

THE HEAVENLY CALLING

consider . . . Jesus

Heb. 3:1

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The Time of the End

Part IX

Taking the Scroll, Breaking the Seals

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts [‘living creatures’] saying, Come and see.

And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer (Rev. 6:1, 2).

Revelation chapters one through four present *the complete Church* in heaven following the present dispensation. Events of the judgment seat are depicted; and when that depicted is one day realized, *the overcomers*, those found worthy to rule the nations with Christ, will be shown forth. And the scene which follows is *the only one* which a person could expect (4:2ff). There is a *relinquishment of crowns by angelic rulers* (4:10, 11), with a view to a *new order of rulers*—Christians having previously been shown qualified through events surrounding the judgment seat—taking these crowns and ruling the earth in the stead of the present order of rulers, in the stead of angels (Rom. 8:18, 19).

“There exists a government of the universe conducted by great angels and their subordinates. Many of these have fallen from their original allegiance to God and prostitute their offices and powers to corrupt His realms. It is therefore inevitable that a re-arrangement shall come in that heavenly government. This will be effected by Christ and His glorified followers being invested with the whole of that heavenly authority. For it

is written that ‘not unto angels hath God subjected the inhabited earth to come’ (Hebrews 2:5).”

— G. H. Lang
World Chaos

Then, immediately after Christians and a segment of the angelic rulers have been dealt with (chs. 1-4), chapter five opens with God seated on His throne, holding a seven-sealed scroll in His right hand. And a powerful angel proclaims with a loud voice,

“Who is worthy to open the book [‘scroll’], and to loose the seals thereof” (v. 2b)?

And no man, in heaven, on earth, or beneath the earth, was found worthy to take the scroll from the hand of the One seated on the throne, break the seals, and look upon the contents (vv. 1-3). Then John began to *weep deeply* (v. 4), for he could only have known, from the Old Testament prophecies, the entirety of that which was involved. The entire program of God, as outlined in His Word regarding His Son, Israel, the Church, and the Nations, could not be brought to pass apart from someone stepping forth to function in this capacity.

Then the scene abruptly changes. Christ is seen as One worthy to take the scroll out of His Father’s right hand, break the seals, and look upon the contents. And, within the sphere of Christ acting in this capacity He is seen functioning in two realms— as both a *Lion* and a *Lamb*.

“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not [‘Stop weeping’]: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root

of David, hath prevailed [Gk. *nikao*, ‘to conqueror,’ ‘be victorious’ (Christ has proved victorious in such a manner as to be deemed worthy)] to open the book [‘scroll’], and to loose the seven seals thereof” (v. 5).

But Christ does not take the scroll from His Father’s right hand as *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*. Rather, He appears as and acts in the capacity of *the Lamb which had been slain*.

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts [‘living creatures’], and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book [‘scroll’] out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne” (vv. 6, 7).

Revelation 5:5 is the only place in the New Testament where Christ is referred to as a *Lion*. And reference to the tribe of Judah simply continues the thought of *regality* from the previous chapter. Judah was *the kingly tribe*, the tribe which possessed *the regal part of the birthright*, which goes back to that which had resulted millenniums before from the action of Jacob’s firstborn, Reuben.

(Through sexual impropriety, Jacob’s firstborn, Reuben, forfeited the rights of the firstborn. And these rights [*priestly, regal, and a double portion of the father’s goods*] were divided among three of his brothers. *The priestly rights* were given to “Levi,” *the regal rights* were given to “Judah,” and *the rights to a double portion of the father’s goods* were given to “Joseph” [realized through his two sons, “Ephraim” and “Manasseh”]. And this has never changed throughout Israel’s history; nor will it ever change at any time in the future.)

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Christ, of the lineage of Judah through David, was about to take the throne and rule the earth. Thus, being introduced, He is first seen as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” (v. 5; cf. Gen. 49:10). He was about to exercise *the regal rights* inherent in that seen through His lineage. But first *He must redeem the forfeited inheritance*. And to do this He must act in the capacity of “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (cf. Rev. 5:6; 13:8).

With respect to *redemption*, Christ is referred to as “a Lamb” twenty-eight times in the Book of Revelation. That seen within the seven-sealed scroll has to do with *redemption* and *the earth*. This scroll contains *God’s redemptive terms surrounding the earth*, and Christ is seen breaking the seals of the scroll as *a slain Lamb*, not as the Lion from the tribe of Judah. Exercising that depicted by the latter could only occur *following* the breaking of the seals and carrying out the redemptive terms contained in the scroll.

That Which Is Involved

Chapters six through the first part of chapter nineteen relate events having to do with the breaking of the seven seals, along with related events occurring on earth during this time. These chapters relate events having to do with God’s end-time dealings with Israel, lasting seven years, fulfilling the seventieth and final week of Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). This seven-year period is dealt with time after time in Old Testament prophecy. And that should be understandable, for judgments during this period bring events to pass which, in turn, bring that toward which God has been working for 6,000 years to a conclusion.

Judgments during this period not only result in a redemption of the forfeited inheritance but also bring Israel to the place of repentance. And bringing Israel to the place of repentance during these final seven years *will allow everything else to fall into place*. *Everything* is contingent upon Israel’s repentance. Thus, is it any wonder that both events and the timing of these events designed

to bring this to pass not only form a major subject of Old Testament prophecy but also occupy a major section of the final book of Scripture as well?

Then, the bride for whom the Spirit is searching during the present dispensation, who will be revealed through the decisions and determinations of the judgment seat (Rev. 1-4), will, through the process of the judgments during the subsequent seven-year Tribulation, be automatically married to Christ (Rev. 6-19a). In Old Testament typology this is seen through Ruth being revealed as the bride on Boaz’s threshing floor (Ruth 3) and then automatically becoming Boaz’s wife through the process of Boaz subsequently redeeming the inheritance (Ruth 4; ref. Part VIII of this series).

Not only must Christ redeem the inheritance in the antitype but two things must occur in connection with this redemption:

- 1) Israel must be restored as the wife of Jehovah.
- 2) And, those Christians removed from the body of Christ, forming the bride (brought to pass through and based on decisions and determinations at the judgment seat), must be wed to Christ.

The necessity of both being brought to pass preceding the Messianic Era is seen in God’s creation of and dealings with man in relation to the government of the earth in the opening chapters of Genesis. God restored the ruined domain (Gen. 1:2b-25). Then God created man to rule the restored domain (Gen. 1:26-28). And God created man “male and female,” with the female seen as being a part of the male (created within the male and later removed and formed into a helpmate for the male [Gen. 2:18-24]). Consequently, together, the man and the woman formed *one complete being*.

Man was created in the image and likeness of God to rule the earth (Gen. 1:26), he was created male and female (Gen. 1:27), and it was to *the complete man* (comprised of both the man and the woman) that God said:

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion [Heb. *radah*, ‘to rule’; also v.

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written by the editor.*

26] over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every moving thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:28).

The overall account of man’s creation forms an unchangeable type, showing the manner in which man was/is to ascend the throne. The man and the woman in the type were to ascend the throne together, *as one complete being*, and rule the restored earth. And so must it be in the antitype.

(The original type in the opening chapters of Genesis has to do with Christ and His wife rather than with God and Israel. It has to do with the first man, the first Adam, and with the second Man, the last Adam, and with their wives, respectively. But though the type foreshadows Christ and His wife, *the principles* regarding how God set forth rulership in the kingdom of men at the beginning of His Word would hold true in both spheres under discussion — God ruling in the kingdom of men, or God’s Son ruling in the kingdom of men.

Where man is directly involved — whether in the past theocracy or in the future theocracy — God simply cannot and will not rule in the kingdom of men apart from the manner in which He Himself has established matters, apart from a husband-wife relationship.)

Thus, when it comes to God ruling in past time in the Old Testament theocracy, or in a future restored theocracy, or to Christ ruling the earth, this *principle* established in the opening chapters of Genesis cannot be violated. Rulership in the kingdom of men, by God and man, can be accomplished in God’s eyes *through one means alone*. It can be accomplished *only through the means in which it was originally established*

in the beginning, in Genesis. It can be accomplished *only through a husband-wife relationship, the man and the woman ascending the throne together.*

This is why Israel is seen as *the wife of Jehovah* in the Old Testament theocracy. And this is why Israel will be seen as the restored wife of Jehovah in the future restoration of the theocracy.

This is also why the Spirit is in the world today searching for a bride for God's Son, in fulfillment of that seen in Genesis chapter twenty-four. The Son can no more reign apart from possessing a wife than God could have reigned in the Old Testament theocracy, or the future theocracy, apart from possessing a wife. To have done so in the past or to do so in the future, by either the Father or the Son, would violate that which God established in *an unchangeable fashion* at the beginning.

In the opening chapter of Genesis there is the restoration of a ruined domain and the creation of man (male and female) to rule the restored domain. Then in the Book of Revelation there is a redemption of this same domain, with a view to man, as God originally intended, ruling this redeemed domain. And through bringing all of this to pass, *two marriages* have to occur — *a marriage between God and Israel, and a marriage between God's Son and the bride whom the Spirit will have previously procured.* Both are inseparably connected with the redemption of the inheritance, in the same manner that the creation of man was inseparably connected with the restoration of the ruined creation in Genesis chapter one.

Both marriages *will* occur. *They will have to occur.* This is the way matters have been set forth in the types, and this is the manner in which that foreshadowed in the types *must and will* be brought to pass in the fulfillment of the complete overall antitype — *God and His wife exercising dominion together, and Christ and His wife exercising dominion together.*

Understanding certain things about the manner in which God originally established rulership over the earth at the time of man's creation will put to rest all of the false ideology prevalent in Christendom today concerning how rulership in the kingdom of God in relation to the earth is often viewed. And, in reality, understanding Bibli-

cal principles drawn from this overall teaching is the only thing which will put these matters to rest.

For example, there is both the thought of *a kingdom now* ("Dominion Theology," as it is sometimes called) and the thought that some type *mystery form* of the kingdom exists within Christendom today. Neither, of course, can be the case, for, where man is involved, a husband-wife relationship between God and Israel or between Christ and the bride for whom the Spirit is presently searching must exist for a kingdom of either nature to exist.

A Husband-wife relationship between God and Israel can't presently exist, for Israel remains unrepentant. Consequently, there can be no present marriage between God and Israel. A divorce decree, instead, is still binding.

And a Husband-wife relationship between Christ and the Church can't presently exist, for not only is the Spirit's search for the bride incomplete but the time for the bride to be removed from the body and be revealed is yet future. Consequently, there can be no present marriage between Christ and His prospective bride.

There is, however, a present existing kingdom in which "the heavens do rule" and in which "the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. 4:17-35). But this is not a form of the rule which existed within the Old Testament theocracy. Nor is it a form of the rule within the theocracy as it will one day exist. The manner in which "the heavens do rule" today is *quite different.*

God ruled in the Old Testament theocracy in conjunction with His wife. Israel was to be placed at the head of the nations, with the nations being blessed through Israel (Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 4:22, 23; 19:5, 6). But Israel formed unholy alliances with the nations, and God eventually divorced Israel (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:1-8; Hosea 2:2). Once this had occurred, a husband-wife relationship, necessary for God to rule in this manner in the kingdom of men, ceased to exist. Accordingly, the theocracy could no longer exist, and God took the kingdom from Israel (Ezek. 1:15, 16, 26-28; 8:3-9; 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23; cf. Ezek. 43:1-5).

But God is sovereign. He rules over all. And removing the theocracy

from Israel didn't do away with God's rule in the kingdom of men. Rather, it changed that rule back to the manner in which it had existed prior to the Old Testament theocracy, or the manner in which it exists today. It changed God's governmental structure to a rule solely through the incumbent ruler, Satan.

(God's rule through Satan is something which could never have completely ceased, even during the time of the O.T. theocracy. A rule through Israel — another ruling "son," separate from Satan and his rule [Ex. 4:22, 23] — allowed God to deal with the Gentile nations in a manner separate from the disqualified ruler whom He had originally placed over the earth, who was still in power and remains in power today. It allowed God to have a ruling entity through whom His message could effectively be carried to the nations and through whom the nations could, in turn, be blessed [Ex. 19:5, 6; Num. 23:9; Isa. 43:10, 21; 60:5, 6].)

God is never seen ruling provinces in His universe in a direct manner. Rather, He is seen ruling through or in conjunction with others (angels and man). In the case of angels placed over provinces, such as Satan placed over the earth, He rules through these angels; in the case of Israel, His wife in the Old Testament theocracy, He ruled in conjunction with man.

And since a theocracy has not existed in the camp of Israel for over two and one-half millenniums, there was only one possible means for God to carry out His regal activities in relation to the earth during this time. God could only have ruled in the kingdom of men through the one whom He originally placed in the position of ruler over the earth — through Satan, though a rebel ruler, but still God's anointed ruler (Ezek. 28:14), whom God has yet to remove and replace.

And, of course, any thought of principles surrounding a husband-wife relationship within the government, as seen in the opening chapters of Genesis, could not exist in the present government of the earth. Marriage exists in the human realm alone. Completely different principles regarding the government of the earth in this respect would

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exist regarding the present government, principles set forth and existing at a time prior to man's creation and even prior to the time of Satan's fall.

Then the thought of the existence or non-existence of any type kingdom of Christ on earth during the present time — *a mystery form, or any other form* — should be simple enough to understand. Christ, as His Father, could not rule in a kingdom apart from exercising power in the same manner that His Father exercises power — through or in conjunction with others, whether angels or men. And since Christ does not presently possess a wife, the only type present rule of Christ in the kingdom of men, which could possibly be considered, is the same type rule which His Father presently possesses (note that the Son is presently seated on the throne with His Father in the heavens [Psa. 110:1; Rev. 3:21]).

(Principles pertaining to marriage in the human realm and non-marriage in the angelic realm in relation to the government of the earth presents an interesting thought surrounding the co-habitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men in Gen. 6:1-4 [angels in the kingdom of Satan taking wives from the female lineage of Adam and his progeny, something which apparently began very early in man's history (vv. 1, 2)]. *A corruption of the human race* could only have been Satan's goal, with probably more than one facet of corruption in view. And these facets of corruption would have a single purpose — *to prevent man from ascending the throne and fulfilling the reason for his creation in the beginning.*

Not only would there have been an effort to prevent the appearance of the Seed of the woman promised at the time of man's fall [Gen. 3:15] but there would have been an effort to corrupt and destroy that which God had established in the beginning concerning the manner

in which man was to conduct appointed regal activities, through a husband-wife relationship. And an effort to prevent the latter would have been brought to pass through a corruption of the husband-wife relationship by the recorded co-habitation between fallen incumbent rulers and fallen female members of God's new entity which had been created to rule.

This same thing can subsequently be seen occurring in a homosexual manner among those in the land covenanted to Abraham and his seed during the days of Abraham and Lot [Gen. 18, 19; Jude 6, 7], along with a heterosexual manner once again among those in this same land during the days of Moses [Num. 13:31-33].

Is it any wonder that God eventually stepped in during Noah's day bringing about a worldwide flood [Gen. 6:11ff]? or during Abraham and Lot's day utterly destroying the cities of the plain [Gen. 19:24ff]? or during Moses' day by telling His people to go into the land and, "with a mighty destruction," do away with all of the nations therein [Deut. 7:1, 2, 16, 22-24]?)

Promises to Israel and the Church

Israel possesses a promise which is *regal* in fulfillment, in complete keeping with both the nation's calling and with man's creation in the beginning. This promise can be seen numerous places in the Old Testament (*e.g.*, in type through God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses in the opening chapters of Exodus, through God's deliverance of the Israelites numerous times during the days of the judges in the book of Judges, or through God's promise to Solomon at the time of the dedication of the temple in II Chron. 7:12ff).

Note the way this promise is worded in Leviticus chapter twenty-six:

"If they [the Israelites] shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers...

Then will I remember my covenant

with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land" (vv. 40a, 42).

This is the promise to which attention was called in the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel in the gospel accounts at the time of Christ's first coming:

"Repent ye [a plural pronoun, the entire nation]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand" (Matt. 3:2).

This is also the promise to which attention was again called in the reoffer of the kingdom following Christ's ascension, seen during the Acts period:

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you [the entire nation] in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38a; cf. 3:19-26).

This is the promise which Israel presently possesses. And this is the promise which Israel will one day realize, when the Jewish people are brought to the end of themselves through the judgments of the Tribulation, causing them to act on this promise.

Christians likewise possess a promise, which, as well, is *regal* in fulfillment (*e.g.*, seen in numerous O.T. types, numerous N.T. parables, the epistles, and other places in both testaments).

Note how this promise is worded in Rev. 3:21, which would, as well, also encompass the preceding six overcomer's promises in chapters two and three:

"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."

The future for both Israel and the Church is as bright as the promises of God — which, when fulfilled, will be inseparably associated with blessings for the nations on a redeemed earth.

— To be Continued —

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