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THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL

Matt.16: 18

NO.260

THE BOOK WAS SEALED

John the Revelator tells us of a book written and sealed with seven seals! This book is not a literal book of parchment and ink; this book is the Word of God contained in the Spirit and placed within each of His called out ones (Church). Jesus taught us through parables that the Word is the Seed and the Sower is the Spirit of God.

But this book of Word or Seed had been hermetically sealed with seven seals. *“And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.”* (Rev.5: 3)

From the beginning God's works were already sealed. They were finished in the heavenly realm of Spirit but they still had to come down and be formed in the earth.

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” (Acts 15: 18b) They were known to God but they have been sealed unto us until the time that God has ordained for them to be revealed.

Immature carnal men have speculated about the things of God. God has been portrayed by man's imaginations and countless weeds have been planted in the minds of humanity. Wars are still fought because of the gods that men have imagined and set up.

The prophet Daniel was chosen to know the true God. He was given an open door to some of God's purposes and plans for creation but God had sealed

them and Daniel had never been able to reveal them. *“And he said, Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”* (Dan.12: 9)

This means that none of these prophecies could be understood by man. The carnal mind cannot comprehend the things of God. They have to be revealed by the Spirit in their time. We have been like John on Patmos as he yearned to understand the writings of the “sealed book.”

We have poured over Scriptures and racked our brains trying to understand their meanings; but they also have been sealed until the Spirit, in His time, reveals them to us. Man may get some understanding through his intellect but man can never know the truth by his natural abilities. *“And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.”* (Rev.5: 4)

But the time came when John was comforted as One appeared and *“...prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof.”* (Vs.5b) The time had arrived and the revelation that had been sealed to the end was ready to be made known.

“And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” (Rev.22: 8-9)

The word angel means messenger. This messenger presented himself as one of the prophets. By the

“BUT YE SEE ME”

Spirit, I would not be surprised that this prophet was Daniel who had been shown the times of the end but had been unable to make them known until that time. Would it not be like our God to choose and send His beloved servant Daniel who had held His word all these many years to deliver the book that he had to seal long ago?

As a young man, Daniel had been taken captive to Babylon with the rest of God's people. They had made the arduous five hundred mile journey from Jerusalem to Babylon on foot. As soon as Daniel and his friends arrived, they were spotted for their good looks and bright countenances and they were quickly selected to serve in the palace.

Right away Daniel made clear that they would not eat the dainties of the king's servants and when the guard saw that they thrived on their own fare, he honored their request. We are in the world, but we do not eat of the world's dainties; we are chosen to eat of the word of life that the Spirit feeds us daily. *“Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”* (Deu.8: 3b)

Nevertheless during their long captivity Daniel remained faithful to his God; He learned to hear from Him in a very special way and God rewarded him and showed His power through him many times.

And when the time came, God honored Daniel and anointed him in the knowledge of the king's formidable dream of the crumbling statue. Not only did Daniel reveal the meaning of the dream, he revealed the dream itself. This stunned the king and made him know that Daniel's God is indeed the true God.

It was when Daniel shut the mouths of the lions that the king of Babylon made a decree that Daniel's God *“...is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.”* (Dan.7: 26b)

During his seventy year captivity, Daniel displayed the glory of the true God and made his captors to bow down before Him. This is the great reward of God's chosen people.

Many seekers of truth have earnestly tried to fathom the depth of understanding given to Daniel in his prophecies. However when carnal minds speculate on these things, many strange doctrines present themselves and so one must wait until the time when the Spirit of God is ready to reveal these truths to His church.

Paul compares Christ's relationship with the Church with the way of a husband with his wife. The Church is called the Bride. She is the woman who receives the Seed and gives birth to a son after the image of His Father.

The woman is the earth or the field into which the seed of life is planted to bring forth the plantings of that seed. Jesus said, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”* (Jn.12: 24)

Jesus compares Himself to a corn of wheat or seed that is planted into the earth and dies in order to reproduce Himself. When Jesus was about to leave His disciples He explained that He was leaving as a man but that He would return to them in the form of the Spirit of truth.

*“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more: **but ye see me**: because I live, ye shall live also.”* (Jn.14: 18-19)

Jesus said, “BUT YE SEE ME.” Do we see Him with our natural eyes or feel Him with our natural senses? Of course not. But Jesus said we would see Him because the Father sent us the Spirit of truth. *“Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”*(Jn.14: 17)

We do not need to cogitate or try to figure it all out with our carnal minds as the world does. We have been given the Spirit of truth to lead us into all truths and so we have a set of “spiritual senses” that

the world does not possess. We have ears to hear and eyes to see the things that God has prepared for those who love Him.

“But God has revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God...Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” (I Cor.2: 10,12)

Because we have another set of “senses” we know things that those who are of the world are not able to see. This is why it is futile to try to explain spiritual truths to them for they cannot receive or perceive without being filled with God's Spirit. We will only confuse them or cause them to turn away from the truth.

Those who are called to reveal God's word are no longer taught of man. They have come to maturity and are able to speak as they hear the Spirit speak. Just as Jesus saw the Father, they see Jesus and are able and willing to do only what He is doing and speak only what He is speaking.

WE HAVE THE BLUEPRINTS

When John began to write the book of the Apocalypse, which is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, he wrote these words in his introduction, *“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear (understand) the words of this prophecy, AND KEEP THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN THEREIN: FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND.”*(Rev.1: 3)

John knew that there would be people reading these prophecies who would be actually keeping the things which are written therein. This means that there would actually be a blessed people who would hear these prophecies at the same time that they were being fulfilled in them and in the world. When we read this book the Spirit within gives us witness that indeed this is what we have been experiencing.

Many studies have been made in the book of the Revelation, but the closer we are to the time at hand, the more the understanding changes and becomes clearer. So the book which is the story of

God's plan and purpose for His people and for His creation is being opened, seal by seal, by the Christ who was slain but is alive within us.

God's mysteries are His plans and purposes for His creation. They are called mysteries because they can only be revealed to us by His Spirit. *“But the natural man (no matter how educated he is) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* (I Cor.2: 14)

I once had this dream, *“I was at an airport hurrying to catch my plane. I had rolls of scrolls under my arms. They were blueprints. I knew that I could not read these until the plane had reached its highest cruising altitude.”* These blueprints were the plans of God that are given to us in Christ.

However, we cannot understand them until we are at a certain spiritual level. This was the meaning of this simple dream from the Lord. He showed me that as we travel toward our destination in Him, He is revealing His plans and purposes for us and for His creation. Indeed, He has been doing just that.

So the key to understanding His word to us is found in the high places of the Spirit. This means that there is a place in Christ within us where we are lifted up from the worldly carnal mind and where we receive the pure unadulterated word of God. We have been in and out of that place in the past, but the time is coming when we will go no more out.

When the Lord asked Simon Peter, *“But who say ye that I am?”* (Matt.16: 15) He answered, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* (Vs.16) Everyone else was saying that Jesus was John the Baptist or Elias or maybe Jeremiah or one of the prophets. But Peter knew the truth.

Jesus explained to Peter, *...flesh hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* (Vs.17b) This is a very important teaching because it is our foundation stone. It is the Rock upon which Jesus has been building His church. We are built as a church by the truths that the Father reveals to us by His Spirit. Our faith is first built when we hear

or read God's word. *"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* (Rom.10: 17) This is how the seed is planted. But it is when God gives the increase and makes these truths part of who we are through our walk that our faith is built upon the Rock.

HIS BELOVED CHURCH

Oh! How He loves her! He has given Himself for her. He is making her beautiful and blessed above all women. He is sanctifying her and cleansing her with the washing of water by the word! *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph.5: 27)

In this same letter to the church at Ephesus Paul writes, *"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 ye are 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 shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*(Eph.2: 4-7)

Paul is talking about Christ's church. She is the one who is being gathered in Him and raised up to shew forth His glory in the ages to come. It was to Simon Barjonah that the Lord declared that He will build His church on the Rock (Christ anointing) that gave Peter the ability to hear from the Father.

It is this Rock (Christ) who is our life and the door to hearing from the Father and to be gathered together in the Son. This church is the Bride that He has been waiting for as she is being built and made ready to be One with Him. She is very much a part of Him and He is bringing her to Himself to do a work throughout eternity.

His church is not to be confused with the churches we see in the world. Although most of us have once been a part of these, we have heard the voice calling loud and clear, *"Come out of her my people!"* Therefore we have been separated or as we read in the verse above, SANCTIFIED. To sanctify is to set apart for a holy work. The true church is not

only set apart from the system, but she is given a holy calling. As soon as she is out of the system, she is gathered unto Him. Do not be deceived, God is not saving the church systems of this world. He is calling His people out of them.

Jesus gives a hint to what the holy calling is all about. He says, *"I will build my church AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT."* (Matt.16: 18b) She is called to storm the gates of hell and death.

As the Son reveals Himself to us, the meaning of these words is becoming clearer. What are the "Gates of Hell?" In a recent dream, the Lord showed someone that huge gates that had been impenetrable were beginning to open wide and people were joyfully coming out from the other side.

The gates of hell represent the power of the devil to keep people into the realm of sin, death and the grave. We certainly have been trapped in the cycle of death that has kept us on the road to the grave from the time of our birth. Others, on the other side of the grave have been trapped into this death as they await the day when they will hear the voice of Resurrection calling them out unto new life.

Jesus was announcing to Peter that the great purpose of His church is to storm these gates and put an end to the cycle of death and hell. He declares, *"The gates of hell (death and the grave) shall not prevail against my church."* In other words, the church will first break through this cycle of death as Jesus did and the gates will no longer prevail.

Jesus introduced Himself to the church as, *"He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death."* (Rev.1: 18) Jesus went through death and hell and triumphantly took back the keys that the thief had stolen. Now, through His church, He is about to open the gates for all humanity only in proper order. *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; after they that are Christ's at his coming."* (1 Cor.15: 22)

This is an important verse because it teaches that

the time is coming when ALL who were born in Adam will be raised in Christ. But our God has an order for they all will come through the death of the cross as Jesus did and as His firstfruits follow.

HE THAT OVERCOMETH

One of the first things mentioned in the book of Revelation is the visit of Jesus Christ to His church. He had much to say to the entire church which at the time consisted of seven churches throughout Asia Minor.

John's feet were on Patmos, but he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day when he heard a great voice as of a trumpet behind him, *"And I turned around to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down do the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."* (Rev.1: 12)

When John heard the voice and turned around, he saw the church as the light of the world *"...the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."* And he saw her great High Priest in the midst. Jesus now the Son of Man, in possession of His eternal body of flesh and bone, was now prepared to deal with His church about her "overcoming."

In each of His visit, the Lord laid out the things that He had against her, but He also revealed the rewards that He had for her when she overcame. Note that the call of the Lord is to "HE that overcometh" which means that He was the One who would take His church through the cleansing and purifying but she needed to yield to Him and follow Him in the process.

Indeed, it is only through the power of the Christ within that we are able to overcome each day and fulfill our calling. We learn many lessons as we follow Jesus' visits to the churches but for now let us look into His visit to the church at Philadelphia.

The Lord Jesus has no reprimand for this church

and He comes to her with a wonderful key. *"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the **key of David**, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth."* (Rev. 3: 7b)

He commends them for keeping His word and never denying His name, but they are left with little strength. So He sets before them an open door that no man can shut. This door is meant to give them the strength they need for the rest of the journey.

I believe that we, as His true church are in that same place today. We have stood in the truth and we have staid the course, but we have little strength. The journey has been long and many of us are no longer around. Enemies of doubt and fear are forcing themselves upon us... But Jesus in our midst has come with the key of David.

This key of David speaks of the glorious covenant that God made with the house of David. *"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn to David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations..with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him."* (Ps.89:3,4,20b,21-23)

The house of David is the house of Jesus Christ and it is where we reside in Him. Zion is the place of His throne or of His rule. Zion is the rule of Christ in the earth. So when Jesus opened the door with the key of David, He gave His church this same place of eternal power with God.

This door is open to the church who has kept His word and has stood against the pressures that have convened against it. This is the place where we find ourselves today. Laodicea has been called the church of the last days, but by the Spirit I believe that in these last days, the church is as Philadelphia.

We are sanctified by the Lord but find ourselves separated and with little strength. Nevertheless our great High priest is here to open the door that no

man can shut and to impart strength and power that no foe can thwart. This means that no man can change the course that we are now finishing.

THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA

Years ago I heard of a book entitled, "The Bride Wore Combat Boots." This sounds like a militant bride ready to go to battle. Indeed, the bride who is His Church is not waiting to be raptured in the sky, she is called to overcome corruption and give birth to a brand new creation man.

When the resurrected Lord visited His Church as written, He presented her with the rewards and glory ahead, but not without first laying out her need to "overcome." It was not without the cross that Jesus triumphed over sin and death and it is the same for His followers.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.." (Heb.12: 2a) The Lord shows us the glory that is set before us but we cannot name it and claim it as children do and forget that there is a race to finish.

When Jesus visited the seven churches, which represent His entire church, He came with great rewards but also with admonitions to follow Him to the cross.

Of all seven churches, it was only the church at Philadelphia who received no reprimand from the Lord. Each church represents a part that we as His entire church is called to walk through. I see many of the Philadelphia qualities in the church that I know today. As the Spirit moved us on, we have been rejected for the Word. We have been scorned and ridiculed by those who claim to be true Christians but through it all, God's love for His true church has overflowed our hearts.

Many have compared the Laodicean church to our last day church, just because she is last in the order given in the book. But I believe that the Lord has spoken these admonitions to us and passed us through the refining fire already. We have bought

gold tried in the fire as well as salve for our blind eyes. We have paid the price for these and most of us now find ourselves as the church in Philadelphia, with little strength but holding on to our crown of life.

So Jesus gives His church a wonderful promise, *"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."* (Rev.3: 10)

Then Jesus says, *"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."* (Vs.11) This is certainly the hour of great testing for the world and for the inhabitants of the earth. But rejoice ye heavens for He is coming quickly! This means that He is arising within us with no delay.

But hold on to your crown! Let no man rob you from your place in Christ. We may have days when we feel weak under the pressures against us but keep single eyed upon the truth that is in you!

We may feel abandoned and alone but we go by faith. I heard a dear one say, I can worship in any church no matter what they believe. This may sound very honorable but it is not the voice of truth. We have been joined to His church and can only find peace there in the Spirit.

The Lord says, *"Behold, I come quickly."* He gives us the assurance that He is not wasting time. He is finishing this work quickly. It is like when the dentist has been drilling on our teeth and he says, "I am almost done!!" In other word hold on just a little longer. Indeed this gives us another breath of air to hold on. This is what Jesus is telling us today. I am the finisher and behold the consummation is coming quickly. It is almost done. Hold on to the Word of life. Hold on to your crown of life!

Our crown is His new life working in us. It includes His minds and His thoughts. And it includes the keys of the kingdom that Jesus gave to Peter on the day that the Father revealed His Son to him. These keys open the way to bind or loose that which is in earth and in heaven.

THE REWARD AT HAND

As Jesus points out, there are many keys to the kingdom of God. We know of the keys of hell and death that Jesus holds. And now Jesus comes to Philadelphia holding the key of David. And so with this key, He opens a door to His beloved church that no man can shut.

“Him that overcometh (Christ in you) will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (Rev.3: 12)

I will make Him a pillar in the temple!! When we have become the “Him” who is Christ in us, we become pillars in the temple and go no more out. This means that we can no longer be moved from our place as priests of God and of Christ. A pillar is one who imparts strength and holds up the building. It does not need holding up, it holds up.

When we look at pictures of Roman ruins, we see that most of the pillars are still standing. If we look at the Vatican in Rome we will see the many formidable pillars stand in perfect order strategically placed to hold the mighty building. The promise to this church is for great spiritual strength. The Lord is making us pillars for strength and steadfastness.

Pillars do not move away from their calling; they just stand there and hold the building. They stay in place in the Body of Christ. They are not tossed about with every wind of doctrine, they are solid and eternal.

Furthermore, this word pillar in the Greek has at its base the word “established” as rooted in a covenant. These overcomers in the temple of our God are fully grounded into God's covenant of blood in Christ. As pillars they have no more decision to make for there is no more choice given. We choose when there are more than one thing to choose from. When there is evil present, we must choose. This is the tree of knowledge of good and

evil there is good and evil. But in Christ all is good; there is no evil present. Now we are no more double minded. We are single eyed and stable.

In Eden, the serpent presented Eve with a choice. She made the choice and gave to Adam and they fell into the realm of death. But Christ is One and He is our life forever. We are established as pillar in the temple. The old Adam is dead and Christ is alive forevermore.

Christ cannot die again and we reckon ourselves dead with Him and alive forevermore. Christ will never die again and in Him we can no longer die. He has kept our appointment with death and has replaced death and the grave (Hades) with the death of the cross that leads to life.

And I will write upon him the name of my God. What is the name of His God? Jesus called Him Father and we are mansions or dwelling places in Father's house. We take on the name of our Father. This means that we become full fledged sons of God. We are not only born again of the Spirit but we are born of God. Jesus told His disciples *“I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”* (Jn.20: 17b)

When our Father's name is written upon us we have left the mother churches that raised us behind. We only belong to Father. We are no longer part of the worldly assemblies of men. He who has an ear let him hear.

And I will write the name of the city of my God which is New Jerusalem. This speaks of Jerusalem from above who is the free woman and mother of us all. *“But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all...Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”* (Gal.4: 26, 28)

Jerusalem from above is the church of the First-born. This city or church is free from the bondage of the law of Moses and the laws that men have imposed on the people through their doctrines. Later we read John's vision of how he sees New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. *“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem com-*

ing down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband.” (Rev.21: 2)

We are given the name or the nature and heart of this church. This church no longer condemns the world; she yearns to reveal the Son to the world. She has been formed and taught by the Spirit, this is why she is coming down from heaven (spirit) into the realm of the earthy. She has been hid in the Spirit and now she is being revealed.

She comes prepared as a bride. She is ready to give birth to the new creation of God in Christ. She is filled with love and compassion and is totally in love with her husband Christ. She is sold out to His purpose as a Deliverer.

And then the Lord Jesus speaks these divine promises, *“And I will write upon him my new name!* In today's vernacular we would exclaim, THIS IS AWESOME! This is MIND BLOWING! The Lord Jesus is saying that He is writing upon us His new nature. The nature of the One who overcame and who has the keys of HELL AND DEATH.

The nature of the One who was dead and is now alive forevermore. *“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death. (Rev.1: 18)*

This is the nature that He has been writing upon us. The nature of eternal life. This is who we are soon to be! He has given us the nature that will never die again for in Him we have kept our appointment with death and will never die again! We all died in Adam but in Christ there is no second death save the death of the cross which takes us unto eternal life.

Jesus said, “Take up thy cross and follow me.” We are not only called to follow Him when He first calls us but to follow Him each day in the death of the cross. This is how we keep our appointment with death. In Adam we were trapped by the law of sin and death into a continuous non-stop death cycle. But in Christ, the cycle is broken and we are made free from the law of sin and death.

He has been writing His word in our minds and hearts. This is the covenant that he is making with us in these days and this covenant includes the receiving of His new name!! With His blood, He has purchased our new body and brought forth a new creation of God in the earth and in the heavens also. This is ours in Christ AS we overcome all that defiles a man.

Jesus is the Savior of body and soul. *“..Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.” (Eph.5: 23b)* The soul cannot exist without a body and cannot have life without the spirit. God so loved His creation that He made a way to save it from death.

The “firstfruits” unto God and the Lamb are the first to receive their new bodies. Then they will reign in the earth with Christ as priests of God to continue the deliverance in the same way that Jesus made for them. The death of the cross is the way to life now and forever. There is no other way ever. Amen!

For it is appointed to all men once to die and the death of the cross is the death unto resurrection. *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: SO CHRIST WAS ONCE OFFERED FOR THE SINS OF MANY..” (Heb.9: 27-28a)*

Our Lord Jesus kept the appointment unto death for all men and replaced the way of hell and death by the death of the cross and resurrection. This will enfold to all in God's order as His sons rule and reign with Christ in the earth for a thousand years which in God's economy is a very very long time in the ages to come.

Our Father's blueprints are being opened unto us and we are finding that the Great Architect has been at work in the midst of us. May He be blessed forever and ever. Amen.

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*