

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#03-09179

Flesh and Blood Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom #3

October 23, 2009

As I finished the last issue on this subject, I felt that some of the points that were made might seem a bit strange to some and a bit too obvious to others. However, I was quickly jolted back to reality. As I was working on the last issue, I took a break to watch a panel discussion of reputed religious leaders and theologians who just so happened to be discussing their views of resurrection. Although the discussion should not have surprised me, I actually was appalled by the superficiality and downright error of what I heard coming from these men. It was the tradition of men, the same sort of thing for which the Lord Jesus condemned the religious leaders who walked the streets of Jerusalem 2,000 years ago.

Jesus exhorted the scribes and Pharisees: **“Neglecting the commandment [i.e., His word] of God, you hold to the tradition of men”** (Mark 7:8 NASB).

As I listened, I was fascinated to hear that two men representing groups that mainline denominations are often most critical of for being either a cult or biblically unsound had the most accurate grasp of resurrection. The mainline religious leaders on the panel were the most inarticulate and inaccurate; clearly they were the voice of the tradition of men. It is no wonder that so many Christians have such a poor understanding of the meaning of death and the necessity of resurrection.

Well, after hearing this panel, I felt better about what I was writing and saw how vital it is to get the message out to those with ears to hear. I encourage you to read what I have written on resurrection.

To recap; the immortal man, the new man in Christ is different from Adam before his fall, for the new man will possess a spiritual body of flesh and bones that will be able to transcend time, space, and matter, and not be limited by the physical realm. It will not be like some wispy, ghostly vapor floating among the celestials. It will be capable of moving in and out of both realms at will. We get a glimpse of this new body in the accounts of Jesus, after His resurrection, appearing and disappearing from locked rooms (John 20:19, 26) and changing or hiding His true appearance to meet the occasion (Luke 24:15-16; John 21:4).

If we add this to the fact that Jesus, after His resurrection, had flesh and bones but no blood, it should become abundantly clear that the soulish body of flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. We must wear the image of the Celestial One, the Lord out of heaven, if we expect to inherit the kingdom.

(47) The first man was out of the earth, soilish; the second Man is the Lord out of heaven. (48) Such as the soilish one is, such are those also who are soilish, and such as the Celestial One, such are those also who are celestials. (49) And according as we wear the image of the soilish, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial. (1 Corinthians 15:47-49 CV)

Consider how Paul contrasts the first man and the second Man. One came from the soil of the earth; the other out of heaven. One is soilish (earthly); the other is celestial (heavenly). As Paul reminds us, we have a house not made with hands, a dwelling from heaven that we groan to receive when what is mortal is swallowed up by life [i.e., immortality] (Romans 8:23-25; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4). Adam was not formed in this way. His life started on earth. The new creation's life comes out of heaven. We have a heavenly Father. This is not achieved when we die, for there is no afterlife in death; it is achieved when we are raised from the dead or are transfigured if we are in the company of the conquerors who are alive and remain when Christ comes from heaven, which was the expectation of the early ecclesia of God (1 Thessalonians 1:10; Philippians 3:20-21).

The immortal body in the image and likeness of the Son of God will have no limitations, for Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, and, as such, has unlimited access to both realms. In like fashion, all who inherit the kingdom through immortal bodies of flesh and bones but not of blood will have access to heaven and earth as well, for they will be the Complement of the One completing the all in all for God the Father (Ephesians 1:23 CV; 1 Corinthians 15:28). They will reign in heaven and on earth, and be part of Christ's work to sum up or head up all things in the heavens and on the earth (Ephesians 1:10). Christ needs a helpmate, a complement in His image, to do this, and His immortal body of conquerors will be His helpmate, for they will be just like Him, filled up to the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19).

Now, although we do not know exactly what the immortal body will look like, we are given a prophetic view of how it might work as seen in the sons of Zadok as presented by Ezekiel (44:15-31). The sons of Zadok are a type of the sons of God chosen to minister according to the order of Melchizedek [Melchizedek, i.e., zadok], which is a major theme of the Hebrews epistle.

Ezekiel had a vision of a future temple, which, most likely, refers to **New Jerusalem** (see issue #03-09104, September 8, 2009, *New Jerusalem #14. According to Ezekiel's Vision*). It is within this vision that we discover the dual ministry of **the sons of Zadok**. They were given charge to minister to the Lord in His sanctuary and to minister to the people outside.

They shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them.... (Ezekiel 44:17 NASB)

To minister within the temple, they were commanded to wear **linen** garments, and to minister to the people, they were commanded to change into **wool** garments so that they would not transmit holiness to them with their garments. In doing so, they would teach the Lord's people the difference **between the holy and the profane** (Ezekiel 44:23).

This is a picture of the immortal sons of God that will change their appearance and nature as they traverse the celestial (spirit) and earthly (physical) realms. It is likened to wearing linen (celestial body/image) to minister to the Lord and wool (earthly body/image) to minister to the people.

In their wool capacity, they shall judge, for Ezekiel explains: **"In a dispute they shall take their stand to judge; they shall judge it according to My ordinances"** [i.e., **My laws and My statutes**] (Ezekiel 44:24 NASB). Paul made a similar declaration to the Corinthians: **Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?** (1 Corinthians 6:2).

Further, the sons of Zadok had no inheritance in the land, for their inheritance was the Lord Himself. **"And it shall be with regard to an inheritance for them, that I am their inheritance"** (Ezekiel 44:28 NASB). John heard the same thing in reference to **New Jerusalem**, which is the **New Creation** in Christ, the very embodiment of Christ Himself, His Complement, the Temple of His body (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 1:23; 2:19-22). **"He who overcomes [conquers] will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son"** (Revelation 21:7 NASB).

What will the conquerors inherit? Let us be abundantly clear that it is not about inheriting physical streets of gold and mansions in the sky. Push these traditions of men out of your thoughts and embrace the mind of Christ. They will inherit the very life and nature of Christ in all His fullness. Paul called it **the fullness of God** (Ephesians 3:19). The inheritance is the Son of God Himself, for **New Jerusalem** is the image of the Son corporately expressed through many **sons of glory** (Hebrews 2:10) conformed to His image (Romans 8:29); the sons of the kingdom (Matthew 13:38) and the sons of the resurrection (Luke 20:36). Today, we have been sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise as a pledge [an earnest; a down payment] of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14). We do not possess all of Christ while we occupy bodies of death, for He is beyond death, and He is the only one, at this point, who possesses immortality (1 Timothy 6:16).

Dear brethren, we need an atomic change to be like our Lord, and the good news is that one is coming!

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a mystery... this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:50, 51, 53 KJV)