

STUDY VII

THE DELIVERANCE AND EXALTATION OF THE CHURCH

The Deliverance of the Church Near--It will be the Harbinger of Deliverance to all Mankind--Its Date Approximated--How the Saints will Escape Those Things Coming on the World--How and When God will Help Her--The Manner and Circumstances of Her Final Deliverance --The Deliverance First of Those Who Sleep in Jesus--The Change of the Living Members of the Church--Will They Die?-- Blessed are the Dead Who Die in the Lord from Henceforth.

**"Look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth
nigh." *Luke 21:28***

BY THE lamp of prophecy we have traced the wonderful events of the "harvest" down to their culmination in the great time of trouble; and, as we remember that within this eventful period the promised deliverance and exaltation of the Church are due, the central points of interest to the saints now are the time, manner and circumstances of their deliverance.

Our Lord taught us that as soon as we should begin to see the events of the harvest come to pass, then we should expect a speedy realization of our glorious hope. And, therefore, as we now mark the accumulating evidence of these signs, we do lift up our heads and rejoice in hope of the glory to follow; for the morning cometh, although a brief, dark night must intervene. Nor is this rejoicing selfish in its character; for the deliverance and exaltation of the Church of Christ will be the harbinger of a speedy deliverance to the whole race, from the tyranny and oppression of the great enslaver, Sin, from the shadow and pains of sickness, and from the prison-house of death: "For we know that the

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whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain,...waiting for the...**deliverance** of OUR BODY"--the "body of Christ" (*Rom. 8:22,23*); because, according to Jehovah's arrangement, the new order of things cannot be established until the great ruler, the Christ complete, Head and body, has come fully into power.

That the deliverance of the saints must take place very soon after 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time, and the angry nations will then be authoritatively commanded to be still, and will be made to recognize the power of Jehovah's Anointed. Just how long after 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed; but it certainly will not be until their work in the flesh is done; nor can we reasonably presume that they will long remain after that work is accomplished. With these two thoughts in mind, we can approximate the time of the deliverance.

While there are clear indications that some of the living members of the body will witness the gathering of the storm and share in some of the troubles it will bring, there are also indications that none of these will pass entirely through it, nor even far into it. The Master's words, "Watch, that ye may be accounted **worthy to escape** those things that shall come to pass" (*Luke 21:36*), seem to indicate this. And yet we know that we are already passing through the beginning of these troubles (the troubles upon the nominal Church incident to its testing), and that we are escaping, while many on every hand are falling into error and infidelity. We escape, not by being taken from the scene of trouble, but by being supported, strengthened and kept in the very midst of

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it all by the Word of the Lord, our shield and buckler. (*Psa. 91:4*) While admitting that in like manner some members of the body might remain to the very end of the time of trouble, and pass through it all, and yet **thus escape** all the trouble coming, it is nevertheless clear, we think, that all the members of the body will be fully delivered--exalted to the glorious condition--before the severest features of the trouble come--after the body is complete and the door shut.

We have seen the storm gathering for years past: the

mighty hosts have been mustering and preparing for the battle, and each successive year witnesses more rapid strides of progress toward the foretold crisis; yet, although we know that unparalleled disaster must soon dash all law and order into the abyss of anarchy and confusion, we do not fear; for "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth [the present organization of society] be removed [unsettled and disorganized], and though the mountains [kingdoms] be carried into the midst of the sea [the lawless and ungovernable people]; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled [with the disputings of contending factions]; though the mountains [kingdoms] shake [tremble for fear and insecurity] with the swelling [the threatening and rising power] thereof." *Psa. 46:1-3*

"There is a river [God's Word, a fountain of truth and grace], the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God [the Kingdom of God, the Church--even in its present embryo condition, before its exaltation to power and glory], the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High [the sanctuary--the Church wherein the Most High is pleased to dwell]. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her." *Psa. 46:4,5*

At the present time we are realizing this promised help, to the full extent of our present necessities, by being taken

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into our heavenly Father's confidence, made acquainted with his plans and assured of his favor and sustaining grace, and even being made co-workers with him. This help we shall realize to the full end of our course; and then we shall be helped still more by being "changed" to the higher sphere to which we are called, and toward which we diligently urge our way.

Though we may be sure that this "change" of the last living members of the body of Christ will not take place until the work committed to them in the flesh is accomplished, we are informed, as shown in the preceding chapter, that ere long our work will be cut short--gradually at first, and then completely and finally, when "the night cometh, when no man can work." (*John 9:4*) And the gloom of that "night" will be dispelled only by the Millennial sunrise. When our work is done, and that night closes in around us, we may expect not only to see the storm-clouds grow much darker, but also to hear and to feel the rising "winds" which will culminate in a wild hurricane of human passion--a

whirlwind of trouble. Then, having finished our appointed work, it will be our part to "stand," patiently, until our "change" comes. *Eph. 6:13*

How long the Lord may be pleased to let his saints stand in enforced idleness so far as his work is concerned, we do not know, but probably only long enough to let faith and patience have their perfect work. Here these virtues will be most fully developed, tested and manifested. This test of patience will be the final trial of the Church. Then "God will help her, at the dawning of [her] morning" (*Psa. 46:5*, **Leeser's** translation)--not the morning which is to dawn on the world at the brightness of her rising with her Lord as the sun of righteousness, but at the dawning of **her** morning in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord. **Her** morning is to precede the Millennial morning.

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That this dark night is already approaching we are made aware, not only from the Scriptures but as well from the ominous signs of the times; and the fate of the Church then, so far as her human career is concerned, seems outlined in the closing pages of the lives of Elijah and John the Baptist, already referred to.* The beheading of the one, and the whirlwind and fiery chariot which bore away the other, probably indicate violence to the last members of the body of Christ. Yet Zion need not fear; for God is in the midst of her, and will help her. Her consecration is unto death, and her privilege is to prove her faithfulness: "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be **as** his master, and the servant **as** his lord." *Matt. 10:24,25*

It will probably be in an effort at self-preservation on the part of "Great Babylon"--"Christendom"--when she sees her power in politics, priest-craft and superstition waning, that the work of truth-spreading will be stopped as detrimental to her system. And probably at this juncture the Elijah class, persisting in declaring the truth to the last, will suffer violence, pass into glory and escape from the severest features of the great time of trouble coming--just in the crisis of affairs when men begin to feel that desperate measures must be resorted to, to sustain the tottering structure of Christendom.

Although the exact time of the deliverance or "change" of the last members of the body of Christ is not stated, the **approximate time** is nevertheless clearly manifest, as **shortly after the "door" is shut** (*Matt. 25:10*); after the truth, which

Babylon now begins to regard as her enemy, and as calculated to accomplish her destruction, shall have become more generally known and widely circulated; after "the

*Vol. II, pages 260-263.

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hail" has to a considerable extent swept away the refuge of lies; and after the now smoldering and menacing hatred of the truth is thereby roused to an opposition so violent and so general as to effectually stop the further progress of the great work in which the saints are engaged. And God will permit this as soon as all the elect are "sealed." But, whatever of trouble or seeming disaster may await the saints while they remain in the flesh, and put a stop to the work which it is their meat and drink to do, let us take comfort in remembering that nothing can befall us without our Father's notice and permission, and that in every trial of faith and patience his grace shall be sufficient for those who abide in him, and in whom his Word abides. Let us look beyond the veil, and keep the eye of faith fixed upon the prize of our high calling, which God has in reservation for them that love him--for the called and faithful and chosen according to his purpose. *Rev. 17:14; Rom. 8:28*

While we may thus reasonably and Scripturally approximate the time and circumstances of the full deliverance of the Church, the **manner** of her glorification becomes all the more a question of deepening interest. And again we come to the divine oracles to make inquiry.

First, Paul declares, "We must **all** be changed [the living no less than the dead saints]: this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." And this "change" from mortality to immortality, he assures us, will not be accomplished by gradual development, but it will be instantaneous--"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," under the sounding of the "last trump"--which is already sounding.* *1 Cor. 15:53,50,52*

*See Vol. II, Chapter v.

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Furthermore, order will be observed: some will be glorified or "changed" first, and others afterward. Precious in the sight of the Lord has been the death of his saints (*Psa. 116:15*): and though most of them have slept long, none have been forgotten. Their names are written in heaven as acceptable members of the Church of the Firstborn. And the Apostle declares that the living, who are left over to the presence of the Lord, will by no means precede those who fell asleep. (*1 Thess. 4:15*) Those who sleep in Jesus are not required to wait in sleep for the living members to finish their course, but are resurrected at once, as one of the first acts of the Lord when he takes his great power. And thus those members of the Christ who have slept will take precedence in entering into glory.

The exact date of the awakening of the sleeping saints is not directly stated, but may be clearly inferred from our Lord's parable of the young nobleman. After having received the kingdom and returned, the first work of the nobleman (who represented our Lord Jesus) was the reckoning with the servants (his Church) to whom his vineyard had been entrusted during his absence, and the rewarding of the faithful. And since the Apostle tells us that the dead in Christ will be reckoned with first, we may reasonably conclude that the rewarding of these took place as soon as our Lord, after his return, took unto himself his great power.

To learn the date at which our Lord began the exercise of his power would therefore be to discover the time when his sleeping saints were awakened to life and glory. And to do this we have but to recall the parallelism of the Jewish and Gospel dispensations. Looking back to the type, we see that in the spring of A.D. 33, three and a half years after the beginning of the Jewish harvest (A.D. 29), our Lord typically took unto himself his power and exercised kingly authority.

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(See *Matt. 21:5-15*.) And evidently the only object of that action was to mark a parallel point of time in this harvest, when he would in reality assume the kingly office, power, etc.; viz., in the spring of 1878, three and a half years after his second advent at the beginning of the harvest period, in the fall of 1874. The year 1878 being thus indicated as the date when the Lord began to take unto himself his great power, it is reasonable to conclude that there the setting up

of his Kingdom began, the first step of which would be the deliverance of his body, the Church, among whom the sleeping members are to take precedence.

And since the resurrection of the Church must occur some time during this "end" or "harvest" period (*Rev. 11:18*), we hold that it is a most reasonable inference, and one in perfect harmony with all the Lord's plan, that in the spring of 1878 all the holy apostles and other "overcomers" of the Gospel age who slept in Jesus were raised spirit beings, like unto their Lord and Master. And while we, therefore, conclude that their resurrection is now an accomplished fact, and hence that they as well as the Lord are present in the earth, the fact that we do not see them is no obstacle to faith when we remember that, like their Lord, they are now spirit beings, and, like him, invisible to men. The facts that they are invisible, that tombs were not found opened and empty, and that none were seen going from the cemeteries, are not objections to such as have learned what to expect--to such as realize that our risen Lord left no hole in the walls of the room which he entered and left while the doors were shut; who remember that none saw the risen Redeemer except the few, to whom he specially and miraculously **showed** himself, that they might be witnesses of his resurrection; who remember that he appeared in various forms of flesh to prevent these witnesses supposing that he still was flesh or that any of the forms they saw was his

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glorious, spirit body. Such as remember that only Saul of Tarsus saw Christ's spirit body, and that by a miracle, while others around saw it not, and then at the expense of his sight, will readily see that their not having seen the risen saints with their natural eyes is no more of an objection to the fact of their resurrection than that they have not seen the Lord during this harvest, and have never seen angels, who, all through the Gospel age, have been "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation."*

Our belief that the Kingdom began to be **set up**, or brought into power, in April, 1878, be it observed, rests on exactly the same foundation as our belief that the Lord became present in October, 1874, and that the harvest began at that time. There "the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord's house," the Church, began to be "exalted above the mountains [kingdoms] of earth, and there the work of judging "Babylon," Christendom, and all the nations of the whole

world, began, preparatory to their final overthrow.

Nor is it out of harmony with this thought, that the majority of the Church are exalted, while a few of the last members of that royal priesthood are yet "alive and remain"; for, as we have seen, the Apostle foretold this very order. To be among those who remain is no dishonor; and to be the very last one of those to be "changed" will be no discredit. Several scriptures show that there is a special work for the last members of the body to do on this side the veil, as important and as essentially a part of Kingdom work as that of the glorified members on the other side the veil. While the glorified Head and those members of the body on the other side the veil have the complete supervision of the great changes now in progress and about to be

*See Vol. II, Chapter v.

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inaugurated in the world, the fellow-members who remain in the flesh are the agents of the Kingdom in publishing, by word, by pen, by books and by tracts, the "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." They tell the world the blessed tidings of God's gracious plan of the ages, and that the time is at hand for the glorious consummation of that plan; and they point, not only to the great time of trouble impending, but also to the blessings which will follow it as the results of the setting up of God's Kingdom in the world. A great and important work, then, is given to the remaining members: Kingdom work it is indeed, and accompanied also by Kingdom joys and blessings. Although yet in the flesh and pursuing their appointed work at the expense of self-sacrifice, and in the face of much opposition, these are already entering into the joys of their Lord--the joys of a full appreciation of the divine plan and of the privilege of working out that plan, and, in conjunction with their Lord and Redeemer, of offering everlasting life and blessings to all the families of the earth.

These with their message are clearly pointed out by the prophet *Isaiah* (52:7) as the "feet" or last members of the body of Christ in the flesh, when he says: "How beautiful upon the mountains [kingdoms] are **the feet of him** that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation [deliverance]; that saith unto Zion, Thy God **reigneth**. [The reign of Christ, which shall bring **deliverance**, first to Zion, and finally to all the groaning creation, is begun.] Thy

watchmen shall lift up the voice: with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see [clearly] eye to eye, when the Lord returneth unto Zion."

Poor, bruised "feet," now despised of men, none but yourselves fully appreciate the joy you have in proclaiming present truth, in saying unto Zion that the time is at hand for the setting up of the Kingdom, and in declaring that

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Immanuel's reign of righteousness, soon to be inaugurated, is to bless all the families of the earth. But, though despised of men, the "feet" of Christ and their present mission are highly esteemed on the other side the veil by the glorified fellow-members of the body and by their glorious Head, who is willing to confess such faithful ones before his Father and all his holy messengers.

The mission of the feet, which is no insignificant part of the Kingdom work, will be accomplished. Though their message is popularly hated and discredited and they are despised by the world as fools (for Christ's sake)--as all his **faithful** servants have been throughout the Gospel age--yet, before they all are "changed" and joined to the glorified members beyond the veil, they, as agents of the Kingdom, will have left such records of that Kingdom and its present and future work as will be most valuable information to the world and to the undeveloped and overcharged children of God who, though consecrated to God, will have failed to so run as to obtain the prize of our high calling.

And let it not be forgotten that all who are of the "feet" will be thus engaged in publishing these **good** tidings and in saying to Zion, "Thy God **reigneth!**"--The Kingdom of Christ is begun! And all who are true watchmen can at this time see clearly, as one man, and can together harmoniously sing the new song of Moses and the Lamb--the song of Restitution, so clearly taught, not only in the law of Moses, which was "a shadow of the good things to come," but also in the clearer revelations of the Lamb of God contained in the writings of the New Testament--saying, "Just and true are thy ways." "All nations shall come and worship before thee." **Rev. 15:3,4**

One by one the "feet" class will pass from the present condition, in which, though often weary and wounded, they are always rejoicing, to the other side the veil;

"**changed**" in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality, from weakness to power, from dishonor to glory, from human to heavenly conditions, from animal to spirit bodies. Their **work** will not cease with this change; for all those who will be counted worthy of that change to glory will be already enlisted in the service of the Kingdom on this side the veil: only the weariness, the labor feature, will cease with the change--"They shall rest from their **labor**, but their **works follow with them.**" *Rev. 14:13*

The "change" to these "feet" members will bring them into the same fellowship and glory and power already entered by the members who slept: they will be "caught away" from earthly conditions to be united "together" "with the Lord in the **air**"--in the spiritual rulership of the world. As already shown,* the "air" here mentioned symbolizes **spiritual rule** or power. Satan has long occupied the position of "prince of the power of the air" (*Eph. 2:2*), and has used for his co-workers and joint-rulers in it many of the great ones of Babylon, who, under his blinding errors, verily think they are doing God service. But in due time the present "prince of the air" shall be bound, and shall deceive no more; and the present heavens, the great Antichrist system, will "pass away with a great noise," while the new prince of the air, the true spiritual ruler, Christ Jesus, will take the dominion and establish the "new heavens," uniting with himself in this power or "air" his bride, the "overcomers" of the Gospel age. Thus the "new heavens" will supersede the present "air" powers.

But must all die? all of the "feet" who will be alive and remain until the presence of the Lord? Yes; they all consecrated themselves--"even unto death"; and of these it is

*Vol. I, C318.

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distinctly written that they must all die. No scripture contradicts this thought. God declares by the Prophet--"I have said, Ye are gods [mighty ones]! All of you **sons** of the Highest [God]! Yet ye shall ALL DIE **like men**, and fall like one of the princes." *Psa. 82:6,7*

The word here rendered "princes" signifies chiefs or heads. Adam and our Lord Jesus are the two heads or princes referred to. Both died, but for different reasons: Adam for his own sin, Christ as a willing sacrifice for the sins of the world. And all the Church of Christ, justified by faith in his sacrifice, are **reckoned** freed from the sin of Adam, and also from the death penalty attached to that sin, in order that they may share with Christ as joint-sacrificers. It is as such joint-sacrificers with Christ that the death of the saints is esteemed by God. (*Psa. 116:15*) The fellow-members of the body of Christ, when they die, are recognized as "dead with Christ," "made conformable unto **his death**." They fall like one of the princes--not like the first, but like the second Adam, as members of the body of Christ, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. *Col. 1:24*

That the term "gods," mighty ones, in this passage is applied to all the Sons of the Most High God, who will be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, the heir of all things, is clearly shown by our Lord's reference to it. *John 10:34-36*

"Ye shall **all die** like men"; but, "behold, I show you a mystery: we shall **not all sleep**." To die is one thing, to "sleep" or remain unconscious, dead, is quite another. God's testimony, then, is that all the saints must die, but that they shall not all sleep. Our Lord died, and then slept until the third day, when the Father raised him up. Paul and the other apostles died, and thus "fell asleep," to rest from labor and weariness, to "sleep in Jesus," and to wait for the promised resurrection and a share in the Kingdom at the Lord's

second advent. Accordingly, when the setting up of the Kingdom was due, their awakening from the sleep of death was due. Why should their waiting and sleep continue **after** the Lord is present and the time for His Kingdom has come? There can be no reason for it; and we believe, therefore, that they "sleep" no longer, but are now risen, and with and like their Lord. And if their continuance in the sleep of death is no longer necessary, neither is it necessary that any of the saints who now die in this time of the **presence** of the Lord and the setting up of his Kingdom should "sleep" or **wait in death** for a resurrection at some future time. No, thank God! the Life-giver is present; and, since 1878, when he took his great power and began the exercise of his authority, none of his members need to sleep. Hence, with all of "the feet" who die since that date, the moment of death is the moment of change. They die as men and like men, but **in the same instant** they are made like their Lord, glorious spirit beings. They are caught away from earthly conditions, to be forever with the Lord--"in the air"--in Kingdom power and glory.

It was after our Lord had accomplished the sacrifice of his human nature and had been raised from death, changed to a spirit being, that he declared, "All power in heaven and on earth is given unto me." (*Matt. 28:18*) And not until all the members of the Christ have followed the example of the Head, and finished the sacrifice in death, will the Christ be complete and fully empowered for the great subsequent work of restoring all things.

In view of these things, how full of meaning is the statement, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord **from henceforth**; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors, but their works follow with them." (*Rev. 14:13*) Nowhere in the Scriptures is death represented as in any sense a blessing, except in this one instance; and here it is particularly

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limited and made applicable to a certain specific time*--"from henceforth." And even then, notice, it is blessed only to a special class--"**the dead** who die." This expression must not be considered a blunder, but as a very pointed and forcible description of the small class to whom death will be a blessing. This class constitutes "the feet of Him." And, as already shown, each member of the body of Christ must finish his sacrifice in actual death.

These alone are **the dead** who die. They are reckoned of God as being already dead, and they are exhorted so also to reckon themselves: "Reckon ye yourselves **dead** indeed unto sin." No other dead men can be said to die but this class of dead ones, who must finish their course of sacrifice in actual death.

Thus will God help Zion in the dawning of her morning --in the morning of the eternal day of Christ's triumph. Thus he is already helping her. One by one, imperceptibly to the world, the saints are now being changed, and are joining the company of the Church triumphant; and those who remain to the last proclaim the everlasting gospel until the door is shut and all opportunity to labor is at an end. Then they will "**stand**" in faith and patience and await their change accepting deliverance joyfully through whatsoever agency God may be pleased to permit its accomplishment.

Thus they will be saved from that great hurricane of trouble which will follow their departure, as well as preserved in the forefront of the battle in which **a thousand** will fall into infidelity, and be overcome by the various pestilences of error, to **one** who will stand. *Psa. 91:7*

*When, in a succeeding volume, we examine the wonderful visions of the Revelator, it will be clearly seen that the time here pointed out by the word "**henceforth**," as marked by events, synchronizes closely with 1878 as indicated by the prophecies herein noted.

As the time of trouble draws on, we must therefore expect the true Church in its present condition, the Elias, the John class, to decrease in influence and numbers, while the Christ in triumph and glory, the same body on the other side of the veil, will increase, as John prophetically indicated.

John 3:30

A Little While

"A little while, our fightings will be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
Will turn our darkness into heaven's bright day.

"A little while, the fears that oft surround us
Will to the memories of the past belong;
A little while, the love that sought and found us
Will change our weeping into heaven's glad song.

"A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer--
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirits' vision clearer,
And guide, Oh! guide us in the shining way.

"A little while, O blessed expectation!
For strength to run with patience, Lord, we cry.
Our hearts up leap in fond anticipation:
Our union with the Bridegroom draweth nigh."