

BEFORE THE THRONE

„For since we believe that Jesus died and rose, so also, we believe that God, through Jesus, will lead forth with him those who fell asleep. For this we affirm to you by the Lord’s word, that we, the living, who are left over to the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who fell asleep.” (1 Thess. 4:14-15. Diaglott.) In the article in

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which we considered how we, the living would be changed to spiritual bodies and yet remain for a time under the veil, it will be noticed that there is no mention made of the dead in Christ. From the above text we find that our changes cannot come until the dead are raised, „for we shall not precede them.” In order to understand this, we must look at several scriptures.

1st. We will notice our pattern, Jesus. We find that after He was raised from the dead, (a spiritual body, born of the spirit) He was not seen by any one except when He showed Himself. This being true then, He could have been present [as He was 40 days. Acts 1:3], and not have been seen at all; just so we now think He is actually present,

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but not seen. And if Jesus can be present, and not seen, the dead in Christ could be raised and not seen, because when raised they will be like Jesus. Our understanding of the matter is this, viz: that the dead in Christ, will be raised spiritual bodies; then we, the living, changed to spiritual bodies, the only difference being, that they will not be seen; that is, will not appear under the veil, [the flesh] while we remain for a time veiled, yet our real condition will be the same. The type of Moses and Aaron teaches the resurrection of the dead before we meet Jesus. Before they met [Ex. 4:27,] you will notice that the angel of the Lord appeared unto him [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush [Ex. 3:2-6]; here God seems to introduce the idea of the resurrection. We find that Jesus gives the key in Luke 20:29-38. We know that it is the resurrection of the dead in Christ He is talking about, for He says: they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead ... these cannot die any more ... [because the first resurrection, the second death hath no power over them, they cannot die again. [Rev. 20:6.] Now that the dead [viz: this class of the dead] are raised, even Moses showed at the bush ... that is, the dead in Christ are raised at this point of time, which we find is before Aaron went to meet Moses and hence, before any one of the ten plagues were poured out. Then if [as has been shown] the meeting of Aaron and Moses represents our change and the dead must first be raised, this

transaction at the bush is in the right place and harmonizes with the statement by Paul. „The dead in Christ rise first.”

In Rev. 15 we find a company on the sea of glass, making a proclamation. This sea of glass condition is before the throne, [Rev. 4:6.] we notice in verse 5, that there are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, (which are the seven congregations, Rev. 1:20, E.D.) these seven lamps bring to mind the complete gospel church. And as they are before the throne, and the sea of glass, is also before the throne and there is a company on the sea of glass, we conclude it must be the overcomers in that position. We then conclude as follows, viz: „that this scene is, after the dead in Christ are raised and we the living changed and though all can sing the same song, they could remain invisible and yet we under the vail, might be visible. The seven lamps of fire might be burning [the church complete] because we are all in the spiritual condition, they would be visible to us and we to them. They

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will not be visible to the world, neither would we, were it not for the vail. With this understanding of the matter we will now look at another point, viz: (Rev. 14:1-5.) ... A lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with Him are 144,000; this company represents to our mind the complete church, and hence, the resurrected saints as well as the changed living saints; these harp with their harps ... [like those on the sea of glass] these sing as it were a new song ... these are the first fruits [overcomers] unto God and the Lamb and these are without fault before the throne of God ... just as the company on the sea of glass are before the throne. Now we think the evidence is conclusive, that these are the overcomers, for the following reasons: 1st. We know of no more exalted position before the throne than the sea of glass. 2d. We know not who else should be the first fruits unto God and stand on the Mount Zion with the Lamb [Moses and Aaron met in the Mount.] 3d. We know not who the seven burning lamps could represent, if not the little flock. 4th. Neither do we know who the 144,000 could be if not those.

Both „the one hundred and forty-four thousand,” and the ones „as it were, on the sea of glass,” are said to be „before the throne,” which is the location of the sea of glass. Should we not conclude, therefore, that they are the same—the bride—“before the throne” signifying before the exaltation to the glory of power? The song sung is after they are seen on the Mount Zion with the Lamb, and this is in harmony with the type. After Moses and Aaron met in the Mount, Aaron did his work. So these are represented making a proclamation after the meeting with the Lamb. Our position then would be this, viz.: All the dead in Christ raised; we, the living, changed. All these would be in the spiritual condition. All remain before the throne until the proclamation to be made is completed by us who remain under the vail. The fact that they are raised but not seen, while we are changed but seen, seems to be shown by Isa. 52:7-8, viz.: „How beautiful upon the mountains

are the feet of Him?" The thought is this: Jesus, the Head (of the body), is beyond the veil and is not seen; the dead in Christ are raised, and they are beyond the veil—not seen. We, the living (the feet), are changed, but we are seen for a time, while a work is being done. The feet (so to speak) walk the earth, and they publish peace, ... bring good tidings, ... that saith unto Zion, „Thy God reigneth, and we shall see eye to eye (because we are changed), when the Lord shall bring again Zion. The types of Elijah and Rebecca, we know, have represented the living phase of the gospel church from Pentecost down, but when we come to the closing work, viz.: when Elijah was taken, and when Rebecca saw Isaac, it proves the previous resurrection of the dead in Christ, for in this matter we cannot precede those who sleep; hence, when we see Him, the dead must have been previously raised, and so those two are in harmony with that of Moses and Aaron and Paul's statement. While they meet Jesus beyond the veil, we can be changed and meet both them and Jesus and yet remain under the veil, and we can all [Resurrected and changed] remain on the sea of glass position for a time before the throne and not interfere with our being finally exalted to the throne. We shall consider this again. The spiritual body condition of both dead and living will obtain before any are glorified [or sit on the throne]. Let us lay aside every weight that we, being in Him, may be accounted worthy to escape—be changed—and the glory will follow in God's due season. A. D. J.

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