

“THE SON OF MAN COMING IN HIS KINGDOM”

PART II

SEEING CHRIST IN HIS GREATEST (REGAL) MAGNIFICENCE

By Arlen L. Chirwood

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance:

Knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty [Gk., superlative; *lit.*, ‘His greatest (regal) magnificence’].

For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount” (II Peter 1:12-18).

Peter wrote his second epistle about 60 A.D., which would have been almost three decades beyond the events on the Mount, seen in Matt. 17:1-5. And these events had been of such a nature that after all these

years *they were still uppermost in his mind.*

At the end of instructions and exhortation pertaining to present Christian living with a view to that which lies out ahead (vv. 1-9), Peter called attention to the Christians’ “calling and election” (v. 10). And, within context, a Christian’s “calling and election” have to do with “exceeding great and precious promises,” to be realized in the coming “kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (vv. 4, 12), which Peter goes on to deal with through that which he, James, and John had seen when they were with Christ “in the holy mount” (vv. 16-18).

“Calling and Election”

Individuals are to give *diligence* to make their “calling and election sure.” The word “election” could be better translated *called out*. The words translated “calling” and “election” in this verse are from the same root forms as the cognate words in the Greek text translated “called” and “chosen” in Matt. 22:14, which should literally be translated, “For many are *called*, but few are *called out*.”

(Both an individual’s *calling* and *out-calling* have to do with the same thing. His *calling* can’t have to do with the Christian’s presently possessed salvation, for he can’t make that anymore “sure” than it already exists. Salvation by grace through faith has already been made “sure,” based on Christ’s finished work at Calvary.

An individual has been saved for a purpose; and that “purpose” would equate to his *calling*, as “realizing that purpose” would equate to his *out-calling*. Both have to do with a future salvation, the salvation of the soul; and both have to do with Christians one day being *called out of the called and realizing positions as co-heirs with Christ in His kingdom.*)

The word “diligence” in verse ten is from the same word also translated “diligence” in verse five. With the same intensity that a person is to abundantly supply in his *faith virtue...*, he is to make his *calling* and *out-calling* “sure.” The word “sure” is the

translation of a word which means “certain,” “firm,” “secure.” And to make his *calling* and *out-calling* “sure,” a Christian would have to be *knowledgeable* concerning that which is in view (note *epignosis* [Gk.], “mature knowledge,” in v. 8).

There can be no such thing as following Biblical guidelines surrounding the purpose for one’s salvation and, at the same time, ignoring one’s *calling* and *out-calling*. The entire concept widely promulgated in Christian circles today which states or teaches that the one really important thing is just to be saved has no basis in Scripture whatsoever. Scripture places the emphasis on *the purpose for one’s salvation*. It is man who has turned this around and placed the emphasis back on salvation itself.

The entire purpose for the present dispensation is *to procure a bride for God’s Son*, with a view to the coming age when the Son will reign over the earth with His consort queen (procured during the present dispensation).

God has set aside an entire dispensation lasting 2,000 years for this purpose. He sent His Spirit into the world at the beginning of the dispensation with specific instructions (seen in the type in Gen. 24:3-9). And the work of the Spirit throughout the dispensation, though it includes breathing life into the one who has no life (salvation of the unsaved), is primarily concerned with *procuring a bride for God’s Son*. And the bride is to be taken from *the saved*, not from the unsaved (seen in the type in Gen. 24 through the specific instructions which Abraham gave his servant and that which the servant did once he was in Mesopotamia — went to the city where Abraham’s kindred resided, and went to Abraham’s kindred in that city [vv. 3-27]).

The whole of the matter surrounding the reason for the Spirit being sent into the world at the beginning of this dispensation has to do with one’s *calling* and *out-calling*. And Christians are to be knowledgeable concerning God’s plans and purposes for the present dispensation, making their *calling* and *out-calling* “sure.”

“In the Holy Mount”

Peter, following his exhortation to Christians pertaining to making their *calling and out-calling sure* (v. 10), with a view to *an abundant entrance into the kingdom* (v. 11), then states that he would “not be negligent” to keep those to whom he is writing “always in remembrance of these things.” And Peter was going to do this even though these Christians were *already* “established in the present truth” (vv. 12ff).

Peter knew that these Christians *already possessed a firm foundation* (literal understanding of the Greek text) in the things that he was proclaiming (v. 12b). But that was of no moment to Peter. In time past he had seen something which they hadn’t seen; he had witnessed something which they hadn’t witnessed. He knew something from firsthand experience — *the importance of keeping the whole overall teaching surrounding that awaiting Christians at the time of Christ’s return before them at all times.*

Peter went on to state that he, along with others (James and John), had seen, with their own eyes, that of which he spoke. He had been on the Mount with James and John years earlier and had seen “the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” He had seen, with his own eyes, the Son of Man in “His greatest [regal] magnificence” (v. 16).

And God announced at this time, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (v. 17).

“Sonship” implies *rulership*. Only “Sons” can rule in God’s kingdom. That’s the way it has always been, and that’s the way it will always remain.

This announcement by God at this time — at the time when Peter saw *the Son of Man coming in His kingdom* — is simply an announcement stating *which Son God recognized as the One possessing the right to hold the earth’s sceptre.*

In this respect, “Satan,” the incumbent ruler, was *is a rejected son of God* (“a son of God” because of *creation*, as are all angels). Christ though, at the time Satan tested Him for forty days and nights (Matt. 4:1-11), showed that He was the One possessing the right to hold the

sceptre, in Satan’s stead. Christ showed that He, *as God’s Son*, was fully qualified to take the sceptre as the second Man, the last Adam (note Satan’s repeated statement, “If thou be the Son of God...” [vv. 3, 6]).

Where Adam had failed, Christ could not fail. And that which Adam had lost in the fall Christ would redeem [which included *both man and the forfeited domain*].

(The redemptive terms for *man* are set forth early in Genesis — *death and shed blood* — pointing to Christ’s finished work at Calvary.

The redemptive terms for *the forfeited domain* [the earth] though are set forth in Rev. 5:1ff, a passage drawing principally from two O.T. types dealing with the subject [Ruth 4:1ff; Jer. 32:1ff].

For information on the preceding, refer to the author’s books, “Salvation by Grace through Faith” and “The Time of the End,” Chapters VIII, IX).

Again, relative to *sonship and rulership*, note God’s statement concerning Christ following His baptism, immediately before being tested by Satan. It is exactly the same as His statement in Matt. 17:5: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Then note Peter’s statement in Matt. 16:16, responding to Christ’s question, concerning Christ’s identity: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

It would not have been possible for Peter to have responded in a more accurate and complete manner. This is why Jesus, in response, said, “Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (v. 17).

Peter had identified Christ through saying, in effect, “You are the One Who will rule and reign, the Son Whom God recognizes to possess this right.”

It was shortly after the preceding though that Peter was chastised by the Lord because of something which he stated in a completely opposite respect, *which came from below, not from above.*

The Lord, following the announcement concerning building His Church (Matt. 16:18, 19) began revealing to the disciples approaching events pertaining to

His death, burial, and resurrection. Peter, only a short time before, having made the statement concerning *Christ’s Sonship and reign*, couldn’t understand this at all. And, as a result, Peter took the Lord aside and “began to rebuke Him” (vv. 20, 21).

Jesus, in response, associating Peter directly with Satan, said to him: “Get thee behind me [*i.e.*, ‘get out of my sight’], Satan...” (cf. Luke 22:31, 54-62). Peter’s actions shortly before this had emanated *from above, from God*; now his actions emanated *from below, from Satan.*

(In reality, these are the only *two spheres* from which a person’s actions can emanate. A person, in his actions, can either be brought forth “from above” or “from below.” *There is no middle ground* [Luke 11:23].)

Six days later though the Lord allowed Peter, along with James and John, to have an experience pertaining to his confession concerning Christ’s identity which he would never be able to get away from or forget. And that is the experience recorded in Matt. 17:1-5.

The Lord allowed Peter to see something which would change his outlook on life completely. The Lord allowed Peter to see *that toward which all of Scripture moves* — “the Son of man coming in his kingdom.”

And almost three decades later, having seen Christ in “His greatest [regal] magnificence” had so impacted Peter that *he could never get away from it.* This is the one event in his life that he referenced to reveal why *he was going to keep on hammering away at teachings surrounding Christ’s coming reign, even though the people whom he addressed were already well-grounded in these truths.*

Because of the importance of that which Peter knew — Christians keeping their eyes fixed on that which he had personally witnessed — *he was going to keep on proclaiming things pertaining to Christ’s coming kingdom to the point that they could never forget it. He was going to proclaim this message to the point that even after he was dead and gone they still couldn’t get away from it.*

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