

THE LORD'S PARTED GARMENTS

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We rejoice in the privilege of being with you this day, the privilege of sharing our kindred thoughts upon aspects of the divine word and what it may mean to us in our individual lives. The lesson being used this morning, dear brethren, has been requested by your convention committee, probably because it deals with an aspect of some of the fundamental features of the divine word, some of the manners in which God has locked within His Bible, His Word, various realistic aspects of the truth, that we may put handles upon the truth and be of certainty of mind that it is of the Lord.

How firm is your foundation, ye saints of the Lord? We sing the hymn and realize it's import to us, and we realize that our faith in the Scriptures stands unique among all the so-called Christian world. Some of the most fundamental aspects of the Bible we hold uniquely separate from great Christendom with its millions of adherents. For instance, we believe the Scriptures teach that there is a high calling, a divine calling, those that will inherit immortality by reason of a faithful course of conduct, obedience, and allegiance to the Lord, come what may. We stand unique in this aspect of the high calling spoken of in the Scriptures.

We believe the Scriptures speak that there is a secondary class, a spirit-born class, called in the Bible the great company or the great multitude. They will also have a part in the heavenly scene in the direction of the world's affairs, but subordinate to those that will be living and reigning with Christ. We believe the Scriptures also speak of the ancient nobles of the past, the ancient worthies as we describe them in our vernacular of the Bible. We believe that these ancient worthies, because of their extreme test of faithfulness of the past, are promised a better resurrection and will be the earthly feature of the Kingdom seen by mankind to administer the laws of God.

You and I, brethren, stand unique in these things; we find no counterpart in great Christendom. Then, last of all, the great noble act of our Heavenly Father—the blessing of all the families of the earth, the resurrection of all mankind, including Adam. In this we stand unique in our faith.

When we think of our Lord at the time of his death at Calvary, I wonder sometime if we have included in the scene of our Lord's death set forth in John the 19th chapter, I wonder if we have considered, from the divine viewpoint, all the arrangements that were necessary by our loving God to put into order, in order to fulfill all the accounts of the prophecies pertaining to this pivotal period of earth's history. We can certainly employ our minds just for a moment to go to the heavenly scene and realize that His loving Father, our Lord's Father and God, looked down upon the path of our Lord as he left the courtroom of Pilate and as he bore his cross and headed toward Golgotha, that there our

Heavenly Father put into motion all the remaining fragments of prophecy to be fulfilled at this one scene of our Lord's death upon the cross. Just the very fact that it was a cross upon which he was crucified took the hand of God to arrange.

But we would like to draw to your attention, brethren, what we believe is an unusual aspect, to show how much love the Heavenly Father had in mind for us, to weave into the scene of our Lord's death upon the cross the divine plan of salvation in such a unique manner. Turn with me to John the 19th chapter, beginning with the 19th verse: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, 'Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.' This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am the King of the Jews,"

By the way, this of itself is a realistic point that our Lord died with the title "the King of the Jews," which would mean that at the time of his return, his second advent, he would return as a King to take up the title that he never carried out to the intent of those that thought he ought to be a King, but certainly his return would give evidence that the objective was the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, and earth's great King.

"Pilate answered, What I have written I have written," Now note here the language: "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout, They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did." We have indicated that this particular scene is a fulfillment of Psalm the 22nd chapter and all the events that surrounded it, among which this statement is found in Psalms: they parted my garments among them and for my vesture, my coat, they did cast lots.

But do you notice that John, writing this account—and he's the only one that wrote in this language—had remembered, as he viewed this scene in his mind and as he later wrote this account, that at the base of the cross there were four soldiers. Why four soldiers? Was Pilate so short that he couldn't send more? Jesus was not going to run away; one would have been sufficient. Nevertheless, John remembered that there were four soldiers at the base of the cross, and more than that he remembered that they had cast lots for his coat, because if they tore it into sections, it would be worthless. And his undergarments they divided equally among them; each took a part. We believe from the divine standpoint, brethren, our Heavenly Father motivated the direction of this event, because we know to the minds of these beastly Roman soldiers seeing an innocent man dying upon a cross, they didn't say this, I'm doing this because David wrote it; but John

put it into the account, as the motivation was directed by God that they might fulfill the Scriptures, that you and I might have faith in features of the Divine Plan.

Many, many, many have read this account and have recognized that they parted his garments, his clothing, and that ended the story. But, no, brethren, we believe our Heavenly Father wanted you and I to bolster our faith in some of the noble aspects of the Divine Word in this simple lesson. Let's turn to where we believe the Scriptures suggest the fulfillment of this, found in Isaiah's prophecy, the 61st chapter. We may remember that Isa. 61:1 begins with a statement by our Lord, giving appreciation of his Heavenly Father by stating: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted," etc.

This marvelous influence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of our Lord so motivated his entire life that he could realize that this was the direction of God. Then found in the 10th verse of Isa. 61, is our Lord's response as to what were the benefits of the Holy Spirit that came upon him: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Here we believe is where our Heavenly Father remembered that he had given this account to the Prophet Isaiah to be fulfilled at a later date at Golgotha. There, as the four soldiers took the literal garments of our Lord, they were a picture of the salvation that would come by reason of the death of the Master upon the cross and the righteousness that would come as a result of his faithful obedience in pouring out his life unto death. So in a figure of a fashion, the literal clothing of our Master was a picture of a lesson of the Divine Plan that only you and I have come to appreciate in the light of Present Truth through the returned Lord and the aspects of the Divine Plan that have been revealed to us, because it was lost to much of all the world through the previous period, save to a few faithful saints down through the years.

It is not unusual to look to clothing to be emblematic of something. The clothing that Rebekah received from Eliezer as she prepared for her journey to meet Isaac in the field was a picture of her wedding garment. The clothing of the high priest, and the various aspects of his clothing, were a picture or a lesson of the duties of the priest and the services of the office of the priest as he would administer the blessings of the Kingdom. So in this matter we believe that the fact that our Lord's garments were divided into four sections and his robe untorn would suggest to us that by reason of our Lord's death now salvation would come to four classes, and as a result all under his robe.

We say that sounds beautiful, and it's true; but is this the end of the story? No, we believe God, from the very planning of this planet itself, designed and wove into the topography of the earth features of the Divine Plan that you and I have come to

appreciate at this late date. Turn with me to Genesis, the story of Adam in Eden, Genesis the 2nd chapter. There's a marvelous statement here found in the 8th verse of Genesis 2: "And the Lord God planted a garden." Just for a moment, stop. Now the account could say, There was a garden eastward in Eden; and it would be true. But the very fact that we read, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden," meant that the Divine Being, our great God, Jehovah, directed the influence of the planting of the Garden of Eden in all its arrangements. He had a hand in it to the extent that he directed the arrangements pertaining to Adam and the home in which he was created.

In the same sense, we believe this great planet has had its interesting features that have been designed in a special way by God to illustrate features of the Divine Plan. For example, you brethren that travel to Israel frequently, supposing the land of Palestine or Israel was as flat as Texas, how would God ever design the features of the Divine Plan in the fact that Zion stands with hills surrounded; and all of the features of Pisgah's Mountain and Mount Sinai? We believe our Heavenly Father stooped down, as it were, and with his great big fingers molded the mountains, etc., in isolated areas, so that features of the plan could become realistic to us.

Thus, as we think of this planting the Garden eastward in Eden, we think of the particular care that God had in this sense. And, brethren, what does it mean to us? If God was careful in the arrangements of the planting of Eden, isn't he just as interested in your life and mine as we've come through Christ? It illustrates to our mind a facet of encouragement to realize the loving hand of God in so many, many ways.

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had created. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden."

Here we can see this great, broad river that flowed through Eden; we can, in our mental vision, see the perfect man, Adam, kneeling down one day and taking his fingers, cupping them, to drink water out of this river that God planned in Eden. Adam didn't realize that God was prefiguring that this broad river was a picture of the perfect life of humanity, that this river would extend to the ends of the earth, and all the children of Adam would drink by the waters of this river, as it were, in a proverbial sense, if they were obedient unto the laws of God. And we can just see our loving God, as he planted this great garden, take as it were his great big finger and draw a river bed into the sand to form this river, to give a picture of life.

How we know this is true is the counterpart of this, the grand fulfillment, found in Revelation the 22nd chapter: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as

crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse.” Here, we believe, is the replica of this literal river that flowed through Eden—the symbolic life that will flow out of the throne of God, reaching and touching all mankind, whereby mankind will drink of the water of life in its pure, crystal sense as Adam literally drank of that water in his day. Hence, it is a picture of salvation that God intended for mankind, illustrated in the perfect river of life.

God foreknowing the end from the beginning, caused something to change in this river as it reached the border of Eden, the outskirts of the garden, beyond which was the unfinished or unplanted earth by the direction of God. So we read again the 10th verse, Gen. 2: “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.”—to illustrate that God foreknew that, because of the disobedience of Adam, there would be open to mankind four manners or life, that they may enjoy in respect as the plan was fulfilled.

Then he described these rivers for us and named them, to suggest their meanings for us: “The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.” We believe this is a typical suggestion of the great high calling and immortality, likened unto gold, as the highest objective of all salvation pictured by God. “And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.”—the land of servitude. We believe this is a picture of the lesser spirit nature, or the great company, servants to the throne.

“And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east.” We believe this is a picture of the ancient worthies, because our Lord described Abraham as looking eastward or to the rise of his day to see the Kingdom, and our Lord said concerning Abraham and his faith, he saw my day and rejoiced because of it. You and I, dear brethren, are living at a time when we almost can reach out and touch the day that Abraham will come back upon this earth to receive the blessings that were promised by his loving God. Abraham looked eastward and saw the City of God. He saw the New Jerusalem in the sense of the Kingdom established and the blessings that would come under the direction of God.

“The fourth river is Euphrates,” which means great and abounding—to fulfill the statement made to Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth.” So the world will abound with this salvation class of perfect human nature as they are obedient unto the laws of the Kingdom at the time when they pass through the end of the Millennial Age.

Hence, we see in direct order, the church, the great company, the ancient worthies, and the world of mankind, in the order or the degree or the rank of their manner of salvation. Is it any wonder, then, that we rejoice with the statement, “They parted my garments among them, but for my vesture they did cast lots”?

However, you as Bible students require more than this to be convinced. So let us turn to Numbers the 3rd chapter. This is a marvelous scene. This is the account of when Moses was instructed by God to arrange the Camp of Levi around the tabernacle. This account, you may remember, is fully explained in the Sixth Volume by Bro. Russell, so it's not new to any of us; only the application may suggest its value to us. In Numbers the 3rd chapter, for the purpose of sequence, we'll begin at the 38th verse, and as we think of these four camps that we're going to consider for just a moment, let's think about one thing that's unique. As Adam, representative of the human family, looked upon this one manner of life, this river, so in like manner these four tribes of Levi, or four classes of the Levites, as they surrounded the tabernacle, looked upon the white linen curtain without seams, which was a picture of the robe of Christ's righteousness, woven without seam. Hence, we see the companionship between the white linen curtain of the 280 cubits of the circumference of the tabernacle excluding the gate, and hence we realize that this was a picture of our Lord's righteousness as seen from four classes. In like manner, those that looked upon the river, the river that will flow out of the throne of God, will see the same suggestion of the manner of life.

The 38th verse, Numbers 3: “But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be Moses and Aaron, and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary.” We realize that the family of Moses was the family of Amram, the priestly family, meaning highly exalted, and it is so realistic. We know from so many aspects that God, with great carefulness, even caused the mind of a mother and father to name a child that that child might in prophetic language later on become meaningful to us as Bible students.

Thus, I think that we should never, in any way, grow weary with the Bible and all the marvelous features of its description, because of the evidence of God's minutia of care to describe for us aspects to bolster our faith, to increase our zeal, our vigor, our vitality in Christ.

So those that were before the tabernacle were on the east side, but we must remember that every morning when Aaron, or Moses, or the sons opened their tent-gate and looked out toward the tabernacle, they looked westward, which meant they looked to a contrary course than the world was going. The whole world, by reason of the movement of this planet, moves eastward every day; they move to meet the sun. The whole world moves to meet the kingdom, the earthly phase of the kingdom; but you and I walk a contrary course. So the priests walked every morning from their tent to the court, and in their

direction the high priest on the day of atonement particularly was in a complete westward course, showing that the life of contrariness to the world is the vigorous life of the priest in sacrifice.

Then in the 35th verse we read: “And the chief of the house or the father of the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail: these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.” Merari, you will notice in your margin or your Bible Dictionary means bitterness or sorrow—a people that have come to their salvation through sorrow; they come through great tribulation. We believe it suggests the Great Company, who for a while looked southward, away from the Lord, and are later, of course, brought back to a full faithful condition in order to be awarded life. In considering the tent position of the family of Amram or of Merari as representing priests or Great Company, we are to look at their compass location relative to the Tabernacle as suggesting a disposition or attitude of service. For the priests, it was a walk of sacrifice or contrary to the walk of the world. For the Great Company, they did not share the full favor of God at all times so they are shown as looking southward, whereas the Kohathites looked northward and enjoying the full favor of God as did the ancient worthies.

And then the 27th verse, we read concerning the Kohathites, and it mentions (verse 29) “The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle southward.” Kohath, you will remember, means friend, or ally, or comrade with God, hence is a typical picture of the ancient worthies, who from the account of Paul in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, gave them a good report of faith. Hence, they all looked toward God, toward the north. So these tent doors, as they opened every morning, of the Kohathites, looked toward the side of favor every day in their obedient course and walk.

And the 23rd verse, “The families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the tabernacle westward,” which means they looked eastward. Gershon means rescued or saved; hence is a picture of the world of mankind, who are saved or redeemed by the provisions of God, and they will look east-ward to the kingdom upon earth and enjoy its everlasting blessing.

But did you notice the order—exactly in the same order as we find the rivers in the manner that we gave the account: the church (the high calling of the church), the great company, the ancient worthies, and the world of mankind.

But again, brethren, these things are interesting to us and verify aspects of truth. But we think of another account. Turn with me to the 45th Psalm. Beginning with the 10th verse, the story of the marriage of the King’s daughter and son: “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father’s house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall

entreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within: 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. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever." And, as Bro. Russell suggests, the 12th verse fits here best: "And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

Did you notice the order? Here the account takes up first the bride, the queen herself, in her golden attire. And she has a long train; her bridesmaids are with her. They enter into the king's palace with joy, but the bridesmaids are not the bride. They only attend the wedding and have a part in its function; but the bride, the queen, has the captive attention. And hence, as a result of the marriage, the first children: "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." The ancient worthies will be the first to be called from the sleep of death, and what it will mean to the world when this takes place!

It so happened that yesterday my plane companion from L.A. to Detroit was a young Jewess, about 30 or 33 years of age, who had been so despondent in life she said, "I feel I am going to take my life; I can't stand the problems I've been involved in." By the end of our journey, we had traveled through Israel with Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and all these nobles of the past, and when we concluded our little talk together, she said, "You've given me a viewpoint of life I've never shared before; I'm going to Israel." Marvelous, marvelous blessings—they just unfold every day as we open our mouth and find the privileges.

Then, finally, the world of mankind will be the multitude of children of Rebekah. Brethren, did you notice the order: the church, the great company, the ancient worthies, and the world of mankind? No wonder our Heavenly Father was so interested that there were four soldiers at the base of the cross, to illustrate to us the manner in which God's salvation through Christ would unfold in this remarkable manner as they looked upon the righteousness of Christ, his untorn robe.

But we would say, brethren: Is there nothing in the New Testament to give this same account? Indeed there is. Strangely, the very last lesson the Apostle Paul used before he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." The last illustration that he used was the picture that we're discussing at this time. Turn with me to 2 Timothy the 2nd chapter, beginning with the 19th verse; it's in the 4th chapter of this same book where he gives the statement which we've just quoted. We notice the Apostle draws an unusual illustration for us: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name

of Christ depart from iniquity.”

Just for a moment, think. What are you talking about, Paul? Well, the only house that Paul knew was the great house of God that would incorporate all of his sons, all of his children and all their planes of life. And he says, strangely, the foundation of this house rests the same regardless of the plane of life that resides in this house. No wonder our Lord said, “In my father’s house are many mansions” or planes of life. Paul says this great Master’s house has a great foundation stone, and this foundation stone incorporates the ideal of God pertaining to those that dwell in the house. First of all, “God knoweth them that are his.” If he has numbered the stars and named them one by one, our loving God’s mind will know all of his sons by name in this entire house. Here is Paul’s conclusive proof that those who dwell in this mansion of God will be known by God, children on all the planes of life. Can’t you see the great big broad smile of our loving Father as he looks in his house eventually and sees every knee bowing and every tongue confessing and all planes of life rejoicing and praising God in perfect love and unity? What an ideal, and it soon will come to pass!

And Paul says, as another condition of those who dwell in this house, everyone that nameth the name of Christ must depart from iniquity. Why must they depart from Iniquity? Because the very thing that captioned our Lord’s life, from God’s viewpoint, was: Because he loved righteousness—truth, and hated iniquity. This was the caption of our Lord’s entire life, and the vigorous campaign that he shared to put down error and lift up truth indicated the objective; and hence Paul points to this in the foundation stone. “Let every man that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” So we see all planes of life will have the same ideal, the same standard. There’s no two-standard program with God, whether it is upon the earth, or whether it is with those that partake of the divine calling; they all will have to be obedient to laws of truth and righteousness; obedient to love and fidelity and faithfulness under the various aspects of the time in which they are developed. Of course, for you and I now, brethren, it’s not as easy as it will be for the world when the stones will be removed and the way will be made easy and the dragon will be held back in that day.

So Paul goes on to describe his house. “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour [or less honor]. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

Here he says, now in this great house (I’m going to describe the inmates of this house, likened unto vessels), there are vessels of various degrees of use. Your better translation does not say vessels unto dishonor, because God would not have a dishonoring vessel in his house; even we ourselves, by choice, would not have dishes or things that are useless

to be put in among the china. For that reason, there, we will say that in this great Master's house every vessel has its function. He says there're golden vessels, and there're silver vessels, wooden vessels, and earthen vessels, all in the Master's house. Notice the order: the gold, the church, the divine vessels; the great company, the silver vessels, purged as gold and silver—the sons of Levi; then the great earthen trees, the trees of righteousness, the nobles of the earth, standing head and shoulders over all mankind as a vessel of great use, but wooden vessels gain their sustenance from the earth for their stability; and then, the earthen vessels, the world of mankind.

Did you notice the order? Gold, silver, wood, and earth—exactly the order of the rivers in Eden, the camp or the tribe of the Levites, or the account of the marriage scene. But brethren, the divine plan doesn't unfold like that. These grand objectives are good, but the divine plan wasn't executed in this fashion. We'd get lost if we just stopped here, without noticing how God puts this into a package, puts a beautiful ribbon around it and a bow on top of it. And he says, now I'll tell you the secret; I'll unfold to you how this divine plan works out for your best interest.

Turn with me to the prophecy of Zechariah the 6th chapter, and we find how, locked within the Divine Word, in a remarkable sense, is the sense that we're going to consider at this time. It is the first eight verses of Zech. the 6th chapter. I'll read the account through first; then we'll go back through the details. "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay [meaning red] went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: So they walked to and fro through the earth." Here we see a picture, and then it finalizes: "Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country."

What's the scene? Up to this point in our mention of the parted garments of our Lord, we've considered them from the aspects of the degree, the highness of the salvation; but now, in this account, God shows the manner by which salvation will be accomplished in respect to the four classes. This great scene before us is a picture of two great copper mountains, spoken of here as brass, but your better translations speak of the two great copper mountains. Copper in Bible language, we know, is a picture of perfect humanity. Hence, the first copper mountain was that in Eden, in which Adam shared with Eve before disobedience. This great mountain, from the divine viewpoint, was large enough

to encompass the entire world, but because of disobedience, a valley set in. Some 6000 years of valley have prevailed between that mountain and the second dominion, the great copper mountain of the kingdom, which is beginning to give evidence as it begins to take shape and form in the preparation of the day in which we live. Hence, between these two great mountains, you and I have seen this great valley of the shadow of death, in which all mankind have learned their lessons necessary to appreciate the smooth road of the kingdom in their day of visitation.

And then the prophet describes for us, as God caused him to write—in the foreground between these great mountains we see four colored horses, each attached to a chariot, and he describes these horses so realistically we can see them pawing the earth, as though they're waiting to be released; they're anxious to get into motion. And he says that these chariots, though they're all alike, are described by the color of the horse that draws them. In Habakkuk the 3rd chapter, the 8th verse, is an account that states they are called "chariots of salvation," so we have an account that these chariots were representative of salvation; and the type of salvation was pictured by the color of the horse. You'll notice the account first says, In the first chariot, red horses; in the second chariot, black horses; in the third chariot, white horses; in the fourth chariot, bay horses (strong or large).

What's the picture? We've mentioned the divine plan occurred in the order in which we see God began to deal with the salvation classes. Our Lord gives us the clue, whereby he described the events of his day and that which was going to befall Israel shortly after his death, and which did occur between 70 A.D. and 135 A.D. particularly, where he says, of this generation—all the righteous blood shed from Abel unto Zacharias whom ye slew between the temple and the altar (from Abel to the time of John the Baptist)—all of this period is going to be accounted for by you of Israel. So he described that Abel was the first noble of God spoken of as being righteous, in a sense. Though he was born at that time through disobedient parents, born subject to the fall and death, he, by his noble position before God and the evidence of his faith in the manner of his life and his sacrifice, showed to God that, were he put into our period of time, he would be a noble saint walking in the path of the Master in a very essential sense; but he, living as all the ancient worthies prior to our Lord, could only hope and be promised a better resurrection and perfect humanity by reason of faithful obedience. So, the first horse, the red horse, is a picture of the ancient worthies; even as we see the red heifer in Numbers the 19th chapter is a picture of the ancient worthies and the work concerning the cleansing process of the world in their day of visitation, when through the access of the benefit or the red heifer and its offering its blood, mankind will have a cleansing work by the ancient worthies as they become temporarily disobedient to certain aspects of the kingdom.

So, right immediately, the ancient worthies move in as the first red horse. John the Baptist, the last of the ancient worthies, died just six months before our Lord. Following this was Stephen, the first of the church other than the head. So, the black horses

followed right upon the heels of the red horses. But you say, why black? The Heavenly Father has a noble way of describing for us why the church is pictured as black. We realize because of condemnation we have a black background. But, particularly because we have made a covenant with death, we're viewed as black. Then in the Song of Solomon, in the marvelous language and the poetic style in which the Bible describes for us aspects of the divine work, is a picture, we believe, of the church. First book of Solomon: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."

But the bride looks at herself in the mirrored room of our Lord; she says: "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." Could it be that our Lord here prophetically styled through Solomon that we have all been found in the mud puddles—Psalm 40:1 and 2—and out of the miry clay we've been drawn; and hence not one of us can boast of our background, our ancestry, excepting as we've had the privilege of coming into Christ.

But you'll notice something else. As this bride is viewed from her outward view, she's not very pretty, but there's something lovely within, described as the Tents of Kedar. We understand that the tents or the nomads, or the travelers of this day in which Solomon's account was written, were of goat skins, rather hideous to the exterior because of the sands that beat upon them; but the interiors were hung with tapestries of beauty and style and gold. The tents were most beautiful within; the exteriors were ugly. And here is a marvelous picture of this bride, pictured as black—a covenant to death; but within she's marvelous and beautiful, enough that she will eventually win the divine approval and be married in the King's palace.

Back to Zechariah the 6th chapter. And the third chariot (the first chariot was red horses; the second chariot, black horses)—the third chariot, white horses. We believe the white horses here, as it follows in sequence, will follow in the order of their being dealt with in finalized salvation. Remember, all the ancient worthies had received their full account of obedience and faithfulness, prior to the naming of any of the Christians or the followers of the Master. Then, the disciples come in, the followers of the Master, and they win their reward. Then the next reward that is offered is to the great company, the white horses. "And in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth grisled and bay" (or strong horses)—the world of mankind, the last class to be dealt with.

But again, brethren, this isn't the way salvation is finalized. That's why we have mentioned that we are to appreciate that this particular account describes the minutiae of the divine plan in the uniqueness that only God could design in language; and, under the

light of the blessings of present truth and his indwelling spirit, we may enjoy the marvelous features of these prophetic accounts. “Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.” In other words, he says, though these classes have been described and have been developed, none have been rewarded. He’s only enumerated them as descriptive classes, but none have been rewarded thus far in the account of the prophecy. It is then we realize that in this account we now see these four chariots, descriptive of four completed classes, from the divine aspect; but when do they go to their rewards?

Now this is where the prophecy continues to show the marvelous mind of God in language. “The angel said unto me, These are the four spirits [or powers] of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country.” Abel is still asleep, waiting for his resurrection, though he preceded by 4000 years Stephen the martyr. But Stephen, we believe, has been rewarded with glory, honor, and immortality. And the black horse class is going to their reward the first to receive its reward. And this is where the marvelous language of the prophet describes for us the order of rewarding of these classes.

“The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country.” Oh, beautiful for situation on the sides of the north is Mt. Zion, the heavenly city of God—the church in glory. Here the glorious reward of the church is shown first, and soon the last member of the black horse class, those who have made a covenant with death, will be raised in their full completion, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and the completion of the church will take place. This is one of the verities that we have to indicate to us the necessity that the sleeping saints would be raised and this corporate body take form at this particular time; one by one as this change occurs in the life of some, whereas others were to await a resurrection as Paul, Peter, and James, and the other apostles and all the faithful of the past until the time of our Lord’s return.

“These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them.” Here is the verification that the white horses follow the black horses in time sequence and in reward; they are lesser, but they go to the north country a part of the throne scene, not upon the throne, but before it in connection with the heavenly courts beyond.

“And [then] the grisled [or the world of mankind] go forth toward the south country [to share the blessings upon the earth]. And the bay [it should be red] went forth that they might walk to and fro through the earth: So they walked to and fro through the earth.”

Here we think is a marvelous time to refer to what I believe is one of the most poetic

pictures of the work of the ancient worthies in their kingdom arrangements, set forth in Zechariah the 1st chapter, beginning at verse 8: “I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.” So they walked to and fro through the earth. “And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.” In other words, the eventual work of patrolling the earth by the ancient worthies will bless all mankind. Some of you may remember Brother George Kendall; he used the illustration that the ancient worthies would be policemen upon their beat. Turn to the Moffatt translation, and the word is: They will patrol the earth. They will be the officers bringing peace to mankind, quieting the earth.

And then, finally, in the 8th verse (Zech. 6), God looks down at this scene and says: “These that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.” In other words, our Lord dwells in the north country; he dwells in the scene in which his bride and bridegroom will accompany him, and the families that are with him of the angelic beings. We realize that then the sin offering has been accomplished, the sacrificial work of the Day of Atonement has been concluded, whereby the next feature of the work may move him to the activity of the resurrection of those that will share human life—the ancient worthies and the world. So he says that these that go to the north country have permitted the release of my divine arrangement for all mankind, through the faithful course of the church with her Lord.

We trust, brethren, this has been helpful to us to prove how firm is our foundation,