**Stewardship and Eternal Habitations**

**Zechariah 3:6 And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying. 7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.**

We can have places to walk among the angels.

**Zechariah’s vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God’s people in the closing up of the great day of atonement.{5T 472.2}**

**Zechariah 3:4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.**

We live in the time in which we need to have a change of spiritual character raiment because raiment is always symbolised as character. In the time in which we live we see that angels are holding the winds of strife so that the wind should not destroy anything of the earth, the wind of warfare.

**Revelation 7:1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. 2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.**

What was involved in the work of the angel sealing them in their foreheads?

**Revelation 7:14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

This is the equivalent of taking filthy garments and replacing them with clean garments of Zechariah 3. It is this change of garment detail we have been studying. We must be holy if we will see God when Jesus comes. We must be pure and have our garments washed clean.

**Zechariah 3:7 I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.**

**Prepare To Be Among These That Stand By**

Who was standing by? The angels.

**Luke 16:9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.**

Many people find these words of Jesus very difficult to understand. What has the mammon of unrighteousness to do with being received into eternal habitations? This is what we are preparing for. To be among those that stand by in the heavenly sanctuary. These words of Jesus in verse 9 are couched in a parable which he told of deep significance for our preparation to exercise. The planet earth is the centre of attention and especially the people who respond to Jesus are the centre of attention of the universe.

**A Spectacle unto the World**

**1 Corinthians 4:9 …for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.**

Did we know we are made a spectacle unto angels? The angels are watching us very closely. The universe of God’s creation is interested in what is happening on this planet.

**1 Peter 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.**

The angels of God desire to look into that which the gospel of Jesus Christ provoking in the lives of the people of this planet. Why are they so fascinated with this? Why is the universe focused on this planet? Because their Commander, their beloved Master, their King took His place as one with us here on this planet. That is why.

**The Interest of the Angels**

Here is the record of how Jesus had to explain to the angels before He came to this planet what he had to do for us.

**The angels prostrated themselves before Him. They offered their lives. Jesus said to them that He should by His death save many; that the life of an angel could not pay the debt. His life alone could be accepted of his Father as a ransom for man. {1SG 24.1}**

**Jesus also told them that they should have a part to act, to be with Him, and at different times strengthen Him. {1SG 25.1}**

He says to them He is going to be on this earth and only His life could pay the ransom and He was going to be dependent on their help to strengthen Him.

**That He should take man’s fallen nature, and His strength would not be even equal with theirs. And they should be witnesses of His humiliation and great sufferings. And as they should witness His sufferings, and the hate of men towards Him, they would be stirred with the deepest emotions, and through their love for Him, would wish to rescue, and deliver Him from His murderers; but that they must not interfere to prevent anything they should behold; and that they should act a part in His resurrection; that the plan of salvation was devised, and His Father had accepted the plan. {1SG 25.1}**

**With a holy sadness Jesus comforted and cheered the angels, and informed them that hereafter those whom He should redeem would be with Him, and ever dwell with Him; and that by His death He should ransom many, and destroy Him who had the power of death. And His Father would give Him the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, and He should possess it forever and ever. Satan and sinners should be destroyed, never more to disturb heaven, or the purified, new earth. {1SG 25.2}**

**Can you appreciate the interest of angels of us on earth because Jesus came here to be one with us? Angels desire to look into this gospel. With interest they would be watching Christ’s sufferings. Jesus said to them you will be stirred to come and interfere but you mustn’t. As they behold the response of the human race to their majestic King, you can see that the angels are really desiring that you and I would satisfy their interest.**

**Joy in the Presence of the Angels**

**Luke 15:10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.**

What happens in heaven? When they see a sinner repent there is joy in heaven among the angels. They are watching how you and I are responding. At times angels are sent to help us. As I am wandering around in my dazed condition an angel comes and draws my attention to real issues of life on this planet. Jesus humiliated himself. He spent every amount of his wealth in humanity to redeem them to his original state. All heaven and all the wealth and riches were poured out for us on this planet as an investment. The angels interest in your and my manner of appreciating that investment causes the angels to rejoice as they are endeared to us if our response is favourable. The angels look for a response and if someone does how do you think they feel to that person? They are endeared, they become our friends. Would you like to have the powerful angels of heaven as your friends?  It is this that is epitomised in the parable of Luke 16.

**Luke 16**

**Luke 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.**

**16:2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.**

**16:3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? For my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.**

**16:4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.**

**16:5 So he called every one of his lord’s debtors [unto him], and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?**

**16:6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.**

**16:7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.**

**16:8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.**

**16:9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.**

Jesus gave a parable to describe His spiritual activities on earth to reveal how we must touch the lives of the onlookers to receive us into everlasting habitations. Here is a steward who was to take care of his Lords wealth. We are stewards of God’s mercy. All humanity is debtors to Gods righteousness. A steward is to reflect the mercy of God to his debtors and thus endear the Lord to them and the angels. God’s investments on this planet are twofold and we who have been benefitted by Him and opened our heart to Him become stewards of what He has committed to us. God had committed into the hands of man the wealth and dominion of what He had created on this planet.

**What Has God Done?**

**Psalms 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?**

**8:5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.**

**8:6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all [things] under his feet:**

What did the Lord do to the human race? He has invested the wealth of this planet into the care of the stewards Adam and Eve. They were to be stewards of God’s goods and creation. He made Him to have dominion over the words of thy hands. Something that someone has created, is it his? Absolutely. Our Creator says I want you to take care of it, be a steward of it. That which they were stewards of, they failed. By sin man became debtors to God because they could no any longer take care of His goods because of sin. What did Jesus do?

**Jesus Redeemed Us**

Another expense for man was invested.

**1 Peter 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers;**

**1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:**

**A Lamb without Blemish**

Not with the expense of silver and gold but far greater riches. The Majesty of the universe gave Himself and that included the entire wealth of the universe as He was the one who sustained it all.  As Jesus did that, He sent forth his disciples. They became stewards of these investments which the angels are intensely involved with. This parable is descriptive of this.

**The Mammon of Unrighteousness**

The riches of this world, we are to make friends of because we are to be stewards of all the riches and wealth of God. Especially the riches of the gospel. The rendition of this is clear as it is embellished under inspiration.

**“Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness,” Christ says, “that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.” R.V. God and Christ and angels are all ministering to the afflicted, the suffering, and the sinful. Give yourself to God for this work, use His gifts for this purpose, and you enter into partnership with heavenly beings. Your heart will throb in sympathy with theirs. You will be assimilated to them in character. To you these dwellers in the eternal tabernacles will not be strangers. When earthly things shall have passed away, the watchers at heaven’s gates will bid you welcome. {COL 373.1}**

Let us meditate upon this brilliant representation. The angels are intensely involved in this drama of salvation and this investment of heaven. As we are living in these last days, when the atonement is being concluded, the angels become more intense because they would like to see every human being on this planet benefitted by the investment that heaven made of their master.

**The First Angel’s Message**

The everlasting gospel is preached by an angel flying in the midst of heaven. Who is the angel? Who does he connect with? The preachers on earth and the disciples, the stewards.  He cries preaching the everlasting gospel and he says fear God and given Him the glory as the hour of His judgment is come.  Then comes another angel who says look, these people are rejecting the work of the first angel. Please he cries, Babylon is fallen, they are rejecting Jesus and His way. All the terrible things that Babylon is doing.  Then comes the third angel also flying in the midst of heaven with a message that human beings are rejecting the true work of the gospel.

**Revelation 14:14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.**

Can you see the angels? What are they engaging in? In preaching. Are they preaching? You can’t see them, they are not preaching. Who is preaching? The stewards of the gospel, they are preaching.

**A Description of Our Interactivity With The Angels**

**One part of the ministry of heavenly angels is to visit our world and oversee the work of the Lord in the hands of His stewards. In every time of necessity they minister to those who as co-workers with God are striving to carry forward His work in the earth. These heavenly intelligences are represented as desiring to look into the plan of redemption, and they rejoice whenever any part of God’s work prospers. {6T 456.1}**

**Angels are interested in the spiritual welfare of all who are seeking to restore God’s moral image in man; and the earthly family are to connect with the heavenly family in binding up the wounds and bruises that sin has made. Angelic agencies, though invisible, are co-operating with visible human agencies, forming a relief association with men. {6T 456.2}**

That is what you read in the three angel’s messages. The Revelation 18 angel says Babylon is fallen and the earth is covered with his glory and as he cries out there is a very strong message that says come out of her my people.

**The very angels who, when Satan was seeking the supremacy, fought the battle in the heavenly courts and triumphed on the side of God, the very angels who shouted for joy over the creation of our world and its sinless inhabitants, the angels who witnessed the fall of man and his expulsion from his Eden home– these very heavenly messengers are most intensely interested to work in union with the fallen, redeemed race for the salvation of human beings perishing in their sins. {6T 456.2}**

**Human agencies are the hands of heavenly instrumentalities, for heavenly angels employ human hands in practical ministry. Human agencies as hand helpers are to work out the knowledge and use the facilities of heavenly beings. By uniting with these powers that are omnipotent, we are benefited by their higher education and experience. {6T 456.3}**

We are to marvel that stewards of God’s mercy are those who accept the mercy of God and are set here on earth as stewards to distribute the benefits of God’s grace.

**What Jesus Said In the Parable**

Notice once again the Revised Version. “Make to yourself friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness that when it shall fail they may receive you into everlasting tabernacles.”

Very soon the riches of this world, the mammon of unrighteousness shall fail. Before it fails, make yourselves friends with those riches before it fails. According to prophecies that soon all the wealth and the economy of this world will fail. Before it fails what are we to use it for? My mother told me that before I was born that in Germany in the Second World War all their wealth that they had was completely useless. They had a wheel barrow full of money that was worth nothing at all. It was all just useless.

**James 5:1 Go to now, [ye] rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon [you].**

**5:2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.**

**5:3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.**

When the last days come it will be useless and the final scene takes place and we can see it coming about.

**The work must not stop for want of means. More means must be invested in it. Brethren in America, in the name of my Master I bid you wake up! You that are placing your talents of means in a napkin, and hiding them in the earth, who are building houses and adding land to land, God calls upon you, “Sell that ye have, and give alms.” There is a time coming when commandment keepers can neither buy nor sell. Make haste to dig out your buried talents. If God has entrusted you with money, show yourselves faithful to your trust; unwrap your napkin, and send your talents to the exchangers, that when Christ shall come, He may receive His own with interest. {CS 40.1}**

What are we to do while money still has wealth? The parable tells us. Make yourselves friends with the riches while it has value and invest it so that the angels become your friends.

**In the last extremity, before this work shall close, thousands will be cheerfully laid upon the altar. Men and women will feel it a blessed privilege to share in the work of preparing souls to stand in the great day of God, and they will give hundreds as readily as dollars are given now. {CS 40.2}**

**If the love of Christ were burning in the hearts of His professed people, we would see the same spirit manifested today. Did they but realize how near is the end of all work for the salvation of souls, they would sacrifice their possessions as freely as did the members of the early church. {CS 40.3}**

What did Nicodemus and Joseph of Aramithaea do? All their wealth was used for the gospel and it gave it a tremendous boost.

**They would work for the advancement of God’s cause as earnestly as worldly men labor to acquire riches. Tact and skill would be exercised, and earnest and unselfish labor put forth to acquire means, not to hoard, but to pour into the treasury of the Lord. {CS 40.3}**

The treasury of the Lord is to be spent to disperse the great wealth of heaven, the glory of His gospel. The gift of obtaining means should be considered in preparation for the end. All the means I have I need to understand how to use as I prepare to be received into everlasting habitations. Make to yourselves friends of riches. Jesus draws an important lesson from this. If the means of wealth and the gifts of heaven that are available for our well being, if riches are something I must be a steward of and I’m not faithful, look what Jesus says;

**Luke 16:11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true [riches]?**

Can God entrust us with the riches of heaven if we haven’t used the ones on earth?

**Luke 16:12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?**

This is all in consequence of that parable. We want to understand the preparation for heaven on this particular point.

**The followers of Christ are not to despise wealth; they are to look upon wealth as the Lord’s entrusted talent. By a wise use of His gifts, they may be eternally benefited, but we are to bear the fact in mind that God has not given us riches to use just as we shall fancy, to indulge impulse, to bestow or withhold as we shall please. We are not to use riches in a selfish way, devoting them simply to our own enjoyment. This course would not be doing right toward God or toward our fellow men, and would bring at last only perplexity and trouble. . . . {CS 133.1}**

Do you see how people misuse funds and the trouble it creates? The followers of God are not to despise wealth but are to make themselves friends with wealth.

**How Wealth Is to Be regarded**

**The Lord has endowed them with capabilities, and power, and influence; He has entrusted them with money, that they may be co-workers with Him in the great redemption. All His gifts are to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy. We are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to care for the widow and the fatherless, to minister to the distressed and downtrodden. God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are entrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. {COL 370.1}**

How do we understand that? Does the word of God tell us what that means? The means over and above our necessities.

**1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.**

**6:7 For we brought nothing into [this] world, [and it is] certain we can carry nothing out.**

**6:8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.**

What is necessary? That which your body needs. Food, raiment, shelter and that’s it. Anything that I gain that I don’t need to use for that, the rest is to be stewards of God’s grace.

**Puritan plainness and simplicity should mark the dwellings and apparel of all who believe the solemn truths for this time. {5T 189.1}**

What sort? Puritan plainness. Study the puritans. They had no embellishments in their house. They don’t spend money for anything not of their needs.

**All means needlessly expended in dress or in the adorning of our houses is a waste of our Lord’s money. It is defrauding the cause of God for the gratification of pride. {5T 189.1}**

**Practice economy in your homes. By many, idols are cherished and worshiped. Put away your idols. Give up your selfish pleasures. Do not, I entreat you, absorb means in embellishing your houses, for it is God’s money, and it will be required of you again. Parents, for Christ’s sake do not use the Lord’s money in pleasing the fancies of your children. Do not teach them to seek after style and ostentation in order to gain influence in the world. Will this incline them to save the souls for whom Christ died? No; it will create envy, jealousy, and evil surmising. Your children will be led to compete with the show and extravagance of the world, and to spend the Lord’s money for that which is not essential to health or happiness. {6T 450.3}**

Make yourselves friends of riches so you can use those riches to make friends of the angels. Think of the angels, they are watching us. Our meagre pittance of wealth in comparison to their wealth and they see us holding it to ourselves when all heaven spent so much on us. Are they our friends? They want to be. Money making is relevant for these days of preparation but after we have pent our puritan necessities that which is left is to be used to the glory of God.

Recall the angels standing by as Joshua the priest was standing in filthy garments. They are watching. Observe their responses to us, rather our responses to this as we engage in selfish enterprises for selfish ends.

**How the Angels Feel When We Handle Financial Matters in a Penurious Way**

**When these angels come to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and witness the exhibition of selfishness, of covetousness, of overreaching, and benefiting self at others’ disadvantage, they turn away in grief. When they see those who claim to be heirs to an immortal inheritance so penurious in dealing with those who do not profess any higher ambition than to be laying up treasures on earth, they turn away in shame; for holy truth is reproached. {2T 239.1}**

The angels turn away in disgust when people waste money and pay people little. The angels are giving all heavens interest for their salvation and are turned off by that. They are not friendly related to that. The wealth of heaven expended for us. We will prepare our hearts to enter soon into that society by spending as was spent upon us? Money in your hand is to relieve suffering.

**“Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness,” Christ says, “that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.” R.V. God and Christ and angels are all ministering to the afflicted, the suffering, and the sinful. Give yourself to God for this work, use His gifts for this purpose, and you enter into partnership with heavenly beings. Your heart will throb in sympathy with theirs. You will be assimilated to them in character. To you these dwellers in the eternal tabernacles will not be strangers. When earthly things shall have passed away, the watchers at heaven’s gates will bid you welcome. {COL 373.1}**

The angels are moved by the sacrifice of Michael the arch angel, Jesus Christ. He was their commanding angel. Spending your given wealth to promote His glory, this is the appeal for these last days before our economy fails. We need to manage our affairs in these last days to stir the angels to receive us as friends.

Amen.