

“*And the men*” – i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate body, and two angels in the form of young men – three men in all – rose up from their visit with Abraham in Abraham’s home in the plains of Mamre – bound for ancient evil Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities round about, for the purpose of annihilating those cesspools of moral filth and lawlessness in a total fiery holocaust.

“And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” Gen. 18:16-19.

In other words, Beloved, God’s report on Abraham was A+, because God could trust his servant Abraham. The Washington Post once wrote that we said that God could trust us at Westboro Baptist Church. They at the Post seemed to like that as an explanation of why – against all odds – we steadfastly continue to do what we do. I tell you, Beloved, we should all continue to pray daily, mightily, that each of us will, at the end, receive the blessed commendation from the Savior; to wit:

“His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” (Mat. 25:21)

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows; WHOSOEVER THEREFORE SHALL CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN, HIM WILL I CONFESS ALSO BEFORE MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN. BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL DENY ME BEFORE MEN, HIM WILL I ALSO DENY BEFORE MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.” (Mat. 10:28-33)

Beloved, the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Truth and Utmost Reliability, has just described a scene that should cause the heart of the stoutest sinner to tremble and fail, as did that of Belshazzar on the night long ago that Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the palace wall as spelling immediate doom for the tyrant; to wit:

“Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting. This night shall thy soul be required of thee; to wit: In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. THEN THE KING’S COUNTENANCE WAS CHANGED, AND HIS THOUGHTS TROUBLED HIM, SO THAT THE JOINTS OF HIS LOINS WERE LOOSED, AND HIS KNEES SMOTE ONE AGAINST ANOTHER.” (Dan. 5:5,6)

Yes, Beloved, that’s exactly what I am saying, because that is exactly what I believe. The majestic scene that the Lord Jesus just described portrays all mankind, from Adam to the end of time, all assembled to receive the blessings and the cursings of the Lamb. The gathering is so huge as to stretch into deep space, when all the Holy and Elect Angels are included with all the redeemed from among mankind. This presents no problem – whatsoever, logistical or otherwise – to the Great God and Creator of all things. To Matthew’s account of that glorious event soon to come to pass in

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Heaven, (i.e., Mat. 10:32,33) Dr. Luke adds a positive inclusion of the elect angels to enhance by their very presence the honors of all God's faithful servants; to wit:

“Also I say unto you, WHOSOEVER SHALL CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN, HIM SHALL THE SON OF MAN ALSO CONFESS BEFORE THE ANGELS OF GOD; BUT HE THAT DENIETH ME BEFORE MEN SHALL BE DENIED BEFORE THE ANGELS OF GOD.”
(Lk. 12:8,9)

John Bunyan's perception of how it will be when the Christian Pilgrim crosses the River of Death and is met by the shining inhabitants of the World Beyond, where our rewards await us; to wit: *“The talk that they had with the shining ones was about the glory of the place; who told them that the beauty and glory of it was inexpressible. Thus they went along. The River of Death has been safely overpassed. All that was mortal has been left behind; they now are disembodied spirits, unclothed of their mortality, ‘and clothed upon with their house which is from heaven’ rising and soaring higher than the clouds. There, citizens of heaven receive them; ministering spirits, that once invisibly ministered to them here, now minister to them in glory, and open up the PROSPECT OF THE THINGS THAT YET SHALL BE, AND THE PART THAT THE REDEEMED SHALL YET BEAR IN THE COMING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST. (!) Meanwhile the retinue enlarges, and swells into a glorious train of triumph and rejoicing; and amid praises, and hallelujahs, and glad anthems of the skies, ‘an entrance is ministered unto them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.’ 2 Pet. 1:11.”*

In the amazing providence of our Father, and in order to give us an accurate picture of how our fidelity to the King will be rewarded as promised to us in our text, the Holy Ghost has preserved for us the historic conflict between the cruel tyrant Haman and Mordecai the Jew; to wit: *“On that night could not the king (Ahasuerus) sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him. And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman (i.e., the deadly blood enemy of Mordecai and the Jews) was come into the outward court of the king's house, TO SPEAK UNTO THE KING TO HANG MORDECAI ON THE GALLOWS THAT HE HAD PREPARED FOR HIM (!) And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in. So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, WHAT SHALL BE DONE UNTO THE MAN WHOM THE KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOR?”* (Stop right here for a powerful point. The answer to this most timely question, taken in the abstract, depends in large part on who is proposing to bestow the honor and the dignity. The penniless beggar who survives on crumbs under the rich man's table may desire to bestow honor and dignity upon his tightwad benefactor – but simply cannot afford to. Here we have a great and mighty Persian king, who owes his life and his empire – literally – to Uncle Mordecai, for exposing and foiling the plot to assassinate king Ahasuerus.) Esther 6:1-5.

“So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king DELIGHT TO HONOR more than to myself? And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king DELIGHTETH TO HONOR, Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head; and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through

the street of the city, and proclaim before him, THUS SHALL IT BE DONE TO THE MAN WHOM THE KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOR. Then the king said to Haman”– (in all the king’s naivete as to Haman’s malice against Mordecai) – “Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, AND DO EVEN SO TO MORDECAI THE JEW, that sitteth at the king’s gate; LET NOTHING FAIL OF ALL THAT THOU HAST SPOKEN. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, THUS SHALL IT BE DONE UNTO THE MAN WHOM THE KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOR.” (Esther 6:6-11)

And the evil Haman was hanged on the very same gallows Haman had built for the innocent Mordecai to be hanged on – and the very same day. See, **Esther 7:9,10**; to wit: *“And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king’s wrath pacified.”*

Beloved, the story of Esther, her uncle Mordecai, and the divinely-wrought deliverance of the people of Esther from the evil Haman – all as recorded by the Holy Ghost in the **Book of Esther** – is one of the most beautiful and remarkable stories and historical events – religious or secular – in the annals of literature. Standing alone. However, its spiritual value as an inducement for God’s Elect to serve the Lord with greater zeal and fervor and love of the brethren, is incalculable; to wit:

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”
(1 Cor. 15:57,58)

“And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:9,10)

“And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor?” (Esther 6:6)

“And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to _____ (fill in name) for this?” O, Beloved. *“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.”* Mat. 10:32. *“Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God.”* Lk. 12:8.

Think, Beloved. String these glorious concepts together. The Great God Almighty will bestow honor and dignity upon us. What does it mean? We can hardly take such a thing in grasp. And when the Lord Jesus Christ, clothed with *“all power in Heaven and Earth,”* steps upon the glorious platform before the assembled teeming masses of all mankind from Adam to the end of time, to *“confess”* me before God the Father and *“before the angels of God,”* – DEAR GOD, WHAT DOES IT MEAN? After Christian and Hopeful – (Bunyan’s The Pilgrim’s Progress) – had successfully crossed the River of Death they were met by shining ones come as ministering spirits and heavenly guides:

“The men then asked, What must we do in the holy place? To whom it was answered, You must there receive the comfort of all your toil, and have joy for all your sorrow; You must reap what you have sown, even the fruit of all your prayers, and tears, and sufferings for the King by the way. In that place you must wear crowns of gold, and

*enjoy the perpetual sight and vision of the Holy One; for there you 'shall see Him as He is.' There also you shall serve Him continually with praise, with shouting, and thanksgiving, whom you desired to serve in the world, though with much difficulty, because of the infirmity of your flesh. There your eyes shall be delighted with seeing, and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One. There you shall enjoy your friends again, that are gone thither before you; and there you shall with joy receive even every one that follows into the holy place after you. There also you shall be clothed with glory and majesty, and put into an equipage fit to ride out with the King of Glory. When he shall come with sound of trumpet in the clouds, as upon the wings of the wind, you shall come with him; and, when he shall sit upon the throne of judgment, you shall sit by him; yea, and when he shall pass sentence upon all the workers of iniquity, let them be angels or men, **YOU SHALL ALSO HAVE A VOICE IN THAT JUDGMENT, BECAUSE THEY ARE HIS AND YOUR ENEMIES.** Also, when he shall again return to the city, you shall go too, with sound of trumpet, and be ever with him. Now while they were thus drawing towards the gate, behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them; to whom it was said by the other two shining ones, *These are the men that have loved our Lord, when they were in the world, and have left all for his holy name, and he hath sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far on their desired journey, that they may go in and look their Redeemer in the face with joy. Then the heavenly host gave a great shout, saying, 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.'* There came out also at this time to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who, with melodious noises and loud, made even the heavens echo with their sound. These trumpeters saluted Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world; and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet. This done, they compassed them round on every side; some went before, some behind, and some on the right hand, some on the left (as it were to guard them through the upper regions), continually sounding as they went, with melodious noise, with notes on high; so that the very sight was to them that could behold it as if heaven itself had come down to meet them. Thus therefore they walked on together; and, as they walked, ever and anon these trumpeters, even with joyful sound, would, by mixing their music with looks and gestures, still signify to Christian and his brother how welcome they were into their company, and with what gladness they came to meet them. And now were these two men, as it were in heaven before they came at it; being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing their melodious notes. Here also they had the city itself in view; and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto. But, **ABOVE ALL**, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever; Oh! By what tongue, or pen, can their glorious joy be expressed! Thus they came up to the gate, over which was written in letters of gold, **'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, (i.e., sodomites) and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.'** Rev. 22:14,15."*

I love you. Amen.