

8. Thou shalt surely die

or: All is not gold that glitters

“In the beginning God [the Godhead] created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Gen 1:1-5

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” “And when the woman [...] took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” Gen 2:7,16-17;3:6-7

“The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage [for they are “virgins”]: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” Luk 20:34-36

Elohim (the Godhead; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) have coexisted from eternity. Since He is Love, He cannot live only for Himself. His Love “compels” Him to create beings in whom he may invest His love, beings that in their turn may experiment the sharing of it by copying the Creator, and thus pouring it out of their hearts back to Him and to their fellows. By the power of His Word He creates all things and also by His power he sustains them, for they are created for love and out of love. He is the Light that calls for life from the abyss of non-existence.

The moment when, in the act of creation of the Earth in seven days, He separated light from darkness (the light was called day and the darkness, night) was the starting point of time on Earth. That first day marked the beginning of the first week, then of the first month followed by the first year, the first century and the first millennium.

From that first day on Earth, He counted seven days and on the sixth day He created the man (Adam) from whose rib He later created the woman (Eve), bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. God put the human being (man and woman, a whole manifested by two persons) in the Garden of Eden to guard it and work its land. So complete and full was the love the Creator invested in the man that the two (Adam and

Eve) were permanently one being, meaning that one without the other and both without God could not have fully existed.

In the middle of the Garden there was a tree called “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”; this was “good for food, and [...] pleasant to the eyes” (Genesis 3:6). God gave the man one single commandment and by his choice to obey or disobey it, the man was allowed to manifest his free will, being created to live freely but still in a voluntary dependence on God. The relational dependence on God represents the single framework where freedom can be manifested in the full meaning of the word so that the man should be able to keep and improve the values he has been given. By the words: “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it” (Genesis 2:16-17), God restricted the human actions up to a point beyond which the man was not allowed to make any step further. Then, He showed the consequences of the action that in his thoughtlessness the man could have done: “You shall surely die!” (Genesis 2:17) – words which expressed a real consequence of their acting disobediently, an imminent result, an unchangeable principle (“surely”). Thus, the man was given the responsibility to watch over his life so that, out of negligence or thoughtlessness, he might not step on a forbidden ground where Satan would have the chance to deceive and draw him by his slyness into suffering this terrible consequence of a sin committed: death.

The serpent’s deceitfully uttered words: “You shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it [tree], your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5) brought a terrible lie in the mind of mankind (an idea according to which the price for disobedience would not be death but the evolution towards a state similar to God’s) as well as a double mistrust; one regarding God’s character, Who appeared to have limited the permissiveness of people’s actions out of wickedness and bad intention, on being afraid that the human being might develop into something similar to Him; the second suspicion (also regarding God’s character) maliciously induced in people’s mind is that He is double-faced, experimenting and mixing somehow in Himself both good and evil.

The consequence of the human being’s consent (Eve and Adam) to the serpent’s deceit was the ignorance of God’s warning by their eating from the forbidden tree. The moment of their ignoring His will triggers death for the two, but not the death leading to non-existence, but another kind of death, that of a separation from God, the very source of love and life. Then their love (that made the two of them, one in God) has got cold, and the glory of the Creator enshrouding them vanished and their resemblance to God’s image faded away.

What was the consequence of this type of death, experienced in this way? The answer is that, if before they only knew the GOOD (LOVE) now they would experience a mixture of good and evil, altruism and egocentrism, truth and lie; they lost the presence of glory, love, peace and life, thus falling into a state of lukewarmness, empty of God, but full of self. Since then people’s experience has been a continuous fight between good and evil, a movement in a hopeless cycle of life and death, of blessing and curse.

The knowledge of good and evil is offered to each individual separately. In every moment of our life, we (born of Adam) are all faced to a choice between the two

concepts, a choice the man of Eden did not have to make. By His coming, Jesus showed from where we fell (the initial state) and where we must get again by His grace.

The last generation will live an awakening from this cursed Babylonian state of mixture of good and evil, light and darkness. God, who separated from the first day the light from the darkness, will do it again through the Holy Spirit on this last day of history. It will be an awakening from dualism, from the mixture of sacredness and profane. The one hundred and forty-four thousand will pass from death into life by the power of the Word (John 5:24,25) and will be the chosen ones, sons and daughters of resurrection (Luke 20:34-36; John 1:11-12) and the others who have chosen not to be part of this experience will remain in death, fully dedicated servants of Satan.

God has sealed until now three “words” of His speaking of this resurrection (when the chosen ones will rise to do only the good and the bad ones will remain “in death” doing “their [own] good”, the righteousness of their filthy garment): Luke 20:34-36, John 5:24-25 and Daniel 12:1-3. These “words” can be fully understood only if considered in the context of the third angel’s light, a prophetic element for the last generation.

“The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage [“for they are virgins” – Revelation 14:4]: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”

Luk 20:34-36

“The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage” – these words mainly refer to the preoccupations of the people belonging to the last generation, and partly represent the very fulfillment of the Savior’s prophecy: “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matthew 24:37-39).

“But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead” – these words refer to the ones that will have been found worthy by God after the investigative judgment. After having analysed each case, God will have taken a decision for them. They will have been found worthy by their appeal to the blood of God’s Lamb; they are the wise virgins that, when hearing the calling: “Behold, the bridegroom cometh!” are ready and will enter with Him in His wedding room; they are the ones who, by communion with the Spirit of God, have been given a wedding garment (the Lamb’s garment), cleansed by the His wounds and sacrifice, a garment received from and put on through the Holy Spirit.

“[They which shall be accounted worthy] neither marry, nor are given in marriage” – it is being referred that, by understanding the message from Heaven, by becoming aware of the solemnity and importance of the time they live in (a time when they are set apart for God) the revived ones will have completely different preoccupations than the sons of this age, and their supreme

preoccupation will be to fulfill the words: “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3).

“Neither can they die any more” – these words differentiate the ones found worthy at the end of this age, God’s sons and daughters of the last generation that will not taste death (“We shall not all sleep”, “we which are alive and remain” – 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:17), from all the other redeemed (those belonging to previous generations) that passed away and will rise when hearing God’s last trumpet (“at the last trump [...] the dead shall be raised incorruptible” – 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:53-54).

“For they are equal unto the angels” – these words talk about the double role of those who will not taste death: on the one hand, their serving attitude and the rapidity with which they will fulfill God’s words and on the other hand, the uniqueness of their service as compared to that belonging to the previous generations. Consequently, these ones (144,000) are the very expression of a providential privilege. Their work will blend with the work of God’s angels in sharing His words from the three angels’ message (Revelation 14:6-11) under the authority of the great angel from Revelation 18, whose glory will fill the entire Earth.

“And are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” – these words refer to that resurrection from dualism to the sharing of God’s love by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the fullness of His presence upon the last generation through the latter rain, the regaining by being born again of that edenic state of love, untainted by sin. This resurrection (spiritual awakening) was described by the words: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto LIFE. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear SHALL LIVE” (John 5:24-25). “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth [are preoccupied only with achieving more and more in this life] **shall awake** [will become fully aware of the truth], some to everlasting life [144,000], and some to shame and everlasting contempt [those will not accept God’s invitation]. And they that be wise [awoken by the Holy Spirit] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:2-4).

The resurrection made by the Holy Spirit, as a consequence of hearing Jesus’ words addressed to this generation: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20) will lead mankind to an unprecedented situation in history. Thus, there will be two distinct categories of people: on the one hand, the chosen ones, upon whom the Holy Spirit will manifest in His fullness, and on the other hand the wicked who have chosen to consent to receiving Satan’s unholy spirit; both will be capable of miracles by the power of the spirit they submit to:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”

Joh 14:12-14

“And he [the beast] doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”

Rev 13:13

As a climax of this work (signs and wonders) for a short time Satan himself will transform into an angel of light, posing as Christ, blessing people and drawing their attention to those parts of the Scripture that are agreeable to him. Then, the warning below will become more real than ever:

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Mat 24:23-27

On following this world-wide counterfeit, the seven plagues will fall upon Earth, as an expression of God’s wrath; their start up will trigger an unprecedented manifestation of hatred of those who have hardened their hearts, against those who have accepted Him, the latter’s attitude being considered as the main cause of the natural cataclysms that will unfold. The climax of these unprecedented manifestations of hatred will be the giving of a death decree against those who, regardless of the consequences they might suffer, have chosen to obey God and His Law.

“I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus’ work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob’s trouble.”¹

During the plagues, God’s children will apparently be abandoned by Him, at the mercy of the wicked. However, during all this hard time of trouble, the angels’ protection and intervention in the life of the chosen ones will be double and sometimes even perceived in the visible specter. Satan will not have access to God’s children either directly by himself or his fallen angels or indirectly by his enslaved agents (the wicked). For “Jacob” (God’s people) it will be a real fight of faith against the dense fog of a false faith. But God, though hidden to their eyes, hears their cry. In His love for them, He will intervene and demonstrate that His glory will not be given to someone else and nor will it be disdained by tolerating the suffering of those loved by Him (John 16:26-27), who by fasting, paying and repenting of all sin have prepared their hearts and received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

God will reveal Himself as a fulfillment of the words: “And the Light of Israel will be for a fire and his Holy One for a flame” (Isaiah 10:17); this manifestation of God’s

power to protect those who have risen (from the spiritual death) will make the wicked bow before them. A rainbow, shining with the glory from the Throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle the 144,000. The mocking cries of the wicked die away and the object of their rage is forgotten for a while. God fulfills His words:

“The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”

Psa 34:22

“Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.”

Isa 41:11-12

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” “But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.” Rev 22:12; 3:11; 2:25-28

1. EW 36,37 (1854)