to overcome the world.

To these, we find Jesus saying, “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 is as though Jesus had in mind the promise made to him that he would be given a portion with the Great. He now was carrying out the remainder of that same promise that he would share this reward with the strong, the overcomers. This is another one of the blessed ‘things’ of our text which the Father has prepared for those who love him.

In view of these promises, how meaningful are Jesus’ words in his prayer shortly before he was crucified, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”—John 17:22-26

THE WORLD TO BELIEVE

In praying for the oneness of his followers with himself and with the Father, Jesus added, "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21) The full oneness of Christ and his followers will not be a reality until they are glorified together with him in that 'place' which he went away to prepare. We see from Jesus' statement relative to this that there is a glorious divine purpose involved in this high exaltation of the Christ, that purpose being the enlightenment and reconciliation of the world.

In other words, the call, preparation, and exaltation of the church to heavenly glory is not an end in itself. It is a part of the divine plan for the restoration of the human race to that oneness with the Creator which existed before our first parents fell into sin and death. The church is to live and reign with Christ in his kingdom. The purpose of this kingdom is to put down the enemies of God and to destroy death. When this is accomplished, and when all things are subdued unto the Father, "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—I Cor. 15:24-28

Preeminently, then, the great thing which God prepared for the faithful followers of Jesus is the privilege and honor of cooperating with him in the divine plan for the blessing of all the families of earth, with restoration to perfect human life. This indeed is one of the 'deep things' of the Word of God. It is so deep that only very few of all the professed millions of Christians know anything about it. It is simply for those to whom God reveals the mysteries of the Truth.

The means for this future blessing of mankind is the long-promised kingdom. Over and over again the assurance is given to us that if we are faithful in suffering and dying with Jesus we will have the privilege of living and reigning with him. The resurrected Jesus said, “He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.”—Rev. 2:26,27

THE JUDGMENT WORK

The Scriptures also abound with assurances that the faithful followers of the Master—those who lay down their lives in the service of the Lord, the Truth, and the brethren—will share in the future work of judging the world in righteousness. This is one of the various aspects of the kingdom work. Paul wrote, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?”—I Cor. 6:2

The apostles had given up their all to serve the Lord and were faithfully following in the Master’s footsteps. They went to Jesus on one occasion indicating their desire to know just what their reward would be. Peter served as spokesman, and said to Jesus, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?” To this Jesus replied, “Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”—Matt. 19:27,28

Note that this judgment scene takes place when the ‘Son of man’ sits on the ‘throne of his glory.’ This follows his coming in glory, and when he sits on the throne of his glory all his “holy angels” or messengers—the entire church—are there with him. (Matt. 25:31) In Matthew 19:28 quoted previously, the judgment of the ‘twelve tribes of Israel’ is mentioned. Jesus enlarges upon this in chapter 25:32 saying that “all nations” shall be gathered before him in judgment. The reference here is to the people of all nations.

What a blessed privilege it will be to participate in that future work of judgment and, in this way, join in extending the blessings of life to all who, during the testings of that time, prove worthy. How deep and glorious is this wonderful truth concerning the future inheritance of God’s New Creation.

AN OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE

Through the prophet Daniel, God assures us that “the saints”—the faithful followers of Jesus—shall share in the Messianic Kingdom rule. Daniel 7:18 reads, “The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” In this same prophecy, we are assured that the saints shall also participate in the work of judging the world. We read, “Judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”—vs. 22

A New Testament confirmation of this wonderful promise of kingship and judgeship prepared for the true followers of Jesus is found in Revelation. Daniel’s prophecy declares that ‘judgment was given

to the saints of the most High,' and in Revelation 20:4, we read, "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." This reminds us of Jesus' promise to the disciples mentioned previously that they would sit upon thrones and that they would be judges.

Who are these so highly honored? They are the ones who are "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads." These are indeed the 'saints' of Daniel's prophecy, and they "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This work of judging and reigning with Christ cannot begin until these saints all die and are made alive in what is described in verse 6 as "the first resurrection." This verse declares that this class shall "be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." It will be at the close of this thousand-year reign of Christ and his church that Satan, having been bound for the thousand years, will be "loosed out of his prison" for a little season.—vs. 7

THE MELCHISEDEC PICTURE

The faithful overcomers of the present age will participate with Jesus during the Millennium in a priesthood typified by Melchisedec, who was both a priest and a king. As the promise states, 'They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign'—reigning priests as well as judges. As kings they will subdue all things unto the Father. As priests they will bless all who become willing and obedient at that time. As judges they will enlighten

and discipline the people to bring them into harmony with righteousness and with God. Isaiah wrote that when God's "judgments are [abroad] in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:9

How wonderful, indeed, are the things which God has prepared for those who love him, and who are called according to his promise. These, as our text so clearly indicates, are among the deep things of God. These treasures of Truth are designed by the Lord for our encouragement.

The purpose of these is that we may be able, through the incentive received from them, to endure the trials which the Father's love and wisdom may permit to come upon us as we walk the narrow way that leads to glory, honor, and immortality.

These deep things of God cannot be understood except by those to whom God reveals them by his Spirit. When thus revealed, as we have seen, they are found to be simple—not complex and beyond the grasp of all except the brilliant and educated. This is in keeping with God's arrangements for calling mostly the ordinary people of this world, and giving them the opportunity and ability to understand his plan for them. Let us thank him that he has called us and given us to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Let us be faithful to these glorious truths. ■

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
—II Corinthians 5:1