

## **Elder Vernon Johnson**

### **Numbers**

#### **Four**

##### **(Part I) River Parted into Four Heads**

In our previous essay we noted the scriptural correlation between the bible number four and the biblical subject of the work of the Holy Spirit.

##### **(Four - Spirit)**

In Gen. 2:10-14 we read, “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.”

Normally when we think of a river we think of streams or smaller rivers flowing into the larger river. The river mentioned above, however, parts and forms four other rivers. Ps. 46:4 speaks of such a river, “there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.” This river had streams coming out of it that caused the city of God (church) to rejoice.

The word, Eden, means “delight.” The Lord delights to save his people from their sins. The first head of the parted river is “Pison.” The word, “Pison,” means “freely flowing.” God’s grace is free and flows down from God to his elect people. This river compassed the “whole land of Havilah.” Havilah means “circle.” In the scriptures a circle is a symbol of a covenant. In the covenant of redemption set forth in Rom. 8:29, 30, those that God foreknew, he predestinated; and those he predestinated, he called; and those he called, he justified; and those he justified, he glorified. Thus all He chose before the foundation of the world are completely encompassed by the grace of God freely flowing from God and imparted unto us by the Holy Spirit.

The name of the second river is “Gihon” which means “stream.” This river

completely encompassed the land of “Ethiopia.” The word, Ethiopia, means “black.” Black is the bible color associated with sin. The atoning blood of Jesus is as a stream atoning for all the sins of all his elect people: “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, thru sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:2).

The name of the third river was “Hiddekel” which means “rapid.” This river flowed to the “east” of Assyria. East is the bible direction of sin. Also “Assyria” means “plain.” In Eph. 2:1 we read, “you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.” The Holy Spirit as a (rapid) river reaches down and quickens us (gives us spiritual life) when we were dead in trespasses and sins (absent of spiritual life). This is the marvelous work of the Holy Spirit causing us to be born again.

The name of the fourth river is Euphrates, meaning “bursting” or “sweet.” The gospel or good news comes to those whom God elected and the Holy Spirit quickened and is indeed bursting or sweet news to the child of God who has come to realize his own condemnation and felt the depravity of his heart. This sweet news refreshes his soul and causes him to have hope of eternal life thru the redeeming blood of Jesus.

Surely these four streams of God’s grace, redemption, new birth, and the gospel flow out from God’s delight to save his people from their sins and make glad the city of God (his church) which is the holy place of his tabernacles.