

THE CHRIST OF GLORY

(Bro. Bakht Singh, Balance of Truth, 1966, July)

"And when. I saw Him; I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon saying unto me, Fear, not; I am the first and the last."

As we see the end time approaching we should read the book of Revelation again and again. We are enjoined to do so in verse 3, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy . . ." The message of the book is for the final days, and we do well to heed the warnings, because we are already living in the end times.

We may not fully understand the Lord's message in this book; and we may also have various interpretations of the different passages, but it will not make much difference. The main thing is that we carefully and prayerfully read it on our knees, verse by verse; chapter by chapter. In this way you will receive great blessing, as well as be found prepared for that day of glory when the Lord Jesus comes.

The message of this book is especially written to those who want to overcome. If we do not have the desire to overcome, God will not force us; but it is plain that He wants us to overcome, for that is why the phrase "he that overcometh" is repeated seven times in the second and third chapters, and in other places also. If you really want to overcome the attacks of the evil one and all his wiles, you will find the application of these divine principles effective, for triumphant living.

For this reason, I feel constrained to exhort you to read this book as much as possible, first to help others. What is not clear, the Holy Spirit will make plain as you read. May I simply suggest for your own study, to divide this book into seven parts. You will see the Lord Jesus Christ giving a seven-fold glimpse of His glory:

Chapter 1—gives a glimpse of the glory of His Person. Who is He? What is He? We may have seen Him on many occasions, but He is so great and wonderful that it will take eternity to see and know Him as He is.

Chapters 2-3 shows His glory revealed in His Church upon the earth. The Lord is moving and working in and through His Church upon the earth despite the devil's very fierce attacks. I can suggest at least forty-nine messages in these two chapters by dividing and sub-dividing.

In chapters 4-5, we have a glimpse of the glory of the Heavenly Church. It is a revelation of what we are going to be when we are taken up to be with Himself.

Chapters 6-19, reveal a glimpse of the glory of His throne. He is seen judging from His throne on behalf of His saints.

Chapter 20: The last part of this chapter shows the glory of His great white throne. This is the time when Christ will judge all peoples and nations who now refuse Him and walk in darkness.

Chapters 21-22: In these we have a seven-fold glimpse of the new creation, "Behold I make all things new" (verse 5).

This book is the book of Glory —the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Prince of Peace and also the God of Glory. If you divide this book into seven parts, you will find it simple to study. Proceed very slowly, and do not be in any hurry.

My purpose now is not to study the whole book, but only to share a few hints from the first chapter.

John the apostle was the beloved disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. This man of God became a prisoner for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ in his old age. This was the year 95 A.D. Patmos is a very barren-looking island about 60 miles distant from Ephesus.

John the apostle was there alone, with many many questions sweeping through his mind because of the situation concerning all the saints of God. For 80 years he had watched the work of God grow and the Word of God increase and prevail, but now a sudden persecution had arisen against the Christians. Many were cast into prison; many were killed; many were scattered and driven out of their homes by force; and many like Demas went back for the sake of the world. Even to the church at Ephesus, the Lord had to say, "Thou hast left thy first love". This was the very first place where Apollos had laboured, and Paul also had laboured, then Timothy, and afterwards, John. The believers there had been well taught. But even they had become cold. That is why the apostle is filled with puzzling questions.

Now the great question he is asking God is: "Lord, why art Thou so silent? Why the scattering, the falling away, the back sliding? Why are there so few of the Lord's shining witnesses remaining? Lord, please give me the answer!"

God has the answer. I feel God's Word shows us that when we come to the end time, the devil will become very active, extremely active — particularly against God's servants. He may come very cunningly through sickness and tragedy; strife and coldness of heart; but he also comes in great fury. That is why John was feeling so downcast and discouraged. Even though we have worked so hard; prayed so much, and seen so much happening, in the end days we are bound to see all kinds of adversity, persecution arising, and many going back—and many other things which we cannot explain.

This book contains not only historical facts, which are interesting no doubt; but I see much more than that. I see in the book divine principles being revealed for our use, that we may know how to face the enemy and defeat him. He may have wily methods, but he is a defeated foe. He may come in great fury, but he will not harm us if we know how to depend upon the Lord's weapons, and not our own.

The first thing we see is that the Lord gave John a vision of Himself. Are you feeling down cast? Are you discouraged in your field of labour? Are you facing problems among your co workers? Let me give you a hint: Ask the Lord to give you a new glimpse of His Glory. There is no other method!

Now we see the Lord appearing to John in a new way. John had seen the Lord transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration— what a privilege!

He had seen Him ascending into Glory, He could have asked Him any questions on earth, —he knew the Lord so well! But now, we find him given such a sight of the Lord, that he had never had before. It was on the Lord's Day, and John was in the Spirit.

The Lord Jesus Christ appears to John from behind and speaks to him. There was a divine purpose in this. It was as though He was saying to His servant, "I know your questions very well; I know you are discouraged; I know you have many questions to ask, but John, look in the right direction—you are looking in the wrong direction".

In all his sincerity, his eyes had been drawn away from the Lord to see situations. You see, when difficulties increase, and problems become complex, and things become strangely mixed we tend to see only the problems; they come in letters, in conversation, and everywhere you go, there is never any end of problems. They are complex, so don't waste time on them! The Lord Jesus says, "Turn about

and look at Me, and not at your problems. I know them". The Lord knows our problems; He knows that we cannot solve them. So when you feel down cast and confused about the future and even your work for Him, He wants you to learn to turn about, and see Him in a new way.

John says that he heard a voice behind him, and being turned, he saw something. It is true that we need the Lord more than anything else. You would have thought that John's eyes would have caught a glimpse of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the first thing he saw was the seven golden candlesticks. It may be that the Apostle had not yet understood what kind of Church the Lord Jesus Christ was building; but these golden candlesticks represent the Church—the true Church of Jesus Christ.

The Lord is not primarily concerned with multitudes. His work is not dependent upon numbers. It is not dependent upon our activities. Of course we feel happy when we see large numbers coming for the meetings. When we see a large audience, we get inspiration to preach. We feel we can give a better report, and we think we can get greater results. But the Lord is not after results! Nowhere does He tell us to bring the multitude to Him. The Lord wants a pure Church, a spiritual Church—a heavenly Church—not numbers!

We may get joy and pleasure by seeing large numbers, and many conversions outwardly. But what about the future— they may fall away! The Lord in essence, was saying to John, "Don't be too disturbed by what goes on; people come and go; but I am building My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". The first thing is, God wants pure gold—not numbers. Whether it is small or great—He wants gold. A small quantity of gold is much more precious than tons of oil or rock. He wants us to go and gather gold. So when the persecution arose,— that was God's way of refining the gold. Persecution is God's fire. He had to bring the 'mixture' into the fire to refine it.

If you were to go to the Kolar gold fields in South India, you would see the stone in these gold mines. It has to be first broken, and then crushed into powder. Then the gold has to be melted and refined by many fires.

God allows refining fires among believers, to refine them and to purify them until they become pure gold. What a pity that we do not know how much of a mixture, how much rubbish is brought into the work of God! The devil cannot withstand a pure work of God! If we continue to work under the Lord's control and

guidance, then He will win in every trial, suffering and persecution; and that is how His gold becomes more pure.

Do we understand what kind of a Church the Lord is building? Is He building a society? — Or a mission? Or a fellowship? No, He is building a pure Church—a Church with a true foundation where His Life can flow and His Light can shine. The golden candlesticks give pure light—no smoke of any kind! You see some people smoking like hurricane-lamps. They have mixed motives. They cannot give a pure light. So we have to wait patiently until His perfect plan is revealed.

In verse 13, John sees our Lord dressed in a long, high-priestly garment. He had seen Him before as Jesus of Nazareth, and later as the Lord ascending into heaven, but He had never seen Him as the heavenly High Priest. Why does He appear in this way?

His presence as High Priest in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks speaks of the intercessory ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. This also is the hope of those who have fallen. He prays for them as their Advocate. He is able to save those who had gone astray, “seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” He does not condemn them—He prays for them. He will lift them up, raise them up and restore them. Even for Demas who had forsaken the Lord and His work, the Lord Jesus continues to intercede until he is restored.

As co-workers with the Lord Jesus Christ, we too have to learn to intercede. We often see God’s servants bitterly attacked by Satan through various temptations. They find the enemy too cunning, and slip and fall. What should we do? Shall we condemn them? Shall we entirely forsake them? No, Christ is interceding for them. We must also learn to Intercede.

Some time ago, a man came to me in tears saying, “Brother pray for my wife and my daughter—they have both forsaken me and run off with some one else”. So I prayed for him, and the man went away. After a while, I felt convicted that I did not feel sorrow in my heart. I could not truthfully say that I was praying as I would pray for my mother or sister. So I travailed for them that night, praying that God’s burden may come heavily upon me and that I might prevail for these two souls who had gone astray. After a few hours of prayer, I received the assurance from the Lord that my prayer was answered. Next morning after our Bible Study, I was told that two women had come to see me. I saw that they were the ones for whom I had prayed. They said, “Brother, we don’t know why we have come to see you, but when we had

already gone two miles on the road, we felt someone constraining us to come here, and ask for prayer." They began to weep bitterly; and, to confess their sin and shame. Since that day, I have seen a real change in them.

So it is that by our priestly ministry of intercession for those of our co-workers who have fallen, that God brings victory and restores them, to Himself.

May I humbly beseech you—do not condemn them—it is not our business to judge our brother. Nor be discouraged yourself. But ask someone else to pray with you. We have found again and again, that after a day of fasting and prayer for similar cases, the Lord gave us praise. I feel very strongly these days that we need a burden for prayer.

Now if you look at Rev.: 1.14- 17, you will notice seven features pictured of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. As you study them, seek the Lord that He may speak to you and show you the meaning of each One by one:

His head and hair, white like wool,
 His eyes as a flame of fire,
 His feet like unto fine brass,
 His voice like the sound of many waters,
 His right hand holding seven stars,
 His countenance as the sun shining in his strength,
 Out of His mouth, a sharp two edged sword.

When you have finished studying these, you will not only have seven messages, but you will have a fuller glimpse of His glory. Your heart will have a new prayer, and a new determination to see Him as He is. That will answer all your questions.

One day a man came to me and said, Brother, I have thirty-five questions to ask you". I told him I was very sorry that I did not have time just then, but I encouraged him to stay with us for two or three days, and then I would give some time to answer his questions, as it would take at least two hours. He agreed to stay. When I was ready, I said, "Now you may please bring your paper and questions". He said: "I do not have any questions left now, when you were speaking, all my questions disappeared."

When you see the Lord face to face, He will answer every question of yours. It does not matter how complicated your problems may be, they disappear when you get a new glimpse of Him and His glory. Then you too like John will fall down at His feet.