

GATES OF PRAISE - WALLS OF SALVATION

by Doug Fortune

Isaiah 60:14,18 "...they shall call thee, The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel... thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise..."

WE are the City of God, the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (you must be born from above- John 3:7), destined to FILL the earth with the knowledge of the GLORY of the Lord. This is our destiny, this is our PURPOSE... there is a PROCESS involved though.

As I view what is commonly called 'the Church' today, I see that it is much like Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity, the walls are in bad need of repair and there is much rubbish to contend with (Neh.4:2). Notice I said, what is 'commonly called the Church'... there is MUCH today that is called 'church' that has really very little to do with Church- the called-out, the ecclesia. I believe that for a large part, modern Christianity especially here in the West, has been so influenced that Babylon is deeply entrenched in the Christian religious system... and we have been in Babylonian captivity so long that it feels NORMAL.

GATES OF PRAISE- Thank God, many have been and are now fleeing their captivity and returning to rebuild. In fact, I believe that in recent years much has been and IS being accomplished in the rebuilding... especially in restoring the Gates of Praise.

The word translated as praise in Is.60 is tehillah in Hebrew, it is a specific praise- the new song, the high praise. Psalm 40:3 says, "He has put a NEW song in my mouth, a song of tehillah/ PRAISE to our God." This new song is not one off the latest Vineyard, Hosanna Integrity, or Doug Fortune CD (sorry, couldn't resist a little commercial there!). It is the spontaneous song of the Lord that flows from within us; it is God prophetically singing proclamation through us.

That word 'new' in Hebrew is from the word chadash which means 'to be new, to REBUILD, to REPAIR'; so this new song is one that rebuilds and repairs, it is redemptive in nature. We are to sing songs of restoration and rebuilding. The enemy has stolen and decimated much in the Church, but this is the day to reclaim what is rightfully ours. According to Ps.149:8-9, this tehillah will "...bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written..."

God is restoring the Tabernacle of David (Acts 15:16, Amos 9:11) with houses of continual praise and worship and prayer springing up all over the globe. These houses of prayer are absolutely integral in the purposes of God because the authority of the Davidic Throne, which executes the judgment written, is established in the Davidic Tabernacle. I also believe this restoration of the Gates has found a measure of fulfillment in the Prophetic movement of recent years.

WALLS OF SALVATION-

As I read in Neh.2:10,19 it would seem that news of rebuilding the Gates brought distress, scorn and ridicule from one named Sanballat. Perhaps I'm reading more into this than what is actually there, but

Neh.4:1 stands out as it says, "...when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the WALL, he was angry and in a great rage..."(Amplified Bible). To me, a GREAT RAGE is different than just scorn and ridicule. You see, apostolic reformation is repairing the breaches in the Walls of Salvation that have been broken down by years of inaccurate teaching... and being met with great rage from those deeply entrenched in Religious Babylon.

We have been taught that salvation is a one time experience that happens instantaneously when you confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and this is partially correct... however, there is more to salvation than just this. And no, I'm NOT saying there are other requirements for your ticket to heaven... I AM saying we are to be sanctified WHOLLY, spirit and soul and body (1Thess.5:23). Just as we are a three-part entity, our salvation is also three-part.

SALVATION OF THE SPIRIT-

For the most part, we have understood the salvation of our SPIRIT that happens instantly at our conversion, but for a large segment of Christendom our understanding of the salvation of our SOUL and BODY has been lacking, at best. It is God's will that our SOUL (mind, will, emotions) be brought to FULL salvation so that His thoughts are our thoughts, His desires are our desires, His feelings are our feelings. This is the OUT-WORKING of the Perfect Man which already dwells in our SPIRIT.

SALVATION OF THE SOUL-

Rom. 5:10 states it clearly, "For if while we were enemies we were RECONCILED to God through the DEATH of His Son, it is much MORE CERTAIN now that we are reconciled, that we SHALL BE SAVED through His resurrection LIFE..." We have been taught that we were saved by His death when actually we are saved by His LIFE, living through us. We need to define salvation though, otherwise it brings confusion. "Therefore He is able also to SAVE to the uttermost - completely perfectly, finally and for all time and eternity - those who came to God through Him..."(Heb. 7:25); "...work out- cultivate, carry out to the goal and fully COMPLETE- your own salvation..."(Phil 2:12); "...salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed..."(Rom. 13:11).

It would seem that the 'salvation' spoken of here differs from the spiritual transformation that happens instantaneously at our conversion. This 'salvation' comes from the Greek word 'sozo' which means 'to deliver or protect, heal, preserve, make whole'. It would seem that this 'working out' of our salvation is the process of working out into the SOUL that which is already perfected in our SPIRIT... it has to do with the way we live. In fact if you read on in Rom.13 to verse 12 it says "Let us then drop-fling away - the works and deeds of darkness and put on the full armor of Light...". It goes on to talk about lifestyle and then says "...clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ...", because He IS the armor of LIGHT, He IS our 'salvation' (not just our atonement) as He lives through us... Christ IS the perfect TELEIOS Man as He lives His perfect teleios Zoe Life through us! This is the process of receiving a NEW heart, NEW soul, a NEW identity.

In Gal.4:19 Paul speaks of "... again suffering birth pangs until Christ is completely and permanently formed - molded within you!". THIS is the 'salvation' spoken of, that which Paul labored for "...that we may present every person mature - full grown, fully initiated, COMPLETE and PERFECT - in Christ..."(Col. 1:28).

THEFT OF DESTINY-

I believe there has also been real confusion concerning the salvation of our BODY, especially in the last 150 years or so. The Scriptural truths of resurrection, transformation, transfiguration have been confused with a relatively new idea. Borrowing from the writings of J. Preston Eby, let me lay some historical foundation for a popular school of Biblical prophetic interpretation, and given it's origin, use your own

discernment as to its CREDIBILITY:

At the time of the Reformation, the early Protestants widely held and were convinced the Popes were the supreme individual embodiment and personification of antichrist, and the Roman Church, the Harlot System of Revelation seventeen. This understanding was responsible for bringing millions of believers out of the Roman Catholic religious system. It therefore became expedient for certain Romish theologians to turn the attention of the people away from the Papacy, and this they endeavored to do by inventing a counter-interpretation to that held unanimously by the Protestants. Rather than viewing the drama of the book of Revelation spiritually and historically, they would consign it all to a brief period of time at the end of the age. It was a Jesuit priest named Ribera who, in the days of the Reformation, first taught that the events in the book of Revelation were to take place literally during the three and a half years reign of the 'future antichrist' at the end of the age. He was the first to break the time continuum of Daniel's prophetic seventy weeks. By putting antichrist off into the future, that would take the 'heat' off of the Papacy, as Luther and the Reformers were exposing the 'man of sin'.

Later, Emmanuel Lucanza, also a Jesuit priest, built on Ribera's teachings, and wrote a book titled "The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty." Lucanza, however, wrote under the assumed name of Rabbi Ben Ezra, supposedly a learned Jew who had accepted Christ as his Savior. He thus conspired to get his book a hearing in the Protestant world; they would not even permit it in their homes coming from a Jesuit pen, but as the earnest work of the "converted Jew", they would consume it with avid interest! (Aren't we still somewhat this way in the Church today?) Within the pages of this elaborate forgery, Lucanza taught the new idea that Jesus returns not once, but twice, and at the first stage of His return He "raptures" His Church so they can escape the reign of the future antichrist. His book was first published in Spanish in the 1812.

Later, Edward Irving became a leading figure of the Catholic Apostolic Church of England. Irving discovered Lucanza's book and was deeply shaken by it, and in fact translated it into English, and it was published in London in 1827. A man by the name of John Nelson Darby was the leader among the Plymouth Brethren from 1830 onward and was a prolific writer. Irving and Darby were contemporaries, though associated with different spiritual movements. Darby developed and organized "futurism" into a system of prophetic teaching called dispensationalism. A Congregationalist preacher by the name of C.I. Scofield came under the influence of Darby and the Plymouth Brethren. The Scofield Reference Bible was destined to have a tremendous impact upon the beliefs of many, when three million copies were published in the first 50 years. Through this Bible, Scofield carried the teaching of the rapture into the very heart of evangelism.

So here we have the chain of influence: the Jesuit priest Ribera's writings influenced the Jesuit priest Lucanza, Lucanza influenced Irving, Irving influenced Darby, Darby influenced Scofield, Scofield and Darby influenced D.L. Moody, and Moody influenced the Pentecostal Movement. The Assemblies of God is today by far the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. In 1914 they were a small movement, and they needed Sunday School and study materials for their churches so they bought it from Moody Press and had their own cover stitched on it. This had its impact on Pentecostal theology and that is how the Pentecostal movement became influenced by the rapture doctrine- by a direct chain right back to the Roman Catholic religious system.

DECLARATION OF DESTINY-

What does the Scripture have to say?: Acts 2:32-35 "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended

into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, UNTIL I make thy foes thy footstool.”

Psalms 110:1-2 “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, UNTIL I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the MIDST of thine enemies.”

Acts 3:20-21 “And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must RECEIVE UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Amplified Bible says “heaven must receive and RETAIN UNTIL the time for the complete restoration...”)

Heb.10:12-13 “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting TILL his enemies be made his footstool.” (The word expecting in Greek is ekdechomai, meaning to accept from some source, i.e. (by implication) to await, expect, look, tarry for, wait for.)

1 Cor.15:24-25 “Then cometh the END, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, TILL he hath put all enemies under his feet.” It is important to note that the word END in that verse is telos in Greek meaning to set out for a definite point or goal; properly, the point aimed at as a limit.

It is the same root word used in the following verses and translated as PERFECT: “But when that which is PERFECT is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”(1 Cor.13:10); “...Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...”(Eph.4:13).

So when 1 Cor.15 says “then cometh the END”, it is not necessarily speaking of the END as a cessation or a stopping place, rather it is US arriving at a pre-determined destiny. And that destiny is US manifesting the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, with all enemies under our feet... it is the restitution of all things forfeited by Adam, the complete restoration we just read of in Acts 3:20-21... that which is in part being done away with; the fullness of the Spirit, rather than just the ‘earnest’ of the Spirit.

I am not looking for Jesus to return half way to get me out of this world, rather I am looking to have dominion in this world as that is what we are SENT for (Gen.1:28). Notice that in Jesus’ apostolic High Priestly prayer in John17, He prays specifically concerning this; “I pray NOT that thou shouldest take them OUT of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not OF the world, even as I am not of the world... As thou hast SENT me into the world, even so have I also SENT (apostello in Greek) THEM INTO THE WORLD... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.”

Neither am I looking for the imminent return of Jesus Christ, because it is obvious from the verses above that Jesus does not return until something specific happens; until His enemies are UNDER HIS FEET. In light of these Scriptures, we must ask the question ‘Where are Christ’s feet?’ We know that Jesus Christ is the HEAD... now then, are feet connected directly to the Head? NO, there is a BODY between the Head and the feet! (Unless you are my son’s toy Mr. Potato Head... sorry, that’s my attempt at humor.) This is the meaning of Rom.16:20 “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under YOUR feet shortly.” The enemies of Christ are put under the feet of His Body as the kingdoms of this world ARE become the Kingdom of the Lord and His Christ.

I wonder if the Church at large in the last 100 years or so has missed understanding, and therefore missed apprehending a large part of her destiny by giving so much attention to a prophetic end time

interpretation of very questionable origins, as we have seen above.

Consider the following Scriptures that give us an idea of our destiny:

Isaiah 45:18 “God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be INHABITED.”

Psalms 37:29 “The righteous shall INHERIT the land, and dwell therein FOREVER.” The word translated as land is *erets* in Hebrew, meaning the earth, land, nations, the world.

Daniel 2:35 “...and the Stone that smote the image became a great Mountain, and filled the WHOLE earth.”

Romans 4:13 “For the promise, that he should be the HEIR OF THE WORLD, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” Did you catch that?... heir of the WORLD!

Galatians 3:29 “And if ye be Christ’s, then ARE YE Abraham’s seed, and HEIRS according to the promise.”

Daniel 7:22,27 “...and judgment was given to the SAINTS of the most High; and the time came that the saints POSSESSED the kingdom. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the PEOPLE of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an EVERLASTING kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

I am much more concerned with the Church ‘growing up’ rather than ‘going up’! We have a tremendous future as we grow up and apprehend that which the Father has destined for us.

SALVATION OF THE BODY-

We get a much clearer picture of the salvation of our BODY as we look to the first Adam before his rebellion, and the Last Adam on the Mount of Transfiguration. Psalm 8 tells us that Adam was crowned or clothed with GLORY and honor; “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.” (Psalms 8:5) The word translated as crowned is *atar* in Hebrew, meaning to encircle, to compass. His clothing befit his nature as he was made in the LIKENESS of God; after his rebellion he was clothed with the skins of a beast, befitting his new beast nature- the SOULISH psuche life.

Jesus Christ came to restore the LIKENESS that Adam forfeited. We see the Last Adam (the Pattern Son who came to bring MANY sons to GLORY- Heb.2:10) manifesting His GLORY, His nature, in His physical body on the Mount. “And after SIX days (remember, we are moving into the seventh millennial day) Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was TRANSFIGURED before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light... Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three TABERNACLES...” (Matt.17:1-2,4). In verse four, we find Peter speaking prophetically as he suggests putting up tabernacles... he is speaking of the Feast of Tabernacles- the seventh Feast, which is the Feast that the Church is NOW moving into. The Feast of Tabernacles speaks of the continual manifest indwelt presence of the Lord in His ‘Temple not made with hands’- His Body, as we manifest His nature, His LIKENESS, His GLORY.

This will one day manifest in our physical bodies just as it did in the physical body of Jesus on the Mount. (not by our will or timing, but by His ...lest any should boast-Edit.) We also get glimpses of it on the faces of Moses and Stephen; “...when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his

face shone...(Exodus 34:29); “And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him (Stephen), saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.”(Acts 6:15)

We can read of this transfiguration prophesied in Is.60:1-3 “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”; and Daniel 12:3 “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.” We can read of its fulfillment in 1Cor.15:51-52 “...I tell you a mystery- a secret truth, an event decreed by the hidden purpose or council of God. We shall all not fall asleep in death, but we shall all be changed, TRANSFORMED in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet call. For a trumpet will sound and the dead in Christ will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed, TRANSFORMED...”(Amplified Bible) As this corruption puts on incorruption, this mortality puts on immortality, then the final enemy DEATH is defeated. We are resurrected into the glorified BODY of Christ.

CONCLUSION- So concerning the Walls of our Salvation, our SPIRIT is resurrected from death to Life at conversion as we become ONE Spirit with Him (1Cor.6:17)... our SOUL is being resurrected into the mind, will and emotions (the SOUL) of Christ (renewing of the mind)... and our body is eventually resurrected into the resurrected glorified BODY of Christ as the many-membered teleios Perfect Man of Eph.4:13. Truly ALL things will be CONSUMMATED and reconciled IN Christ!

Don't be robbed of your destiny because the Walls are in bad need of repair and there is much rubbish to contend with (Neh.4:2). Rise up, O Church, and REBUILD! “Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall GROW UP out of his place, and he shall BUILD the temple of the Lord: Even he shall BUILD the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them BOTH (Christ- the Head and US- His Body).”(Zech.6:12-13); “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit WITH ME IN MY THRONE, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.”(Revelation 3:21)

by Doug Fortune



Temptations of the Christian Leader

By Kevin A. Miller

Temptations become even more difficult to resist when I don't recognize them. Oh, sure, I can spot bank robbery and adultery and murder. But certain evils fly in under my spiritual radar because they don't look evil; they look like something good. It takes spiritual discernment to realize that something I eagerly want and pursue may actually destroy or weaken me and my ministry.

The late Henri Nouwen names three such temptations in his insightful book, In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership:

1. The temptation to be relevant.

2. The temptation to be popular by doing something remarkable.
3. The temptation to be powerful in your leadership; to lead rather than be led.

This week you and I probably will be sent brochures promoting conferences that will help us and our churches do precisely this: become relevant, do something remarkable, and lead boldly. Such conferences offer many helpful insights, and I've benefited from some. But pause and reflect on the fact that Jesus regularly refused to do miracles on demand (John 6:26-31), that he asked many of the people who did receive his miracles not to talk about them (Mark 5:41-43), that he said some things almost certain to drive people away (John 6:53, 60, 61). And ultimately he was led away, like a lamb to the butcher.

I don't like those facts. I want to be relevant, a leader who does something remarkable. The question is, Why?

The answer, if I can peer through the murky silt and see the bottom of my spirit, is that I want to be liked, noticed, and significant? I thought my drives were all about ministry for God, but it turns out they're only a little about God and a whole lot about me.

As Nouwen puts it simply and piercingly: "The question is not: How many people take you seriously? How much are you going to accomplish? Can you show some results? But: Are you in love with Jesus?"

Do I love Jesus? Really? If the answer is "mostly" or "somewhat," what has displaced my first, full love? Maybe a desire to be a Christian leader who does something relevant and remarkable.

But if the answer to "Do I love Jesus?" is an unqualified yes, then no matter how uncertain and frustrated I am, no matter how insignificant and unremarkable the current ministry, God will one day tell me, with equal certainty, "Well done!"

Kevin A. Miller is editor at large of Leadership Journal