



18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.
(Eph 2:18-19)

Our ancient citizenship and birthright

From the moment of our birth into this world, the disease of sin begins to work in our organs, and the process of a slow death begins its course. Each moment, each hour, and each day draws us nearer to the gaping jaws of the grave. There are no exceptions to the rule. Each person reading this devotion has a room of dying which is already foreordained in the discretion of God for a visit from the Angel of Death. For us who are living, there has always seemed to be a tomorrow; but for many, there will be no tomorrow. When Judas attended the Passover Last Supper with the Lord and the other Apostles, he had no hint or clue that this would be his long night of eternity. Judas would never witness another morning sunrise. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* (Romans 5:12) That one man who opened the floodgates of pain, suffering and death for us was our federal head - Adam.

The land that we inhabit today is the world. It is the land of our natural nativity. We are natural-born citizens of the world, and it is the perversities of the world that we must live with if we remain its citizens. The world, too, is cursed and damned. It has a sentence of death upon its head. The time will come when God will destroy this world with fervent heat. Nothing will be left unless it is on deposit where neither moth nor rust can ruin - that place is Heaven! *"19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."* (Matt 6:19-20)

Those who owe their allegiance to the world cannot inherit the Paradise of Heaven. But God has made a way, through the redemption made available through His Son, for us to denounce our citizenship to the world and its sordid ways and gain a naturalized citizenship in Heaven.

Our passport to paradise

Just as we were born into the world of sin, we must likewise be born into the Paradise of God through the process of adoption (naturalization) if we are to be spared

the damnation coming upon the world. Even though we are ADOPTED into the family of God by means of the redemptive works of Christ, we must also be born into His Kingdom. Where, how, and when does that happen?

Where were we born anew?

Those who have become citizens of the Kingdom of God were born anew at Calvary. *"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left."* (Luke 23:33)

How are we born anew?

By a believing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by the gift of Grace of the Holy Ghost! *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."* (John 11:25-26) These words are a carefully worded legal document. It will answer the next question.

When?

The 'when' is a very important consideration. Please read again John 11:25-26 above. What is the meaning of these verses? Jesus says, *"He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."* The next part reads, *"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."* At first glance, the first statement and the second seem to contradict, but they do not. We are all dead in trespasses and sin until we have believed. *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 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 ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* (Eph 2:1-6)

Yes, if we are true Christians, we were also dead in trespasses and sins before the Holy Spirit quickened us and made us alive. Observe this point: The dead can do nothing at all to come to Christ - it is an act of the Grace of God. Lazarus lay four days in the tomb as his body turned cold and began to decay. He could do nothing to save himself. But the Voice of Christ penetrated the stone enclosure, the dead and rotting flesh, and the heart of poor, dead Lazarus, and the warm pulse of life immediately awakened along with Lazarus. That is how dead we were before we awoke to the Voice of Christ calling.

Our old father was Adam, but now, being born anew, we have a new Father in God. We, in fact, have a new family since the old things are passed away. We have a multitude of brothers and sisters in Christ. *"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,"* (Heb 2:10-11) *"And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."* (2 Cor 6:18) If we are children of the Heavenly Father, should we not bear a likeness to His express image? Just as American coinage bears the mark of the United States, should we not be sealed with the mark and likeness of our family Paternal Head - should we not bear His name (Christian)?

Who shall make the sacrifice for us in the Holiest Place? It has always been the High Priest who interceded for us at the Table of Incense before the veil, and it still is the High Priest. Who is that High Priest? *"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."* (Heb 2:17-18) That High Priest is Christ!

Every nation has a fashion of dress appropriate for its disposition. But the Children of God are also an army whose uniforms must peculiarly match their duties and dispositions. What attire is proper? "*And white robes were given unto every one of them.*" Rev 6:11 "*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" (Rev 7:14) The seven churches today that nominally claim Christ as their husband (Rev 1-3) may be mentioned in Isaiah 4:1 - "*And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.*" These churches of our modern era desire to take hold of our Lord for the sake of respectability; yet, they do not want to eat of the Bread of Heaven (His Word) or wear the white robe of righteousness. They prefer their own leaven-filled bread and their own filthy rags of the prostitute.

The language of our Heavenly Paradise is unknown by the world. There are even many preachers who have learned the Bible very well for the sake of making a profit from its preaching, but have not the slightest idea what the Bible says and means. They do not understand the Spirit's reminders of meaning.

Every land has a place of recreation and rest. So does God's Paradise. "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" (Psalm 91:1) "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" (Matt 11:28) Our allegiance is to the Ensign of Christ and no worldly potentate: "*For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;*" (Eph 2:18-19)

As strangers and pilgrims we wander the world looking for a city not made with hands. As pilgrims, we travel lightly without the excess baggage of the world. What city is it that we seek? "*And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*" (Rev 21:10)

By what rite of passage shall we be admitted to our Heavenly Homeland? "*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;... 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified....19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,"* (Heb 10:10-12-14-19)

SIGNATURE: I, Jehovah, have Spoken it. (I changeth not!)

DATE: Before the Foundation of the World!