

## **“THE NEW CREATION”**

(Discourse below by A. I. Ritchie starting on page 151 of the 1911 Convention report. Bro. Ritchie was a Pilgrim before the Pastor's death.)

In Eph. 2:10 we read, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” This text indicates that whatever we are as new creatures, we are the workmanship of God, and God is the one who is making the new creation, and we are samples of the new creation, in process of manufacture, in process of creating.

I thought that tonight we might have a little study together as to the means of this choice that God has made, and why he is making this new creation. Beginning with Eph. 2:19 we read, “Now therefore ye are no more foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” This Scripture indicates that the Lord is building a temple, which is a spiritual temple, and Peter tells us that this temple is built out of spiritual stones, and the Lord says here it shall be an habitation for himself when he has it made.

In the first chapter of Corinthians we read that the things which God has prepared for them that love him and those who prove their love for him by standing all the tests he will send, are so great and wonderful that “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those that love him.” Then in the imagery of the Bible he has made use of the richest things we have in the world, the richest things the eye of man has ever looked upon, as pictures of what he has prepared for those that love and serve him—not that we deserve these things ourselves, but he has a particular reason for giving these things to particular individuals of the human race. He has a purpose which he has shown us in this same chapter. In Eph. 2:4-7, we read: “But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved). And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

That is, he is doing all of this work so that he will have a better illustration of his grace in the ages to come. So we can see that these things are not given to us because we have earned them, or are worthy of them, or because we are better than other people, and that he has to have us, but because he desired to pick out some who, when perfected and brought into the kingdom of Christ, would be excellent examples of his grace and

goodness, of his ability to make something out of very unpromising material. And he has selected such of us as are here, which are indeed very poor material, of which he is going to make something very grand and glorious. And if we find we are not very well fitted for the things which he has for us, if we find we are not able to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh very readily, then we can realize that that is another excellent reason why God chose us, so as to perfect transformation in us, that he intends to show the exceeding richness of his grace through all the ages to come, by having a class who will be excellent examples of his workmanship.

When a piece of our workmanship is only partially done, we do not place it on exhibition; we do not say, "Come, see what I have done." The Lord has not placed his workmanship on exhibition either; he has not exposed it to the world to be seen. In fact, the Lord's people are hidden from the world. We are told, "And your life is hid with Christ in God." It is hidden in such a way that the world knoweth us not, even as it knew not our head. We are not of the world and the world cannot understand us or see us. Nor can they see that which comes from God in us any more than they could see it in the Lord Jesus Christ, our head. If the world treats us the same way it treated the head, if the world speaks of us the same way they spoke of the Apostle Paul, then we ought to be glad and rejoice because we realize that we are in the right path. In so far as the world cannot understand us, in so far as we have the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and in so far as we have realized spiritual things, then we can be glad and rejoice whatever may be said about us, or whatever others may think about us.

The mentioning of the temple seems to refer to the temple in the Old Testament scriptures, and I thought we might notice several things about it, and then we will come back again to the New Testament. The temple Solomon built was also built for an habitation of God. So God told him, "I will dwell in the house which you are building." And when Solomon went to the King of Tyre to get men to help him, he said, "This temple which I shall build for Jehovah must be a very great temple, because Jehovah is the greatest of all gods. He says he will dwell in this house which I will build, but he says that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, how much less this house which I shall build." But he wanted to impress the King that he wanted the very best workmanship possible for humans to produce, and I expect he got it.

This temple typifies the little flock, and the richest of material was put into this temple. It was compared with other buildings on the earth a good deal like a piece of jewelry. A good many people have estimated the cost of this temple, and made some wild estimates, too. I presume we will never know just what it did cost until the time comes when we know as we are known, but we know from the description given in Kings and Chronicles that it was very rich. For instance, the Free Masons in England estimated that the temple with its jewels, etc., cost something over eighty billions of dollars. I think you will all agree that is a very extravagant estimate, almost an absurd calculation. But if we take the

amounts given in the Bible and multiply them by the value of a talent given to us—a greater a golden talent, at thirty thousand dollars, and a lesser talent at fifteen thousand dollars, we can find that this temple was very rich. The very lowest estimate we could place on it would be about two billions of dollars.

And if the Lord is going to give a picture beforehand of his little flock, the spiritual temple in which he will dwell throughout the ages, and through which he will manifest himself to others, it is appropriate that this picture should be very rich too. Of course we are told that the things which we can see, and the things which we have heard, and the things which have entered into our ears, do not give any conception of the things which God has prepared for those who love him. We might say that certain things stand in certain relationship to each other, and we can reason from that that certain other things which are beyond these, and which we cannot see at all, would be in a certain relationship also, and in that way we could say that if the richest things on earth typified in only a small degree the wonderful things God has for those who love him and prove their love for him, then the things he has for them must be very wonderful indeed.

A very great prize is set before the Lord's people. There is surely a wonderful prize, greater than we can imagine, and at the same time, it seems to me sometimes that it is so great and wonderful that our minds balk; we are unable to go any further, and we begin to interpret the things God has prepared for us in harmony with the things which we see around us. And that is true with a great many Christians. They think that heaven has houses in it, and waterworks and flowers, and things like that. They are the things they know of, and so they interpret heaven and the prize God has set before us in terms like these. But we who have had a glimpse of spiritual things and the spiritual advantages that come to us now, realize there is still greater joy way beyond any that we know of now. We are rejoicing to come in convention here and meet one another who love the Lord, and who have a certain measure of the spirit of the Lord; how great will be our joy when we meet the one who is our head, and all those who have been of the little flock all during this age, who are in the flesh now and who will then be glorified! We can say as was said of the Lord, for the joy set before us, even of just meeting those who have gone before us, we ought to be steadfast, disregarding the shame and suffering, and sorrow, because this joy would be like a beacon light, making our path straight and direct before us.

Now the building which is said to be the most valuable building in the world is the Vatican at Rome. And this is a very large building. It is said that in Saint Peter's, associated with the Vatican, there is room for 54,000 people to assemble at one time, and would be probably thirty or forty times as large as Solomon's temple was; and this building, with all the rich treasures and gatherings of gold, medals, vessels and paintings in it from all parts of the world, is valued at about fifty millions of dollars; yet Solomon's temple would build and equip forty Vaticans, and it was not a very large building either; it

was just thirty feet wide, and sixty feet long, and forty-five feet high. It was not a very large building at all. In front of the temple was a porch which stood fifty feet high, and just the same width as the building and one hundred and fifteen feet in depth. This is the building in which the Lord wanted to picture forth his little flock, in process of being taken out during the gospel age, about 1900 years. The most valuable building in the United States was the Capitol at Albany which was burned last winter. This cost \$25,000,000 to build and equip. Now it would take eighty of those to build a Solomon's temple and equip it the way Solomon had it equipped.

When the Congressional Library was built at Washington, and they went to decorate the dome they overlaid it with three thousand dollars worth of gold, and a good many people complained and said it was an extravagant use of gold to put pure gold on top of a building like that. If Solomon had been decorating that building he would have put about a million dollars worth of gold and diamonds on it—that is if he decorated it the same way he decorated the temple, because we read that when he built the temple he overlaid it within and without. And he overlaid this porch with gold also, and the floor was overlaid with gold, and in the Most Holy, which was very much smaller than the Congressional Library, he overlaid with plates of gold fastened with nails of gold, then studded it with precious jewels to make it look nice. He spent six hundred talents of gold on the decoration of that small chamber, a cube of thirty feet. Six hundred talents are about eighteen million dollars. So if Solomon was in the United States building public buildings, he would ruin the country in a little while—if he built them all like he did the temple. But the temple was built for a specific purpose, and typified a specific people whom the Lord is going to specially bless, and all of those beautiful things, the gathering together of all the richest things he has in the world, and most desirable things that man can have in this world, merely point forward to the richness of blessing that the Lord has for those who are his favored ones, those who prove that they love him, those that prove that they do his will in preference to anybody else's will, or even their own will.

Now in the third chapter of second Chronicles we read something regarding the temple. It goes on and describes the different parts of the temple, that it is built and overlaid with gold; and it must have been, as it set on the top of one mountain, one mountain facing the other, and this building facing the east, a place of beauty, as the people of Jerusalem would look upon it. No wonder that the people of Jerusalem were proud of it! No wonder they glorified in that temple. No wonder they rejoiced in it. No wonder that people came from all parts of the world to see it. In the morning the first intimation they would have of the sun's rising would be the shaft of light just touching on top of that tower 180 feet high, or taking a cubit as 25 inches long, it would be 250 feet high. When the sun rose this light would come down a little more and a little more until finally it would lay on the whole temple, and if you were standing directly in front of the temple, you could not see anything else than the tower, or porch as it is called. Now we are living stones in the temple, and our Lord said, "I am the door," and everyone that comes into

that temple must come in by the door. So the temple would typify the church completed in glory, and the tower would very well typify the Lord Jesus Christ who is the door to the spiritual temple. And anyone who was standing in front of that temple, or looking toward it from any part of Jerusalem, or the surrounding country, would first see that spire or porch. So the time comes when the church is glorified, although they will be partakers of the divine nature, typified by the gold, and although they will be like jewels, typified by the jewels—because the Lord says they will be his jewels, and he will gather them together when he comes to make up his jewels—when the people see these saints who have made their calling and election sure, they will rejoice in them. But every time they look toward that church, they will see first the Lord Jesus Christ, who will be the one that will get the glory, who will be the one that will attract all the attention, and anyone who will not be glad to have that so will not be one of the stones of the temple, because he is the one through whom we get all our blessings, the one through whom we get all our praise and all the glory we ever hope to have.

When the temple was built, we are told that it was put together without the sound of a hammer. The Lord gave them a pattern, gave the plans to David, but he was not allowed to build the temple, but he was permitted to have a look at the plans and to hand them to his son. David means “beloved” and his life of warfare and bloodshed, etc., and hard struggles after he obtained the kingdom, very nicely typifies the condition of the Gospel church during the Gospel age. They are every one a man of blood, as it were; they are all sacrifices. And while the sacrificing is going on we may not build the temple, but each one who is sacrificing, each one who will be a stone in the temple, is being polished and tested and prepared for a certain place. God sets every member in the body as it pleases him, and he has each one fitted beforehand for that place in the body. So that corresponds very nicely to the fitting of each stone, and the preparing of them all to fit exactly in the place intended. Then when the temple was built by Solomon, Solomon in his glory very nicely typified the glorified Christ during the Millennial age. During the Gospel age the stones are all being chiseled and polished, and prepared for their places. Then after they are prepared the antitype of Solomon places them together in the temple and sets it up before the eyes of the world.

Now in the 21st chapter of Revelation we have another picture of the temple, “And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Then the ninth verse, “There came unto me one of the seven angels having the seven vials full of the seven last plagues and talked with me, saying, ‘Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ And he carried me away in the spirit.” We have to be in the spirit to see the temple, to see this city. Those who are not in the spirit cannot see it. Those who are not in the spirit merely see the outside, or the refuse that the Jews cast away or condemned to death. They do not see much to admire in that. When the Jews saw the Lord Jesus Christ, they did not see any beauty in him that they should desire him for their king. And the same thing is true of the

followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord did not choose many wise, or mighty, or many who have great names in the world. He chose the weak things in the world, the things which are despised, and the things which are naught, in order that he might get the glory out of their transformation, and that they might always be a credit to his workmanship. There is really more credit in taking a person who has fallen very low, and transforming that person by the renewing of his mind, with his own consent, and making a glorious being out of him, a being transformed from glory to glory, and himself cooperating all the while, than there would be in making a new creation altogether out of nothing.

“And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” There seems to be a nice thought in there. We are like living stones in the plural—144,000 stones in one, if you will. There was one perfect stone to begin with, and all the others had to be conformed to the image of that stone; all have to have the same lines of character, the same spiritual lines as that head stone, and yet when these stones are all assembled together in the one building, the antitypical temple, this whole temple, the whole church, is spoken of as one stone.

Now in the manufacture of glasses and spectacles they have discovered a way of taking two glasses of different density and fusing them together, so you cannot tell where the point of fusion is; you cannot see just where these two glasses are put together. This is a discovery which is very recent. One part of the glass can be ground for a long distance, and the other for a short distance, and where they are joined the line of their joining is invisible. Now that seems to show how the 144,000 stones might become one stone. You remember the Lord prayed that they might all be one, as he and the Father were one, and when they are all put together they come out a stone, most precious. That is the stone we read about in Daniel, that is going to smash the image on the feet. It has to be one stone bound together. If there is anything that will make an army fall to pieces it is lack of discipline, lack of love and loyalty, lack of cohesion. If you get a small army, and get a small nation thoroughly loyal, and thoroughly joined and bound together, they can conquer almost anything, humanly speaking. And so, with this little flock of 144,000, they are going to be welded together in one—there will be but one mind in that whole 144,000. There is only one thing in view, and that is to perform Jehovah’s will, and they rejoice in doing his will. And it is just like a tremendous club or weapon, whichever way it moves, they all go together with the one thought in mind. And it should be so here in the flesh. We should not seek our own elevation, or seek to glorify ourselves at all; our glory is the thing that must be forgotten. If we do not prefer the Lord’s will to our own will, and the little things that would please the flesh as we are here now, we are going to fall out of the little flock, we are not going to be welded into that little stone. And the power that is going to hold us together in that stone is, “Thou shalt love Jehovah, thy

God, with all thy mind, and soul, and strength.” And if you do you will love your neighbor as yourself, and if we have overwhelming love and loyalty for God, we will be as putty in his hands to be moved about as he pleases and moulded exactly as he wishes, and he can bring forth the best results in that way.

Now it says that, “Her light was like unto a stone most precious.” There are a great many stones that are called precious stones in the world, but are not all of one gem quality, and the most precious stone is that which is perfect in every way, without flaw, without darkness, without any shading in it, but one which gives forth the results that kind of stone ought to give forth. Scientists tell us that minerals always crystallize in exactly the same way if left to themselves. For instance, lead will crystallize in a cube formation, but if it is pressed in with some other substance it is made to include that other substance when it is crystallized. The same is true of copper, and all the different formations of iron, gold and every other precious substance, even to the lower grades of stone; they will always crystallize in the same way. Now the same applies to precious stones, and there are a great many stones in the world which have the materials in them to make them precious, but they are not all of precious quality, are not most precious. Now this stone which typifies the church, is a stone of the first water, you might say, without any flaws at all. There are a great many diamonds found, also a great many rubies, and garnets, and other stones like them, which if they had not been crushed against some other substance, and made to crystallize around various substances, would be very valuable. I suppose if they were all of the first quality they would not be so valuable. But because they have been made to form around other substances, which have come into too close contact with them, they are useless, except merely for grinding up and making emery stones, or something like that. I might say that an emery stone has almost the same materials in it that a diamond has, and also in carborundum you will find almost the same materials, but they are only fit for grinding things.

So with us, if we have some of the gem quality, if we have some of the quality which would make us useful to the Lord and his work, and yet have not gone on and separated ourselves entirely from the baser things of the world, but try to surround some of these things, and also crystallize them into our characters, we become of that class which is trying to serve God and mammon; we are no use to God, and are of no use to the world, for we have something in us the world cannot use. Those who go straight for worldly things, and follow worldly things entirely, are wiser than we are who try to serve both the Lord and the world at the same time. If any man who pretends to love the Lord, and loves the world, he has not learned to properly love the Lord at all, and he cannot be used of the Lord. “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let not that man think he shall have anything of the Lord.” The Lord has nothing for that man at all. He wants those who will separate themselves from everything of the world, and not merely from the things of the world that do not attract them—they would not want those anyway—but from the things that would naturally attract them and naturally draw them; things they

would naturally like to surround and carry with them. And if they succeed in cutting off all these things, like our Lord Jesus did when he made his consecration, then they are able to take the straight course through life and miss a great many temptations that otherwise they would have.

For instance, when the Lord consecrated himself it was so thorough that there never was a time after he began his ministry that Satan found an opportunity to tempt him. When he tried his temptations in the wilderness, he found he was foiled at each point by the use of the Scripture, and it says he left him for a season; he went away. It is as if Satan was watching his course; and if there had come a time when our Lord thought he would like to enter politics, or earn a little money on the side, or that he would like to save his reputation a little bit, or where he would like to shield some of his friends, where he thought he would encourage some things in some of his friends that he would not recognize in others, Satan would have found it out, and he would have been right there on hand to tempt him. Now all these are things by which we can be tempted unless we make our consecration, and our separation from the world, thorough and complete. When the Lord began to deal with us it was necessary for us to consecrate our lives and wills to him; and then he takes our wills and seeks to build them up, and begins to supply us with an understanding of spiritual things. From that time on if we feed on spiritual food, if we think on the things which are honest, and lovely, and just, and pure, etc., the things which pertain to God's kingdom, we will grow and develop spiritually, and we will develop more individuality than we had before. We will develop more character than we had before, so long as we remain in Christ, but if at the same time we seek some of the things of the earth, we will be, as it were, crystallizing around those worldly things with spiritual things, and we will become a stone which the Lord cannot use at all, but will have to reject, and which he will have to crush and make over again.

Now if a diamond cutter finds a stone with a flaw in it, he can do one of several things with that stone; he can put it on a stone and grind it down until that flaw is ground out, and cut away half or two-thirds of it, or may be more than that. One of the greatest diamonds of the world was cut down from something over 700 karats to 118 karats in order to obtain the best results. The Lord does not have to do that with us; he does not have to waste a great deal in order to make something out of us. He takes us with very low quality to begin with, and he builds us up; but first of all he takes out of us the things that are impure.

If the diamond cutter was able to crush that stone and let it reassemble itself, after he had taken out the impurities, he would have the stone just as large as before with the exception of the impurities which he would not want, and he would have perfect results. Now when the Lord goes to deal with his people, the first thing he does is to crush them. "A broken and a contrite heart the Lord does not despise," because that is the one kind of a heart he will deal with. If our hearts remain hard, intact, he cannot deal with us; he

does not deal with that class of people at all. He is dealing with that class who are broken-hearted. He came to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort those that mourn in Zion, to comfort those who realize they were undone and in a helpless condition. Those are the ones the Lord deals with. He is going to those who are crushed and broken down now in order that he may build them up and give them help and trust in himself.

And so, when we come to him and he receives us, he begins to purge out the things which are contrary to his will, the flaws, the dark spots, the things which pertain to the world, and as he moves those out, it causes a certain amount of pain, and separation, and disappointment. The Lord loves righteousness, and if we are branches of the vine, he prunes us, and cuts off those things which are not necessary, and which are not desirable, and all of those things are done with a certain end in view; the Lord does not work by guesswork, for he knows exactly what results he is going to produce, as he is the father of spirits and understands what spiritual life means, and he knows exactly what things to move out of our lives, and what things to introduce into our lives; and the results are that we will be made like unto himself. We could not do these things at all; we do not know what we ought to do. We would not know how to direct our lives in order to bring about these results. We would not know what things to cut off. If we were to cut off the things we think are in the way, we would be apt to cut off many of the things the Lord would want to leave. For instance, I know of some people who think that in order to purify themselves from the things of the world it is necessary for them to hold their hands up in the air all the time, never take them down at all; and by means of props, etc., they have kept their hands up in the air for years, while the Lord does not direct us to do anything like that at all. Others sleep on beds with spikes in them; others crawl on their hands and knees for miles; others seek for things that are the hardest to do, and because they are hard to do, they think they must be the proper things to do. But when the Lord deals with his people they do not have to do those things at all. If we seek to know the Lord's will from his Word, and are ready to do it as rapidly as we find it out, and if we take advantage of every opportunity for the service that he brings to us, he will move the things out of our lives himself. And every one of us who has consecrated to the Lord has had these in our own lives. We do not need to guess at all. We all know the Lord himself has moved the things out of our lives we did not know about at all; things we thought were all right to retain there, but which, after they were gone, we found afterwards were proper to be moved out of our lives, and we were glad that they had been moved out.

Now all the precious stones in the world will reflect different colors; the emerald, shades of green; the ruby, shades of red; and other stones different shades, but there is one stone that will reflect all the shades of color, and that is the diamond. And the jasper seems to refer to the diamond. It is the only stone that will fit the description of the jasper. And it will reflect all the shades of color there are, and when it reflects pure white, that means all the shades are included. If you take a disk and paint the seven colors of the rainbow in their proper proportion on the disk and then turn it rapidly enough, you will have a white

disk, because all the colors will blend so that it will show white. I have never seen it done, but I have heard it is true. The blending of all these colors brings white. Now a diamond that is polished shows white, but when you look into it and notice the different prisms that reflect from the interior and the exterior of the stone, you will find all the shades of color that your eye is able to discern and distinguish, because they are all there.

Now the diamond is a very appropriate stone to be represented in this temple. If we take the twelve attributes of God as represented by colors or shades, and we are told that there are three different primary colors—some say there are four—but if we take the three primary colors, and have those represent the three attributes of God, justice, wisdom and love, and if we say that power represents the force behind each of these, then we have the basis for the understanding of God's character. People in general do not understand the character of God at all. There are some people who cannot distinguish colors, and there are some people who only know about a half a dozen colors, and all the rest are interpreted by these colors; and there are a great many people in the world who do not know anything about God, except the one thing that he is just, and they think of his justice as, for instance, the desire to persecute, the desire to torture, hurt, do injury; or we might say their conception carries no color with it at all, just a kind of gray or black—no color at all. You might say that black is the absorbing of all the colors, while white is the reflecting of all the colors; when the colors all go back to you they look white. So most people do not know much about God, but we, who have committed our way to him, begin to see the different attributes—wisdom, justice, love and power. Then each one of these break up, and the way they break up is by God's dealings with us; and God's dealings with us all illustrate these four attributes, one after another, and the more we learn of him, and the more polishing we have, the more understanding we have; and more trials we have, the more experiences we have of God's way of dealing, the more we realize that he is the very embodiment of all the desirable attributes there are. There are none left out.

Perhaps twenty or thirty years of experience with God's dealings in this life would enable us to love and respect him in all the different ways in which he enters into our lives. And if there is anything in our lives that would cause us to rebel against God, we will be tested along that line, and if we rebel we shut ourselves right out of God's dealings, and we do not learn anything more of him at all that is favorable. We get into the same camp with those who are finding fault with his dealings, those who would criticize him. If we are learning proper lessons from the Lord's Word, we will learn to love him with all our hearts and mind and soul and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. That is the lesson our Lord Jesus learned from the old Testament Scriptures. When they asked him what was the chief commandment in the law, this is what he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangs all the law and the prophets." If we are learning, that is what we shall learn. We are to be among those who are to be able to say

at the close of this age, along with the others, “Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints.”

If this stone, which typifies a cut stone, polished, has a perfect number of prisms on it to refract the rays of light that come to it, then it will refract all the rays of light there are, and all the attributes of light broken up in such a way that people can see these colors for themselves. As it is now, we learn what God is like from his Word. We learn what God is like by faith. In the Millennial age the people will be able to read in history what God is like. As it is now we are among those who are able to say that we believe God is just, that God is righteous, but in the Millennial age they will all know that he is just and righteous. So as we are learning these things now, we are finding out these colors, and will be able to tell them to others after awhile.

How many colors will there be? The Standard dictionary gives a list of 625 colors in the rainbow, and makers of cotton thread have something like 1,500 colors on their color cards, and manufacturers of silk thread have something like 4,000 colors on their color cards, and it said in the city of Rome the makers of mosaics there have a stock list of 15,000 colors, and they say there 15,000 colors will average 50 shades apiece. Now when we get down to shades like that, we can realize that just a few portions of color changed from one to another will make a new shade; we would not be able to distinguish it with the human eye, but we could have almost an innumerable number of shades in that way, and all of these different shades would not be too numerous to represent the different shades of God’s dealings with us, and with the angels, and with people through the whole of the ages.

And when this stone is brought down from heaven, this new Jerusalem, represented as being the light of the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone, most precious, a little farther down in the same chapter we read, “And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.” Every stone in this wall was made perfectly clear. Now in the Bible, light seems to represent righteousness, and Jehovah is the father of light, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning; and with Satan, his kingdom is full of darkness, and he is associated with darkness all through, and his reign is a reign of sin. “Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people.” When the morning comes and the Sun of Righteousness rises, the night will be dispelled; and when this new Jerusalem is set up the walls will be the pure gold of the divine nature, like transparent glass, and will not have any light within themselves at all, but within will be the light of the glory of God, shining out through those wall. Now the picture of the pyramid seems to represent it very well, because the chief corner-stone would be the Lord Jesus Christ, and all the other stones welded into one stone, and within this holy stone, as it were, the glory of God dwells; they are all builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Now in all that temple wall, we are told that there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. In all that wall there will not be one single flaw; there will not be one life of sin, and not be one single person, or thought, that will be in harmony with sin or unrighteousness, or one that has a will of his own; they will all be there to execute God's will, having learned to rejoice in his will whatever may come to them for doing so. And as the light floods every stone in that wall, and we see how much we shall have of his light then, how glad we will be to do his will! These stones will be flooded with beautiful light, brighter than the sun at noonday; each one will be flooded with the light of the divine will, righteousness and character, and as the light comes through them, it will not be white light, it will be all broken up and diffused into the different shades possible for a human being to imagine.

And that typifies the way in which we will be used, and for which we are being prepared now, to show forth the glory of God's justice, wisdom, love and power; the way in which we are prepared now to reveal him to the world of mankind in the next age. And the way in which we are being prepared for that is by chastening, and polishing, and these experiences coming to us now. If we are without chastisement now, we are spurious, and not true sons. That is the way in which the Lord is preparing us to reflect and refract, and show forth his glory, and the Lord is taking out the elect class now, so through those who prove they love him now, he can show himself forth to the rest of mankind who have not desired to know him. And will not the sight be glorious! We can imagine the picture of a building something like the pyramid of Egypt perhaps, and the light goes forth to all nations of the world, and all nations shall walk in the light of it, in the light of that church, in the light that the Lord shall show forth through you and me if we are faithful, if we are able to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that through much tribulation we shall enter into that temple.

Then we can understand what the apostle meant when he said, that these light afflictions which come to us, which polish us, and which grind us, and which take away the things of the earth, which are excrescences on us which make us out of shape, and make us so that we cannot fit in with the other stones, these light afflictions are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and without which we could not share in that glory, and could not have any part in that glorious temple.

Another picture seems to be associated with that in the 52nd chapter of Isaiah: "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Just as if God had been desiring to have something which he could show around throughout all the ages to come, to show forth his glory, and to show the riches of his grace and his kindness toward us, and he had all the time that was needed, and he had all the power that was needed, all the wealth needed, all the material, and if he had not the material he could make it, and he desired to make something that would be to the glory of his name throughout the ages to come, something that he could show around,

something that would reflect his justice, wisdom, love and power, to show what kind of a God he was, and what he could do. He did not take angels to fill this position, he did not take perfect men, but waited until the time in which we are living; and how thankful we are that he gave us an opportunity to be in this class! And will we not take everything he sends to us and rejoice in it, knowing that these chastenings which come to us are not guess-work at all, but he gives them to us for our profit that we might be partakers of his glory.

Now the Lord Jesus indicated something which ought to give us a great deal of joy and confidence. When he was on earth, he said, "Set your affection on things above, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The Lord says that those who are his people, those who love his will, those who rejoice in his law, and in his will, are to him like jewels, and they shall be his in the day when he makes up his jewels. And these jewels are also said to be his peculiar treasure, a holy nation he has chosen out, every one of whom is holy; and these are the ones whom he has taken out and given the richest things he has ever given to any who are in the flesh, and for whom he has reserved the highest prize there is. These are the ones who are his peculiar treasure on the earth. And the Lord Jesus gave us a clue. He said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;" and so, if we are the Lord's peculiar treasure, we know that his heart is set upon us, and we are the ones who are peculiarly his, the ones whom he loves particularly, if so be we love him, if so be we rejoice in the way he leads us, and are willing to go wherever he is willing to send us. We know that he makes no mistakes. His ways are ways of love. Nothing can separate us from God's love. Jesus assures us that the Father loves us, and we know he loves us by the way he gets, keeps, and sustains us. We know he loves us by the joy he brings into our lives. In all of the temptations and trials that come to the Lord's people in the present time, we have the compensating pleasures and joys; we have these conventions; we rejoice to meet those who love the Lord the same as we do, and when we meet with one another, we are loathe to part. We realize there is only a short time ahead of us now, only a short time the way it is going. It seems to be going faster and faster all the time—just like when you let the water out of a basin; at first it seems to run through slowly, but when it gets nearer the bottom it begins to swirl around and goes faster and faster, as if the different drops were anxious to get out ahead of each other. It seems as if the days and weeks were hurrying past each other to get us to our reward and with the Lord. As we look forward to the time of the Great Convention, where there is no parting, and when we will see one who blessed and guided us, our Elder Brother, and above all having the opportunity of seeing the one who was our Creator, then we can truly rejoice in his leadings, and realize his love has been on us from day to day. And if we will count the blessings and favors, they will be more in number than the sands on the seashore.