

A NEW HOUSE

TEXT:

2 Corinthians 5:1: *For we know that if **our earthly house of this tabernacle** were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

The Lord God called a man, Saul, out of darkness on his way to Damascus. He was Divinely Selected for God's purpose.



Because of his sordid deeds of the past, Ananias asked the Lord **in Acts 9:13:**

Acts 9:13: *“Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to Your Saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the Chief Priests to bind all who call on Your Name.”*



Clearly Ananias is concerned.

Acts 9:15-16:

15 *But the Lord said unto him, “Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the Children of Israel:*

16 *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake.”*

This man, who was later renamed Paul by the Lord, greets our admiration as a hero of God's highest order in **Hebrews Chapter 11** – the Great Chapter of Faith.

THE REMAKING OF SAUL

He is calm and quiet amidst circumstances in which most folk worry and become disturbed. ***He had stolen a march-upon-the-shadows-of-time, and entered into possession of the realities of eternity.***

He looked not on the things *which are seen, but he set his whole regard on the things which are not seen*; by this it means that *he entered into a deep and joyful peace that kept him steadfast, and unmovable*.

Most men, as an ox, like to live in the realm of leisure and pleasure and plenty; but the character of souls made for eternity are from a *different mold*. These precious souls mind the things of the Upper World while in their *earthly house of this tabernacle*.

Paul did not fear that he himself would be dissolved; he had not the slightest fear about that. The catastrophe which he looked forward to is known among us by the **name of death**; but he calls it:

***The DISSOLVING of the EARTHLY HOUSE
of this TABERNACLE
The TAKING DOWN of this TENT HOUSE BODY.***

He did not say; “If I were to be destroyed” or “If I were annihilated”. He had no supposition of that kind.

Paul felt perfectly safe, and We should as well, while inhabiting Our *earthly tent of this tabernacle*. The We is all unharmed and undone. If We were to lose this *earthly tent of this tabernacle*, We have a building of God-eternal in the Heavens.

This real man – **The ESSENTIAL SELF** — is out of harms’ way; and all that Paul talks about is the falling pieces of a certain tabernacle or tent in which, for the present, he is (and we believers are) lodging.

Many people are in a great fright about the future; yet here is Paul — viewing the worst thing that could happen to him with such complacency. He likened it to nothing worse than **The pulling down of his make-shift tent TO residing in his mansion in the skies**.

This man of God perceived that the body in which he lived is frail in itself. He felt that his body would not need any great force to overthrow it, just as in the

account of the Three Hundred Men the Lord selected through Gideon in the **7th Chapter of Judges**. It was like the tent which the Medianite saw in his dream, which only needed to be *struck by a barley cake and lo, it lay along*.

Judges 7:13: And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along."

A house of solid masonry may need a crowbar and a pick to move its stones from their places, but feebler tools will soon overturn a tent and make a ruin of it, as in the **Book of Judges**. The body is liable to dissolution from causes so minute as to be imperceptible - - a breath of foul air, an atom of poison, a trifle, a mere nothing may end this mortal life.

I hope that you and I duly remember the frailty of our bodies. When we think of the brittle war our bodies endure in life, it is not strange that it should soon be broken. Is it not a wonderful thing that we continue to live? Much more wonderful than that we should die?

Paul, therefore, because *he saw his body being as frail as a bubble* looked forward to the time when the earthly house of his soul would be dissolved. Paul wore himself out with labor and he felt, therefore, that the day would come when his body would give way under the intense excitement of his life of agony.

In addition to this, Paul endured cold, and hunger, and nakedness, and infirmities, and shipwreck with cruel scourging and stoning from his persecutors.

Here is Paul's own account of the matter.

2 Corinthians 11:25-27:

²⁵ Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;



26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Well, might he reckon (believe) **that ere long** (before long) **his poor shepherd-shanty** (body) **would give way under such rude blasts** (insults).

It would not affect a man if his tent should be overthrown — he would shake himself clear of it and come forth; it would not otherwise disturb him. So death shall not affect us for the worst, but for the better.

The dissolution of this hampering frame of ours shall give us liberty.

Today, we are like birds in the egg; so long as the shell is whole we are not free; death breaks the shell and I have never heard of birds pinning away over its broken shell. No, to flight it goes into the skies.



This body will be dissolved — that is meant to be.

Let us be glad. We have been glad of this body while we have needed it, and we thank God for the wondrous skill displayed in it; but when we no longer require our bodies, we shall escape from it as from imprisonment, and never wish to return to its narrow time on earth.

Death, as it pulls away our sackcloth canopy, will reveal to our wondering eyes the Palace of the King — wherein we shall dwell forever.

Paul knew most surely that if his tent dwelling were overthrown, he would not be without a home; he knew that he would not have to open his eyes in a naked condition and cry: “Woe is me whither am I to fly. I have no dwelling place.” No, he knew that if this tent house were gone, he had a building of God’s making.

Some, even among Protestants, have revived *purgatory* from fiction in a modified form, and have told us that even believers will have much to bear before they will be fit for eternal happiness in Heaven. The Apostle had no such opinion, but on the contrary; Paul did not expect to be roasted alive for the next thousand years and then to leap from *purgatory* to Paradise; but he did expect to go into his eternal house in the Heavens as soon as his earthly house was dissolved.

He had not even the thought of lying in a state of unconsciousness until the Resurrection. He says: 'We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have (already) a building of God's making. Not that we *shall* have it, but we have it **now!**'

What did the Apostle mean, however; for this text of scripture is said to be a very difficult one. He meant: first, the moment his soul left its body, it would at once enter into the house of which Jesus said;

John 14:2a:
In My Father's House
are many mansions . . .



Do you want to know about that House? Read **Revelation** and learn of Heaven's

- **Gates of pearl,**
- **Streets of gold, and**
- **Walls of rarest gems,**
- **A river which windeth thru it, and of the**
- **Trees which bear their fruit every month.**

If after that, ye desire to know more concerning this House, I can give you the advice which was given to one of God's servants: "Go and see for yourselves, believe no dreams, accept no heresy."

Well, my brethren, we are assured that to lose this vile body is clear gain since it will be fashioned like Christ's Glorious Body that knows neither suffering nor limitations. Paul knew that he had a Father in Heaven, for he felt the Spirit of sonship. He knew also that his Father has a House, and Paul

was certain that if ever he lost the tent in which he lived, he should be surely welcomed into his own house above.

Heaven — The House of many Mansions — we feel quite sure of a hearty welcome in time, especially we houseless wanderers all over the sod of this earth. Paul knew that Paradise was prepared, for he had been there already.

You remember how he locked up that secret inside himself until he could keep it no longer. Then fifteen years after its occurrence, he let out the blessed secret of his trip to Heaven.

Let me quote his words:

2 Corinthians 12:2-4:

² “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third Heaven.

³ And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

⁴ How that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable Words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

How can any man on earth tell Paul that he doesn't know what he is talking about?

For Jesus said to Martha:

John 11:25-26:

²⁵ “I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou [Martha] this?”



Having believed in Christ, Paul knew he was safe, for the promises are to believers; and if any man be a believer, every promise of the Covenant belongs to him . . . *To those who walk not after the flesh but in the Spirit.*

Romans 8:1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Paul had the confident belief that if his body should be dissolved, he would not be loser; it kept him from fainting. He knew what the worst would be, and he was prepared for it. Great storms were out there, but the Apostle knew the limit of his possible loss and was glad — for all the loss was a frail tent, weak, vile, and contemptible.

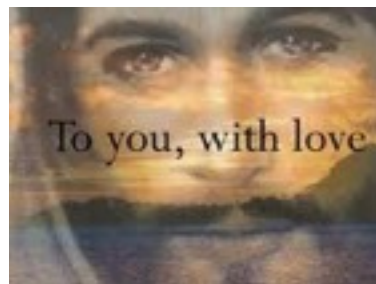
When a man knows the limit of his risk, it greatly tends to calm his mind. The undiscoverable and unmeasured are the worst of our dread and terror.

Some of God's own children are much troubled thru fear of death because they do not know what it is. If they were better taught, they would soon discover in their present source of sorrow the subject of a beautiful song.

Philippians 3:20-21:

²⁰ For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

²¹ Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His Glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.



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