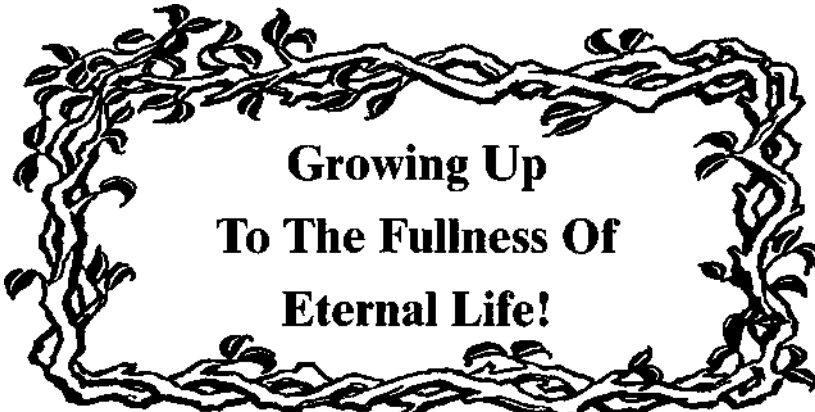


Growing Up
to the Fullness
of Eternal Life!

by B. R. Hicks



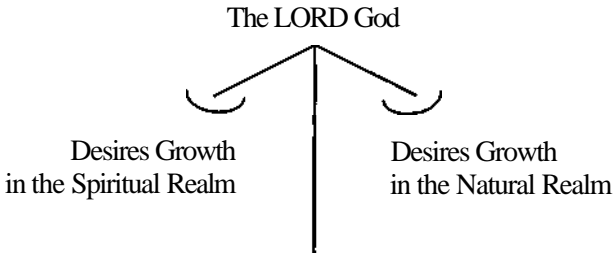
**Growing Up
To The Fullness Of
Eternal Life!**

LIFE! GROWTH! Nothing on earth brings as much joy or reward as the experience of growing. From the first stirrings of the fetus in a mother's womb to the upward thrust of the first green blades of grain in the farmer's fields, life brings hope, fulfillment, and satisfaction. The source of all life and growth in all realms of creation is the LORD God. Therefore, the thrilling excitement, hope, fulfillment, and satisfaction that are experienced as one watches the growth of life taking place in the natural realm of creation are also experienced as a Christian learns to know the LORD Jesus Christ in ever increasing realms of spiritual revelation from His Word.

Without growth to maturity in man's spirit, soul, and body, his life is dull and often ceases prematurely. When growth is arrested in the human body, damage is done which, to some degree, prevents a person from entering into the fullness of life's enjoyment and satisfaction. Each stage of development in a person's spirit, soul, and body adds new depths, heights, length, and breadth of enrichment and pleasure. Who would be content to remain a baby all his life? True, a baby shares the joys of receiving love, but it never can experience the deep, abiding love of a mature adult who has learned the pleasure of giving love as well as receiving it. There is not much reward attached to remaining a baby because a limited stature and mentality restrict a person's experiences.

It is important for *all* forms of life to grow. Without the growth of plant life, man would starve to death. If all plants were arrested in their early stages of growth, they never would produce fruit nor seeds for the next crop.

Growth is essential to our continued *physical* existence, and growth is essential to man's continued *spiritual* existence. God planned for everything natural and spiritual to exist in parallel forms. What appears in the natural realm also exists in the spiritual realm, and everything in both realms functions according to God's Laws.



For example, God designed all *natural*, growing things to start as seeds and, then, to progress through various stages of development until they reach maturity. *Spiritual* growth begins in a Seed form, too.

In the realm of natural growth, as well as having a seed, certain other conditions must exist for growth to take place. Some of these essential conditions are freely given by the Creator. He gives the earth, the sun, the air, and water, as well as the life in the seed. Other aids to growth and production, man had to ferret out and learn through his own efforts in order to prosper. Man had to learn to till the soil, plant, cultivate, and fertilize in order to produce successful crops.

God follows the same plan for the growth of the believer's Spiritual Heart. As far as believers are concerned, spiritual growth and natural growth are joint efforts between them and God.

Salvation comes to believers through the free gift of God's Love that sent His Son as a spotless Lamb to be the Sacrifice for man's sins. Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, the Breath of Life, the Water of Life, and the Seed of Life which God gives believers. The human heart is the soil or earth in which He plants His Seed of Life. Believers must nurture the Life of that Seed by protecting it, feeding it, and watering it if they are to carry out God's Plan, which is for each Seed to reach maturity.

After he becomes a Christian, a believer must discover what nourishes the Seed of Life and learn how to cultivate the growth of the spiritual Seed of Life which God's Love implants in his heart at the time of Salvation. This new Seed of Life, the Creator freely gives. From that point on, what a believer does with the spiritual gift of Life from God is up to him.

If, after a while, a Christian feels his life has reached a spiritual impasse and his joy in the LORD is declining, chances are he has stopped growing. Things that are growing in the natural realm are always reaching upward toward the sun, pushing past any obstacle to reach the light. Likewise, in the spiritual realm, growth speaks of action. A believer needs to be moving toward God in his *thoughts, actions, and feelings* and pressing past the obstacles of darkness and error in order to reach the Light of Truth. If he is going to mature as a Christian, he needs to be always reaching upward toward the Sun of Righteousness. A growing Christian sends his thoughts Heavenward; his actions are ones of worship and praise for his Redeemer; and his heart ever surges upward in love and adoration for the privilege of knowing his Creator's Love and Care.

God has placed beautiful lessons of growing in all natural creation that are pictures of spiritual lessons a Christian must learn in order to grow, if he is to achieve God's Perfect Will in his life. In His Holy Word, God has given clear-cut instructions and patterns of His Plans for spiritual growth that will take the believer from the seed stage to full spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ. No one has an excuse for remaining a helpless baby spiritually.

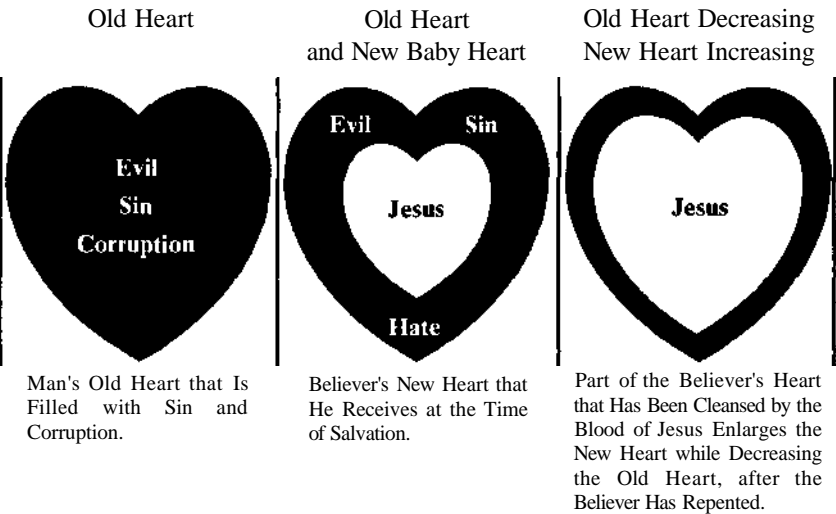
Because growing is such an essential part of God's Master Plan for believers, He *commanded* them to grow. To gain a successful start, a person must separate himself from the things that would hinder his spiritual growth. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter wrote the following instructions:

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious (I Peter 2:1-3).

There are sins that destroy the love and desire for the Word of God; therefore, these sins hinder the start of the growth of the Word of God in the heart. There are other sins that hinder the New Heart after it has begun its growth, but the one sin that a believer must overcome, even to get started on his way to maturity, is the *lack of desire* to grow. The key word in *everyone's* life for doing *anything* is *desire*. People always do what they really *desire* to do. The Apostle Peter listed several carnal attitudes which will rob a Christian of his desire to know more about the LORD. A heart that is filled with the evil desires of malice (malicious revenge), guile (flattering lies), hypocrisies (counterfeit attitudes), envy (jealously of others' achievements), and evil speaking (backbiting others) will never be filled with good desires of love and diligence to study God's Word. It is essential to study because it takes understanding of the Scriptures in order to grow in Grace and Knowledge of the LORD and Saviour, Jesus Christ. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (II Peter 3:18).

God's Word feeds and nourishes the spiritual Seed of Life within the heart. God's Word is not only food for the New Heart or Spiritual Man, but it is also a mirror to reflect man's "carnal self" to him. However, people seldom want their carnal image exposed when they are filled with the sinful attitudes of malice, guile,

hypocrisies, envy, and evil speaking. But those who *do* seek God's Word because they desire to grow will find the Waters of Truth washing their hearts from all these evil hindrances. Growth is achieved when the believer confesses these evil faults to Jesus and asks Him to cleanse them from his old heart by His precious Blood. Therefore, through Jesus' shed Blood, and through the Waters of His Word, cleansing of the old man or the corrupt heart is achieved. When a portion of the believer's sinful nature is cleansed from his old heart, this leaves room for growth of the new Seed of Life that he receives at the time of Salvation.



A joint effort is necessary between God and the believer in order for a spiritual birth to take place and for spiritual growth to prosper in the believer's heart. First, the soul must be convicted of its sinful condition by God's Spirit. Second, a believer must repent of his sin and receive Jesus Christ as his own personal Saviour. Third, Jesus gives the repentant heart a new Seed of Life in the form of a spiritual New Heart. Fourth, man must have a spiritual desire for

this New Life to grow within him. If this spiritual desire for growth is lacking, the believer must seek God to cleanse the known, carnal attitudes of indifference and coldness from his heart through Jesus Christ's Blood. The believer must also study God's Word to discover secret, hidden, sinful emotions in his old heart that must be removed in order for his heart to be filled with God's Moral Law. Only the indwelling Moral Law of God will have the necessary control over the believer's heart and life to keep him from returning to his former evil ways of walking.

Prayerful study of God's Word will enlighten and enable the Christian to grow as he follows God's Plans for growth to spiritual maturity. Spending time in God's Word gives the believer a joyful appreciation for the Creator and His Master Plan. God's Word provides the believer with the knowledge of how to follow His Plan and Purpose for his life. God's goal is for each Christian to grow in Truth — past childishness, ignorance of Truth, weakness of faith, false judgment, temptation to sin, instability of character — up to the fullness of perfection and spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ.

How does a Christian grow once he has the desire to do so? God gives specific patterns or blueprints that the believer can follow to growth in the full Spiritual Stature of Christ Jesus. These blueprints all depict Jesus Christ and His Stature with His holy Attributes and His divine Nature. Jesus Christ is the believer's perfect example. Believers must discover what Jesus Christ, the Creator, is like in order to take on His Nature. Jesus Christ's basic Nature is *love for* and *obedience to* the Father's Will. The entire Bible is a revelation of Jesus Christ's Nature and His Love for and His Obedience to God the Father.

Originally, man was made in the Image and Likeness of God and was perfect. But man sinned and disobeyed God's Will. By so doing, he marred God's Image and Likeness in his soul. Jesus Christ suffered, died, and rose again in order to restore man to his original state of perfection in God's Image and Likeness. Restoration will lead man back to love for God's Will and obedience to God's Will.

As the believer grows more and more in the nature of Jesus' Love and Obedience, he becomes less and less like fallen Lucifer, whose

will is filled with hatred and disobedience toward God. Man inherited fallen Lucifer's nature of hatred and disobedience toward God's Will when he sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. But Jesus Christ restores repentant man to love and obedience toward God's Will.

As a Christian prays and studies God's Word, on one hand, the Holy Spirit will open his eyes to see Jesus' Love and Obedience; on the other hand, the Spirit will show him how he falls short of being like Jesus. Heeding God's Word enables the believer to regain a holy, mature nature of love and obedience. This is what growth is all about. The believer's Adamic nature is not eradicated in one blow when he receives Salvation, but it is gradually changed as it is yielded to God, daily, and washed by faith in Jesus Christ's Blood and the Waters of Truth from God's Word. As the believer gains Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge through prayerful study of the Scriptures, he sees the wrong attitudes in his carnal nature that are contrary to Jesus' Nature; then, he can quickly repent.

A true *disciple* of Christ learns from the Word and Spirit how to take his faults and errors to Jesus so that they might be changed from sinful energy into righteous energy by the LORD Jesus Christ's Blood. Righteous energy manifests itself in right acts, right thoughts, and right feelings.

As the Source of all Life or Energy, God has given man energy or life to praise and worship Him as the Creator. When man uses his life to praise and exalt the creation and to seek the pleasures of this world and his own selfish gain, then he sins. When man confesses that he is a sinner and asks for forgiveness, God takes the life or energy that man has misused and abused and converts it into righteous energy for man to use in living righteously. This miraculous conversion of energy is accomplished through the supernatural, resurrected Blood of Jesus, which is God's accepted way of atoning for sin. God always has required a blood sacrifice for sin's atonement. In the Old Testament days, animal sacrifices were offered for sin until the perfect sacrifice was made by God's Son, the spotless Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

It is true that the penalty of sin, which is Death, is canceled the moment a person accepts the Blood of Jesus for his Salvation. But

having one's old nature of hatred and disobedience completely changed takes time, for God does not let a person see all his erroneous and wrongful attitudes at once. Such a disclosure would discourage a person beyond his being able to cope with the situation. Seeing and acknowledging *one* bad fault takes God's Grace and Power. Then, obtaining the desire for God to change what one has seen takes even more Grace and Power. But God's Grace and Power are sufficient for all things. So a Christian must ever be seeking more and more Grace and Power from Jesus Christ so that he gradually can be changed back into his original Image, the Image of the Creator.

The most detailed pattern of the Stature or Image of God's Son is found in the Mosaic Tabernacle. The blueprint that God gave to Moses for building the Old Testament Tabernacle was both a pattern for the literal Tabernacle, used by Israel to worship God, and a picture, figure, shadow, and type of the greater and more perfect Tabernacle, Jesus Christ. Every single portion and function of the Mosaic Tabernacle was a type of some part of the Stature of God's Son. This is explained in the Book of Hebrews.

The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (Hebrews 9:8-11).

Jesus' Ministry and Life were the visible fulfillment of the pattern, blueprint, shadow, and type found in the Old Testament

Tabernacle. To build or grow spiritually, a believer must follow God's Master Plan revealed through Jesus Christ.

God's Master Plan for spiritual building begins with Jesus as the Chief Cornerstone, and it ends with Him.

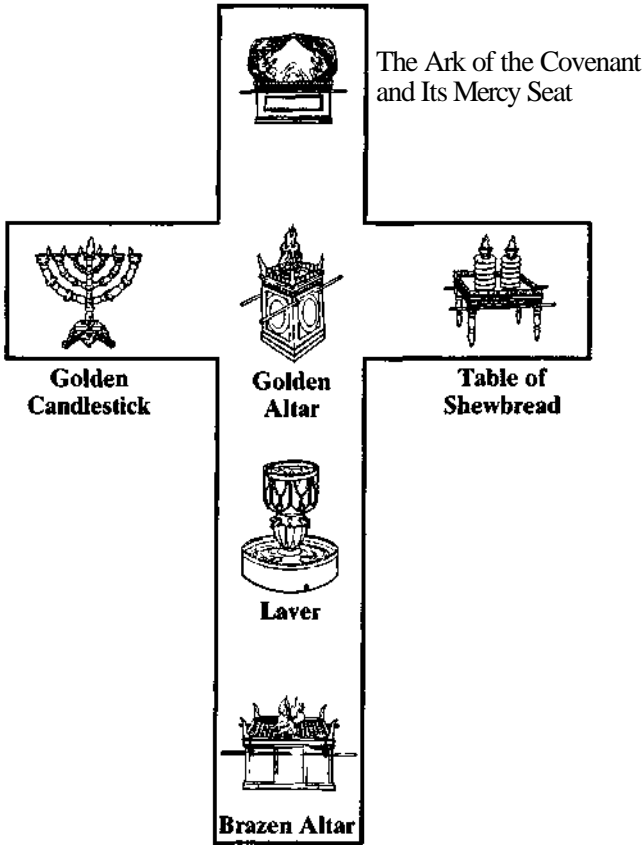
For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:18-22).

Jesus Christ is the Author and the Finisher of our faith. Man cannot ignore God's provided Plan for obtaining Truth. If man follows his own plan and thinks he can save himself or become a better person through his own efforts, he becomes a thief and a robber of the precious, shed Blood of Jesus Christ. Man cannot bypass Jesus Christ, the Creator and Giver of Life, and expect to find Salvation. The god of this world, fallen Lucifer, is not the *source of life*, for he is a *created being* himself. But he is a gross deceiver, and so he ensnares men with his lies of promised life through the glory, fame, and pleasures of this world. Man is a fool for believing the Serpent's lies. The life of this world is temporal, but the Resurrected Life of Jesus Christ is Eternal. Therefore, man's living relationship to God is what counts, not his relationship to this world and all the things in it.

The study of Moses' Tabernacle reveals that the pieces of furniture in it were placed in the form of a Cross.

(See drawing on following page.)

Arrangement of the Furniture in the Mosaic Tabernacle



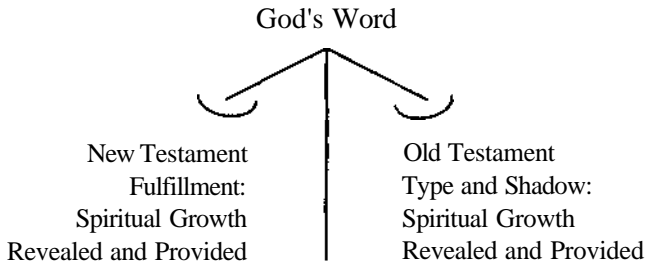
The ministries performed at each piece of furniture by the Old Testament Priests picture the experiences a believer will encounter as he begins to nourish and cultivate the new Seed of Life in his heart that Jesus has given him because of the believer's faith in and confession of the Power of Jesus Christ's shed Blood. New experiences and new Light from the Word of God will cause the Spiritual Stature of the believer to grow, which begins his journey toward the Fullness of Eternal Life!

Very simply, John the Baptist gave God's formula for increasing Spiritual Stature. He said that *he must decrease* (John was referring to his own carnal will) so that *God could increase* (His righteous Will and right attitudes) in John's heart. Each new experience that the believer has in Christ will decrease his old heart and increase his New Heart.

Although God started at the highest and most Holy Place in the Tabernacle when He instructed Moses to put the furniture in the Tabernacle, man's experiences must start in the lowest place or at the foot of the Cross. God came down to man so that man can come up to Him.

There were seven pieces of furniture in the Mosaic Tabernacle. But the Priests encountered eight experiences in their ministries because two experiences took place at the Brazen Altar, the first piece of furniture in the Courtyard. The eight experiences found in the Old Testament Tabernacle relate to the eight spiritual experiences of growth one finds in the LORD Jesus Christ. Jesus fulfilled the Truth of the Old Testament Tabernacle when the Word came and tabernacled in Flesh. Through the ministry of His Death, burial, and Resurrection, Jesus provided Substance for man's Spiritual Stature so that he could fulfill God's Master Plan for growth to maturity. Jesus' Sacrifice provided for all of lost man's redemption and spiritual growth. Jesus Christ made full provision for man so that he could be saved and grow the full maturity of Jesus Christ's Stature within his own heart. The Mosaic Tabernacle was the type; Jesus Christ is the fulfillment. The application or utilization by the believer of the Substance that Jesus' Sacrifice provided will restore man to fellowship and harmony with God.

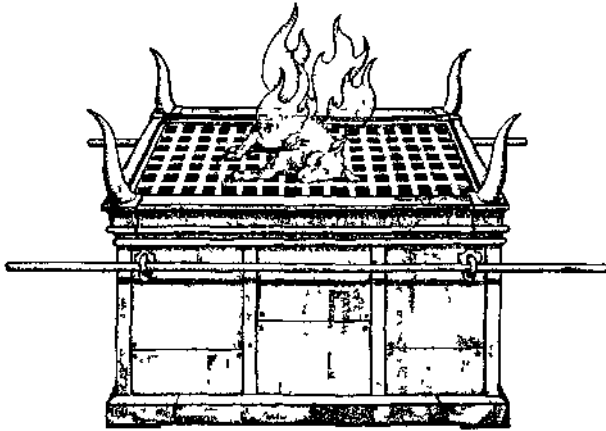
When God reveals a Principle of Truth in His Word, He repeats it over and over again; hence, God's Pattern of Operation is firmly established. One of God's greatest Principles by which He works is the one of gradual, progressive growth to maturity, both naturally and spiritually. All around in nature are visible examples of growth. However, the examples of *spiritual* growth are found only in the Word of God, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.



First, in the Old Testament type and shadow, the Mosaic Tabernacle reveals the steps to spiritual maturity. Second, in the New Testament fulfillment, Jesus followed these steps as He walked in Love and Obedience to His Father's Will, which provided Spiritual Substance for the believer so that he could walk in the same way. Third, Jesus' Sacrifice and Obedience has made it possible for the believer to achieve full, mature growth in Spiritual Stature as he follows God's Master Plan for his life.

Drawing out (1) the type (the Priests' ministries in the Old Testament Tabernacle); (2) the fulfillment (Jesus' walk through His Life on Earth); and (3) explaining how the Spiritual Substance provided by Jesus' Sacrifice becomes the spiritual experiences the believer must gain if he is to grow gives the believer the blueprint and instructions of how to build a mature Spiritual Stature in God's Master Plan. Growth to maturity leads to greater rewards than will be won by those believers who remain spiritual babes.

Growth at the Brazen Altar



The Type: The Priest's Ministry at the Brazen Altar

The first two experiences in God's Master Plan of growing in Him are the experiences of Blood and Fire at the Brazen Altar. When the Priests prepared the sacrifices at the Brazen Altar, blood was shed for the people's sins. Then, divine Fire fell from God to consume the people's acceptable sacrifices, after they had been offered by Aaron.

And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces (Leviticus 9 22-224).

The Fire from the Brazen Altar was carried throughout the rest of the Tabernacle to provide Fragrance and Light in each place in which the Priests ministered. All other fire was called "strange fire" and was not acceptable to God.

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD (Leviticus 10:1,2).

The Fulfillment: Provisions of Blood at Calvary's Cross and the Holy Ghost Comforter

Jesus' Sacrifice provided Blood and Fire for the believer. As He hung on Calvary's Cross, His shed Blood became the Atonement for every person's sins. Then, after Jesus' perfect Sacrifice was completed, God sent the Holy Ghost and Fire from Heaven to lead or Light the Way into all Truth in which the redeemed should walk. Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life or Light, leads those who will follow Him into all Truth.

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14).

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: (John 15:26).

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself;

but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come (John 16:13).

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Blood and Fire

The believer must utilize the Blood and Fire provided by Jesus in order to lay the proper foundation for a Spiritual Building. After a person has appropriated the provided Blood and Fire, which are his foundational experiences, he starts walking in God's provided Plan of growth to spiritual maturity. The believer receives Jesus' Sacrifice for sin that removes his penalty of Hell and Death. Then, he can freely receive God's Gift of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire that enlightens his spiritual understanding of God's Word and leads him into higher realms in Jesus' Spiritual Stature.

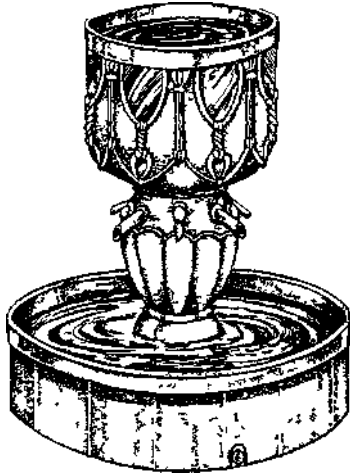
But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you (John 14:26).

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (Ephesians 1:7).

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:22).

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come (John 16:13).

Growth at the Brazen Laver



The Type: The Ministry of the Priests at the Brazen Laver

The Laver contained the supernatural Water from the *Rock*. The *Rock* that followed Israel throughout her wilderness journey was *Christ*.

At the Laver, the Priests washed their entire body before they put on their linen garments. This was their original cleansing. After this all-over cleansing, they returned daily to wash their hands and feet in the Laver, which prepared them to minister in the Holy Place.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver *of brass*, and his foot *also of brass*, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein (Exodus 30 17,18)

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Baptism in Water at Jordan and in the Waters of Death

Jesus fulfilled the ministry of the Priests in the Old Testament when John baptized Him in the River Jordan. Next, Jesus went down into the Waters of Death to purchase victory over Death, Hell, and the grave, once and for all, and to purchase cleansing for every inward sin of man that must be dealt with daily.

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Water Baptism

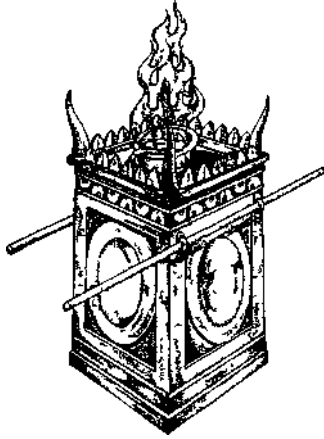
The believing saint is buried once in Water Baptism, signifying his belief in the Name of the LORD Jesus Christ, in His Death, in His Resurrection Life, and in their combined Power to restore man to his original state. After this, the believer must go daily to the waters of the Word for fresh cleansing of his hands (the instruments of his service) and his feet (the instruments of his walk), so that his work and his walk will please Jesus every day.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38).

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (Ephesians 5:26).

(See Drawing on following page.)

Growth at the Golden Altar



The Type: The Ministry of the Priests at the Golden Altar

Morning and evening, the Priest burnt Incense ignited by the coals of Fire from off the Brazen Altar so that his prayers, with the Incense at the Golden Altar, would ascend in a fragrant cloud to the LORD God. The Priest ministered in the Holy Place in prayer as one who lifted up the LORD's Name in praise and thanksgiving and as an intercessor between God and the people.

And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: *of* shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *shall be* of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners

thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the vail that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon (Exodus 30;1-9).

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Ministry of Prayer at the Golden Altar

Jesus became the Supreme Intercessor between God and man through His Death on the Cross. He is the Mediator Who is at the Right Hand of the Father, continually interceding for mankind.

Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Romans 8:34).

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).

Jesus Christ offers up prayers, with the Incense of His Name, in praise and thanksgiving unto His Heavenly Father Who hears and answers the Son's intercessory prayers.

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of All Prayer

It is God's Will for the Spirit-baptized believer to come before Him daily and allow the Holy Ghost within him to release the Power and Fragrance of Jesus' Name in prayer. As the Spirit-baptized believer prays in the Spirit, intercession and travail (deeper levels of prayer than *asking* prayer) will be released within him to minister his praise and thanksgiving unto the LORD Jesus Christ and the Father, to minister to the needs of his old heart and His New Heart, and to minister to the needs of others before the Throne of God.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Ephesians 6:18).

Growth at the Golden Candlestick



The Type: The Ministry of the Priests at the Golden Candlestick

The Priests prepared the Lamps of the Candlestick twice daily, filling them with fresh oil and trimming the wicks. Once in the

morning and once in the evening, this service was performed so that there would be Light for the Priests to minister in the Holy Place. Again, the Fire from the Brazen Altar was used to light the wicks and keep the oil burning in the Lamps of the Candlestick.

And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: *of beaten* work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: Three bowls made like unto almonds, *with* a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, *with* a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick *shall be* four bowls made like unto almonds, *with* their knops and their flowers. And *there shall be* a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it *shall be* one beaten work *of* pure gold. And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it. And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, *shall be* of pure gold. *Of* a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels (Exodus 25:31-39).

There were sixty-six bowls, knops, and flowers on the Golden Candlestick that supported the seven lamps that furnished complete Light for the Holy Place. There also are sixty-six books of the Bible that furnish man with complete spiritual Light that leads the seeking believer into all Truth. The Oil in the Lamps burned continually, lighting the Holy Place or the secret, hidden place of ministry before the LORD.

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Ministry of Light to the World

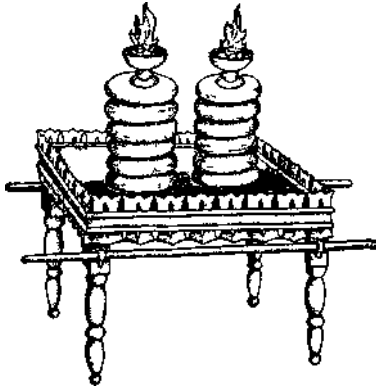
God's Holy Spirit or Fiery Dove came upon Jesus Christ when John baptized Him in water; and from that time on, Jesus went forth into the world as a burning, shining Candlestick. Jesus said that He *is* the Light of the world. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Everywhere He went, His burning, shining Life lit up the darkened hearts of men with Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge that created a Holy Place in their hearts and filled it with the Light of His Truth. The Light of Truth reveals how man can please God at all times in his thoughts, feelings, and actions.

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Light

The Psalmist David said: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet *and* a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). When the believer spends time in the Lamps or Oil of the Wisdom of God's Word, the Fire of God's Spirit sets his heart burning with new Understanding and flaming with new Light of Knowledge so that he can see how to walk closer to Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God causes the Light of Knowledge in the Word of God to shine out to men through Christ Jesus, the Living Candlestick. To know the Light of the Word of God is to know the LORD Jesus Christ. The Bible is a Written Candlestick of Light that reveals the Living Candlestick of Truth, Jesus Christ. The Light of the Living Candlestick, Jesus Christ, reproveth, corrects, and instructs the believer through the Word of Truth so that he can build a Spiritual Building in the Image of Christ.

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3:16,17).

Growth at the Table of Shewbread

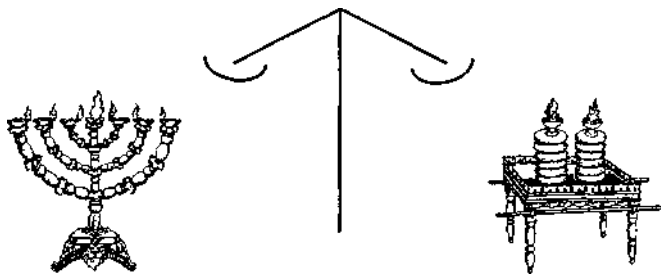


The Type: The Ministry of the Priests at the Table of Shewbread

The Priests ate the meat or the meal offering, which was known as the Shewbread, after it had rested upon the Table for seven days. The Priests also offered the drink offering at the Table of Shewbread. The Priests received Light from the Candlestick to walk in the Holy Place and serve God. Because of the Light of the Candlestick, the Priests could see clearly the way to walk in the Holy Place, according to God's Will. The Priests received Strength from the Shewbread at the Table so that they had the might and power to walk in the Light of Knowledge from the Candlestick. The Candlestick furnished the Light of Knowledge of Truth; the Shewbread furnished Strength so that the Priests could walk in that Light.

And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire

unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute(Leviticus 24:5-9).



Light of the Truth of the Torah to Knowledge of the Torah to Walk in Obedience to the Light of the Truth of the Torah

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Ministry as the Bread of Life

Jesus said that He *is* the Bread of Life.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.... Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man

may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6:35,47-51).

The Psalmist said, "The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1). The LORD's Bread of Truth is man's Source of his life's strength. The LORD's Bread of Truth binds the body and soul together, permeating them with strength to obey the *Torah*. When the LORD is the Source of man's strength, nothing can harm him. Jeremiah called the LORD his Strength and Fortress.

O LORD, my strength, my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* wherein *there is* no profit (Jeremiah 16:19).

The uniqueness of the LORD's Strength is a Refuge and Stronghold in the day of affliction. The LORD told Paul that His Strength was sufficient for him in the time of weakness.

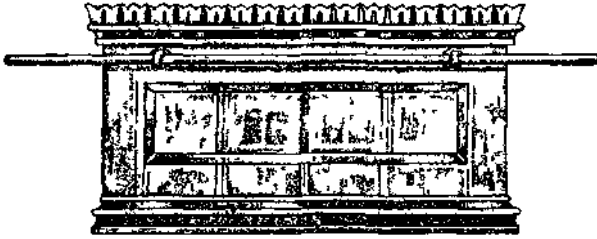
And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (II Corinthians 12:9).

The Strength of the LORD's Bread of Truth is revealed more gloriously in the midst of man's weakness and helplessness. He is the Source of Everlasting Strength for man's frail humanity.

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Strength

Bread has the necessary properties to nourish and strengthen a person *only* if he eats it. Jesus Christ, the Word of God in Flesh, will strengthen and keep the believer from Death *only* as the believer feeds on God's Word. If the believer wants to be stronger, then he must spend time feeding his faith with the Strength-giving Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, by studying and believing God's Written Word. The Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things [have strength to accomplish anything] through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Growth at the Ark of the Covenant



The Type: The Ministry of the High Priest at the Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat were the LORD God's Abode in the Mosaic Tabernacle. From this place, the LORD ruled, judged, guided, and led His people in Mercy and Love. The directions God gave the High Priest came out from the place of the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat.

And they shall make an ark *of* shittim wood: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a

cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *shall be* in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee (Exodus 25:10-16).

When the High Priest ministered before the Ark of God, he stood behind a veil in the Holy Place to seek God's Mind or Will for the people. The Ark contained the Tables of the Law that God had given for the purpose of governing the moral actions of the people. God gave His Mind and Will to the High Priest based on His Moral Principles in the *Torah* that was inside the Ark.

The Law or *Torah* was a revelation to man of God's Holy Mind. In the Law were contained God's negative and positive Precepts which revealed the Holiness and Purity of God's Mind. The Ten Commandments in the Ark unveiled God's Moral Standards for Israel.

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Ministry of God's Moral Laws

Jesus was God's Ark in which He placed His wonderful Words of Life.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld

his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:1,14).

Jesus was a revelation of God's Holy Mind in a Living Tabernacle of Flesh. Through Jesus' Teachings, man can see the negative and positive Precepts of the Law. For example, Jesus told the woman taken in adultery to "go and sin no more," after He had forgiven her. Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, thy soul, thy mind and thy strength." Jesus continually established God's Moral Standards of the Law through His Ministry.

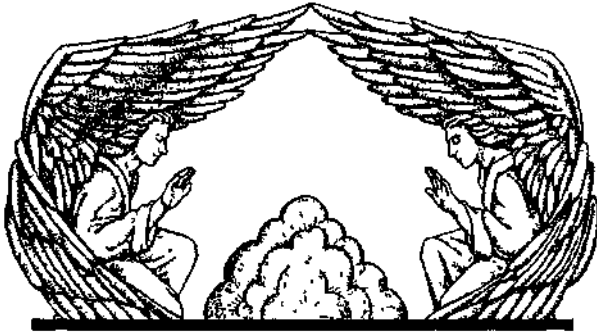
The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Christ's Humble Mind

God desires that the believer continue his growth to full spiritual maturity in Jesus, the Son of God, until the Ark is formed, as it were, in his heart. Then, God can place Christ Jesus' Humble Mind in it.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:5-8).

Having Jesus' Humble Mind and Will causes the believer to be obedient and faithful to fulfill the negative and positive Precepts of God's Moral Standards of the Law. As the believer studies God's Written Word, his heart becomes a receptacle for the Written Word, and his whole being is able to thrill and joy over the Truth. The lies and deceptions of fallen Lucifer become abhorrent to the person whose heart is filled with the Truth of God's Holy Word.

Growth at the Mercy Seat



The Type: The Ministry of the High Priest at the Mercy Seat

The Ark did not exist alone as one piece of furniture, for it was covered by the Mercy Seat that was made of pure gold.

And thou shalt make a mercy seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, *of* beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of

the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel (Exodus 25:17-22).

Once a year, the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies to place the Blood of Atonement on the Mercy Seat. At other times, when the High Priest ministered *before* the Ark to seek God's Mind or Will, he stood *behind* the veil in the Holy Place. When God's Voice spoke from the Mercy Seat that covered the Ark, two mysterious stones inside the High Priest's Breastplate responded to God's Voice and caused the twelve stones on the outside of the Breastplate to light up. This response of the stones on the Breastplate confirmed that the Voice speaking was God's, and the Truth was established concerning the things God spoke to the High Priest. This assured the High Priest that God truly had spoken and that it had not been Satan's imitation of God's Voice.

God's Merciful Voice governed and guided Israel by revealing His Mind and Will to Israel throughout the year. Then, on the Day of Atonement, the mercy-blood sacrifice renewed God's Oneness of Relationship with the Nation of Israel as, once a year, the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies to place the Blood of Atonement on the Mercy Seat.

The Fulfillment: Jesus' Ministry as the Seat of God's Mercy

The LORD Jesus Christ is the Mercy Seat through which God reveals His Divine Will and Mind of Mercy, Love, and Forgiveness to Mankind. While He was on Earth, Jesus did not speak His own thoughts and desires. He spoke God's Mind and Will of Mercy and Forgiveness.

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak (John 12:49,50).

Jesus Christ's Words were accompanied by supernatural miracles. This confirmed that He spake His Father's Words. For example, when the woman from Canaan came to Jesus, Who was God's revelation of the Mercy Seat, she came crying for *Mercy* for her daughter who was grievously vexed with a devil. Jesus graciously spoke forth the Oral Law of Mercy and healed her daughter that very hour. Again, Jesus displayed His Mercy when the sinner woman came to Him, weeping and kissing His Feet and wiping them with the hair of her head, which demonstrated her desire for forgiveness; and Jesus mercifully forgave her of all her sins.

Paul, speaking of Jesus Christ in his letter to Timothy, wrote these words: "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;" (I Timothy 6:15).

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, just as God, speaking from the Mercy Seat that covered the Ark, was the Head over Israel.

And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church (Ephesians 1:22).

Jesus stood as the High Priest to speak God's Mind to the people. Jesus' Message to man was of the Love and Mercy of the Father Who wanted to reconcile sinful man to Himself.

Jesus Christ is not only the visible revelation of God's Merciful Mind, He is the Provider of the Atonement Blood. Jesus stood in the place of the High Priest when, after His Death, burial, and Resurrection, He ascended to the Throne in Heaven to place His Atoning Blood on the Mercy Seat. The Apostle Paul stated the following Truth:

And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (Romans 5:11).

In other words, the Lamb's Atoning Blood has been placed on the Mercy Seat in Heaven so that those who have received the

Blood of His Sacrifice on Calvary might one day stand in His Presence, freed from sin and death.

The Believer's Experience: Utilization of Jesus' Provision of Merciful Headship

As the believer feeds on the Truth that Christ is the Head over all things to the Church, he matures in faith, love, and confidence until he reaches a place of rest in Christ because he acknowledges that all things (all pleasurable things and all painful things) work together for his good. The believer has the assurance that Jesus Christ's Atoning Blood is in Heaven working in his behalf to reconcile his corrupt, carnal mind and will to God's Holy, Righteous Mind and Will so that he once again can enjoy a Unity and Oneness of Relationship with God.

All these experiences appeared as types in the Mosaic Tabernacle; then, they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ's Life when He was on Earth. Clearly, they are God's Plan for spiritual growth so the believer can follow them to mature growth in Spiritual Stature.

Other Scriptures in the Bible also establish God's Pattern for Progressive Growth; the Mosaic Tabernacle is just the first and the most complete example. Israel, the nation through which God chose to reveal His Son, was referred to in different ways as she progressed in her journey to the Promised Land.

Israel's Spiritual Growth			
Egypt	Wilderness	Canaan's Land	Zion and Jerusalem
Son Relationship (Exodus 4:22)	Church Relationship (Acts 7:38)	Wife Relationship (Isaiah 62:4)	Mother Relationship (Isaiah 66:8,10,11)

And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel *is* my son, *even* my firstborn: (Exodus 4:22).

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: (Acts 7:38).

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married (Isaiah 62:4).

Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.... Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory (Isaiah 66:8,10,11).

In the New Testament, the stages of gradual spiritual growth are described in the Gospel of Mark.

And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear (Mark 4:26-28).

The Seed Stage of spiritual growth relates to the born-again believer's experience in Jesus Christ. The growth of the Seed of Life begins in the heart after a person has accepted the Blood of Jesus as the Atonement for his sin. Once a person becomes a believer in the Saviour, he has to start preparing his heart so that the Seed of Life will grow. Prayer and study will plow up the sin-hardened areas surrounding the new Seed of Life so that the Blade Stage of growth can appear. Once the Blade Stage of growth has developed sufficiently, the Ear of Fruit is added to the spiritual plant. Finally, in the last stage of growth, the fully mature plant reaches the time for harvest. Harvested grain can be shared and given as food to other hungry hearts.

Mature grain also will reproduce itself in other ground. The LORD wants His Word to mature in individual believers so that they can share it with other hearts. Then, the Seed can begin to take root downward and bear fruit upward in others' lives.

Apart from fulfilling God's Command to Grow, why should the believer desire to grow? The answer is that there are different eternal Rewards to be gained that are based on the believer's degree of spiritual growth. The Bible clearly speaks of four possible degrees of Glory to be attained. It also speaks of four eternal Places of abode. Each man will spend Eternity in one of four places. If he is a believer, he will live in one of three places: the New Heavens, the New Earth, or the New City. The degree of spiritual maturity he has acquired will determine his eternal place of abode. The fourth place of eternal Abode, the Lake of Fire, is reserved for unbelievers and their leader, fallen Lucifer. With God, as in our natural world, reward is based on achievement.

The Word of God uses three ways to describe the different categories of resurrected believers. The Apostle Paul compared the degree of Resurrected Glory attained by believers to the glory or light from the heavenly bodies as they relate to Earth. Those with the smallest degree of glory, Paul compared to stars (and even they differ in glory). Those with a greater degree of glory, he compared to the moon; and those with the greatest degree of glory, he compared to the sun.

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: (I Corinthians 15:41,42).

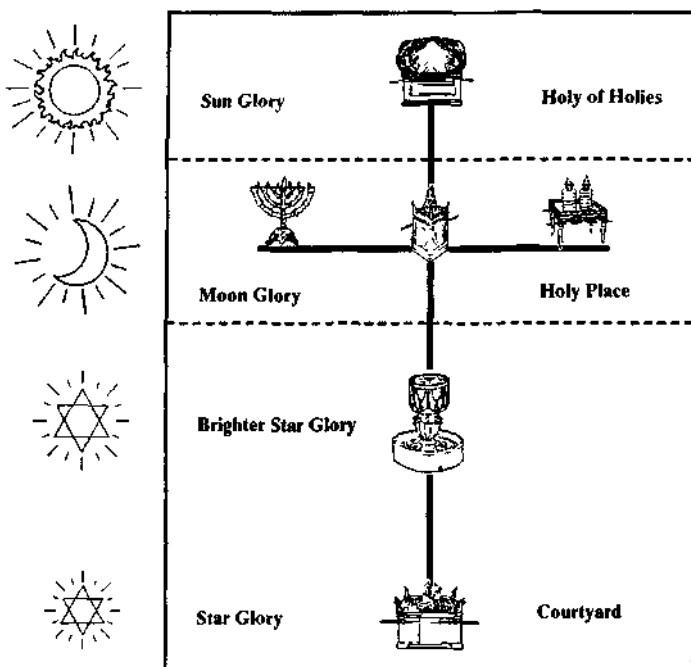
God's Word also compares the resurrected bodies of believers to *clothing*. Paul definitely stated that a person will be clothed with Spiritual Clothing when he rises on resurrection morning.

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. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: (II Corinthians 5:1,2).

The Book of Revelation explains the three distinct kinds of Clothing that will be worn by the saints. It also tells where these categories of saints will live in Eternity.

Since the Mosaic Tabernacle is the first great picture of spiritual growth, it is easy to fit the three classes of Resurrected Glory, the three different kinds of Glory Dress, and the three places of Eternal Abode within the divisions of the Tabernacle.

(See drawing on following page.)



The three major divisions of the Tabernacle (the Courtyard, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies) reveal the experiences of Truth that are to be learned there; the three degrees of Glory attained there as one progresses in spiritual growth; and the three realms of growth that will determine the believer's eternal place of abode. The three major degrees of Resurrected Glory and the Eternal Places of Abode clearly show the place in growth and knowledge and experience in the Crucified Christ that the believer has attained while on Earth.

Christians who have believed the Truths of God's Word and who have had experiences of the Blood and Fire, found at the Brazen Altar in the Courtyard, will shine as stars, and these stars will differ in brilliance. Those who have grown more, as they have pressed on

into a closer relationship with Jesus and have gained the experiences of the different kinds of prayer, the Light of the Word, and the Strength of the Word found in the Holy Place, will shine as the Moon. Those who have grown into a Full Spiritual Stature of Maturity in the Mercy and Love of Jesus Christ will shine as the sun. The ones with the Glory of the sun will have surrendered their hearts and lives to Christ's Headship, which means that they will have grown to the top of the Cross or into the Holy of Holies. They will have the Law written in their hearts, so their minds will be one with the LORD's Humble Mind.

The Book of Revelation tells about the three kinds of Clothing that will be worn by the resurrected saints, which are: White Robes, White Raiment, and White Linen. Three classes of resurrected saints will be found living in different places in Eternity. Revelation, chapter seven, verses nine through seventeen, explains that the saints wearing *White Robes* will remain in *Heaven*, where they will serve God. Referring to the multitude clothed in White Robes, the Scripture says:

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them (Revelation 7:15).

The ones wearing White Robes will never leave Heaven; they will live there forever and ever. They will have the degree of Glory comparable to the stars.

Another group of believers will wear *White Raiment* and *Crowns of Gold* and will spend Eternity on the *New Earth*.

And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment: and they had on their heads crowns of gold (Revelation 4:4).

These people will have known Jesus in a still deeper way than the White-Robed ones, so they will have a different Dress, different

Glory, and a different place of abode. The humility they exercised in their personal lives while on Earth will make it possible for them to have ruling power over the people who will dwell on the New Earth in immortal, physical bodies that will be healed by the leaves from the Tree of Life in the New City. The Crowns worn by the ones in White Raiment reveal that they will be rulers. Chapter five of Revelation, verses eight through ten, tells where these saints will live. In part, verse ten says, "...and has made us unto our god kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

The Book of Revelation reveals that the White Raiment group includes not only the *twenty-four* Elders, who are the White Raiment ones, but also the *four* Beasts or Living Creatures. (Both of these are symbolic numbers.) John described these Beasts or Living Creatures.

And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come (Revelation 4:6-8).

Although no specific Scripture tells that the Garments of the Beasts or Living Creatures are White Raiment, this can be logically concluded from their placement around the Throne with the Twenty-four Elders, the White Raiment ones, and their ministry on the New Earth with the Twenty-four Elders. In Revelation 5:10, the Kings and Priests (the Beasts and Elders) plainly say, "We shall reign on the earth." This group of believers will have grown in Spiritual Stature to the Holy Place; therefore, they will be rewarded with Governmental Ruling Power on the New Earth. In the Tabernacle, the Governmental

Bread was kept in the Holy Place, so this designates the Holy Place as a place of Ruling Power.

The last group of overcoming saints will wear White Linen. Their Glory will be like the Glory of the Sun, and they will spend Eternity in the New City.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God (Revelation 19:7-9).

The overcomers described in these verses will have grown to full spiritual maturity. During their earthly journey, they will have surrendered their own wayward, selfish will to Jesus Christ and will have lived according to His Will and Direction. They will be His Bride because they will have reached maturity; their relationship will have reached a Union of their wills with Jesus Christ's Will; and they will have practiced utter dependency upon Jesus as their Husband. They will have traveled in their earthly journey from Egypt (the world) to Canaan's Land, spiritually, just as Israel did in her literal journey.

When Israel lived in Canaan's Land, she was known as God's Bride. The Bride will have nurtured and cultivated the Seed of Life from Jesus until it grew into a Full Ear of Corn. She will have gained the Light and Knowledge of the Glory Truth of the Bridegroom so that she will be able to share it with others throughout Eternity.

When one glimpses the Glory and Beauty of the Lamb's Wife (for it is the Bride who will wear sumptuous, beautiful White Linen), a desire to be a part of the Bride immediately fills the heart. The Bible says that the Bride made herself ready. It also says that her Fine, White, Linen Wedding Dress was woven by her righteous thoughts, deeds, and attitudes. The Bride will not have received her Wedding

Dress of Glory by gift. The Bridegroom's gift to the Bride was only her White Robe of Salvation that was formed through the foundational experiences of Blood, Fire, and Water in the Courtyard. As she applied the Blood, Fire, and Water to her fleshly nature, the Bride's Spiritual Stature will have grown until she gained the White Raiment of Power related to the Holy Place. Clothed in the Garments of Humility Power, she will have ruled and reigned over inward attitudes and dispositions that grieved her Bridegroom's Heart, and her Spiritual Stature will have continued to grow and mature. The Bride will have done more than learn about the pure, holy, righteous Principles that govern the Decisions and Judgments of her Spiritual Husband. Her own heart will have been so perfectly joined to His Heart, in the Holy of Holies, that she will have practiced the same Humility and Righteousness that she found in Him.

While on Earth, the Bride's righteousness will have manifested itself, first, toward her Spiritual Bridegroom. She will have learned to keep a right attitude toward God and will have sanctified His Name of LORD by always acknowledging that His Rulership and Headship over her was Holy, Just, and Righteous. She will have kept her thoughts, words, and behaviour right, even in contrary, humiliating situations. Second, she will have learned to exercise righteousness toward those with whom she has lived and ministered.

Many years before Christ came to the Earth and took on a physical Body, the Prophet Joel prophesied the LORD's Return with His Mighty Army (Joel 2:1-11). A verse in Revelation states that the Armies that will return to the Earth with the LORD at this time will be wearing White Linen.

And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean (Revelation 19:14).

Therefore, we know that this can be none other than the Bride herself, ready to war and fight for the Righteous, Holy Will of God.

At the end of Jesus' thousand-year reign on this Earth, and after the Will of God has been firmly established on the Earth by the

Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, and His Bride, the LORD will turn the rulership of the Earth over to resurrected King David so that he can sit on his earthly throne as was prophesied by the Prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and Amos. Then, the Bridegroom Jesus Christ and His Bride will move to the New City, New Jerusalem, where they will take up their Eternal Abode. In the Eternal Ages, the Bridegroom and the Bride will rule and reign out of the New Jerusalem that John saw coming down out of Heaven.

Being in the Bride of Jesus Christ is the Prize for which the Apostle Paul strove. It is the supreme Reward for the highest spiritual achievement. It is greater than all the Olympic gold medals or Nobel prizes in the world, for it is an **Eternal Prize**. This is why Christians should desire to grow, not only for the Eternal Prize but also for the present pleasure and joy of knowing Jesus in a greater way throughout this lifetime. It is more than an opportunity of a lifetime; it is the opportunity of all Time and Eternity!



Appendix

Truths assembled in this combined, condensed, and paraphrased version of these three booklets: *Growing in God*, *The Need for Spiritual Growth*, and *Secrets to Spiritual Growth* are amplified in greater detail in major works by B. R. Hicks. For more proof of the Spiritual Principle of gradual growth to spiritual maturity read *Israel's Journey from Egypt to Canaan's Land*.

Another detailed study, which is referred to briefly in this booklet, are the books on *Man's Threefold Nature, Volumes One, Two, and Three*. Volume One relates man's five natural senses to his five spiritual senses and shows how man's senses became polluted and corrupted by fallen Lucifer. Volume Two tells what lies in the heart of man that controls his thoughts, actions, and feelings before he gives his heart to Jesus for cleansing. It also delves into the very center of man's being to reveal his pride and the *fool* or *body of sin* that lives deep within every corrupt heart. Finally, Volume Three tells about man's will and what happened when sin entered it in the Garden of Eden. These books help a person understand why he acts and feels the way he does and what he needs to do to live a happier, more victorious spiritual life. They not only list man's ills but also give the cure for them. Understanding ourselves makes us more understanding and tolerant of others.

This booklet also refers to God's greatest pattern for growth, the Mosaic Tabernacle. The book *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle* is a thorough study of the Tabernacle in the wilderness that Moses built according to the Plans God gave him. In the Tabernacle is the tremendous revelation of the Stature of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Understanding the Tabernacle, its construction, its materials, its furniture, and the Priests who ministered there (especially the High Priest) will be a help to hearts that desire to know the LORD Jesus Christ in a greater way.

The last major study used in this booklet to help explain growth to maturity is the Author's book on the Bride and the Bridegroom, *The Song of Love from the Song of Solomon*. The Spiritual Bride is the group of people who fall in love with Jesus and reach maturity through their "growth experiences" in God's Word and Spirit. Thus, they are prepared in their hearts to join the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, in a Marriage Union of their wills. This book reveals another great picture of Jesus Christ. This time He is seen as the One Who woos, loves, and reveals Himself to those who desire to know Him in their hearts in a deep, personal way. For those who long to know how to commit their hearts totally to the LORD, this book is extremely edifying. To know Him is to love Him. A person will find, as he studies God's Word, that the entire Bible is profitable to him in every way. It is a guide to knowing Jesus, to knowing oneself, and to understanding others, which adds up to spiritual growth. Knowledge plus experience equals sound spiritual growth. This is why the Bible tells us to be a *doer* of the Word and not a *hearer* only. It is not possible to separate *knowing* God from *growing* in God.